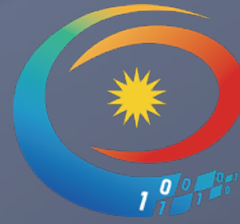
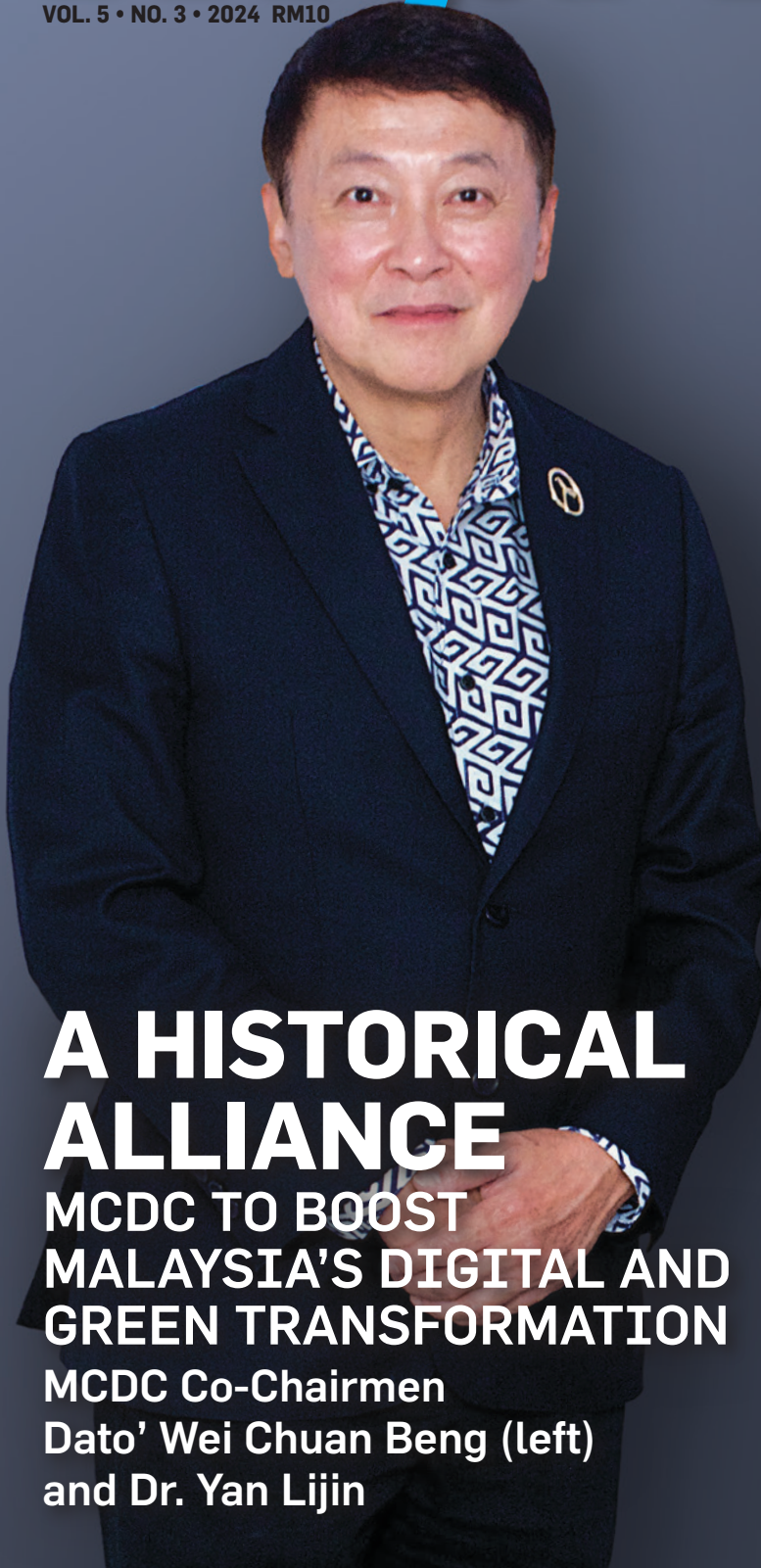


**myiT**

VOL. 5 • NO. 3 • 2024 RM10



**MCDC**  
**MALAYSIA-CHINA**  
DIGITAL COOPERATION COUNCIL  
马中数字经济合作委员会



# A HISTORICAL ALLIANCE

**MCDC TO BOOST MALAYSIA'S DIGITAL AND GREEN TRANSFORMATION**

**MCDC Co-Chairmen  
Dato' Wei Chuan Beng (left)  
and Dr. Yan Lijin**

**PIKOM  
LEADERSHIP  
SUMMIT  
2023**

**WCIT | IDECS  
2023**





中马建交50周年

ULANG TAHUN KE-50

HUBUNGAN DIPLOMATIK MALAYSIA - CHINA



**MCDC**  
**MALAYSIA-CHINA**  
DIGITAL COOPERATION COUNCIL  
马中数字经济合作委员会

# MALAYSIA-CHINA DIGITAL COOPERATION COUNCIL

## MERGING CAPABILITIES, INTEGRATING ECOSYSTEM

### WHO WE ARE

Malaysia-China Digital Cooperation Council (MCDC) stands as an emblem of a pioneering collaboration between digital industry frontrunners from Malaysia and China. This landmark partnership aims not only to merge digital capabilities from both nations but also to replicate and integrate ecosystems across borders, encompassing the ASEAN and RCEP regions. At MCDC, we aspire to fortify cross-border digital cooperation and forge a path of progress for people, businesses, and industries.

### WHAT WE DO

#### REPLICATING ECOSYSTEMS

- Redefining digital landscapes with Malaysia as the regional hub
- Revamping and integrating technologies, talents, and resources within the replicated ecosystems

#### CATALYSING INITIATIVES

- Championing digital initiatives and ecosystem replication
- Cultivating competitiveness in key sectors: Agritech, fintech, govtech, and healthtech

#### EMPOWERING COLLABORATION

- Establishing spaces for cross-border digital cooperation within ASEAN and RCEP regions
- Encouraging a culture of trust and mutual respect

#### PROMOTING CO-PROSPERITY

- Pooling resources for local joint ventures to achieve mutual prosperity
- Prioritising productivity, infrastructure development, and community prosperity



**CONTACT US**



**+60-165033 152**



**MCDC.SECRETARIAT@GMAIL.COM**

MY.IT magazine is published by



E1 Empire Damansara, No 2,  
Jalan PJU 8/8A, Damansara Perdana,  
47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

## PIKOM COUNCIL

### CHAIRMAN

**Ong Chin Seong**

Powerware Systems Sdn Bhd

### DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

**Alex Liew**

Glocomp Systems (M) Sdn Bhd

### SECRETARY

**Alex Loh**

Nera (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd

### TREASURER

**Anthony Raja Devadoss**

Agensi Pekerjaan Korn Ferry (M) Sdn Bhd

## COUNCILLORS

**Wing K Lee**

YTL Communications Sdn Bhd

**Dato' Dr Munirah Looi**

Brandt Business Services Sdn Bhd

**Raymond Devadass**

Daythree Business Services Sdn Bhd

**Abdul Halim bin Md Lassim**

Heitech Padu Bhd

**Dr Dzaharudin Mansor**

Amazon Web Services Malaysia Sdn Bhd

**Datuk EK Teoh**

EKTECH Communications Sdn Bhd

**Oliver Liu Qingsong**

Huawei Technologies (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd

**Catherine Lian**

IBM Malaysia Sdn Bhd

**Johary Mustapha**

Forest Interactive Sdn Bhd

**Akhil Gupta**

Talbotiq Technologies Sdn Bhd

**Eric Foo**

Exabytes Capital Group Sdn Bhd

**Lee Cheung Loong**

IP ServerOne Solutions Sdn Bhd

**Sandy Woo**

Veritas Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd

## ADVISORS

**Chin Chee Seong**

SEATech Ventures Corp

**Ganesh Kumar Bangah**

Commerce DotAsia Ventures Sdn Bhd

**Cheah Kok Hoong**

SteerQuest Sdn Bhd

**Danny Lee**

E-Tech IT Sdn Bhd

**Xavier Tan**

**Lee Boon Kok**

I-Commerce Sdn Bhd

**Wee Kee Heng**

**David Wong Nan Fay**

SnT Global Sdn Bhd

**Woon Tai Hai**

Takaful Ikhlas General Bhd

**Shaifubahrim Saleh**

**Ngoh Chee Hung**

HELP University

**Stan Singh**

IronHorse Asia Sdn Bhd

**Dato' Dr. Sean Seah**

SCCW Holdings Sdn Bhd

**Shukor Karim**

## PIKOM EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

**Ong Kian Yew**

CEO, PIKOM

**Nurul Asyiqin Nasir**

Head of Corporate & Industry Affairs

MY.IT is produced for PIKOM  
ISSN 2637-0964 by



**HARINI MANAGEMENT SERVICES SDN BHD**

(609031-W)

W-9-12, Menara Melawangi,  
Amcorp Trade Centre, 18, Persiaran Barat,  
46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

Tel: 603-7932 3259

Email: harini.mservices@gmail.com

www.harini.com.my

Publisher/CEO

**V.S. Ganesan**

Senior Editor

**Vimala Seneviratne**

Editor

**Rachael Philip**

Creative Designer

**Goh Wei Lee**

Advertising Consultant

**Faridah Ismail**

Marketing Manager

**Karthik Ganesan**

Operations Manager

**G. Revathi**

## PRINTER

**UNITED MISSION PRESS SDN BHD (755329-X)**

No. 15, Perindustrian BS 9,  
Jalan BS 9/10, Taman Bukit Serdang,  
43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor.

Tel: +603-8958 0186

Fax: +603-8945 5168

## DISTRIBUTOR

**ALLSCRIPT ESTABLISHMENT (MALAYSIA)**

**SDN BHD (405335-D)**

No. 16, Jalan TP3,  
Taman Perindustrian Sime UEP,  
47620 Subang Jaya, Selangor.

Tel: +603-8020 7112/7122

Fax: +603-8020 7119

Email: allscript@allscript.com

Website: <http://www.allscript.com>

All articles featured in MY.IT magazine represent the personal views of contributors and are not necessarily those of MY.IT & Harini Management Services Sdn Bhd. All writers automatically agree to indemnify PIKOM and Harini Management Services Sdn Bhd against any loss, costs, expenses (including legal fees), damages and liabilities that might arise from their own incapacity, negligence, breach of contract or other civil misdeeds. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All rights reserved. Copyright © 2024 by Harini Management Services Sdn Bhd. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without prior written permission from the publisher. PIKOM and Harini Management Services Sdn Bhd accept no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, photography, illustration and other editorial materials.



**On The Cover**

MCDC Co-Chairmen  
Dato' Wei Chuan Beng  
(left) and Dr. Yan Lijin

- 3** From the Chairman's Desk
- 4** A Historical Alliance
- 8** In Conversation with... MCDC Co-Chairman Dato' Wei Chuan Beng
- 10** In Conversation with... MCDC Co-Chairman Dr. Yan Lijin
- 12** Ride Madani Gets Thumbs Up from Guests
- 13** Winning Strategy
- 14** Malaysia, China Digital Champs Meet
- 16** Creating A Dynamic Digital Community
- 19** MCDC Backs Innovative Collaboration for Regional Digital Growth
- 21** MADANI Model to Flavour Malaysia's ICT Ascent
- 23** PIKOM Addresses PADU Security Breach
- 24** PIKOM Calls for Robust Commitment from the Government
- 25** PIKOM Looks Forward to Working with YB Gobind
- 26** Icon Base Expands Portfolio with BCom
- 27** PIKOM Launches Northern Sub-Chapter
- 29** Awards Night Celebrates 37 Industry Luminaries
- 31** Unveiling the Future of Innovation, Technology in Sarawak
- 37** WITSA 2023 Award Winners
- 42** Malaysia's Globally-Recognised Talent
- 45** Selangor Collaborates with Taiwanese Cities
- 46** Empowering MSMEs Through Digital Innovation
- 48** Golf Win-Win For All



# From the Chairman's Desk

I am honoured to address you in my capacity as the Chairman of PIKOM for the second term, following our 36th annual general meeting held in December 2023. I extend my sincere gratitude to members of the association for re-electing our team, and I am thrilled to continue serving this vibrant association in 2023/2024.

