

Help youth feel better about future

LETTERS: The new administration under newly appointed ninth Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob must focus on our youth, among the most seriously affected due to the pandemic.

The Covid-19 crisis has disrupted all sectors especially education, forcing lay-offs affecting more than 720,000 people, leading to mental health issues, anxiety and depression.

Our youths and future generation will have to shoulder much of the long-term economic and social consequences of the crisis. An estimated 35 per cent of young people aged 15-29 are employed in low paid and temporary jobs are severely affected to sustain themselves.

The authorities should collaborate with youth stakeholders such as myHarapan-Youth Trust Foundation and the Undi18 groups with actionable youth projects and initiatives that will further contribute to nation-building efforts.

Also focus on policies for more job creation, training and re-training, skilling and upskilling especially for the unemployed youths.

Youths are vulnerable due to the psychological distress and social distancing. Unemployment will take a toll on their mental health. If left unchecked, it can lead to bigger social issues of drug use, violence or gangsterism.

Government-private partnership with key industries like electrical and electronic; information and communication technology (ICT); and, encouragement of continuation of studies through short-term courses and training subsidies go a long way.

Certain incentives including cash subsidies will benefit at least 300,000 jobseekers, according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia.

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