

## Developing industry specific skills

EDUCATION

Sunday, 17 Mar 2019



The first batch of graduates from the Malaysian Meister and Apprenticeship Programmes have already started working at NHF as full-time employees.

LEADING automotive replacement parts manufacturer, New Hoong Fatt Holdings Berhad (NHF) welcomes the Government's emphasis on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The empowerment of TVET is critical to addressing the expected increase in demand for 1.3 million additional TVET workers by 2020, as stated by the Education Ministry.

NHF has been taking part in the Malaysian Meister programme (meaning Master Craftsman) since 2015, which is one of the many TVET courses offered in Malaysia.

NHF managing director Chin Jit Sin said: "We are pleased that more focus is being placed on TVET as upskilling and reskilling will create skilled workers who are not only highly sought after in the automotive industry but also many other industries."

"We have been working closely with the Selangor Human Resource Development Centre on the Malaysian Meister programme.

"The programme is aimed at developing industry specific skills such as precision machining and mechatronics," he said.

Chin said the first batch of graduates have already started working at NHF as full-time employees, adding that there are a few more batches in the pipeline.

"Apart from that, we have also initiated our very own apprenticeship programme, which is an alternative education/career path for school-leavers," he added.

A stronger focus for TVET could potentially lower the youth unemployment rate, address the issue of underemployment, and bridge the skills gap between new graduates and employers, he said.

On the national level, he added that it would equip the Malaysian workforce with the skills required for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, reduce our nation's dependency on foreign workers, increase national competitiveness and push Malaysia to become a developed country.

"Therefore, TVET empowerment is beneficial to all the stakeholders and with the ministry's pledge to make TVET as students' first choice of studies in the next five years, it would encourage higher participation in TVET programmes.

"This is because one of the challenges with the programmes is student enrolment. We have difficulty finding participants to join the programmes even with the programmes being funded by the Government and corporations like us.

"We are optimistic that eventually with greater emphasis being placed on TVET, the perception towards it would change as well." Chin added.

The Malaysian Meister programme spans over two years and is a collaborative effort between the Selangor Human Resource Development Centre and the Federation of Malaysian Skills Development Centre. It is a skills-based course where students are trained through a two-pronged approach via practical training and theoretical learning.

On the other hand, the Group also has an apprenticeship programme sponsored by Auto Global Parts Industries Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NHF. It serves as an alternative education/career path for school leavers and upon graduating from the 18-month programme, the graduates can either further develop their careers to become a manufacturing specialist or take part in the Meister Programme.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/education/2019/03/17/developing-industry-specific-skills/>