



Ministry to train 15,000 youths to be more employable

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By Fiqah Roslan

KOTA KINABALU: The Ministry of Entrepreneur Development aims to train and produce 15,000 youths to be more employable and also groom them to become entrepreneurs.

This is in line with the government's intent for Malaysia to be an entrepreneurial nation, said Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Yusof.

In order to achieve that target, youths especially must change their job-seeking mindset to a job creating one, he said.

"Graduate unemployment is still a rampant issue and it's troublesome especially as it concerns the future of our nation. The reality is, graduates are still inclined to be job seekers instead of job creators or entrepreneurs.

"This mindset is what the ministry aims to change. Entrepreneur education should be given serious attention nowadays to encourage more youths and

graduates to create jobs, which is an important component in generating a more creative and innovative society.

"Through Professional Training and Education for Growing Entrepreneurs, or Protégé, the ministry hopes to inspire youths to have the courage and branch out as entrepreneurs on their own. Protégé programmes will then provide them with the training and assistance needed," Redzuan said this at the Protégé Reach-out and Awareness programme at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) here, Thursday.

By all indications, Protégé is on the right track to give high impact in generating local entrepreneurs who can be brought to an international stage, said Redzuan, who affirmed that the achievement of Protégé so far had been encouraging and producing better results compared to previous training schemes.

"So far, we have already



Redzuan (front, centre) with Protégé Programme participants after yesterday's session. Also seen is UMS Vice Chancellor Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin (second from Redzuan's right).

reached out to 17,000 students from 14 universities nationwide.

In September onwards, we are looking to reach out to six more

universities.

"We will then select 15,000

youths to be trained so that they will not only be more employable, but can become entrepreneurs and create jobs for others.

"We are trying to tell them to become job creators so that they have the courage and motivation to become entrepreneurs. Hopefully, through this programme, that can be achieved," he said.

Meanwhile, the ministry is also targeting more involvement from cooperatives to contribute towards gross domestic product (GDP), saying co-ops are "sleeping giants" that could greatly attribute to national development if "awakened."

"Cooperatives in Malaysia are a potent movement with considerable resources not only in terms of finance, but expertise as well.

"Last year, co-ops contributed RM42 billion to GDP with RM140 billion in assets. This year, we are targeting RM50 billion towards GDP, to further boost growth," he said.