

EDUCATION

Students geared to jobs in tech

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To prepare the younger generation for the upcoming Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) project, authorities have launched a campaign to groom about 250,000 students to fill positions in high-tech industry.

Panita Pongpaibool, said the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (Nectec) and the National Science and Technology Development Agency stated that one of the campaign's goals was to launch a competition in software development among vocational students.

Ms Panita, deputy director of the Sustainable Manufacturing Center, said the competition, named the "IoT Hackathon 2021 Gen R", ran from last Friday to yesterday at Rayong province.

The event was organised by the Vocational Education Commission Office and Nectec.

The competition recruited 70 first-year vocational students from Chon Buri, Rayong and Chachoengsao to participate. The campaign period is set for three years.

As vocational students were

often viewed as "inferior to university graduates", she said this campaign aimed to change Thai society's perspective about them.

"We want to see them receive the same treatment as university graduates," Ms Panita said. "So, this campaign will help to boost their abilities with new knowledge, even more than what they had been taught at university to cater to the future of this region [the EEC area]."

"To push forward the Thai industrial sector to the next phase, we need three pillars of support — technological advancement, basic structure and expert manpower.

"Prior to this [competition], we had arranged six days of online training among the competitors and their coaches. This competition was the evaluation of how they would apply their knowledge to real experience."

The students needed to create problem-solving tools.

When asked why vocational students had to be involved, she replied that over the past five years the EEC market required 475,688 staff and almost 50% were vocational school students.

"We view these kids as very valuable resources for the upcoming industrial sector transformation," she said. "Besides, to counter the problem of unemployment, we want to train them according to market requirements, especially in digital, logistics and the smart electronics sector."