



story by  
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SCHOOL leavers should enrol in trade courses and make it a top choice as vocational education is not reserved for dropouts.

Deputy Education Minister Senator

Chong Sin Woon said society, the younger generation in particular, was now more receptive and recognised vocational courses such as beauty and cosmetology, hairdressing, baking, multimedia, agriculture, animation and biotech.

"The older generation still has the wrong perception that vocational training is only for those who did not excel in their studies.

"The situation has changed and vocational education will be a deciding factor for our country in achieving Vision 2020," he said at the launch of the TVET & Higher Education Fair 2016 recently.

The fair was jointly organised by MCA Youth and the Federation of JPK Accredited Centres (FeMac) at Viva Home expo hall in Kuala Lumpur.

Also present were FeMac chairman P. Sallanathan and event organising chairman Ng Keong Woo.

The two-day fair in collaboration with 11 vocational institutes saw more than 70 exhibitors, including China and Taiwan colleges, providing students with career guidance and scholarships worth RM4.7m.

Chong said more should be done to encourage students who are keen on taking up vocational courses, including sending them for training stints in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan to enhance their skills.

Citing Germany as an example, he said 60% of their citizens were taking up

# Changing perceptions of vocational trainings

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Fair aims to encourage more young Malaysians to take up technical courses

vocational education, making them more than those studying in academic fields. By providing the right education for our children, we will unleash their true potential.

"We now face greater economic competition from neighbouring countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia," he said, adding that vocational education was a vital component to improve the country's competitiveness.

Chong said Malaysia successfully produced 165,000 vocational graduates in 2013 and hoped to increase the number to 225,000 graduates by 2020.

He said his ministry had taken positive steps towards vocational education transformation with the construction of six vocational colleges in Pasir Puteh, Pagoh, Pekan, Tanjung Piai, Pasir Gudang and Kuala Berang.

"Under the 11th Malaysia Plan, we have requested building funds for another five vocational colleges to cater to the rising demand.

"Our long-term aim is to provide vocational education to more students. This is to further enhance our country's talent pool by producing technical professionals who are capable and competent for the job market," he said.

Chong added that the ministry was pursuing inter-ministerial cooperation to give these students the right platform to shine in their respective fields of interest.



Chong trying out a motorbike made by students during the TVET & Higher Education Fair 2016. Looking on are Ng (right) and Sallanathan (second from right).