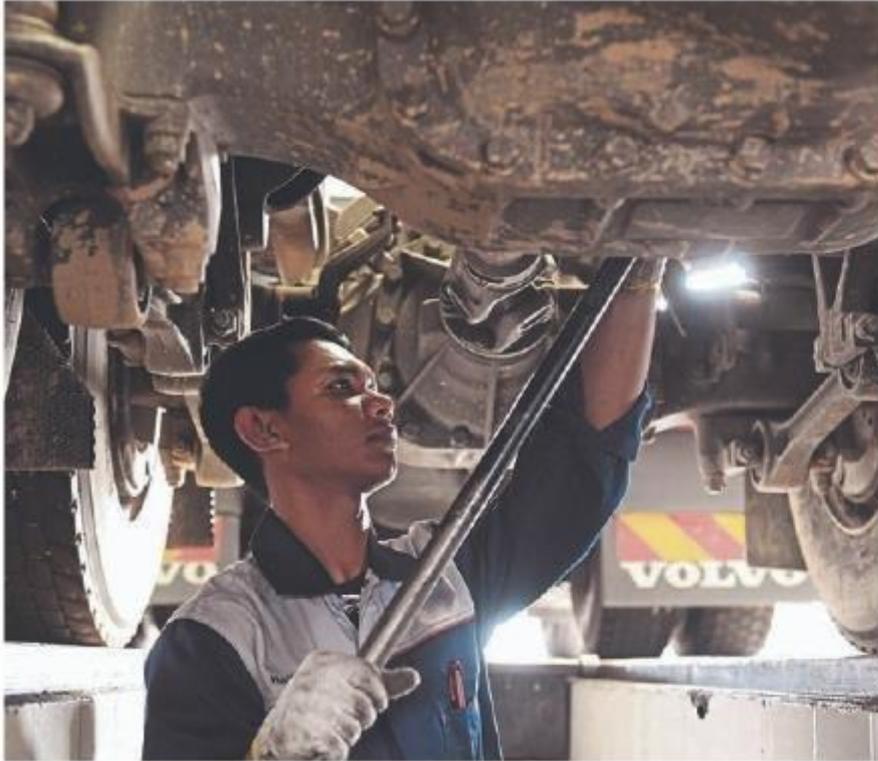


# TVET plan a success

By [Dhesegaan Bala Krishnan](#) - November 8, 2020 @ 12:44pm



KUALA LUMPUR : The Vocational Education Transformation Plan introduced in 2012 is bearing fruit as more skilled and future-resilient Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates join Malaysia's workforce every year.

TVET Division director Azman Adnan said TVET education holds great promise to fulfil the country's dream to become a high-income nation.

"At present, we have 87 vocational colleges, 357 schools offering Pendidikan Vokasional Menengah Atas, 26 schools offering Perantisan Industri Menengah Atas, nine Sekolah Menengah Teknik and four Sekolah Menengah Pendidikan Khas Vokasional. "All of them are geared towards one goal: to produce a top-notch workforce for our country," he said.

Azman shared with the New Sunday Times how the TVET education sector is adapting to the new normal, its "success story" of producing highly sought-after graduates and initiatives to internationalise TVET graduates.

## TVET Under New Normal

Azman said the new norm of online learning has worked well for TVET institutions. "Our modules comprise of 30 per cent theory and 70 per cent practical components.

Since the Movement Control Order began, our educators have been able to deliver the theory lessons smoothly online.

"We also revised lesson plans to ensure that we fulfil the required contact hours. We even adapted some practical components into online classes.

"However, for some industries, such as shipping, students need to use machineries and equipment on-site.

"So, we have allowed students to attend physical practical classes but on a rotational basis based on their semester.

"This ensures our students do not lose out on their hands-on skills while we adhere to the standard operating procedures," he said.

### **TVET Graduates In High Demand**

While skills mismatch still persists in Malaysia's workforce, Azman said vocational colleges have successfully bridged the skills gap.

"Every year, the ministry targets for 70 per cent of vocational college graduates to work in industries, 20 per cent to further their studies to the tertiary level and another 10 per cent of graduates to become entrepreneurs.

"After we embarked on the transformation plan for TVET education, our graduate employability rate in vocational colleges has continued to soar. "For instance, the employability rate of vocational college graduates was 97.6 per cent in 2017. It reached 98 per cent in 2018 and stands at 98.7 per cent last year.

"In fact, our vocational colleges are the country's largest provider of skilled workers," he said.

Azman attributed this success to the industry-based curriculum implemented in TVET sectors, which puts strong emphasis on hands-on skills. "Employers always prefer to hire skilled workers because they don't want to spend their resources to train unskilled workers. This is where TVET prevails.

"For instance, students pursuing the Malaysian Vocational Diploma (DVM) programme are required to spend four years studying and then complete on-the-job training (OJT) for six months before graduating.

"Since 2013, we have signed more than 1,000 Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with industries to place our students for industrial training.

"We also constantly upgrade equipment at vocational colleges to ensure they are in accordance with industry standards. This allows our graduates to learn the ropes earlier and faster before they are even hired."

Azman said the ministry is also seeking a more structured engagement with industries to train lecturers on state-of-the-art technology, provide them with

research opportunities, as well as to consult industry players to improve teaching and learning practices.



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**Taking Local Talent Global**

Azman said the ministry also aims to nurture home-grown talents in TVET sectors to meet global standards.

"For instance, we have forged strategic partnerships with key industry players such as Shell Bhd, IBM Malaysia, Sime Darby, Honda Malaysia, among others, to facilitate our training programmes.

"Besides that, our vocational colleges are also collaborating with various international institutes, such as the Beijing Information Technology College,

Shanghai Technical Institute of Electronic and Information, Asean Chambers of Commerce and many more," he said.

The ministry is also undertaking initiatives for programme endorsement by higher education institutions locally and abroad to widen opportunities for TVET graduates' academic articulation locally and globally.

"While graduates can pursue their degree at four institutions under the Malaysian Technical University Network, namely Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Universiti Technology Melaka and Universiti Malaysia Perlis, they can also continue their studies at several other local and international varsities.

"Another initiative for internationalisation is our plan to get our outstanding vocational colleges accredited by the Asia Pacific Accreditation and Certification Commission. This will be very significant for our graduates' mobility not only in higher education, but also in their careers.

"Currently, we are trying to get funds from the Education Ministry to help our TVET graduates benefit from this opportunity," he said.

Azman lauded the government for charting the way forward for TVET education through the RM6 billion allocation under the 2021 Budget. "In particular, the RM60 million allocation by the government for the Sistem Latihan Dual Nasional (SLDN), which is expected to benefit 10,000 participants, is a very timely move.

"Raising the SLDN allowance from RM600 to RM1,000 will encourage more participants from the B40 group to enrol in skills training," he said.

In the long run, Azman hopes that the resources poured into developing the country's TVET sector will change the community's negative perception of the field.

"I hope parents drop their pessimistic view of TVET as second-class education because reality speaks volume of our success. "Every year, we produce some 14,000 graduates and we are the country's largest provider of trained and skilled workforce.

"These graduates are the key to realise Malaysia's high-income nation dream," he said.