Skills training students can now pursue degrees

SHAH ALAM: Students from skills training courses will soon be able to pursue their degrees at several technical universities under the Higher Education Ministry.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr S. Subramaniam said yesterday four such universities have been identified to allow graduates from skills training or technical courses to pursue their degrees.

They are Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Malacca and the Technical University of Malaysia Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, Batu Pahat, Johor.

“Our (ministry) officers are discussing with the Higher Education Ministry to provide such opportunities for the training course participants to pursue degrees or its equivalent at local and private higher learning institutes.

“With our present universities, there is no need for a new university to offer degree programmes with specific courses because existing universities can add new courses for these training course participants.”

Noting that the partnership between Human Resources and Education Ministries is in line with the upgrading of the Malaysian Skills Certificate to a degree equivalent level, Subramaniam said this would encourage more people to take training courses in the country.

“Those who come from training courses have the hands-on skills and experience. So with an advanced programme or degree courses there are better employment opportunities for them,” he said, adding it would also reduce hiring foreigners for skilled jobs required in the industry.

Subramaniam said if formalities in terms of student intakes and recognition are settled, the courses can start immediately.

“Ministry officials are fine-tuning some things with the Higher Education Ministry at the moment.

“The government plans to raise the standard of skills certificates in this country to be on par with academic certificates,” he said.

Meanwhile, Subramaniam also commented on the complaints by nursing student graduates who face difficulty getting jobs.

He said about 200 nursing certificate students from a fairly new private nursing college had complained that they have difficulty getting employment either in government or private hospitals.

“This is a big issue. It is important for students to check on employment or career opportunities when choosing their courses and for nursing courses, it is important to check if their choice of institution has any ties with hospitals so that they are able to obtain a job upon graduating,” he said.