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Innovation, creation will spur our economy to grow anew

By [Dr Amalina Amir](#) - April 8, 2021 @ 7:45pm



Malaysian companies must create products that can compete in the global market in quality and price. Top Glove and Hartalega of the glove industry are good examples of companies that have excelled at that. -STR/FAIZ ANUARFAIZ ANUAR

FOR over a decade Toyota management claimed that it wasn't a good idea to push for massive electric vehicle production.

But, last year Toyota 'kowtow' to the inevitable and starting to make its first battery-electric vehicles and presenting Toyota electric SUV and electric sedan prototypes sometime this year.

Toyota and Subaru formed a joint venture in early 2020 to develop a new platform that is key to the making of electric vehicles to compete with renowned VW Group's MEB platform which has many advantages compared to the existing platform.

This platform is known as the e-TGNA modular platform. This what Toyota said about their e-TGNA modular platform that will be used for their first electric vehicle, the Toyota BZ SUV:

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The SUV will be based on Toyota's new e-TNGA platform, which is highly versatile and easily adaptable for a range of product types. The basic architecture principle of e-TNGA works on the basis that key elements remain fixed whilst others vary. This approach allows variance in vehicle width, length, wheelbase, and height.

e-TNGA can also be defined with front-, rear- or four-wheel drive and with a wide range of battery and electric motor capacities to suit various vehicle types and usage profiles. The versatility and flexibility of e-TNGA technology allow Toyota to design and create vehicles that are not just battery-electric, but also exciting to drive and beautiful to look at.

This description fits perfectly to describe our local company MIMCO modular platform that will be used to make MIMCO Alif SUV and MIMCO Caliph sedan. This meant MIMCO was 3 years ahead of Toyota in the creation and utilisation of a modular platform for their Electric Vehicle (EV).

This MIMCO platform is now used to make a well-known China brand SUV. It is time we should support this industry. Datuk Seri Mustapha Mohamed, the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) recently said:

"New sources of growth are needed to ensure that it is driven by multifactor productivity. We need to build a workforce for the future, drive digitalisation and spur productivity improvements at the sector and enterprise levels."

The only way to make Malaysia's GDP grow again is in the innovation and creation of Malaysia's own new products for the export market.

Malaysian companies must create products that can compete in the global market in quality and price. Top Glove and Hartalega of the glove industry are good examples of companies that have excelled at that.

European Union gave more than US\$1 billion grant to Tesla that resulted in Tesla building a Gigafactory in Germany to manufacture EV batteries. We should therefore invest by taking a major equity in Malaysia's own company that have viable technology and capability to start manufacturing Electric SUV and Electric Sedan for the global market.

Depending on FDI to create jobs for highly qualified and high skill Malaysians are the past. The government needs to invest in productive spending instead of consumptive spending to create jobs for Malaysians

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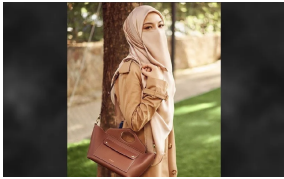
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that are studying high technology courses and for the high skill workers being trained in various institutions in Malaysia.

Students studying courses in EV, EV batteries, and other IR 4.0 products might just as well study aerospace engineering as there would be no suitable job for their qualifications available when they graduated from their studies.

So the relevant ministries need to shift gear now to catch up with the IR 4.0 development worldwide otherwise Malaysia will be left behind even by neighbouring countries.

The writer is head of Innovative Electromobility Research Lab, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Universiti Teknologi MARA

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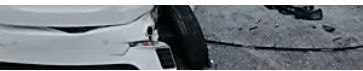


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