During the AGM, we unveiled our plans to appoint six additional Councillors and establish an Advisory Board to fortify our team. I believe in the power of collaboration, and with this expanded lineup, we are poised to achieve greater heights collectively.

A quick take on WCIT2023 held in Sarawak last October. PIKOM played significant role as Host Association. We brought in 117 delegates to Sarawak and secured RM430,560 in sponsorships for Sarawak Digital Economy Corp Bhd.

Further to this, the launch of PIKOM's Northern chapter in January this year was a bold step forward in strengthening our association's footprint. This chapter provides a platform for CIOs in the north to exchange ideas, collaborate and advocate for their unique needs.

In another exciting development, during the PIKOM Leadership Summit, the Malaysia-China Digital Economy Cooperation Council announced a groundbreaking initiative. Companies from RCEP countries and China will invest RM100 billion over the next five years in Malaysia through the RCEP Innovation and Digital Ecosystem (RIDE) Madani initiative. This investment will significantly accelerate Malaysia's digital and green economy transformation.

Meanwhile, the release of PIKOM's 15th edition of the Economic and Digital Job Market Outlook 2023 report, last October, has created the right momentum to take us through this new year.

I would like to take the opportunity to commend the government for its efforts to elevate the well-being of the rakyat in Budget 2024. We feel, however, that more could have been done to fortify the tech sector for the challenges and opportunities presented by the 4IR. In response, PIKOM has proactively provided suggestions towards this.

Additionally, addressing the recent PADU security breach, we applaud the government's prompt response and urge further collaboration with external experts to fortify our national cybersecurity infrastructure. It is



**“I believe that through collective efforts, we can achieve milestones and make a positive impact.”**

imperative that public and private sectors join hands to enhance the skillsets of public officers.

On that note, we anticipate working with YB Gobind Singh Deo, the new Minister of the new Digital Ministry. Having a dedicated ministry overseeing the industry is indeed a blessing, and we are optimistic about the impact it will have on our community.

Shifting our focus to achievements and celebrations, I am thrilled to share the success of the MDX 2023 Awards Night held last November. The event honoured the contributions of individuals and organisations that have advanced the local digital landscape.

As mentioned at the PIKOM AGM, I believe that through collective efforts, we can achieve milestones and make a positive impact. Challenges are inevitable, but our team has shown resilience and strength in overcoming them.

As we embark on yet another year together, I am confident that with support and the dedication of our dynamic team, PIKOM will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the technology landscape in Malaysia.

Thank you for your trust, and here's to a year of innovation, collaboration and shared success.

**Ong Chin Seong**  
PIKOM Chairman



# A HISTORICAL ALLIANCE

The RIDE Madani Champion Alliance will bring together technology, resources and funds from leading players in the digital sphere, marking a significant step towards accelerating digital growth and the green economy



Hainan Silk Road Investment Group sets to establish a regional headquarters in Malaysia to serve and invest in RCEP and Malaysia's digital economy.

海南丝路投资集团计划在马来西亚设立区域总部，以服务马来西亚和RCEP数字经济。



**M**alaysia Madani, officially adopted as national policy in January 2023, places priority on both the country's development and the well-being of its people. Rooted in six core values – sustainability, prosperity, innovation, respect, trust and compassion – Malaysia Madani holds relevance across governmental, business and daily living contexts.

As the Belt and Road initiative enters its second decade, incorporating digital and green economy, new ideas like Digital Silk Road, Green Belt and Road, and Health Silk Road have emerged. These ideas paired with the Malaysia Madani values and analysed within the framework of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have brought forth the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance, where RIDE stands for RCEP Innovation and Digital Ecosystem.

## REGIONAL PACT

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), in effect in Malaysia since 2022, stands as a comprehensive free trade agreement, representing a large economic and trade bloc covering 15 countries, namely China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and the 10 ASEAN member countries.

China, being the largest country within the RCEP trade bloc, maintains a strong relationship with Malaysia. In addition to the decade-old Belt and Road initiative, both nations anticipate celebrating the 50th anniversary of their diplomatic ties later this year.

The RIDE Madani initiative aims to establish a digital ecosystem demonstration zone in Malaysia dedicated to green sustainable development. This zone welcomes collaboration and resource-sharing among Chinese and Malaysian enterprises within the digital economy.

Simultaneously, the proposed

establishment of the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance will facilitate the integration of resources and foster innovative cooperation across relevant industries, including digital, AI and green sectors. This initiative will drive the formation and growth of RIDE Madani.

The alliance aspires to position China and Malaysia as global exemplars in digital, AI and green economies, advocating for sustainable development on an international scale.

## TRIPLE 100s

A notable aspect of the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance is the introduction of the 3x100 plan, which will run over the course of five years.

The alliance will bring together 100 industry champions in the digital, AI and green sectors, who will replicate ecosystems and invest a substantial RM100 billion within the same five-year timeframe, directed towards RIDE Madani's focus areas.



The alliance shall also commit to annually nurturing at least 100 young leaders in the digital, AI and green economies, to sustain the momentum and foster diversified development in the ecosystem.

**DEMO ZONE**

The RIDE Madani Champion Alliance will collectively build a demonstration zone in Kuala Lumpur,

to house five centres dedicated to various digital ecosystem needs.

This includes the regional headquarters centre for the digital economy, digital technology research and development centre, training centre, digital trade centre and digital financial settlement centre, making Kuala Lumpur the headquarters base for RIDE Madani.

“Through digital technology,

resource leveraging, talent development and integration, and cultural exchange, the alliance will help China and Malaysia in further connecting the worlds of the 21st-century and the future,” said MCDC Co-Chairman Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng.

“It will construct new competitive advantages in emerging industries, optimise industrial structures through digital transformation, and create transnational, advantageous industrial chains across the Asia-Pacific, seamlessly integrating into the global value chain.”

**MAKING HISTORY**

Wei anticipates that, with the launch of the Malaysia-China Digital and Green Development Fund, alongside the world’s inaugural Renminbi-Ringgit dual-currency fund, strategic investors from across the globe will join the alliance.

MCDC is urging industry champions in the digital, AI, and green sectors, along with financial institutions and government-business entities, to join the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance and contribute to the sustainable development of these industries. ♦





## UPSKILLING AND RETRAINING

The advent of AI, generative models and automated technologies hold the potential for heightened productivity and economic growth. However, concerns about potential job displacements have been raised.

This need not be the case. The advancement and implementation of AI can also generate new job opportunities. This underscores the importance of education and training to equip the workforce with the skills needed for the evolving job market.

The RIDE Madani initiative prioritises education in the digital and industrial sectors. This effort involves collaboration with international companies and training centres dedicated to upskilling and retraining the workforce on digital technology and innovation.

“The emphasis lies in developing talents that align with the needs of emerging economic sectors. By addressing the talent gap in emerging economic sectors, the initiative seeks to enhance the adaptability of the workforce,” explained MDCD Co-Chairman Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng.

## MDCD TAKES MADANI VALUES GLOBAL

Digital technology has undeniably shrunk the world, presenting MDCD with the opportunity to share Madani values globally through the RIDE Madani concept.

MDCD Co-Chairman Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng said through the coming together of 100 digital ecosystem champions, resource integration and innovation collaboration, he expects the partnership to foster interdisciplinary and cross-border industrial clusters.

“This will grant RIDE Madani international influence, positively contributing to the digital and sustainable development of Asia and the entire world,” he added.

He emphasised that the digital era calls for fresh ideas and a new approach to business, respect, trust and compassion are virtues that have stood the test of time, and contribute much to discussions on digital inclusion, digital rights and cybersecurity.

“Principles like sustainability and renewable energy sources are relevant when talking about high powered data centre and electronic wastes. The digital era has created economic opportunities leading to prosperity, while innovation in areas like AI, blockchain and IoT can lead to transformative changes in various industries.

“As such, I believe the Madani concept has come about at the right time. It has the power to transform the world. Incorporating these principles into the digital landscape contributes to a sustainable, inclusive and ethically-driven digital future.”

# IN CONVERSATION WITH... MCDC CO-CHAIRMAN DATO' WEI CHUAN BENG

Dato' Wei Chuan Beng shares with RACHAEL PHILIP the importance of pairing ethical and moral values with the digital economy, and the benefits of being part of the RCA



highest level, that is the exchange of civilisation and culture. This will then trickle down to the lower levels, that is the exchange of trade and technology. All these exchanges will make life better for people across the whole belt, be it in the digital sphere or the green or health spheres. We believe this is the direction we must take as we identify the aspirations for Malaysia.

**With the RCEP taking effect two years ago, and the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road initiative last year, how does the RCA shape the future of China-Malaysia collaboration?**

The alliance consists of ecosystem champions. Champions will provide the umbrella of opportunity to nurture the rest of the ecosystem players. These two events and the upcoming 50th year anniversary of Malaysia-China diplomatic relationship will provide the impetus for innovation and growth, while the RCA will integrate the ecosystems having its base in Malaysia and expanding beyond our borders to the RCEP member countries.

**How does the alliance plan to nurture young leaders annually, and why is this crucial for the development of digital, AI and green industries?**  
We have to find the balance

**How does the RIDE MADANI Champion Alliance (RCA) align with Malaysia's core values of "Sustainability, Prosperity, Innovation, Respect, Trust and Compassion"?**

When it comes to the application of technology there is always that human aspect. We would like to see Malaysia's digital ecosystem cultivating from the RCA, embracing all these values. These standards

will then spread to China and RCEP member countries. In short, in the digital ecosystem, we would like to see both human and green values.

**What role does the RCA play in Malaysia's response to emerging trends like the Digital Silk Road, Green Belt and Road, and Health Silk Road?**

The idea of the Silk Road is to provide the opportunity for exchange at the

between the human capabilities, and technical and technological capabilities. We must tap into companies that actively seek to grow human capabilities. We are already in touch with several forward-looking ecosystem champions who are in line with this vision. They will be our foundation, and help us achieve that transformation in all industries, be it energy, automotive industry, green agriculture, digital health care, just to name a few.

**Please shed some light on the RCA Demonstration Zone in Kuala Lumpur, particularly the role of the five dedicated centres.**

The RCA Demonstration Zone consists of clusters of companies and ecosystem champions putting together their solutions to solve various problems for the government, for the society, and for the industry.

Besides digital ecosystems, the zone feature centres that provide infrastructure development such as backhaul works, international connectivity, data centres and cybersecurity protection, all important enablers for the digital economy.

The zone will also consist of centres to relook and enhance policies. There will also be space for talent development in the demonstration zone. This is a priority as it is a catalyst for the growth of the whole ecosystem. These are some of the important centres within the zone.

**“IN SHORT, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE BOTH HUMAN AND GREEN VALUES IN THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM.”**

– Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng

**“WE MUST TAP INTO COMPANIES THAT ACTIVELY SEEK TO GROW HUMAN CAPABILITIES.”**

– Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng

**Please explain the 3x100 plan and its contribution to digital, AI and green development in Malaysia? Why is this important?**

In a nutshell, 3x100 consist of three specific but inter-related areas that together will bring in RM100 billion of investments and value creation for Malaysia within five years.

It may sound like an onerous number but let’s look at how it is actually broken down into something that is both achievable and important for Malaysia.

First, are the 100 digital ecosystem champions. Let’s look at companies that could be called champions, for example Huawei, which commands a revenue of about RM100 billion a year. In Malaysia, Huawei has a regional support centre with 3,000 people. Yet, its other value and supply chain providers are not in Malaysia. If we are able to integrate those ecosystems of a champion into the Malaysian economy through local participation and joint ventures, replicating their presence in Malaysia, using Malaysia as a base, imagine the spillover effect from this investment.

