

ISSUED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CORPORATE AFFAIRS, IEM

STUDENTS HEAD FOR THE BEST PROSPECTS

“The Public Sector Lacks Opportunities for Advancement of Engineers and Other Science Professionals”

STUDENTS will flock to where the best prospects are – and Science is not taking them there. The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) is of the opinion that the current furore over the lack of interest by students in Science simply reflects the more fundamental underlying reason – that of limited prospects available for the different science professions, including engineers.

The Public Sector, which includes statutory bodies, government-linked companies and the armed forces, is a glaring example where career advancement for engineers and other science professionals are distinctly curtailed. There is no pathway for science professionals, including engineers, to reach the top of the public service; contending only to serve, at best, as the head of his or her department.

The top government post of Ketua Setiausaha Negara (KSN), Ketua Setiausaha (KSU) posts of the various Ministries and even the State Secretaries’ posts are “off-limits” to them. When students learn of such limited prospects, why would they even think about taking up Science? Would parents, once they understand how the public sector works, want their children to pursue Science?

The situation where there are no entrants to take up science related posts, including engineers, in the public sector is something very real and will derail the nation’s path to a high income and developed status. As such, the Prime Minister and the government will have no alternative but to revamp the public sector to allow for equal opportunities in career advancement for engineers and other science professionals to reach the top of the service. In the process, the services of hit her to untapped talent will then be made available for the betterment of the country.

The IEM, on its part, has initiated plans to set up Engineering Clubs in schools throughout the country to promote an interest in science and engineering. The purpose is for these clubs to generate interesting and exciting activities that can explain to young minds, especially at the lower secondary level, the wonders of science and engineering and its importance and relevance in all aspects of our lives. The IEM hopes to have the support of the Ministry of Education and the private sector in the setting up of these Engineering Clubs and to help make it a success. ■

