

Committee should focus on more job opportunities

KUALA LUMPUR: The Special Committee on National Employment, set up to coordinate and monitor implementation of all employee-related initiatives under the National Economic Recovery Plan (Penjana), should focus on issues to increase employment opportunities for Malaysians and reduce the country's dependence on foreign workers.

A lecturer at the School of Business and Economics, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Associate Professor Dr Anuar Shah Bali Mahomed said the government should gradually reduce the number of foreign workers and the vacancies to be filled by locals.

"At present, there are too many foreign workers in our country, making it difficult for our own people to fill up the job opportunities...and when the foreign workers are sent back (to their countries), we have to make sure they do not return (to Malaysia) again.

"We see that the government's focus is on job-related issues. This is because if the people have jobs, they can generate income and this stimulates the country's economy again," he said when appearing as a guest on Bernama TV talk show "National Economic Recovery Plan (Penjana)" Friday night.

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, when announcing Penjana yesterday,



said the special committee would be chaired jointly by the Finance Minister and Human Resources Minister and include representatives from the private and public sectors.

It was set up to coordinate and monitor the implementation of several initiatives to address

rising unemployment challenges and encourage employers to retain their workers following the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the country's economy.

Anuar Shah also expressed the need for the young generation to capitalise on the use of

technology to create high-skilled jobs in the digital economy.

"We need to have an added value, a new skill among our people and this is where technology plays a role. Most importantly, the young generation needs to develop their own interests and skills.

"Furthermore, in the context of technology, the job opportunities are more attractive because they do not involve physical ability and muscular strength, like in 3D - dirty, dangerous and difficult - professions, but only requires skills in technology," he added.

Meanwhile, business development manager at Putra Business School, Associate Professor Dr Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff said Penjana, which is based on three main thrusts, namely to empower the People, propel business and stimulate the economy, could help to boost the country's economy.

"Overall, the 40 key initiatives worth RM35 billion under Penjana have positive impact, be it in short term, medium term and long term, to the country. It's a good development.

"For example, in terms of empowering the people, most of the initiatives are to ensure the people have jobs because we know the unemployment rate will rise. This can be seen through the extension of the wage subsidy programme, apart from the Employee Recruitment Incentive Programme to encourage employers to provide jobs," he added. — Bernama