Each ecosystem will bring in a total of RM1 billion in investments

times 100 champions results. This was how we arrived at this figure of RM100 billion in investment or value creation.

**How does the alliance’s 3x100 plan aim to build new competitive advantages in emerging industries in Malaysia?**

The digital green and digital economy cuts across all industries, namely healthcare, education, government, trade and so forth. In the digital world, these are now considered emerging areas that will utilise not only digital capabilities such as AI, data, the application of block chain, 5G and so forth but also competent human talent.

Competitive advantage comes when we combine and strengthen these factors using Malaysia as a base. Secondly, we offer our products and services to RCEP member countries. This is how we can position Malaysia as a truly new base in this new configuration of the world supply chain.

**What benefits do you see for participants joining RCA? How does their involvement contribute to sustainable global development?**

Firstly, if you want to grow, join the RCA. If you want to get business partners, join the RCA. If you want to create favourable policies in the future, get visibility and do marketing for your company and products, join RCA. These are all good reasons to join the RCA. See you there! ♦

# IN CONVERSATION WITH... MCDC CO-CHAIRMAN DR. YAN LIJIN

Dr. Yan Lijin shares with RACHAEL PHILIP insights about advancing the Malaysia-China collaboration via the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance. He unravels key strategies for sustainable innovation and delves into the transformative power of the partnership, cherishing Malaysia as China's old friend

## **How does the RIDE Madani Champion Alliance (RCA) align with China's core values in the context of collaboration with Malaysia?**

The alignment is seen in the advancement of sustainable development in innovation and in a green economy. Over the years, China and Malaysia have worked together in various fields, including trade, investment, infrastructure, education, culture and tourism. These collaborations are based on the principles of mutual benefit, serving the common interests of both parties.

## **What role does the RCA play in China's strategy regarding emerging trends like the Digital Silk Road, and Green Belt and Road?**

In emerging trends such as the Digital Silk Road and the Green Belt and Road, China and Malaysia share common goals and visions. Both are committed to advancing digital transformation and green development to stimulate economic growth and improve people's quality of life. RCA will play a significant role as it will provide a platform for collaboration in emerging technologies, aligned with China's vision for global digital connectivity and sustainable development.

## **How does China see the future collaboration with Malaysia through initiatives like RCA, especially considering the upcoming 50th anniversary?**

As China and Malaysia approach the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations, we aim to strengthen cooperation further and promote exchanges as well as collaboration in various fields. RCA is crucial for strengthening China's collaboration with Malaysia in the coming years in trade, investment, infrastructure and cultural exchanges, fostering mutual development.

## **What is China's perspective on the impact of the "3x100" plan on digital, AI and green development and bilateral ties?**

Regarding the "3x100" plan and its impact on digital, AI, green development, we see it as an important cooperation framework aimed at promoting collaboration in emerging areas. Through this plan, both sides can explore new development opportunities, enhance technological innovation and facilitate the long-term stable development of bilateral relations. It shall be a catalyst for both countries' economic growth, technological advancement and

increased competitiveness in these key sectors.

## **How does China view the importance of investing in young leadership talents within the "3x100" plan and their role in sustainable development?**

China recognises the importance of investing in young leadership talents especially in the digital sector. By nurturing and supporting young leaders, their contributions in areas like digital, AI and green development can be maximised, and pushed towards the achievement of sustainable development goals.

## **How will the five dedicated centres in the RCA demonstration zone benefit both China and Malaysia's digital ecosystem?**

The five dedicated centres in the RCA demonstration zone will support the digital ecosystem and help with the rapid development of the digital economy. These centres cover areas such as digital technology, AI, cloud computing and big data, and provide an innovative environment and resources to promote collaboration and innovation among enterprises. China and Malaysia can both

benefit by creating hubs for research, technology transfer and business incubation, collaboration and providing a competitive edge in digital, AI and green sectors.

**Can you provide examples of how the alliance plans to achieve new competitive advantages in emerging industries, specifically in digital, AI and green sectors?**

China believes that the alliance can integrate resources, facilitate technology exchange and promote industrial cooperation. This involves knowledge sharing, technological development and localising capabilities in Malaysia before expanding to other RCEP nations. By doing so, the alliance members can reduce costs, increase efficiency and innovation capabilities to replicate successful ecosystems.

**From China's perspective, what benefits can participants expect by joining RCA, and how does their involvement contribute to global sustainable development?**

Participants joining the RCA can benefit in various ways. Firstly, they can gain opportunities for international collaboration and cooperation, expanding their international perspectives and resource networks. Secondly, they can engage in the innovation and development of emerging industries, and growth opportunities of the digital economy. Additionally, participating in the RCA can promote sustainable development and corporate social responsibility, driving mutual prosperity in the economy and society. ♦





# RIDE MADANI GETS THUMBS UP FROM GUESTS

At the welcome dinner, MDCD warmly welcomes participants from China, the US and RCEP member countries to the PIKOM Leadership Summit 2023

**R**IDE Madani – Malaysia’s programme for the creation of a digital ecosystem that is sustainable, dynamic, nurturing, open and collaborative – received all round approval at the PIKOM Leadership Summit’s welcome and networking dinner.

In his speech MDCD Co-Founder Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng said he was encouraged by the enthusiastic response to the RIDE Madani Declaration.

“While this initiative is established in Malaysia, it will soon extend its reach to all 15 RCEP member countries and beyond,” he said in the midst of more than 30 business leaders from China.

The event was also graced by Minister Councillor of China’s Embassy Sun Su Qiang, PIKOM Chairman and Exco members, MDEC management team and industry captains.

“RIDE Madani draws inspiration

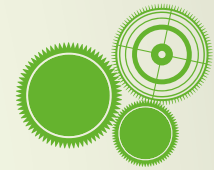
from well-established digital and green ecosystems in both China and Malaysia. In the next five years, we aim to forge an alliance with 100 digital ecosystem champions, including renowned entities like Huawei, Tencent, China Telecom, Run Jian, Kingsignal, LEAX, satellite services groups, and so forth to bring their ecosystem consisting

of hundreds and thousands of supply chain and value chain companies together.

“This marks MDCD’s inaugural partnership with the national tech association of Malaysia, and signifies a pivotal step toward fostering digital cooperation between Malaysia and China, with a vision to expand across ASEAN and RCEP countries.” ♦



# WINNING STRATEGY



**A**t the PIKOM Leadership Summit 2023, MDCDC together with the national ICT association and MDEC, and in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Sri Fadillah Yusof and the ambassador of China to Malaysia Ouyang Yujing, made a series of announcements. Seven out of the 20 companies participating in the RIDE Madani initiative have committed to investing almost RM3 billion to grow and strengthen the digital and green economy in Malaysia and the region.



- Kairous Capital and Comcom International will establish the world's first dual-currency fund (MYR+RMB) called the Malaysia-China Digital and Green Development Fund with a capital of RM1 billion.

- Runjian Corporation will invest RM600 million to establish an AI computing data centre in Malaysia towards a stronger AI ecosystem in Malaysia and among RCEP member countries.

- China Tianying Group will invest in Malaysia's green energy sector and establish a regional headquarters in Malaysia to cater to the local and RCEP members.

- Leax US will establish its Asian headquarters in Malaysia to serve both Malaysia and the RCEP member countries in 5G infrastructure and applications.

- Full Speed Network will establish a regional headquarters in Malaysia to cater to the RCEP market, offering an advanced digital marketing strategy along with a comprehensive 360° customer experience.

- Shenzhen Bot Space Time Technology, a leading generative AI company, will establish its Asian headquarters in Malaysia to build the AI ecosystem in Malaysia and RCEP member countries.

- Hainan Silk Road Investment Group will establish its regional headquarters in Malaysia to serve and invest in the digital economy of Malaysia and RCEP countries.



# MALAYSIA, CHINA DIGITAL CHAMPS MEET

Tech leaders from Malaysia and China discuss challenges and put forth proposals that could ease the creation of a stronger and sustainable digital ecosystem

Called the RCEP Digital Champions’ Roundtable, it was first of its kind forum attended by 30 tech industry stakeholders and journalists from Malaysia, China and the US, who gathered to discuss policies and challenges facing the industry players. They also put forth ideas on how to build a stronger and sustainable digital ecosystem in Malaysia and for the region.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Minister of Communications and Former Deputy Minister of Digital, YB Teo Nie Ching.



Also present at the meeting was the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Malaysia Ouyang Yujing, PIKOM Chairman Ong Chin Seong and MCDC Co-Founders, Dato’ Wei Chuan Beng and Dr. Yan Lijin.

## PRIORITY INDUSTRY

YB Teo, in her welcoming address, said the government has been actively prioritising the growth of the digital industry through various initiatives and policies. Malaysia has outlined a comprehensive digital transformation roadmap to guide the growth of the digital economy.

“In 2021, the government introduced the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint, or MyDigital as a framework to strengthen the foundation of the country’s digital transformation,” she said.

“By 2025, it is projected that digital economy will contribute 25.5% to the country’s GDP. Half a million job opportunities will come from this industry.”

Further, she added that the Digital Investment Office (DIO),

set up in 2021, received investment commitments of more than RM44 billion between Jan–Oct 2023. These will see the creation of high-value jobs in AI, cybersecurity and 5G data centre.

The DIO supports the development of nine key sectors under Malaysia Digital, namely Digital Agriculture, Digital Services, Digital Cities, Digital Health, Digital Finance, Digital Trade, Digital Content, Digital Tourism and Islamic Digital Economy.

“Today’s roundtable will benefit all of us as we come to understand the needs of the industry. This is crucial as we make ourselves more attractive to investors.”

She added that the ministry looks forward to the creation of the dual-currency fund worth RM1 billion, which will open up many opportunities.

“The investments will certainly provide a boost to the digital and green economy in the country and region. You are all most welcome to set up your digital headquarters in Malaysia.”





## CHAMPIONS

To get the ball rolling, Wei, as moderator, said the roundtable will facilitate engaging and productive discussions on the challenges and prospects of the digital technology, and to produce actionable insights, look for areas for collaboration and potential policy recommendations.

“The leaders in the hall today are digital champions and we welcome your thoughts,” he said.

PIKOM Chairman Ong, addressing the room, said the tech association is delighted to be a part of this mutually beneficial platform which has the potential of propelling the local tech scene onto the global landscape.

“Malaysia looks forward to strategic partnerships with companies from China and the world. We want to leverage on the cutting-edge tech from China in order to enhance the local digital infrastructure and economy. This collaboration is a springboard for Malaysia to expand its reach into the broader Asean market,” he said.

“We are seeking opportunities for Malaysian companies to venture into the dynamic Chinese market and its vast share of consumers. Malaysian businesses can scale up its operations and expand their market share in order to establish a strong foothold in China.

## SANCTIONS

When the floor was opened, one participant showed his concerns that the US had in December 2023 sanctioned four companies in Malaysia and one in Indonesia as part of its restrictions targeting Iran’s drone programme.

Giving the thumbs up for the dual currency fund, he also asked on its ecosystem. He stressed that in the digital services and platforms, it was important that emphasis is placed on prioritising the availability and accessibility of services rather than strict ownership. Another point he highlighted was the importance of cultivating talent in the digital economy.

One member of the roundtable said the ecosystem approach works well in the tech industry and was keen to replicate China’s green ecosystem in the Malaysian and the regional context.

## WIN-WIN

PIKOM Deputy Chairman Alex Liew said Malaysia is a good place to invest in. The diversity in culture and language, and Malaysia’s relationship with China can benefit both countries, he said.

“Malaysia is also known for its good infrastructure and utilities. Our pricing is competitive, and we have a good digital ecosystem. We can work



closely building a great partnership together,” he said.

Immediate Past Chairman Dr. Sean Seah, meanwhile, emphasised the significance of the roundtable discussion. He added that PIKOM has 1,000 active members, and hopes for more collaborations with foreign tech companies.

