

Najib Announces Task Force To Promote Academia-Industry Collaboration
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 11 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today announced the establishment of a task force to encourage collaboration between academia and industry to enhance marketability of graduates.

The Prime Minister said the task force would be chaired jointly by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh.

He said the cooperation between academia and industry was aimed at creating university curriculum more oriented to the needs of the market and not solely based on the requirements of the faculty.

"All of our programmes are based on two aspects, planning by universities and the needs of the market," he said when speaking at a special meeting with 1Malaysia Training Scheme (SL1M) participants here today.

Present were Abdul Wahid, Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Richard Riot Anak Jaem and 1,200 SL1M participants undergoing training with government-linked companies.

Najib said the curriculum needed the elements of communication, soft skills, creative thinking, ability to work independently as well as to work as a team.

He said if universities succeeded in creating such effective curriculum and training, there would be less dependence on graduates of the SL1M programme.

"If universities can take over the training, we can make SL1M "slimmer" because this programme is quite costly," he said.

In fact, he said, the government was prepared to provide more allocations to universities which could produce graduates in demand in the market.

Therefore, he said, the marketability of graduates would be a key performance indicator (KPI) for a university.

Meantime, Najib voiced support for the resolutions adopted by the SL1M committee including on participation by Public-Listed Companies (PLCs) in the SL1M programme to produce human capital with high skills.

He said it could be part of their Corporate Social Responsibility to help Malaysia become a developed nation.

Najib also said without the right policies and government assistance, it would be impossible for graduates to optimise their potential.

"If we are bright, capable, the right policies will still be needed to translate our potential into reality," he said.

At a press conference afterwards, Abdul Wahid said the SL1M committee had forwarded five resolutions which were accepted by the heads of government-linked companies GLCs and government-linked investment companies (GLICs).

The resolutions were expanding the SL1M programme to multinational companies (MNCs), PLCs; improve soft skills and marketability, strengthen industry and training, encourage curriculum in tertiary institutions to be more based on the needs of industry and entry to universities to be based on the same (needs of industry).

"We have received the commitment of heads of companies to fully support academia-industry collaboration whereby among others, CEOs of GLCs have agreed to take part in a programme called 'CEO Faculty'.

"Under this programme, they (CEOs) will adopt faculties in selected universities and give their commitment as adjunct professors whereby they will provide at least 10 hours of lectures in a year besides engaging with the varsities on academia-industry collaboration," he said.

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