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Malaysia's ability to harness new technologies crucial to recovery from COVID-19 -- Adham Baba



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JOHOR BAHRU, Dec 7 -- Malaysia's ability to harness new technologies will play a key role in ensuring the nation's recovery from the pandemic and resilience to future crisis, Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said.

He said despite disrupting lives, work, education and economy globally, COVID-19 has also accelerated the urgency for an agile, adaptable and transformative technology to further support digital economy.

"So, what can we do to support Malaysia's transformation in digital economy?

"MOSTI believes that the key to ensure Malaysia's transformation as a high-tech nation is for all of us to work together and realign our business models to explore new technologies," he said in his speech at the opening of the virtual Iskandar Global Innovation and Technology Exchange Conference (IGNITE) 2021 here today.

Dr Adham shared a success story of a local talent, Dr Afnizanfaizal Abdullah, who started a spin-off Artificial Intelligence company called Synapse Innovation Sdn Bhd and currently chief technology officer of the number one global drone company in the world -- Aerodyne Group.

"MOSTI believes that Aerodyne will be developing hundreds of local talents in Medini, Iskandar to further support the company's growth globally. Meaning to say, this will also create high-value jobs for Keluarga Malaysia at large.

"I hope that there will be more companies like Aerodyne in Malaysia," he said.

Dr Adham said MOSTI, through its agencies like the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC) and Malaysian Technology Development Corporation (MTDC), is working closely with Iskandar Investment Bhd (IIB) to provide the necessary support to push forward the adoption and development of innovative technology and applications.

"Malaysia's technological companies need the right professional tools and ecosystem support to catalyst their growth," he added.

He said the ministry is committed to collaborating with industry players and government agencies to continuously support initiatives to upskill and reskill the workforce to keep up with the pace of digital transformation.

The minister also announced the introduction of the Iskandar Corporate Accelerator Programme (CAP), a collaboration between IIB and Finnext Capital to develop Johor's first ever corporate accelerator programme.

The programme, which was designed to bring together corporates with the experts in drones and robotics to the market, would together forms the perfect synergy for commercialisation of products, he added.

"MOSTI believes Iskandar CAP would help the nation rebuild the economy, and our recovery plans must focus on creating jobs, investing in infrastructure, and driving innovation with sustainability as the main focus," Dr Adham said.

Meanwhile, IIB president and chief executive Datuk Ir Khairil Anwar Ahmad said Iskandar CAP would bridge corporations with high-calibre startups and tech companies, enabling innovation transformation for corporates.

"This would be one of the first corporate accelerator programmes in the southern region with a special focus on oil and gas, logistics, ports, and manufacturing sectors for corporate innovation and transformation, particularly in dronetech, robotics, blockchain, and AI technologies.

"Local and regional technology companies would be invited to participate in the programme where they would be able to showcase technological expertise and grow their market within the southern economic corridor," he said.

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