A Chinese US-based businessman said he was happy to participate in the RIDE Madani programme.

“We see Malaysia as a gateway to the region. As such, we have established our local facility and regional business centre here. We truly believe were doing the right thing,” he said.

“We would appreciate resources and support in any form from the Malaysian government as we build our hardware and facility here. ♦

# CREATING A DYNAMIC DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Malaysia puts forward a robust plan for digital transformation which starts at home, and will eventually extend to ASEAN and RCEP member countries

**M**alaysia-China Digital Cooperation Council (MCDC) envisions a dynamic and digitally connected community encompassing Malaysia and China. It hopes to foster innovation, collaboration and progress, and eventually extend this vision to ASEAN and RCEP members.

Co-Chairmen of MCDC Dato' Wei Chuan Beng and Dr. Yan Li Jin, in their opening speech at the PIKOM Leadership Summit and RIDE Madani Declaration last November, said the mission at MCDC is to facilitate digital capability exchange so that the digital and green economy of both countries can be enhanced, leading

to shared prosperity and well-being in society.

"The Malaysia-China Digital Cooperation Council was established during the inaugural visit of Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim to China in March (last) year. It is timely that we give the digital, AI and green ecosystems in China and Malaysia a boost in order to serve Malaysia and RCEP countries," said Dr. Yan.

"We believe MCDC will catalyse tangible growth and uplift the digital and green economy for the benefit of the region."

## DIGITAL BOOST

Wei offered his appreciation for the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Sri Haji Fadillah Bin Yusof who,

he said, has always been a friend and a strong supporter of PIKOM. In his opening speech, he also welcomed local and international industry captains and champions from China, the US, Sweden, Switzerland, RCEP and ASEAN countries to the event.

"Today, we shall witness the declaration of RIDE Madani, RCEP Innovation and Digital Ecosystem in Malaysia Madani, the RCEP Digital Champions Roundtable to be chaired by the Deputy Minister of Communication and Digital, several announcements of China champions setting regional headquarters in Malaysia, the launch of Malaysia-China Digital and Green Development Fund and the signing



of several MOUs on collaborations between Chinese and Malaysian companies.

## VALUES AND TECH

Wei explained that Malaysia Madani is a societal model rooted in human values, sustainable practices and progress.

“We are encouraged by the enthusiastic response to the RIDE Madani declaration, a transformative initiative aimed at fusing digital and AI economies with green practices, harmonising human civilisation with the environment,” said Wei.

“Established in Malaysia, it will become a test-bed of sorts and eventually extend its reach to all 15 RCEP countries and beyond.”

He said that the RIDE Madani draws inspiration from the well-established digital and green ecosystems in China and parts of Malaysia.

“Over five years, we aim to forge an alliance of 100 digital ecosystem champions, including renowned entities like Huawei, Tencent, China Telecom, Run Jian, Kingsignal,

LEAX, satellite services groups, and so forth to bring their ecosystem consisting of hundreds and thousands of supply chain and value chain companies together, and to invest RM100 billion.

“A core focus of RIDE Madani will be nurturing at least 100 young digital technology talents annually. In addition, Kairous ComCom Ltd is set to announce the Malaysia-China

Digital, AI, and Green Development Fund, the world’s first Renminbi and Malaysian Ringgit dual-currency, cross-border investment fund to support and serve the needs of RIDE Madani.

“Concurrently, several companies, including Run Jian, China Tianying, LEAX, and Full Speed, will set up their regional HQs in Malaysia as well.”





**TRADE PARTNERS**

Wei underscored the importance of the RCEP Digital Champions Roundtable, which was chaired by the then Deputy Minister of Communication and Digital.

He said the roundtable would discuss issues and challenges faced by the players of the digital economy in both countries. It will explore policies and critical success factors such as technology, infrastructure and talent for cultivating digital, AI and green ecosystems in Malaysia.

Last March, during Anwar’s first official visit to China, Malaysia secured a record RM170 billion worth of investment commitments from China.

The amount, the biggest thus far from China, is from a total of 19 memorandum of understanding

signed between businesses of the two nations in various fields, mostly in the areas of green technology and the digital economy.

“This is historical. It is good for Malaysia and the future,” he said, when announcing the news at the Malaysia-China Business Forum, which was attended by some 1,000 business leaders from both countries.

**NEW ERA**

Among the notable MOUs sealed were between Digital Way Group Sdn Bhd, China Silk Road Group Ltd and China Kairous Capital to jointly establish a Malaysia-China digital and development fund in China and Malaysia as well as one on a proposed development of water-to-energy plant in Malaysia.

According to the Prime Minister’s Office, China remains Malaysia’s largest trading partner for 14 consecutive years, with total trade of RM487.13 billion in 2022, up 15.6% from the year before.

On the investment front, China was the country’s biggest foreign direct investor in 2022, with investments amounting to RM55.16 billion.

Anwar’s visit to the country is also in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Malaysia-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, while the two countries will celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations later this year.

Both parties also developed a blueprint for the development of bilateral relations in the new era. ♦

# MCDC BACKS INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION FOR REGIONAL DIGITAL GROWTH

Malaysia-China Digital Cooperation Council (MCDC) marks a historic alliance between the two nations. The council aims to shape a promising digital future transcending borders and fostering innovation across ASEAN and RCEP members

**T**he Malaysia-China Digital Cooperation Council (MCDC), a ground-breaking collaboration between digital industry frontrunners from Malaysia and China, was formed in March 2023, witnessed by Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

It is chaired by two visionaries – Dato' Wei Chuan Beng from Digital Way Group, Malaysia, and Dr. Yan Lijin of China Silk Road Group, China. Its mission is to encourage the growth of digital economy in Malaysia, to entice investors from China and to enhance the digital ecosystem.

“MCDC is a joint initiative led by industry leaders from both countries and is supported by their respective governments. It is positioned to facilitate cross-border digital cooperation,” explained Wei.

He added that MCDC will cultivate human competencies in the digital era, propelling talents in both countries to thrive in an evolving landscape and this in turn will fuel the growth of digital industries.

“This council is not merely a collaboration. It is a conduit for a promising digital future aimed at not only transforming the industries in Malaysia and China but extending its influence to other Asean and RCEP members. Its objectives are not confined to economic growth but also to cultivate a digitally integrated



community, fostering innovation, collaboration and progress across borders.”

## ALL-ENCOMPASSING

Stakeholders in this initiative span beyond government entities, and trade and industry associations, to technology providers, businesses as well as academia and research institutes. These form the backbone of MCDC, contributing their expertise and resources towards the common goal.

According to Wei, MCDC stands ready to facilitate collaboration across diverse sectors, namely agritech, fintech, communications (including 5G, satellite, edge computing, cybersecurity, etc), govtech, healthtech, edutech, digital talent development, advanced manufacturing, semiconductor and beyond.

Its core objectives encompass championing digital initiatives,

nurturing government relationships, organising immersive programmes and functioning as a link for trade associations. Through these efforts, it hopes to nurture extensive cross-border digital cooperation.

## INDUSTRY INPUT

To strengthen and to make the council impactful and effective, MCDC is supported by the heads of relevant associations, who act as Vice Chairmen. They are from PIKOM, Malaysia Digital Economic Corporation (MDEC), Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia, PiDC Holding and Kairous Capital.

China's Vice Chairmen, meanwhile, come from China Smart Cities Industry Alliance, International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, China Tianying, Swan Daojia, LinkSure and Guangzhou Radio Group.



“This landmark partnership aims not just to fortify cross-border digital cooperation but to forge a path of progress for people, businesses and industries in both countries,” explained Wei.

### THREE 100s

At the PIKOM Leadership Summit 2023 last November, the council launched the RIDE Madani initiative, also known as RCEP Innovation and Digital Ecosystem (RIDE) Madani. Under this initiative, companies from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) countries will invest RM100 billion over the next five years in Malaysia, aiming to accelerate the nation’s digital and green economy transformation.

The RIDE Madani Champion Alliance (RCA) is formed to achieve the impressive “Three 100s”

initiative of RIDE Madani, which includes gathering 100 Champions to replicate ecosystems, resulting in an investment of RM100 billion in Malaysia, and nurturing at least 100 young leaders each year.

As of November 2023, MDC had successfully brought together approximately 20 companies through the initiative, attracting investments ranging between RM2 billion and RM3 billion. Wei emphasised that this is an industry-led initiative supported by the Government, seeking to leverage China’s well-developed digital economy ecosystems for the benefit of Malaysia through replication of the ecosystem.

Recognising Malaysia’s population limitation of 33 million, Wei highlighted that the collaboration extends beyond the Malaysian market to encompass the

entire ASEAN and RCEP member countries.

### WORLD’S FIRST

One notable outcome of the RIDE Madani initiative is the collaboration between regional private equity and venture capital firm Kairous Capital and Comcom International. Together, they are working towards establishing the world’s first dual-currency fund in Ringgit Malaysia and Renminbi, along with the creation of the RM1 billion Malaysia-China Digital and Green Development Fund.

The partnership further involves a RM600 million investment by Runjian Corporation to establish an AI data centre in Malaysia. Wei added that a number of companies including Silk Road Development Fund, Shenzhen Bot Space Time Technology and LEAX US are also planning to establish their Asian and RCEP headquarters in Malaysia.

### WISH LIST

On his New Year’s wish list, Wei said Malaysia must be fully equipped and ready for the digital era.

“We have strong foundations going back to our MSC days. We have great industry mentors, namely MDEC and PIKOM, and we have a sound ecosystem. Now we must step up and become a regional player. How do we do this? By rigorously developing new talent.

“This will be done by our industry partners. Young people must grab the opportunities proffered in the digital and green economy as they stand to gain the most. Hence, they must actively come forward and participate.

“The Malaysian government must be ready to support this initiative. Is Malaysia ready? Ideas, regulations, infrastructure and vision must be shaped and rolled out quickly. We need fast decisions and swift implementation.” ♦

# MADANI MODEL TO FLAVOUR MALAYSIA'S ICT ASCENT

PIKOM Leadership Summit played a more regional role this year enticing tech businesses in the region to set up headquarters, invest in infrastructure and build ecosystem in the country

**A**fter a brief hiatus in 2022, the PIKOM Leadership Summit was back with fresh ways to advance digital technology in the country. The flagship event, held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre last November was themed Unleashing Tech: Shaping the Future Together.

Co-organised by PIKOM and the Malaysia-China Digital Economy Cooperation Council (MCDC) with MDEC as their strategic partner, it was a larger than usual event, incorporating the launch of RIDE Madani and featuring a roundtable discussion among RCEP digital business leaders.

Both these events were designed to boost the regional digital economy, serving as the RCEP Digital Economy 'test bed' in Malaysia, China and other participating countries.

The launch of RIDE Madani is to attract investments, stimulate production, promote test bedding, develop supply chains, facilitate training and providing service beneficial to RCEP and its member nations.

The roundtable, specifically, will come up with actionable insights, potential policy recommendations and identify areas for collaboration both within Malaysia and among RCEP member nations.

## GENERATIVE AI

The World Economic Forum said in 2023 that it expects up to 85 million jobs to be displaced by a

shift in the division of labour between humans and machines by as early as next year.

Some 97 million new roles may emerge that are more adapted to the new division of labour between humans, machines and algorithms, WEF says.

Fusionex Group's General Manager of Enterprise Solutions and Development Ng Wei Keong, in his keynote speech entitled Generative AI in the Age of Disruption addressed this issue. He said AI can be seen as either a replacement or a collaborative tool.

Generative AI operates in areas of creativity, innovation, efficiency and automation, and will impact every job, workforce and business, and this necessitates proactive steps in order to benefit from it.

During Panel 1 – Elevating IT Service with Generative AI – Sena Thevaratnam, Head of Customer

Service at Valiram, emphasised the significance of collaboration between businesses and AI developers

He highlighted the importance of working hand-in-hand with those who design, develop and deploy AI-powered solutions, and to grow with them.

