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Tackle students' disinterest in Science and Mathematics, says Anwar

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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants a concerted effort to tackle the declining interest in the Science and Mathematics subjects among school children. - NSTP/MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants a concerted effort to tackle the declining interest in the Science and Mathematics subjects among school children.

Anwar said lack of interest were findings of an Education Ministry study and there must be new proactive approaches to rekindle the attention of children in both subjects.

The ministry should work along with its Science, Technology and Innovation counterpart to lure children to learn more, he said.

"Get scientists and research bodies to go to schools, polytechnics, education institutions and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to spur curiosity.

"It should not just be in the form of teachings but emphasise on the importance of science, mathematics as well as technology," he said in his speech at the launch of the 2023 Malaysia Commercialisation Year Summit here, today.

Anwar said he had asked Proton Holdings Bhd (Proton) and Petroliam Nasional Bhd (Petronas) to provide partial TVET training to ensure that future graduates were able to fulfil the respective job requirements.

TVET training by Proton could cover the needs of Proton and Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Co Ltd (Geely) while Petronas could cater to Saudi Aramco's demand, he added.

"We have also agreed that TVET teachers be given upskilling so that this aim can be reached, apart from more allocations be given for machineries (to aid training).

"This is vital because when Tesla and Geely and others enter (the market), we need an additional labour force," he said.

In his speech earlier, Anwar said Geely shared with him that the country's TVET training was not as highly skilled as they wanted because foreign expertise was still needed.

He said they hoped that the government could provide enhanced and highly skilled TVET training.

"They tell me the level of discipline and professionalism of our engineers were excellent. But what was terribly lacking was the high level of expertise because we still require it from overseas.

"They suggested that we need to give adequate emphasis on expertise to fill in the gap."