Vaccination programmes will boost local economy

PLANTATIONS

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KUALA LUMPUR: The rollout of vaccination programmes scheduled for the end of this month will further boost the Malaysian economy and help in creating more jobs possibly by the second half of 2021, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) said.

Executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said more employers would be ready to employ people for a longer term rather than just providing short fixed-term contracts or contract-based jobs as practised currently.
“But as for now, I think even with short fixed-term contracts, fresh graduates and the unemployed should appreciate it if employers offer them such jobs because the reality is the employers are facing hard times too due to the unprecedented event of Covid-19.

“We are not sure of the businesses’ long-term outlook,” he said.

Shamsuddin said the federation has raised with the government the issue of how difficult it is for the employers to offer employment for a period of at least one year as a precondition to be eligible for employment incentive and it hopes that the private sector can still be eligible for the wage subsidy incentive provided by the Social Security Organisation (Socso) even if they only offer shorter term jobs.

Nevertheless, he said, the private sector will try to do its best to assist the government in providing jobs to the locals during this difficult period.

The government has approved a total of RM12.76bil under the Phase One Wage Subsidy Programme (PSU) 1.0 as of Jan 29, 2021, benefitting a total of 322,177 employers and 2.64 million employees.

For PSU 2.0 under the Prihatin Special Supplementary Initiative Framework, a total of RM741.16mil has been channelled to 64,345 employers an 518,793 workers as of Jan 29, 2021.

Shamsuddin also said that 2021 would see more people upskilled and reskilled via the RM2bil Penjana Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) initiative launched in June last year.

Among others, the initiative aims to upgrade Malaysians through upskilling and reskilling programmes, focusing on workforce marketability and job matching.

“This pandemic is a long-term problem for us all, so we need a strong partnership between the government and the private sector so that together we can break the chain and move forward to improve the economy.

“(This is to ensure that) at the end of the day, businesses can be sustained and we help reduce the number of retrenchments, which is critical at this time, while creating more jobs,” he added.

On Tuesday, the government said that it aims to create 160,000 new jobs this year via committed investments. — Bernama

It is optimistic that the set targets can be achieved despite the country still being under the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin chaired the second meeting of the National Employment Council with MEF being one of the 10 council members involved. — Bernama