

Extra RM200mil for TVET

PM announces allocation for training 13,000 students

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KUALA LANGAT: An immediate allocation of RM200mil will be channelled to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses on top of the RM8bil already provided, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the additional RM200mil is needed to train 13,000 TVET students in fields such as energy transition, artificial intelligence, technological and digital-based industries, and high-powered electronics as well as farming.

Anwar announced the allocation when launching the National TVET Day at the Kuala Langat Industrial Training Institute yesterday.

He said that while Malaysia has to ensure the shift towards TVET moves fast, TVET students should not be merely skilled workers but must also be instilled with values so that they will enter the workforce as "good human beings".

"The funding would encourage TVET institutes to develop programmes in line with the government's wishes to solidify high-growth value sectors and industries in accordance with the National Energy Transition Roadmap and the National Industrial Master Plan 2030," he said.

This would also create skilled job opportunities as needed by the Industrial Revolution 4.0, he added.

Anwar said the mindset that TVET is for academic failures and those with nowhere else to go must be changed, much like in Japan and Germany where upskilling and reskilling courses are in demand for school leavers.

"The country has to make a shift, as nearly RM8bil has been allocated for TVET, the highest allocation of its kind in history. By



Investing for the future: Anwar and Ahmad Zahid touring TVET-related booths at the Kuala Langat Industrial Training Institute. - Bernama

the end of this year, with additional allocations, it will cross RM8bil.

"For example, there are children from rural areas who are not academically inclined, but they are excellent in coding, surpassing even those who excel academically. It would be our loss if such children are not channelled into computer and digital courses.

"This is why the country feels there is a need for a shift to TVET. Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has aggressively promoted TVET, and I support his proposals to introduce more programmes for TVET courses," said Anwar.

Earlier in his welcome speech, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid had proposed an additional budget to expand TVET courses to include certain specialisations and groups of minority students such as tahfiz school leavers and Orang Asli.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Rural and Regional Development Minister, is chairman of the TVET National Council.

Meanwhile, Anwar said while foreign investments from tech giants such as Microsoft, Nvidia and Google were due to Malaysia's stable politics, having skilled workers ready is also one of the attracting factors.

"We have been a semiconductor hub in the region for Germany, the United States and China. Of the global semiconductor chip supply, 25% comes from Malaysia," he said, adding that most of the new foreign and domestic investments are in the energy and oil and gas industries.

Anwar also took a swipe at the Opposition for criticising the subsidy retargeting policies of the Federal Government during the event, which was attended by ministers, deputy ministers, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali, and thousands

of TVET students.

"The retargeting of subsidies does not mean we cancel subsidies altogether. Previously, even rich people enjoyed subsidies, which is the government's charity to the people to lower the prices of goods such as fuel. Which country gives charity to the rich?

"We retargeted the rebates for electricity, which means big companies and the rich who make up 15% of electricity consumers lost their rebates. As for foreigners, we took away the electricity rebates because they do not pay their taxes. Why should we assist them?

"I too have to pay my electricity bill for Sri Perdana, but 85% of Malaysians have not had their electricity rebates taken away. Only the ultra-rich and foreigners lost them. We saved RM4.5bil when we did that, but we were lambasted by the Opposition.

"We lifted the price control for chicken when we realised that it was cartels profiting from the annual subsidies. The price of chicken was then floated, and even during the Hari Raya period, the prices did not go up. Thus, we saved RM1.2bil," Anwar said.

"The retargeting of diesel subsidies ensures giant companies that make millions in profit, foreign fishermen and diesel smugglers will not be able to enjoy diesel at low prices.

"Farmers, fishermen and school bus drivers will not lose their subsidies for diesel," he said, adding that the billions saved from the retargeting of subsidies would enable the money to be channelled to better programmes such as TVET courses for the youth.