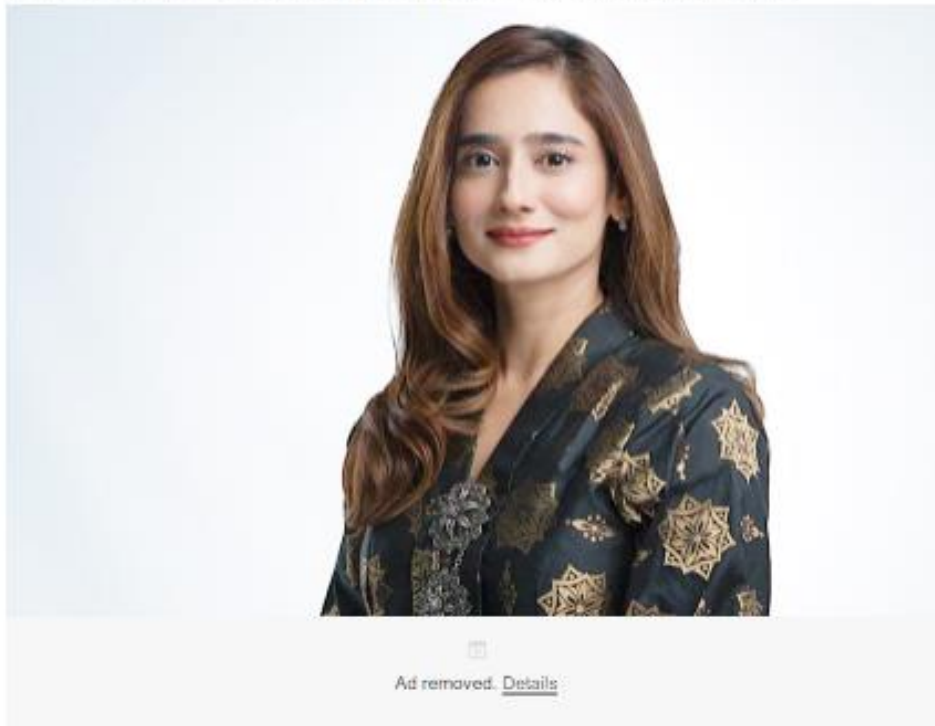


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## MRANTI opens IR4.0 playground in Bukit Jalil



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*The learning and development centre will feature a spectrum of IR4.0 focused tools, technologies and tech immersion programmes*

by AZALEA AZUAR / Pic by BERNAMA

THE Malaysia Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI) will be opening a Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0)-themed playground called MakersLab in Kuala Lumpur (KL). The 2,000 sq ft (185.8 sq m) learning and development centre, which is aimed for innovators at all ages, would feature a spectrum of IR4.0 focused tools, technologies and technology immersion programmes.

It is ideal for sandboxing smaller scale ideas, as well as tinkering of hardware and software in a dedicated space. This would encourage communities to gather for experiments and collaboration in order to increase local inventions as well as repositioning Malaysia as a high-income nation.

MakersLab would be located in MRANTI Park in Bukit Jalil, KL and is expected to launch in May. MRANTI CEO Dzuleira Abu Bakar (picture) said Malaysia's opportunities in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, electrification data science, cloud computing and 3D printing are booming but we still need more talents to fulfil the IR4.0 criteria.

"While roadshows allow us to reach all corners of Malaysia to fan interest in technology and innovation, a central hub allows for the meeting of minds.

"This is where ideas for impact are sparked, where thought and tinkering become a thing," she said in a statement.

"We want to maintain our competitive edge. This requires us to cultivate ideas from an early stage, effectively transition and scale them for sustainable impact," Dzuleira added.

The agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation also aims to match solutions to problems and this playground would boost creativity and innovative problem-solving skills.

Currently, visitors would have to book an appointment to enter MakersLab. It would also invite school students, youth and the STEM community to come over to realise their ideas between April and May through a pop-up makerspace.

The centre compliments MRANTI Park's 686 acre (277.6ha) integrated facilities for end-to-end research, development, commercialisation and innovation services where it already contains five Living Labs for dronotech, unmanned autonomous vehicles, 5G, BioScience (Agriculture, Healthcare, Bioindustry), and IR 4.0 technologies — ideal for stress-testing innovations in a closed environment.

It is also a place where ideas can come to life through the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox sites where solutions can be brought on to real-world test beds.

They would also be primed for industrial-scale contract manufacturing, consulting and a host of go-to-market programmes at MRANTI Engineering and MRANTI Nexus facilities.

“Ultimately, we want to increase the R&D commercial output of local innovations,” she said.

Moreover, Malaysia aims to achieve a 1:100 engineer to population ratio in its efforts to achieve a high-tech nation status.

“There is a high demand for engineers and the skills gap in engineering will negatively affect areas of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in terms of clean energy, sustainable cities and climate action.

“At MRANTI’s MakersLab, we want to foster a culture of learning by-doing, innovation, hands-on exploration here — where the community can be involved in the shaping of world-class Malaysian-made inventions which could someday be applied to address critical societal and planetary issues,” she said.

MRANTI has also recently held a World Engineering Day celebration which is in collaboration with the Board of Engineers, Malaysia, the Institution of Engineers, Malaysia, and STEM4ALL Makerspace and held for two days.

The celebration managed to attract 500 students, educators, innovators and technology enthusiasts where they enjoyed events and activities including a series of talks, forums, competitions, exhibitions and design workshops themed Build Back Wiser — Engineering the Future.