Panelist Rao Muruges, Sub-Chapter Lead at Roche Informatics, said that while AI is for everyone, it still requires governance.

“While we need to be bold in deploying data, we also need to be responsible,” he said.

Freddy Loo, Director of Digital and Analytics Advisory at Fusionex Group, emphasised the importance of striking a balance between technology and framework, standard operating procedures and user interface before deploying AI.

He highlighted that for data to be truly useful, these elements must be carefully considered and integrated.





## CHANGING TIMES

Senior Vice President of International Research and Product at Forrester, Dane Anderson said that the world has transitioned beyond the eras of manufacturing, distribution and information. It now stands in the age of customer.

“Customer obsession means being customer-led, insights driven, fast and connected,” he explained adding that this feature will not change as business leaders look towards What’s Next After AI.

“Customer obsession doesn’t replace sound business fundamentals such as functional products, accessible channels or a way to make money.

“But putting the customer at the centre of your leadership, strategy and operations enables your company to sense and respond to dynamic market conditions, powering long-term growth, especially in a shaky economic environment.”

He said generative AI is the “real deal” and it is important to leverage AI for both efficiency and effectiveness as companies strive to deliver more customer value.

## SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

During an interesting panel discussion on What’s Keeping CIOs Awake at Night, the panel speakers concurred that technology can indeed be a source of sleepless nights for Chief Information Officers.

IT Director at Mydin Malik Murad Ali said, when shopping for technology, it is always best to look at the practical side of things, and not to be quick to opt for “shiny and bright” solutions.

Ngoh Chee Hung, Director at HELP University, stressed on the importance of focusing on people and processes first before technology.

“Technology is here to serve us. As such, it is important to focus

on people – to train them well – and on processes – to fine-tune and adopt good practices. Then we will not be heavily reliant on technology,” he explained.

“With our people and processes in place, we don’t need the best in technology. Even for automation, we do not need million-dollar systems. Even Excel can help you do your day-to-day.”

All panel speakers also agreed that CIOs require specific essential skills, including a curious disposition, courage and a willingness to try out new things, self-driven learning and strong community networks.

“Tonality is important, and the manner in which we engage with people can greatly influence our course. Remaining humble and open to learning from one another is crucial as arrogance and overconfidence can hinder growth,” added Ngoh. ♦





## PIKOM ADDRESSES PADU SECURITY BREACH

The national ICT association of Malaysia urges comprehensive cyber resilience measures and enhanced collaboration in the wake of the data breach

**P**IKOM acknowledges the recent security breach affecting the Central Database Hub PADU launched by the Malaysian government.

While it commended the government's initiative in developing and deploying PADU utilising internal public sector expertise, it believes the vulnerabilities discovered highlight the need for a more comprehensive approach to cybersecurity in critical government IT infrastructure.

"We applaud the objective of PADU – streamlining public service delivery for citizens. Utilising internal talent for such projects fosters self-reliance and knowledge retention within the public sector," it said in a press release.

"However, when it comes to complex technological initiatives, particularly those involving sensitive

data, striking a balance between leveraging existing resources and engaging external expertise is crucial."

The association noted that the fundamental nature of the discovered vulnerabilities suggests that they could have been identified during the development and testing phases.

"This underscores the importance of involving independent, industry-expert security personnel in comprehensive security assessments throughout the entire software development lifecycle.

"Such assessments, conducted by real-world threat actors and penetration testers, would significantly bolster the platform's resilience against cyberattacks."

In light of this, PIKOM urges the government to consider collaborating with the private sector in upskilling public officers in niche areas like cybersecurity.

It added that industry attachments, where public officers spend time working within established private companies, can provide invaluable real-world experience and exposure to cutting-edge security practices.

This knowledge transfer would enhance internal capabilities and ensure future projects are developed with robust security considerations from the outset.

"At PIKOM, we remain committed to working with the government and industry stakeholders to strengthen Malaysia's overall cybersecurity posture.

"We believe that by adopting a collaborative approach, including leveraging independent expertise, promoting knowledge sharing, and fostering upskilling initiatives, we can build a more secure and robust digital infrastructure for our nation." ♦

# PIKOM CALLS FOR ROBUST COMMITMENT FROM GOVERNMENT

PIKOM applauds the government for prioritising digitalisation, MSMEs, STEM and 5G in Budget 2024 but urges for a stronger commitment to propel the nation towards 4IR readiness

**T**he National Tech Association of Malaysia (PIKOM) commends the Malaysian government for its effort to elevate the well-being of the rakyat in its latest budget.

Themed Economic Reforms, Empowering the People, the budget was tabled by Prime Minister and Finance Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim on 13 Oct 2023. It was slated as the largest in Malaysia's history with RM394 billion being allocated.

PIKOM is particularly pleased to see the government's continued focus on digitalisation, MSMEs and start-ups development, local talent and skills development, promotion of STEM which PIKOM continuously promoted, 5G implementation, and enhanced cybersecurity effort. These are all key areas that are essential to the tech sector's growth and development.

However, the budget somehow lacks lustre in the extra boost needed to equip the nation to be future-ready. PIKOM believes that the government can do more to equip the tech sector for the 4IR. In particular, PIKOM provided some

quick-wins that could have been implemented:

**An automatic double tax deduction to be enjoyed by companies on skills training for their employees.** This would help companies to invest in training their employees with the skills they need to succeed in the 4IR. Some of the MSMEs may not have sufficient levy in HRDCorp and can utilise the tax break.

While there were some grants announced for digitalisation for RM5,000, it was largely silent on **smart automation for manufacturing and services** that may require larger investment. This would help mid-sized to larger companies to adopt digital technologies quickly and easily.

**Increased government spending on tech transformation.** There were little details on how public sector transformation will be technology-led.

**A dedicated export funding for tech companies.** This would help tech companies to expand their reach into new markets as we seek to create regional and global champions and unicorns.



**“We believe that the government can do more to equip the nation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and be future-ready.”**

**A voucher programme to spur tech retail sales for lower-income Malaysians.** There is already a tax relief for the middle to higher income groups but a voucher for deserving Malaysians would help to make tech products more affordable and accessible.

“We are grateful to the government for its continued support of the tech sector,” said Ong Chin Seong, Chairman of PIKOM.

“However, we believe that the government can do more to equip the nation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and be future-ready.” ♦



# PIKOM LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YB GOBIND

The association said his extensive experience will be invaluable in driving growth and development of the technology sector

## GOOD MOVE

PIKOM has welcomed the appointment of YB Gobind and the setting up of a dedicated ministry calling it a significant milestone in Malaysia's digital journey. The move, the association said, will help accelerate the nation's digital transformation.

"We have worked

with Yang Berhormat YB Gobind when he held his last ministerial post. His extensive experience will be invaluable in driving the growth and development of the technology sector," PIKOM Chairman Ong Chin Seong said in a statement.

The association said it looks forward to working with the Minister to grow the local market for information, communication and technology, improve digitalisation for small and medium enterprises and the rural community and urban poor, increase digital exports and explore new markets.

PIKOM said the Ministry should work with industry stakeholders to develop strategies that promote the development of exportable products and services, and facilitate market access for Malaysian technology companies.

It should also explore new markets for Malaysian technology

products and services. This includes leveraging existing trade agreements and exploring emerging markets with high growth potential.

## BETTER FOCUS

YB Gobind, meanwhile, said there was a need for a dedicated Digital Ministry as the rampant digitalisation that was taking place in Malaysia does not come without challenges.

"I've served as the Communications and Multimedia Minister before this and during that time the scope of the ministry is already very wide, involving aspects of information, media and digital matters."

"We are all aware that the current challenges amid the digital era have affected every layer of society, from the way we move around to the way we do business and how we can overcome the digital threats.

"Due to these challenges, there is a need to have a separate ministry," he said as reported in The Star.

Meanwhile, Malaysiakini reported that the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit will be placed under the Digital Ministry. The unit was previously under the ambit of the Prime Minister's Department.

MDEC, MyNIC and the personal data protection agency will also be parked under the Ministry of Digital. ♦

**A** cabinet shuffle in mid-December saw Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim appointing YB Gobind Singh Deo as the Minister of Digital. Formerly, YB Gobind was the Communications and Multimedia Minister under the Pakatan Harapan administration from 2018-2020.

Prior to the Nov 12 announcement, the ministry overseeing the country's information and communications technology was known as the Ministry of Communications and Digital. It was helmed by Fahmi Fazli, its deputy Teo Nie Ching.

According to the Prime Minister, it was necessary to split the Ministry of Communications and Digital into two separate ministries. Communications will focus on imparting accurate information on the administration's policies while the Digital Ministry will focus on digital transformation and artificial intelligence.

# ICON BASE EXPANDS PORTFOLIO WITH BDCOM

With the inclusion of China-based BDCOM – an R&D and a manufacturing of data communication products company – Icon Base now has a wide and complete range of communication products



Local company Icon Base Sdn Bhd, established in 1999, is proud to announce that they have been appointed the distributor of networking and communications products and services from China-based BDCOM.

BDCOM, formerly known as Shanghai Baud Communication Co Ltd, was founded in 1994. It integrates R&D, production, sales and support, and businesses covering switching and routing, WLAN, FTTx and network security.

One of the earliest suppliers of networking and communication solutions in China, BDCOM has three world-class manufacturing bases located in Shanghai Jinshan, Jiangsu Kunshan and Wuhan Optics Valley. All three locations have a total annual production capacity of over 10 million units.

The company is present in more than 100 countries. In a statement, BDCOM said it is proud to be officially present in Malaysia.

## INNOVATION

The company's passive optical LAN or POL Network Solution is highly in demand today. It is a novel way to structure a telecommunications network involving a large area. It replaces traditional structure cabling

with its multiple levels of switch and router aggregation.

POL, which uses less cable and labour to install, features simple networking of multi-network convergence, easy deployment as it is easy to construct and easy to debug, and light operation as it is easy to manage with few faults.

The brand also has intensive security with encryption and anti-interference denying all illegal access. The product, which has a high bandwidth of 10G uplink and downlink, also reduces total cost by 60%.

Clients give it the thumbs up because of its wide coverage of up to 20km. The product has a steady upgrade to 50G.

## INTEGRATION

The company is proud to introduce its product lines – all with BDCOM independent intellectual property rights. These are BDCOM Switch, BDCOM Industrial Switch, BDCOM xPON, BDCOM Router and Wireless, and Cloud Operation Platform.

The BDCOM Switches can achieve “Cloud-tube-end” integration strategy and provide end-to-end overall network solutions. BDCOM Industrial Switch has over 600 types of industrial ethernet

switches widely applied in the fields of rail transit, bridge, tunnel, smartgrid, wind photovoltaic power factory automation and industrial monitoring.

The BDCOM xPON has a rich product line that covers EPON, GPON, 10GEPON and XG(S)PON. Its large capacity, high density support routing function achieves dual roles of PON access and core/aggregation. It also supports the above to reduce costs.

Its Cloud Operation Platform supports unified access of six product lines including router, switch, xPON and wireless.

According to Icon Base, its core business from the beginning has been in the distribution of voice, data and video related communication products and services.

“We predominantly focus on providing products and solutions that enables smooth transition between legacy and next generation networks,” said the company.

“This is a niche area that is often forgotten by the industry. The products that we represent are leaders in their respective area of expertise. We are thorough in choosing our partners to ensure we only deliver high quality products and guaranteed after sales support and RMA. ♦

# PIKOM LAUNCHES NORTHERN SUB-CHAPTER

It was a pivotal moment for PIKOM as it expands the association's reach beyond the Klang Valley, and towards the vibrant tech scene in Penang

**T**he launch of PIKOM's Northern chapter early in January this year was a bold step towards strengthening the association's presence and amplifying the voices of tech leaders in this dynamic region.

PIKOM Chairman Ong Chin Seong said the chapter presents a platform for CIOs in the north to exchange ideas, collaborate and advocate for their unique needs.

