

Demand still for skilled workers

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MERSING: Vocational-based hard skills can cushion the effects of retrenchment as there is demand for skilled workers in the industrial fields of automotive, telecommunication and electronics among others.

Human Resources Department director-general Romli Hassan said since unemployment was undeniably adverse to the economy and people, it was important for retrenched workers to upgrade themselves with new skills.

"In times of economic slowdown such as now, rest assured that such skills will be very much in demand, thus increasing the employability of the recently unemployed," he said yesterday.

Earlier, Romli witnessed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing between

Mersing Industrial Training Institute, Human Resource Department, Petronas Management Training and Malaysian Marine Heavy Engineering Sdn Bhd.

The MoU would provide the Mersing Industrial Training Institute with equipment and welding training modules to prepare students with high-grade welding skills in the oil and gas industry.

It is learnt that Petronas is in need of some 15,000 workers from various fields for its local and international oil and gas market.

"As of right now, vocational fields are the preferred choice (compared to academic fields). The trend is changing according to the current need," he said.

Romli also said that 60 to 70 per cent of students from in-

dustrial training institutes often found themselves recruited for employment within six months of graduation.

"It is our mission to cater to the demand of the industries and at the same time help to improve the country's economy," he said.

Romli said the department was committed in softening the effects of retrenchment by providing training essential to the need of the industries.

He said the department had devised a long-term measure for that purpose, which was by slotting certificate and diploma courses for students at industrial training institutes.

"Meanwhile, for short-term measures, we have initiated customised modules for retrenched workers who are ready to venture into other fields," said Romli.