

HUMAN CAPACITY FOR THE NEXT GROWTH STAGE

Presentation by:

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TOWARDS A 21ST CENTURY SMART NATION: INTELLIGENT, INNOVATIVE, INCLUSIVE

- In the 21st Century, the key focus will be more on being Smart and Smartest instead of being Big or Biggest. We should focus on becoming an intelligent, innovative and inclusive nation.

BUILDING AN INTELLIGENT HUMAN CAPITAL FOR A SMART NATION

- To become a Smart Nation, we need to institutionalise Excellence and Meritocracy. Meritocracy should be the key prong of our Human Capital Development. Merit should be a primary basis for admission into universities and promotion of university lecturers.
- To become a Smart Nation, we need more foreign expertise. Malaysia should target bringing in 5,000 foreign experts every year and accord them and their families permanent residence status.

BUILDING AN INTELLIGENT HUMAN CAPITAL FOR A SMART NATION

- Greater effort should be given to promoting e-learning at the work place with internet and computer-assisted learning for further upgrading of skills. E-learning allows companies to shift the training paradigm. Instead of bringing employees to the training room, we bring the training to the work force. A National Competency Framework for e-learning should be established. Virtual learning is the way forward to building a smarter, more innovative work force.

BUILDING AN INTELLIGENT HUMAN CAPITAL FOR A SMART NATION

- We need to promote continuous learning and open distance learning. This will facilitate working people with the opportunity to seek self-improvement. Open Universities should be given more encouragement. Tax deductions should be considered for those pursuing courses at approved Open Universities. For example, India has 1.8 million students enrolled in its Open University.
- To encourage life-long learning and to upgrade skills of the work force, excess capacity at night in universities, colleges and schools can be turned into night classes for adult learning and reskilling.

BUILDING AN INNOVATIVE THINKING SOCIETY FOR A SMART NATION

- To promote innovation, Government should allocate more research grants to both public and private universities. A University Grant System as practised in UK, Australia and other countries should be developed to enhance quality research.
- To enhance continuous upgrading of skills and to equip our work force with the right set of innovation and strategic thinking skills for the future, companies should be given double deduction for all training courses and not just for limited approved courses.

BUILDING AN INNOVATIVE THINKING SOCIETY FOR A SMART NATION

- **Government should forge a strategic tripartite partnership between Government, Industry and Academia to develop a 21st Century curriculum that will prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow. Curriculum review should focus on enhancing skills in strategic thinking, creativity, innovation, information technology and global knowledge.**
- **We urge the Government to re-establish 15-20 old premier English schools and convert these into Centres of Academic Excellence and premier schools using English as the medium of instruction. Some of these premier schools can be privatised.**

BUILDING AN INNOVATIVE THINKING SOCIETY FOR A SMART NATION

- We need a concerted effort to bring in outstanding foreign universities or a consortium of universities to establish branch campuses. Special consideration should be given to attracting top Japanese, US and German universities to set up branch campuses in Malaysia that will promote Innovation and Creativity.
- Tax rebates should be given for greater IT usage, including tax deduction for purchase of smart phones like BlackBerry.

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUSIVE

- **Social inclusiveness should be another strategic thrust for the development of a Smart Nation to ensure the poor and needy are not left behind. Educational vouchers should be given to the poor and needy of all races. The innate intelligence of the poor should be developed. Hence, human capital development needs to be inclusive.**
- **Tax incentives should be given to private universities and colleges to encourage them to expand and upgrade their facilities as well as to provide more scholarships for the poor and needy especially those from rural areas.**

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT **SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUSIVE**

- **Government should engage the Third Sector to promote and develop social enterprises to develop human capital at the grassroots level. Social entrepreneurs should be encouraged to focus on training and education in their own communities.**
- **A National Apprenticeship Framework should be developed to focus on a nation-wide apprenticeship scheme involving Government and Industry. The German and Japanese models can be studied and evaluated. Such a National Apprenticeship Framework can provide more opportunities for the poor and needy.**

CONCLUSION: WITH A SMART CURRICULUM WE CAN BRING STUDENTS TO THE WORK FORCE EARLIER

- Finally, we propose that the number of years in schools can be reduced so that we can have more people joining the work force earlier. In primary schools, the number of years can be reduced to 5 years as most pupils will have gone to kindergartens or pre-schools. Pre-university courses (STPM) can be reduced to just a one-year National Matriculation Programme. Pupils should also begin schooling at 6 years instead of the present 7 years.

THANK YOU

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