"Their collective voice will resonate, not just within PIKOM, but also in shaping national discourse on technology and innovation. For this, I congratulate the PIKOM CIO Chapter (PCC) Chair Ngoh Chee Hung and his councillors, and especially Dato' SN Lee who will lead the team in Penang," he said at the launch event held at the E&O Hotel.

## ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Also present at the launch was Chief Minister of Penang Chow Kon Yeow and State Assemblyman for Pulau Tikus Joshua Woo together with PIKOM excos and PCC members.

Ong said Penang has established itself as a beacon of innovation and digital transformation. Its steadfast support has borne fruit, attracting global tech giants and nurturing local startups, making the island state a true power player in the regional tech landscape.

"PIKOM stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the Penang government in this shared endeavour. We are committed to working hand-in-hand to further improve the tech business climate

in the state and across the nation," said Ong.

He added that this commitment takes shape in advocacy efforts, where the association actively engages with policymakers to clear roadblocks, streamline regulations and create a conducive environment for technology businesses to flourish.

"Ultimately, our goal is to empower our members and drive industry growth that aligns with national aspirations for a technology-driven future."

## TIMELY MOVE

Chief Minister Chow said the inauguration of the PCC Northern Region is timely and aligns seamlessly with the thriving technological ecosystem evolving in Penang.

"With the launch of the PIKOM CIO Chapter Northern Region, I hope to witness more forward-

thinking initiatives and collaborations that will propel Penang towards embracing digitalisation, innovation and sustainability, in line with the Penang2030 vision of 'A Family-Focused Green and Smart State that Inspires the Nation'.

"As we embark on today's journey, let us reaffirm our commitment to collaboration, innovation, and the shared goal of building a brighter future for Penang. Together, I am confident that we will propel our state to greater heights," he said.

## STRONG COMMITMENT

To strengthen Penang's identity as the 'Silicon Valley of the East', the state government will continue to bolster the state's digital ecosystem in various fields such as electrical and electronic manufacturing, integrated circuit design, medical



technology, digital district and the new economy.

“Emphasis will be on fostering innovation and technological advancements to propel Penang to the forefront of the global tech landscape,” he said.

“As an example, the World Congress on Innovation and Technology 2022, hosted by Penang in September 2022, was a testament to our commitment.

“With over 4,000 participants from 60 countries, WCIT 2022 became a global platform stimulating discussions, driving collaborations and spearheading transformations through technological adoption, digital innovation and foreign investment,” he said.

Nonetheless, he said, it was crucial to acknowledge that despite the state’s various efforts, the pursuit of excellence is an endeavour that demands collective engagement, necessitating a harmonious collaboration between public and private sectors. ◆



# AWARDS NIGHT CELEBRATES 37 INDUSTRY LUMINARIES

The award event recognised both local and international individuals and organisations who have helped advance the Malaysian digital landscape



In November, the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), recognised the outstanding achievements of 37 individuals and companies that have contributed towards the growth of Malaysia's digital economy.

The evening – MDX 2023 Awards Night – was officiated by the then Minister of Communications and Digital Fahmi Fadzil. MDEC was parked under the purview of the Ministry of Communications and Digital (now the Ministry of Digital).

This prestigious event celebrated the outstanding innovations and achievements within the local digital technology ecosystem.

It recognised individuals and organisations through 37 categories including key investors for local and foreign companies, artificial intelligence leaders for omnichannel marketing, women entrepreneurs, students, participants of the

#mydigitalmaker program, players in the tourism industry and data ecosystem.

## STELLAR SPEAKERS

The MDX 2023 Awards Night is part of the successful MDX 2023, a three-day event which took place between November 6-8, 2023. Some 120,000 participants engaged in the conferences, networking sessions and exhibition.

Officiated by Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the conferences saw an impressive lineup of speakers featuring AI Futurist all-star and former Head of Go-To-Market at OpenAI, Zack Kass, who delivered a keynote presentation titled, "Digital Edge: Shifting the Economic Narrative".

This premier event on the digital economy calendar also saw renowned speakers and industry leaders including Zoom Head of

APAC Ricky Kapur, Turkiye Investment Office Country Advisor Ahmed Emre Buyukklic, Japan Peppol Authority Director Hiroyuki Kato, Equinix Inc President Asia Pacific Jeremy Deutsch and many others.

During the MDX 2023 Grand Finale Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar announced the launch of the Digital Agriculture Technology Adoption (DATA) programme. DATA is a pioneering initiative that would transform the agriculture sector in Malaysia through the use of digital technologies including the Internet of Things, Big Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence within the agricultural value chain.

This infusion of technologies is expected to yield several key benefits, including increased productivity, improved crop yield and quality, higher income and revenue, reduced operational costs, and optimised plantation management.



Under the guidance of the Ministry and MDEC, the DATA programme aspires to modernise Malaysia's agriculture sector by promoting digital adoption. It also aims to stimulate tech industry interest and participation, fostering technology adoption that enhances productivity, promotes food security and contributes to national economic growth.

The exhibition floor, meanwhile, brought together the giants of the digital tech industry such as Grab, Capbay, Razer Merchant Services,

Primary Guard and Virtual Economy Technology, who will be showcasing their products and services.

### READYING FOR GROWTH

Six weeks prior, MDEC's empowerment journey kicked off through 18 auxiliary events that commenced on September 25, 2023.

With MDX 2023, MDEC aims to make the country a digital hub in Southeast Asia in line with the goals of the Madani economy.

The country's digital industry exports have grown exponentially

in recent years with its exports surpassing RM20.2 billion in the first half of 2022. This is already 81% from 2021's total performance.

Malaysia is attracting significant digital opportunities from both domestic and foreign companies, with over RM37.4 billion secured this year in the digital sector, as of August.

MDX 2023 Grand Finale was proudly sponsored by Diamond Sponsor Fusionex Group, Gold Sponsor ZTE (Malaysia) Corp Sdn Bhd and Official Technology Partner TM Technology Services Sdn Bhd. ♦





# UNVEILING THE FUTURE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY IN SARAWAK

The event saw meetings, conferences and an exhibition that emphasised the future of digital technology and opportunities for stakeholders

**T**he much-anticipated international tech events, the 27th World Congress on Innovation and Technology, and the 6th International Digital Economy Conference Sarawak – together known as WCIT | IDECS 2023 – kicked off on Oct 4, 2023.

Some 6,500 attendees from 46 countries converged at the opening ceremony of the three-day event held at the Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching.

The concurrent events featured global thought leaders, corporate

leaders and award-winning innovators who shared on artificial intelligence, sustainability, 5G, autonomous, diversity and inclusivity, smart cities, global ICT policy and space technology.

Through the three days of foreign direct investments, meetings, incentives conferences and exhibition tourism and sponsorship, the events are expected to create a positive economic impact of RM660 million on the Sarawakian tech and start-up ecosystem.

## TECH INVESTMENTS

Over the course of the event, various MOUs were signed between notable companies in the technology and digital arena.

Among them, the MOU signed between Sarawak Digital Economy Cooperation Bhd (SDEC) and TM Technology Services Sdn Bhd. SDEC is a government-owned company, entrusted to lead the implementation of the state's digital economy initiatives.

The MOU aimed at improving internet access in rural Sarawak,

raising awareness on smart services, 5G, cybersecurity and cloud services among the private sectors. The deal will spur the creation of innovative solutions aligned with the objectives of the state's Digital Economy Strategy and Post-COVID Development Strategy 2030.

The MOU on smart city between SDEC and Malaysian Industry Government Group for High Technology and Malaysia Smart Cities Alliance Association was also signed on the sidelines of WCIT | IDECS 2023.

This tripartite MOU between parties aims to collaborate to share knowledge and expertise in Industry 4.0, smart cities and the digital economy.

It also includes capacity building and exploring markets for education and training in IR 4.0 technologies. Additionally, the partnership seeks to develop smart and sustainable technology solutions for various sectors like smart cities, transportation, energy and waste management.

An MOU was also signed between Parties Centre for Technology Excellence Sarawak, Solarvest Borneo Sdn Bhd and Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak.

This tripartite MOU will see the parties collaborating on designing and building two prototype vehicles for Shell Eco-Marathon Asia 2024, as part of the centre's green energy training programme. The parties will also host STEM events that promote green energy. They will also collaborate to promote graduate student recruitment for the centre's programmes.

### TRANSFORMING SARAWAK

In his welcoming address, the Premier of Sarawak Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Openg said the state is poised for its next phase of growth. Technology and innovation are





key drivers to accelerate economic growth, social inclusivity and environmental sustainability, he said.

“Sarawak must fast-track its digital infrastructure development. Ultimately, the people stand to benefit through our digitalisation efforts. We hope this will trickle down to the various Sarawakian communities that we serve in order to build and create a thriving, and vibrant digital and data-driven ecosystem,” he said.

In line with this, the opening ceremony saw the launch of the Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint aimed at transforming the state from a conventional and resource-based economy to one that is tech-driven and environmentally sustainable.

The blueprint will promote digital acceleration as a key enabler to strengthen Sarawak’s economic competitiveness and create job opportunities and new generations of digital industries. It will also develop a vibrant tech sector with the goal of developing an inclusive digital society and achieving high-income developed status for the state by 2030.



## EMERGING HUBS

Meanwhile, World Innovation, Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) Chairman Dr. Sean Seah said he was thrilled to see the WCIT | IDECS 2023 taking place in Kuching as it is in-line with WITSA’s mission of spotlighting emerging tech hubs across the world.

“With the continual rapid advancement in technology, these gatherings are pivotal in fostering collaboration and ensuring we remain at the forefront of innovation,” he said.

PIKOM Chairman Ong Chin Seong congratulated Sarawak for successfully organising a world-class technology and innovation event.

“PIKOM is proud to be associated with the event and has galvanised





our 1,000 members and its affiliates around the region to support the event. Apart from the content, the networking and potential business opportunities are what drive PIKOM to arrange delegates and exhibitors to attend WCIT almost every year.”

## NEW FORUM

In the lead-up to WCIT|IDECS 2023, the Sarawak Government also hosted the inaugural She-Tech Asia Forum 2023, aimed at elevating women’s representation in the technology industry, addressing the gender imbalance and challenges faced by women in the industry.

The forum also served as a networking opportunity to connect like-minded women leaders and professionals in technology, to encourage collective growth and development.

Sarawak’s Minister of Women, Early Childhood and Community Wellbeing Dato’ Sri Hajah Fatimah Abdullah said the forum reflects the state government’s belief that for true progress to be made, there first needs to be a foundation built upon gender equality and women empowerment.

## STAND OUT

WCIT | IDECS 2023 put forth a stellar lineup of speakers, both international and local speakers, who shared their insight, knowledge and perspectives with the delegates.

Leading speakers at the conference included Tomorrow CEO Mike Walsh, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Senior Fellow Michael R. Nelson, Consumer Technology Association Vice President Doug Johnson, Connected Women Founder and Head of Special Projects Gina



Romero and Pemandu Associates President and CEO Dato’ Idris Jala.

WCIT | IDECS 2023 was also a platform with an extensive exhibition where exhibitors showcased the latest trends in innovation and technology.

Overall, WCIT | IDECS 2023 saw over 50 partners and sponsors including Huawei, Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation, Digital Nasional Bhd, Sarawak Energy Bhd, Celcom Digi, iHeal and MTDC.

## DECLARATION ON AI

On the third day of the event, WITSA made a powerful declaration which

underscored its commitment and its use of AI. The Artificial Intelligence Declaration, titled Shaping the Future Through Ethical, Inclusive, Sustainable and Innovative AI, promotes a careful and common-sense approach to harnessing the opportunities and addressing the risks arising from the rapid innovations in AI. It puts the spotlight on best practices, standards and regulation to help ensure that AI systems deployed are ethical, fair, transparent and accountable.

Dr. Sean said the declaration is not just a testament to shared commitment to use AI positively, but a clarion call to nations worldwide.

