

# Anwar pushes for AI talent growth

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**JOHOR BARU:** Malaysia needs to grow its talent pool and produce graduates in new fields such as artificial intelligence, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister spoke of being impressed to find out during his visit to Abu Dhabi that there was already a university teaching AI there.

"They were able to do it within a short period," he said.

This led to him pursuing the matter with the Higher Education Ministry, he said, adding that it usually takes one or two years to start a new faculty.

"However, it has now been done within four months by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Johor," he said in his speech at the Invest Malaysia event organised by Bursa Malaysia yesterday.

Anwar spoke about a need to partner with the private sector to develop talent.

"We lacked a niche in the highest level. So it is important for us to produce graduates who fulfil their requirements," he added.

He also touched on the importance to tap the Asean market for investments as the region had a huge population of 680 million and a GDP of US\$3.5 trillion (RM14.7 trillion).

On Singapore, he said both countries would continue to collaborate to achieve a win-win situation, including the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ).

"Yes, we have our minor differences like any other country globally but we are still excited to work with each other," he added.

Malaysia, he said, was generating enough energy surplus to



**Economic matters:**  
Anwar delivering his speech at Invest Malaysia. - THOMAS YONG/The Star

power new major development projects.

He said the government would continue to pursue renewable energy and energy transition initiatives, as it aims to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, while still focusing on projects like JS-SEZ.

Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi said Johor's strategic advantages and strong growth momentum made the state an unbeatable investment destination.

"We are witnessing growing interest from investors, both locally and internationally.

"Johor's GDP growth outpaced the national average, expanding by 4.1% year-on-year in 2023, driven primarily by our thriving services and manufacturing sectors," he said.

Onn Hafiz noted that Johor recorded RM5.2bil in exports in July, with strong performances in

petrochemicals, electronics and non-metallic materials.

Later at another event in Kuala Lumpur, Anwar said he is ready to declare his assets right away if he is involved in any investigation.

"Some leaders, when they become the prime minister or the finance minister, they amassed hundreds of millions and some even up to billions of ringgit," he said.

"But when we asked them to declare their assets, they hold grudges.

"If I were told to declare my assets tomorrow, I will declare it, probe me as much as you want," he said at a groundbreaking ceremony for a school.

Earlier yesterday, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) dispelled allegations that Anwar had instructed the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC)

to investigate former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his sons, and former finance minister Tun Daim Zainuddin.

According to a report by Bloomberg, the PMO also denied instructing MACC chief commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki not to investigate share purchases by Anwar's former political secretary Farhash Wafa Salvador.

"The Prime Minister's Office affirms that the Prime Minister has never issued directives or interfered in investigations conducted by the MACC. The MACC operates as an independent body, acting on the basis of complaints received," it said.