

## INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

**'INTERNS CAN BOOST PRODUCTIVITY'**

Allowance will help university students pay for transport, food during stints

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**T**HE reintroduction of allowance payments for undergraduates undergoing industrial training or internships will not only reduce the financial burden of students but enhance the productivity at the respective ministries and government agencies.

Leaders of youth groups and university students' representative councils told the *New Straits Times* that the presence of a young workforce, albeit temporary, will provide a new dynamism for the government.



Jufitri Joha

Malaysian Youth Council president Jufitri Joha said some interns came from poor families and were undergoing industrial training at ministries and government agencies far from their homes.

"Allowance payments will help university and college students



Muhammad Izzuddin Rosli

pay for transportation and food during their internship stints.

"The allowance would motivate the interns to perform their duties as required by their superiors," he said.

Youth and Sports Minister Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman on

Wednesday said the cabinet had agreed to reintroduce allowance payments for those who underwent industrial training with the government.

Jufitri said he hoped the move would encourage more companies to provide allowance payments for interns.

The council, he said, was of the opinion that interns should be paid a minimum allowance of RM400 or an amount that could cover transportation and food expenses.

"For companies which are unable to pay allowances but provide free food and transportation for their full-time workers, we hope such facilities will be extended to those undergoing internships at their respective organisations."

The council said there were companies, especially from the small- and medium- industries, unable to provide allowances.

"We hope at least the companies could lessen the interns' bur-

den by paying transportation fees for the interns to get to work and for food," he said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia student representative council president Muhammad Izzuddin Rosli said the plan proved the government understood the woes of university and college students who were required to undergo internships in order to graduate.

"We are not suggesting that students should only do internship because of money as gaining experience in the working environment is equally important.

"Graduating on the dean's list is not a guarantee for a graduate to secure employment if they lack soft skills," he said.

Both Jufitri and Izzuddin rejected views suggesting that interns were only a burden to government departments and agencies.

They said with proper guidance, interns could perform their duties as productive as full-time workers.