

CREATING TECHNICALLY SKILLED WORKERS FOR THE NATION

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THE Vocational Education Transformation effort spearheaded by the Education Ministry, will see the nation equipped with a pool of skilled and semi-skilled human capital, parallel with the country's aspirations.

The effort started in 2012 through the ministry's Technical and Vocational Education Division with the primary aim of uplifting vocational education as a mainstream line of education.

Division director Zainuren Mohd Nor said the improvement to the vocational education system gave better opportunity to the people in terms of access, as called for in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025).

"As proposed in Shift 1 of the blueprint on access, this transformation programme provides a level playing field for all Malaysians to receive world-class education.

"It also realises the government's aspirations of having a group fulfilling the talent pool of technically-skilled workers, in hopes of achieving the dream of being a high-income nation by 2020."

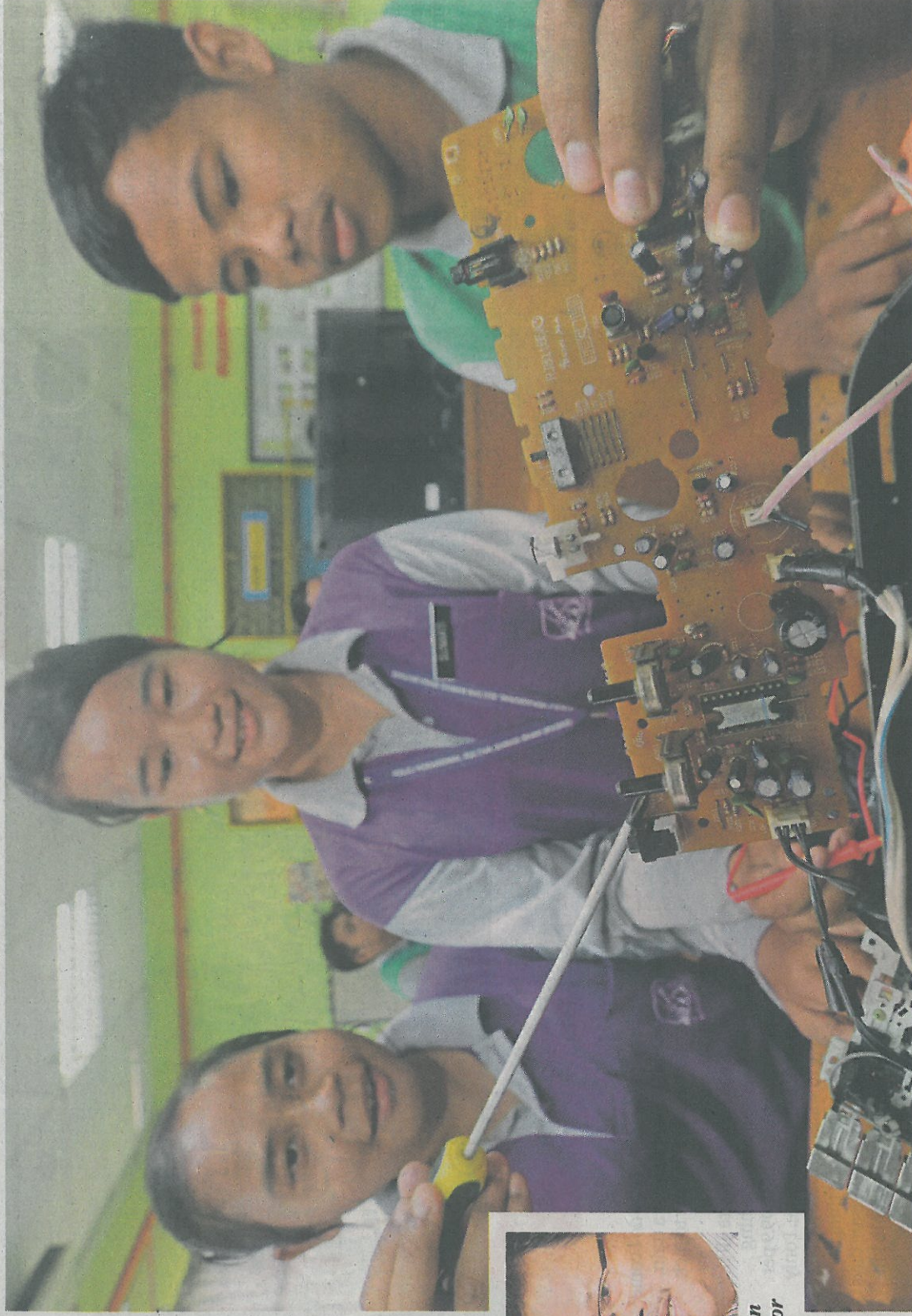
In ensuring that future human capital was fortified with a workforce which possessed high skills and met industrial demands, Zainuren said it was imperative that vocational education be improved and adapted to current times.

