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Meraque Elevating Young Talents to Fly Higher with School Drone Squad

By Cynthia Ignatius - April 28, 2022



Malaysian DroneTech company Meraque Services Sdn Bhd (Meraque) is sponsoring educational drones and basic drone awareness modules to be implemented in three (3) schools across Johor, kicking off its nationwide effort to nurture young tech talent, equipping them with skills to future-proof their careers.

This corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme by Meraque is in line with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) DroneTech initiative to generate 100,000 job opportunities in the local drone industry by 2030.

Fly with Meraque is a partnership effort with the 'School Drone Squad' initiative by the Malaysian Air Youth Club (KRUM), a curricular club with an aim to create awareness around drone technology amongst secondary Malaysian school students. The programme is supported by the Malaysian Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI), an agency that champions the development of local young talent in drone technology.

As part of Meraque's ongoing local drone talent development push, the programme will help inculcate in the students an interest in drone technology and its application. The syllabus, which will be delivered by KRUM through extracurricular drone club activities, will equip, support and enhance the capabilities of the students through innovative drone courses and new-age skills, priming them for future employment opportunities in the drone space.

Fly with Meraque was officiated by YB Dato' Sri Dr Adham Bin Baba, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) on 24 April 2022 at the Dewan Majlis Daerah Kota Tinggi in Bandar Tenggara, Kulai. Also present were YB Dato 'Seri Haji Idris Bin Jusoh, Chairman of Felda, YB Norlizah Binti Noh, Chairman of the Johor State Education, Information and Communication Committee, Mr. Hahasrin Hashim, ADUN Pantl (N34) and Tuan Haji Omar Bin Salleh, Johor State Deputy Director of Education.

YB Dato' Sri Dr Adham Bin Baba, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI) said that the ministry would discuss with the Education Ministry the matter in the government's efforts to streamline the syllabus and attract more interest in STEM subjects. "I was informed that the Ministry of Education will bring the Cabinet memorandum on STEM and its use to the government soon and there, we (MOSTI)

will suggest that drone technologies such as design, use, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are included in STEM...as early as in the school curriculum and co-curriculum.”

Aside from the drones, the donations included drone training modules, career opportunities, intensive classes, study tours and club activities. More than 600 students from SMK Sultan Alauddin in Felda Bukit Besar, Kulai, SMK Seri Pinang in Bandar Tenggara, Kulai and SMK Taman Scientex, Pasir Gudang are expected to benefit from the donations from Meraque. Over 7,000 students registered for Kelab Rakan Udara Malaysia with schools under the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Maktab Rendah Sains MARA (MRSM) will benefit from the modules as well.

CEO of Meraque, Md Razalee Ismail said, “Meraque has always been committed to community betterment activities through drone educational programmes. We believe in investing in students to inculcate a passion for drones as they will eventually be the future of this industry, and even our company. This CSR programme will enhance the level of instruction we can offer these students.”

“According to a recent study by MRANTI, the Malaysia drone economy is expected to contribute RM 50 billion to the GDP by 2030. To be able to tap this growing opportunity, we, as a nation, must swiftly increase the number of skilled workers in the drone sector. By providing students with early exposure to drone technology through a safe and guided curriculum, we hope to equip them with the necessary skills sets to become industry-ready and eventually, expose them to career opportunities in the field. This CSR programme is part of Meraque’s commitment to pioneering human capital development in the technology and manufacturing industries,” he added.

Azhar Bin Selamat, President of Malaysian Air Youth Club (KRUM) said, “This initiative by Meraque will have a positive dent on the nation’s journey to develop a new generation with a passion for drones and an aptitude for its technologies. This is merely the tip of the iceberg of a long term strategic plan that KRUM and Meraque have tailored specifically for the Youth School Drone Squad. The sharing of expertise and hands-on guided syllabus will generate exposure for the participants, significantly enhancing their drone knowledge to catapult their drone career trajectory.”