“Our members have made a commitment to champion this cause in their respective economies and work towards collaborating with their governments to adopt and uphold the tenets of this declaration,” he said.

Dato’ Dan E Khoo, CEO of WITSA added that innovation and trust in new technologies, including AI, are best supported when policy objectives and regulatory requirements make use of voluntary consensus-driven standardisation, to support implementation and compliance.



“To avoid slowing AI innovation and beneficial adoption, regulations should adhere to a specific list of policy principles.”

In light of the rapidly evolving landscape of AI and its profound impact on economies, societies and individuals, the AI Declaration provides a foundational framework for international cooperation and understanding.

### ARMENIA, HERE WE COME!

At the closing ceremony, Dato’ Dan announced that Armenia will host the next WCIT in 2024. The theme for this conference is “Science as a Means of Fulfilling the Promise of the Digital Age”, and it will be held in Oct 4-7, 2024 at the Karen Demirtchian Complex in Yerevan.

With the announcement, the global tech community sets its sights on the West Asian nation for what promises to be another groundbreaking congress in 2024. ♦

## READY TO TRANSFORM

At WCIT | IDECS 2023, the Sarawak Government reaffirmed its commitment to investing in innovation and technology to pave the way for the state’s transformation from a traditional economy to a modern technology-driven powerhouse.

On the final day of the event, Deputy Premier of Sarawak Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah Ali Hasan said WCIT | IDECS 2023 has illuminated Sarawak’s path towards a future where innovation and technology are the driving forces behind the state’s economic growth.

“Many of the ideas shared over the past few days will come to shape Sarawak’s journey forward, building on the state’s current trajectory to becoming a thriving society driven by innovation and technology where our people can enjoy economic prosperity, social inclusivity and a sustainable environment,” he said.

“The Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030 is our strategic roadmap to create positive impact and empower our people and position Sarawak as an attractive investment, business and tourism destination at the international level.”

WITSA Chairman Dr. Sean Seah said the convergence of both WCIT and IDECS, the partnerships, collaborative connections and discussions on tech in general, and AI in particular, will pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive digital future.

“This pivotal success stands as a testament to what can be achieved when governments, industry leaders, and communities come together with a shared vision,” he added.

# WITSA 2023 AWARD WINNERS

This year's winners demonstrated excellence in improving human lives through digital innovation and public-private partnerships

**O**n Day-2 of WCIT 2023, the World Innovation, Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) announced that 38 recipients from four continents were selected to receive the 2023 WITSA Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards, a special WITSA Chairman's Award, the WITSA MVP Award as well as two WITSA Eminent Person Awards.

WITSA is the leading recognised voice of the global digital technology industry, with members from 80 countries and economies. The WITSA Awards recognise the

entities that have either made, or hold the highest promise to make, significant contributions in the use of technology to better the lives of humankind as judged from the entries received in 2023.

"The judging committee for the 2023 Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards had the honour of reviewing over 130 unique and remarkable award submissions," said WITSA Chairman Dr. Sean Seah.

The awards recognised some the most influential women leaders in technology who have demonstrated considerable experience in leading innovation and becoming leaders

and role models in the tech industry, as well as government authorities and corporations that have partnered to successfully procure and implement public information infrastructure and services using the technology, solutions, innovation and expertise of the private sector.

"The nominations submitted for this year's awards programme spanned WITSA's global membership," said WITSA CEO Dato' Dan E Khoo.

"We are delighted that we were able to recognise some of the best tech solutions from governments, institutions, individuals and industry," he said. ♦











## The following are the winners of the 2023 WITSA Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards:

1. **2023 Chairman's Award**  
Consumer Technology Association and National Institute of Standards and Technology
2. **2023 Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
Institute for Information Industry: An agile hybrid simulator of human machine collaboration for multi-workers
3. **2023 Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award (Public Sector)**  
Aspire to Innovate – a2i: National Intelligence for Skills, Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship
4. **2023 Smart Cities Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
Skenarios Real Estate by Skenario Labs
5. **2023 Smart Cities Award (Public Sector)**  
Information Management Centre, New Taipei City Government: Building 5G Smart Poles in New Taipei Smart City
6. **2023 Sustainable Growth Award/Circular Economy Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
SunGreenH2
7. **2023 Sustainable Growth Award/Circular Economy Award (Public Sector)**  
Joint Air Quality Unit: Improving UK's Air Quality – Delivering a Digital Service to Support Clean Air Zone Management
8. **2023 Innovative E-Health Solutions Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
Frontier Management Consulting SRL: PROMED Project
9. **2023 Innovative E-Health Solutions Award (Public Sector)**  
IDIKA SA: e-Government Centre for Social Security Services
10. **2023 Public/Private Partnership Award:**  
– Taichung City Economic Development Bureau in Taiwan: Taichung Shopping Festival Platform  
– BT Group: Virtual Wards Programme
11. **2023 e-Education & Learning Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
SMACRS: Lumière (smertege)
12. **2023 e-Education & Learning Award (Public Sector)W**  
– Aspire to Innovate a2i: MuktoPaath – Ensuring e-Learning for All  
– HRD Corp
13. **2023 Emerging Digital Solutions Award**  
SOFTONE Group: Prosvasis GO Web Application
14. **2023 AI Excellence Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
– Institute for Information Industry: Intelligent Predictive and Analysis System (IPAS) for supply chain resilience for EMS  
– SIMPPLE: SIMPPLE AI
15. **Best Place to Work Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
Epsilon Net: Transforming the Workplace into a Tech Haven
16. **Digital Transformation of the Year (Private Sector/NGO)**  
Alliance Bank Malaysia Bhd: Virtual Credit Card
17. **Digital Transformation of the Year (Public Sector)**  
The General Secretariat for Information Systems and Digital Governance (Ministry of Digital Governance): The Interoperability Centre (KED)
18. **Women in Tech Award (Private Sector/NGO)**  
– Vasiliki Anagnostou, General Manager and Deputy CEO of Epsilon Net Group: Empowering Women in the Tech Industry with a Woman-Led Leadership  
– Catherine Lian, Managing Director – IBM Malaysia
19. **Women in Tech Award (Public Sector)**  
Women and e-Commerce
20. **WITSA EMINENT PERSON AWARD**  
– Dr. Lisa Su, President, CEO and Chair of Advanced Micro Devices  
– The Right Honourable Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, Premier of Sarawak
21. **WITSA Most Valuable Partner Award**  
– Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation

# MALAYSIA'S GLOBALLY-RECOGNISED TALENT

Malaysia's third placing in the Kearney's Global Services Location Index 2023 is testament to the country's ability to reskill and deploy its workforce. As talent is key, constant rejuvenation of the workforce is needed

**P**articipants at the World Congress on Innovation and Technology (WCIT) 2023 in Kuching, last October, heard that while Malaysia's position as a formidable player in the global business services sphere is significant, it cannot rest on its laurels.

A panel discussion entitled Global Business Services: Enhancing Operational Excellence and Strategic Impact in GBS Through Cognitive Automation and AI Integration revealed that maintaining a competitive edge involves the smart use of cost-effectiveness, a strong talent pool and continuous workforce rejuvenation to keep skills current and ahead of the curve.

The panellists comprised industry captains in the GBS sector, namely Digital GBS Malaysia Chair Anthony Raja Devadoss, MDEC Chief Digital Investment Officer Raymond Siva,

Brandt Business Services Founder and CEO Dato' Munirah Looi, Dell Technologies Malaysia Senior Director and General Manager TS Koay and Daythree Digital Bhd Founder and Managing Director Raymond Devadass.

Participants also heard that the GBS industry in Malaysia is growing rapidly, and it is expected to continue to do so in the coming years. In 2022, the industry in Malaysia generated USD4.95 billion in revenue. This is expected to touch USD 6.7 billion by next year, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 6.2%.

This growth is being driven by a number of factors, including the increasing adoption of digital technologies, the growing demand for shared services, and the expansion of multinational companies into Malaysia, said the panellists.

## COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Commenting on this, Anthony said Malaysia's strides in the global business services arena are a testament to the nation's commitment to excellence.

"It has earned us the esteemed 3rd spot in Kearney's Global Services Location Index 2023. Yet, we must remain steadfast in our pursuit of progress. Talent rejuvenation is key to our continued success," he stressed.

This was echoed by PIKOM Chairman Ong Chin Seong who later added that the GBS industry in Malaysia exemplifies the nation's resilience and adaptability.

"We are poised not only to maintain our position as a global leader but to ascend even higher by looking at high-technology value outsourcing business. The future of business services resides here in Malaysia," he said.

## PREMIER DESTINATION

Malaysia's GBS industry has also shone in the 2023/24 GBS World Competitiveness Index where it received second-place ranking, surpassing major players.

The country's rise, part of a broader trend in Asia-Pacific, solidifies its standing as a premier destination for customer experience (CX) management services. This accolade, based on surveys conducted with global enterprise executives, places Malaysia at the forefront in the Customer Lifecycle





Management and Back-Office services categories.

The ascent in the Index is a testament to Malaysia’s growing prominence as a preferred destination for CX management services, underpinned by robust infrastructure, a tech-savvy workforce and cost-effective operations.

**INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION**

The GBS Malaysia Strategy Report, meanwhile, launched in July 2022, by MDEC together with GBS Malaysia, Contact Centre Association of Malaysia and International Data Corp, stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts between public and private sectors.

This first-of-its-kind publication not only serves as a roadmap to propel the local GBS industry forward, but also strengthens investors’ confidence in Malaysia.

The report acts as a guide for organisations transitioning from traditional business processes to digital, helping them ascend the value chain.

**THE FUTURE OF WORK**

Following the success of the panel session in Kuching, GBS Malaysia organised its 13th instalment of the GBS Summit 2023, themed “D.I.V.E. – Digital Innovation, Value and Efficiency” on October 26, 2023.

The summit, attended by some 200 participants, reinforced the importance of leveraging digital technologies to drive innovation. It emphasised the pivotal role GBS plays in shaping the future of work and making a meaningful contribution to society.

It showcased real-world examples and expert insights, highlighting how businesses are leveraging AI, automation, data analytics and process optimisation to enhance operational excellence and foster positive social change.

In his keynote address



Transforming Workplaces, Retaining Talent and Pioneering the Digital Frontier for the Road Ahead, speaker Billy Lim unpacked how digital innovation is revolutionising the way we work. He also shared on the latest technological advancements that are shaping the industry.

The Paywatch Malaysia Head of Sales and Partnerships (Asia) shared his vision where GBS organisations are at the forefront of digital transformation, prioritising employee retention and fostering agile, sustainable workplaces with ethical ESG practices.

**GBS AS A CATALYST**

In a world where work is evolving at an unprecedented pace, the role of GBS becomes integral in shaping this future. Today GBS is playing a pivotal role in driving a future of work that is inclusive, dynamic and impactful.

During the Panel Session 2 – Is GBS a Catalyst for Igniting Global Progress through Empowerment, Societal Upliftment and Talent Development, the participants learned how GBS was spearheading this global transformation while shaping a future of work that harmonises ambition, innovation and societal enrichment.

Former member of Parliament Prof Dr. Ong Kian Ming, in his Keynote Address delved into the role GBS plays as a strategic partner in catalysing digital transformation within the government sector in Malaysia. The Director of Philosophy, Politics and Economic Programme



at Taylor’s University and a member of the MIDA board of directors said amid the country’s ongoing efforts to embrace digitalisation, GBS can contribute to enhancing public sector efficiency, deliver citizen-centric services and drive the modernisation of government operations.

**GBS AND ESG**

During Panel Session 4, experts explored the effective integration of ESG principles into business strategic planning, ensuring a stable foundation for long-term sustainability.

Their discussion shed light on strategies and methodologies that not only fostered effective integration but also paved the way for an enduring commitment to long-term sustainability.

Overall, the GBS Summit demonstrated that in an increasingly digital world, businesses must invest in innovation, embrace new technologies and adapt to evolving trends. The key to success lies in utilising digital innovation not only to drive efficiency and value creation but also to lead the way in shaping the future of work.