"This is so that the quality of our skilled workers does not only fulfil market demand, but also contributes to a new wealth creation for the country."

Among the steps taken by the ministry



**Zainuren
Mohd Nor**



in producing this group is upgrading 80 Sekolah Menengah Vokasional to Kolej Vokasional (Vocational Colleges).

"As many as 15 vocational colleges were opened starting 2012 and the number has since risen to 80, which are in operation. Six more colleges are in

construction, while five more are being planned for construction."

Zainuren said in a span of four years, the transformation effort have led to numerous successes that the ministry takes pride in.

"Among our successes are that

all programmes at the 15 pioneer vocational colleges received provisional accreditation from the Malaysia

Qualifications Agency, and the number of students who extended their programme to the Malaysia Vocational Diploma level has increased from 83.6

per cent in 2014 to 87.9 per cent last year."

"Programmes offered at our vocational colleges have received recognition from the Department of Skills Development under the Human Resources Ministry."

EXPOSING STUDENTS TO REAL-LIFE JOB ENVIRONMENTS

KUALA LUMPUR: On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a compulsory component for all Malaysia Vocational Diploma students, where during this time they are exposed to real-life job environments.

Conducted by the Vocational Education Training Academy (VETA) for a period of four months, OJT enhances the skills of vocational college students and prepares them for the working world.

Chief executive officer Roszida Othman said the institute carried out skills training in the fields of welding, automotive, machinery, and safety, all of which are fields

with high demand in the industry. "VETA has developed the Virtual Welding Training System in addition to the Lloyd's Register certification and we are also the Asia Office for the World Safety Organisation (WSO).

"We developed a curriculum in health and safety based on international standards with certification from WSO that can add value to the employer," she said.

The academy works with the Education Ministry's Technical and Vocational Education Division as an industrial partner where final year students taking the Malaysia Vocational Diploma in welding undergo professional upskilling

programme that fulfils all oil and gas industrial specifications.

"This partnership with the unit is integrated with involvement from Sapurakencana Petroleum Bhd, which focuses on upskilling according to oil and gas standards used globally, simultaneously offering positions at the company."

Siti Sarah Mohd Samsuri, 20, a Mechanical Welding Technology student from Kolej Vokasional Sungai Petani 1, is one of only two students in her college that passed the client test needed to be employed by Sapurakencana Petroleum.

Describing her interest in welding as a passion, Sarah said her stint at VETA was challenging, especially going up against those of the opposite sex.

"When I passed the client test I was ecstatic, because it is not easy

for a women to do a man's job as a welder. I failed the Lloyd's Register certification the first time but came back stronger and passed the second time," she said, adding that she aspired to work offshore, welding petroleum pipes in the future.

Another student employed by Sapura Kencana Petroleum at the age of 20 is Siti Nur Syamiza Azua Ahmad from Kolej Vokasional Wakaf Tembesu, Terengganu.

Syamiza, who is from Kuala Berang, Terengganu, she said she was encouraged by her father, who was also a welder, to delve into the field following his footsteps.

"My passion for welding came early because my father taught me the basics of welding. It is a challenging field because you have to



**Siti Sarah Mohd Samsuri (left) and
Siti Nur Syamiza Azua Ahmad**

have your own specific skills to do it.

"The most important things to survive in this line is passion and the determination. With both, you can succeed and do well," she said.

Both Sarah and Syamiza are employed by SapuraKencana Petroleum with a salary pay of between RM3,000 to RM3,500.

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