Youth Unemployment, Skills Gaps Among Issues Discussed At ACET 2015

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 3 (Bernama) -- Youth unemployment, gap in skills and gender disparity were among issues discussed on the first day of the Asia-Pacific Conference on Education and Training (ACET) 2015 held here today.

Education ministers throughout the Asia-Pacific region gathered here in the capital to discuss how Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) could address issues to bridge the gap between education and work.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Bangkok director Gwang-Jo Kim noted that despite the region's dynamic growth, young people were the ones 'bearing the brunt' of inequality.

He said within countries of Asia-Pacific, some 220 million of them were unemployed as well as out of school or other formal training; while another 300 million are underemployed.

"How do we ensure that 300 million youth can maximise their skills to develop our respective economies in a sustainable manner?"

"How can we encourage equality in skills acquisition, so that both men and women can have equal opportunities to excel in their field?," he said in his speech during the conference.

He added that it was imperative for the nations to work together to create strong TVET systems that would propel economic growth in a sustainable and equitable manner.

"The overarching aim of this conference is to leverage the tremendous potential of TVET policies and practices to better link the skills acquired by learners with those needed in the labour markets," he said.

The conference is expected to conclude on Wednesday with the signing of the 'Kuala Lumpur Declaration' which will outline concrete, action-oriented recommendations to develop and strengthen TVET in Asia-Pacific.

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