

India to be important source of professionals for SE Asia

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India will become an increasingly important source of professionals for Southeast Asian countries but its elite group are staying home to work for multinational corporations on better terms, says a book.

It is also becoming increasingly difficult for Southeast Asian companies to source Indian professionals from major metros, this is because of unattractive remuneration packages when compared to wages, bonuses and incentives given by the MNCs, said the books co-author during the launch on Friday.

As such, more and more Southeast Asian companies were seeking professionals from second and third tier India [Images] cities, albeit on cheaper terms, to fill the gap of professionals, said Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, co-author of the book *The Migration of the Indian Human Capital: The ebb and flow of Indian professionals in Southeast Asia*.

Arunajeet Kaur, a PhD student at the Australian National University, is the co-author of the book with Dr Faizal, a Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

The Southeast Asian companies, unlike MNCs, have always considered Indian professionals as cheaper source of management expertise, he pointed out.

But this was no longer the case as professionals emerging from Indias IITs and IIMs, have better options and MNCs were now locating to India to tap their expertise, he told PTI after the launch of the book at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore.

Even if these top professionals stay back to work in India, they have a better environment with 'gated houses and several servants' while it becomes a challenge to secure a domestic maid when working in places like Singapore or Malaysia, Dr Faizal pointed out.

Asked if professionals from the two and three tier cities would continue to be a source of professionals for the Southeast Asian companies for a long time, he said it was not likely to be so.

In fact, competition comes from the MNCs which are locating their operations in India to recruit the best brains and appoint them in their global operations.

Top Indian professionals also preferred to work in developed economies, especially the United States and Europe.

The next best option for them was in West Asia and the Gulf countries where wages and re-numeration are higher than those offered by the Southeast Asian companies, Faizal said.