

33 Asean youth leaders gather for programme to spur collaboration

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Efforts to step up collaboration between youth leaders across Asean in key areas like sustainability are going ahead despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

Over the next five days, 33 delegates from all 10 of the association's member states will take part in the third Asean Youth Fellowship, which was postponed last year owing to the pandemic.

Launching the programme yesterday, Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim said Asean youth had shown remarkable pluck and promise in facing up to regional challenges, such as

the social and economic problems brought on by the pandemic, and those surrounding climate change and sustainability.

He told the delegates: "(Asean youth) are taking the future into their own hands, and moulding it gently but firmly into a bigger, better, and brighter one.

"I encourage you to reach out openly and enthusiastically, to find out more about the stories of your fellow participants, and the possibilities you can unlock together."

The programme of dialogue with industry leaders and team-building sessions are organised by the National Youth Council and the Singapore International Foundation, and open via application or nomination to people roughly between



Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim at the launch of the third Asean Youth Fellowship yesterday, where he urged participants to explore collaborations. ST PHOTO: ARIFFIN JAMAR

the ages of 27 and 35 who are leaders in their communities beyond their professional work.

One of Singapore's 10 representatives is consultant orthopaedic surgeon Hamid Razak, 36.

Dr Hamid, who is also an assistant professor at Duke-NUS Medical School and adjunct teaching faculty at the National University of Singapore's and Nanyang Technological University's schools of medicine, said he was looking forward to learning more about the public healthcare systems of the various Asean countries.

He said: "I'm also interested in having discussions about issues on sustainability regarding the medical industry and medical waste."

Dr Hamid added that as someone who is also involved in mentor-

ing outside his professional work, he will use the fellowship as an opportunity to network and meet potential mentors.

A participant from Jakarta, business development head Cynthia Handriani Wijaya, 27, said achieving sustainable development goals is not possible without the support of the rest of Asean.

Ms Wijaya, who works for Daya Selaras Group, a sustainability company focusing on paper packaging, said: "People who have been working in the sustainability industry know that it is a long-term journey, meaning that seeing the immediate impact of your work can be quite challenging.

"In order to bring a lasting and larger change, it is impossible to work alone and we need all 10 Asean countries to work together, and I do believe there are opportunities for that."

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