

'RAMP UP BUILDING OF ROBUST AI ECOSYSTEM'

All ministries must synergise efforts so that Malaysia is not left behind, says PM

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MALAYSIA must accelerate efforts to build a strong ecosystem to drive the development of artificial intelligence (AI) in the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said all ministries must synergise and work together to ensure that the country was not left behind in the use of AI technologies.

"When I talk about the ecosystem, all ministries have to be involved, especially the Digital Ministry.

"This ecosystem means (introducing) AI in institutions from primary schools and secondary schools, to technical and vocational education and training colleges and institutes of higher learning, as well as among civil servants. Everyone must be ready."

Anwar said this at the launch of the Malaysia Artificial Intelligence Nexus at the World Trade Centre here yesterday.

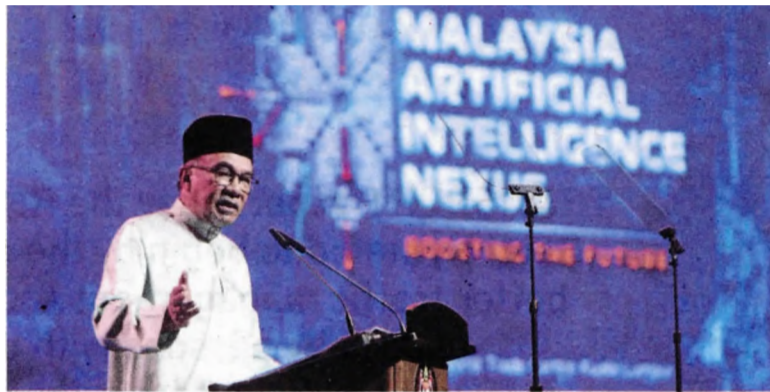
Anwar also listed several pillars in the country's AI ecosystem, including systematic AI governance and ensuring a pool of professional skilled talents equipped with AI knowledge working with multinational corporations.

He said the growth of AI in the country must be pursued through the Malaysian Artificial Intelligence Consortium (MAIC).

It was also crucial, he added, to have lecturers and professors with the expertise to build the AI ecosystem and the capabilities to train others so that the country had highly specialised talents.

At the same time, he said, all parties must move away from old ways of thinking and focus on the country's future by proving their ability to meet current needs.

Anwar emphasised the need to strengthen mathematics and science in universities, adding that the younger generation's interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects was declining.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking at the launch of the Malaysia Artificial Intelligence Nexus at the World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI.

"We need to figure out a way to change our approach so that these subjects are seen as interesting to students."

He said in the post-normal era, it would not be possible to execute policies or undertake change using old policy frameworks.

"One of the fundamental issues raised or observed is the accelerated pace.

"Spontaneous and complex issues happen at the same time, but also the pace of change and development is unprecedented.

"Under such circumstances, we cannot undertake change using old frameworks."

He added that implementation of AI-related policies and initiatives must not be delayed.

"We cannot wait six months (to implement it). It must be expedited. For matters related to AI, we cannot wait too long, otherwise we will be left behind."

The Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry has been tasked to coordinate the usage of cloud computing by all ministries and agencies to provide university students access to research and information from government agencies.

Anwar said the ministry had been given two weeks to do so.

"I admit that we have some limitations to cloud computing, but our policy is to accelerate its implementation.

"The Digital Ministry, Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry and Communications Ministry will get this in order, with the science, technology and Innovation minister coordinating the matter.

"Give us two weeks, and all universities will receive (this information)."

He said this at the Temu Anwar

session at the event.

Anwar also said it was important to have stability in politics and clarity in policies to attract investors to the country.

"We have all sorts of policies, such as the National Energy Transition Roadmap and the New Industrial Master Plan, and all these help (attract investors).

"I am not interested in responding to criticism. I want to focus on building our country, attracting investments, focus on AI and education."

Anwar said with the rapid development of AI, there was a pressing need for more AI graduates in the country.

He said he would direct agencies to create a nexus with industry players not just in terms of industrial training, but also job placements.

"For example, companies in the Kulim Hi-Tech Park have been in touch with Universiti Sains Malaysia to hire graduates as engineers.

"So I think, in this regard and for AI, we can do the same. Companies can tell universities what they can offer."

Present were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Lih Kang, Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil and Digital Minister Gobind Singh Deo.

At the event, Anwar presented Universiti Teknologi Malaysia with an appointment letter for the setting up of the MAIC.

He also launched the 2024-2030 AI Talent Roadmap and witnessed the exchange of the letter of intent between the Higher Education Ministry and leading tech company Nvidia.