Going forward, stakeholders of the industry should use a holistic approach that combines technology, talent, collaboration and a strong commitment to continuous improvement. By embracing these strategies, businesses in the industry can position themselves to reach their optimum level and thrive in an ever-evolving landscape. ♦

# SELANGOR COLLABORATES WITH TAIWANESE CITIES

The effort will advance digital excellence and foster educational and skills development through international collaboration

In line with Selangor's aspiration to achieve Smart State status by next year, Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) has embarked on a strategic working visit to Taiwan aiming to foster cross-border collaborations focusing on digital economy and talent training in fields crucial for the future artificial intelligence market.

From November 2-4, 2023 a delegation led by Selangor State Exco YB Ng Sze Han engaged in discussions with three city mayors and officials from Taipei, Taoyuan and Kaohsiung, prominent cities in Taiwan.

These talks were geared towards developing joint educational programmes and skills-building opportunities, crucial for the burgeoning digital sector.

Ng underscored the global importance of interconnectedness and the urgency to merge resources and expertise to combat the digital talent gap.

"Our collaboration with Taiwan is a step towards a strong digital economy and talent development framework, benefiting both regions and the global AI landscape," said Ng.

Sidec's CEO Yong Kai Ping, meanwhile, highlighted the growing need for AI expertise.

"With digital transformation at



the forefront, establishing partnerships with Taiwan is key to building a talent reservoir to meet the increasing demands in AI and related fields," he noted.

The visit included fruitful discussions on enhancing startups and e-Commerce accelerator programmes and strengthening the digital ecosystem between Selangor and Taiwan.

Additionally, the delegation's stop at Taiwan's Ministry of Digital Affairs showcased Taiwan's commitment to leading digital democracy and innovation through modern digital tools and a collaborative culture.

The delegation's comprehensive itinerary reflected these ambitions, exploring potential aviation collaborations that utilise the



combined resources of Taoyuan and Selangor's airports and aerospace centres.

A significant visit to Pingtung University of Science and Technology was also conducted to explore advancements in agricultural practices.

Accentuating this strategic direction, Ng highlighted Selangor's role as a key player in attracting foreign investment to Malaysia, underscoring the necessity to prepare the state's workforce with skills that align with the latest global trends in industry and AI.

Sidec is a subsidiary company of Invest Selangor Bhd. Mandated to lead the digital transformation of Selangor as Asean's digital hub, Sidec focuses on three key sectors of the digital economy, namely e-Commerce, startup and SME digitalisation.

The corporation is committed to creating an innovative digital ecosystem that will inspire new talents to pursue their dreams fearlessly and to accelerate Selangor startups to become regional tech icons. ♦

# EMPOWERING MSMEs THROUGH DIGITAL INNOVATION

The shift towards a digitally-capable Malaysia is a collective effort. Participants were urged to seize the opportunities provided by the eUsahawan and Gig programmes, and work together to build a digitally-savvy Malaysia

**M**DEC, the nation’s digital economy agency, aims to train 30,000 SMEs, tertiary and TVET students, with total sales target of RM35 million, this year, through its eUsahawan programme.

Digital Minister YB Gobind Singh Deo said, since its inception nine years ago, MDEC’s eUsahawan programme has successfully trained 563,543 entrepreneurs nationwide, generating impressive cumulative sales exceeding RM1.24 billion.

From this amount, the food and beverage sector contribute 40% to the accumulated sales, followed by beauty and health at 25%, and lifestyle and fashion at 15%.

“The impact of the eUsahawan programme extends beyond direct training, with eUsahawan modules now integrated into the curriculums of over 35 tertiary education institutions and TVET institutions,” said YB Gobind.

“This significantly contributes to the nation’s digital tech aspirations

such as the National E-Commerce Strategic Roadmap, Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint and Industry4WRD.”

YB Gobind was speaking at the opening of the first eUsahawan and Gig Fest 2024, organised by MDEC at the KL Convention Centre on February 20.

## SUPPORT HUBS

To further aid local entrepreneurs, MDEC will add 100 new eUsahawan hubs in strategic locations nationwide. These hubs will expose and equip the MSME business community to digital marketing strategies.

MDEC’s second popular programme for MSME business people is its Global Online Workforce, or Glow programme, introduced in 2016. Through this initiative, the agency has assisted a total of 105,390 entrepreneurs across the country in increasing their income. It has successfully generated a collective revenue of RM282.76 million.

The programme has played a crucial role in honing the skills and knowledge of participants, especially unemployed graduates as well as those who have experienced job loss and salary cuts, enabling them to succeed as digital freelancers.

## UPSKILLING GRADS

With the High-Value Gig Digital Freelance programme, MDEC in collaboration with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia’s Career Advancement Programme will train 5,000 tertiary students, equipping them with essential digital skills.

This initiative, a programme with the Ministry of Higher Education, will offer opportunities for the target group to enter high-value job fields on regional gig job platforms.

YB Gobind said the eUsahawan and Gig Fest serves is a platform for visitors to empower their digital businesses by gaining support from local and international customers, while also competing on a global level to secure sustainable income sources.

“This initiative reflects MDEC’s commitment to bridge the digital gap and empower the people to seize opportunities presented by the digital economy, ultimately positioning Malaysia as the digital hub of ASEAN.”

## DIGITAL FIRST

With the theme “The Opportunity is Here”, the eUsahawan and Gig Fest aim to cultivate a more digitally-driven culture and equip individuals, graduates and MSMEs with the







necessary skills to thrive in the digital economy.

The event provided participants such as investors, entrepreneurs, startups, gig economy workers, and digital professionals with valuable insights on leveraging digital technologies to create job opportunities, promote products and services and expand their market reach through online platforms.

“I believe that knowledge in the digital sphere will not only open doors but will give one the freedom to actively participate in the changing economic landscape. The country’s digital economy has the potential to shine on the global front.

“The contribution of the country’s digital economy to the Gross Domestic Product is projected to increase to 25.5% by next year, compared to the current 23.3%. his growth is also capable of creating up to 500,000 new job opportunities, indirectly providing opportunities for local digital talent.

“As such, it is essential for us to adopt a digital-first approach in implementing initiatives.

“The inclusive growth and progress of Malaysia’s digital economy, in line with the government’s efforts to enhance the well-being of individuals and businesses, are crucial to ensuring the country’s economic pulse continues to thrive. Therefore, the development of entrepreneurial talent and gig freelancers through a

digital-first approach should be a priority.

“Witnessing the participation numbers of the 2024 eUsahawan and Gig Carnival, I am hopeful that this event will showcase Malaysia’s spirit of innovation and limitless potential.”

### PLATFORM FOR MSMEs

Meanwhile, MDEC CEO Ts Mahadhir Aziz, in his welcome speech said the inaugural event is a platform for MSME entrepreneurs to generate ideas and seek opportunities as they participate in knowledge-sharing sessions.

“This event aims to further uplift the skills of entrepreneurs and gig workers to a higher level. It is also a space which provides opportunities for this community to communicate and network with industry players.

“Additionally, this initiative aims to encourage knowledge sharing and exchange of views on innovation and current trends in the digital entrepreneurship and gig economy fields,” he said.

### STAYING AHEAD

Mahadhir said MSMEs constitute 97% of the economy, making them the backbone of our nation’s progress. Hence, their digital empowerment is not just a target but a necessity, as they contribute significantly to the employment sector and the country’s GDP.

“Through Malaysia Digital, MDEC

is committed to ensuring that no SMEs will be left behind in this transformation,” he said.

“The year-on-year growth of 5.4% recently recorded by Malaysia in terms of e-Commerce revenue demonstrates the opportunities awaiting our entrepreneurs. With the capabilities of digital platforms, MSMEs can seize opportunities in this fertile market, contributing to their growth and the country’s economic prosperity.

“Our initiatives are catalysts that impact our economic growth. In an era where adaptability is critical, eUsahawan and the Gig Fest empower participants to explore and pioneer business ventures in the digital realm.

“This diversity is not just a strategic step, it is also a foundational shift that strengthens our economy against uncertainties,” he said.

Ultimately, the shift towards a digitally capable Malaysia is a collective effort, with MDEC at the forefront of this transformation.

“Bright opportunities lie ahead of us. Let us seize the opportunities provided by the eUsahawan and Gig programmes, working together to build a digitally-savvy Malaysia.

“Together, we will be able to make an impact in the global digital landscape, building a legacy in terms of innovation, economic sustainability and prosperity for future generations.” ♦



## GOLF WIN-WIN FOR ALL

The PIKOM-GBS Malaysia Golf Invitational and Gala Dinner 2023 at the stunning Tropicana Golf and Country Resort saw about 150 registered participants at the tee off.

The event held last December gave participants the chance to get outdoors, build lasting relationships on the golf course and perhaps strike a deal or two.

Organising Chair Akhil Gupta, in his welcome speech, expressed gratitude to the sponsors for their commitment to and support of the event. He also thanked his GBS working committee for their tireless work in putting together the day's event and the Gala Dinner later that evening. He acknowledged the support of the PIKOM Council Members for their contribution to the event.

Anthony Raja Devadoss, Chair of GBS, thanked the organising committee for creating this platform

where participants can enjoy a relaxing day out on the golf course, network with their peers and form long-term partnerships and friendships which can contribute positively towards future business collaborations.

At the Gala Dinner later that evening, a three-piece band entertained the crowd as they enjoyed their dinner. The evening also saw the winners of the golfing event announced and presented with their prizes. ♦





# ComCom International

A subsidiary of  中国丝路集团有限公司  
CHINA SILK ROAD GROUP LTD



中马建交50周年  
ULANG TAHUN KE-50  
HUBUNGAN DIPLOMATIK MALAYSIA - CHINA

## BRIDGING THE WORLD FOR YOU AND ME



### Who We Are?

**ComCom International Sdn. Bhd.** is a dynamic joint venture resulting from a strategic partnership formalized by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between China Silk Road Group Ltd. (CSRG) and Digital Way Group Sdn. Bhd. (DWG).

CSRG, a prominent player in China's business landscape, specializing in international trade, e-commerce, green energy engineering, healthcare and etc, joins forces with visionary Malaysian firm DWG, deeply engaged in the digital sector, dedicated to strengthening Malaysia's digital economy through cross-border investments and partnerships.



### What We Do?



**We Facilitate** global supply chains and trade, offering an integrated B2B platform with logistics, finance and payment solutions.



**We Connect** people, businesses and trade delegations, offering expert advisory, partnership fostering and critical insights.



**We Collaborate** with government and industry, driving innovation and economic growth through digital solutions.



**We Invest** in environmental solutions and empower the transition to green energy for a sustainable future.



**We Aggregate** healthcare supplies for efficient distribution, contributing to community well-being by ensuring accessible and quality resources for all.



**We Advise** on strategic projects, providing clarity and direction to complex initiatives, guiding partners toward success.



### Get in Touch

+60 12-210 7227  
support@comcom.global

Level 11, Wisma Unirazak, 195a,  
Jalan Tun Razak, 50400, Kuala Lumpur.



**BDCOM** Switch Portfolio covers from core to aggregation and access network for one-stop solution; 100+ user-friendly & cost-effective models with Carrier-level stability & functionality

**BDCOM** (Shanghai Baud Communication Co. Ltd.) founded in 1994, is one of China's leading suppliers of networking and communication products and solutions.

With a revenue of more than USD300 million, **BDCOM** has been in the vanguard of networking and communications technologies.

**BDCOM's** products are widely used in many areas like Banking, Education, Government, Manufacturing, Utility and even the Defence, globally.

**BDCOM** has presence in more than 100 countries.

Now we are proud to be officially in Malaysia.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Top 10 brands of switches in China
- China's top 100 E-Government IT Enterprises
- 30 years of Technological Innovation
- In house R&D & Manufacturing
- Multicity production base
- Core Switch
- Data Center Switch
- POE Switch
- Industrial Switch
- XPON
- Router
- Wireless Products
- Network Management System