

NewStraitsTimes • WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024

6

NEWS / Nation

PIONEER MODEL

UNIKL TO SET UP AI FACULTY

It will work with Mohamed Bin Zayed University of AI to prepare for future tech advancement

DUBAI

UNIVERSITI Kuala Lumpur (UnikL) will establish an artificial intelligence (AI) faculty to prepare future generations for the rapidly advancing technological landscape.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said UnikL, under the auspices of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara), would collaborate with Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI) in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to establish the faculty.

Zahid, who oversees Mara under the Rural and Regional Development Ministry, stressed the importance of the collaboration, highlighting that MBZUAI was the world's first AI university, founded 15 years ago.



DAWN CHAN

"Back then, many countries mocked the UAE for establishing an AI-focused university. But now, those same countries are eager to learn from the UAE's pioneering model for AI education."

He said Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka and Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah would also set up AI faculties as part of the initiative.

Zahid said this yesterday during a dinner with 250 members of the Malaysian diaspora here.

He is on a seven-day working trip to the UAE to strengthen bilateral ties.

Zahid shared insights from his visits to important institutions, including the AI-powered space tech company Space42, the Abu Dhabi-based vocational training

institution ACTVET and the National Fire Fighting Manufacturing FZCO (Naffco), a leading supplier of life safety solutions.

He thanked the UAE for planning to invest US\$50 million in a data centre in Malaysia, expected to be the largest in Asean.

Later, Zahid said using AI and the Internet of Things in safety services, such as emergency and rescue vehicles and security and emergency systems, could greatly benefit Malaysia.

"These technologies have the potential to strengthen the country's disaster management systems and improve our ability to tackle current challenges."

"Efforts to learn the latest technologies and engage in knowledge exchange are vital, especially as we prepare to face global risks like climate change-induced disasters."

He said Naffco's expertise and commitment aligned with Malaysia's mission to protect lives, property and the environment.

Zahid, who chairs the National Disaster Management Council, visited Naffco on Monday, where he was briefed on the company's products, vision and operations by its chief executive officer Khalid Al Khatib.

The inaugural Mihas@Dubai exhibition reached RM500 million in export sales on its first day, a significant step in expanding the presence of Malaysian businesses in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region.

Zahid said he was confident Mihas@Dubai would achieve the RM1 billion target and beyond.

The event began on Monday and is being held alongside the Middle East Organic and Natural Product Expo. Mihas stands for Malaysia International Halal Showcase.

Zahid said Mihas@Dubai provided Malaysian companies a platform to showcase the excellence and diversity of halal products and services.

From January to October, trade

with the UAE rose 12.8 per cent, reaching RM36.73 billion.

Zahid said the UAE remained Malaysia's largest export destination in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), accounting for 55.3 per cent, or RM12.03 billion.

"This was driven by high demand for jewellery, petroleum products, processed food as well as palm oil and oil-based agricultural products."

"Malaysia's imports from the UAE also showed strong growth, rising 17.5 per cent to RM24.70 billion with key imports including metals, jewellery and chemicals."

"This achievement underscores the UAE's important role as a strategic trading partner for Malaysia and highlights the significance of hosting Mihas@Dubai as a catalyst to strengthening bilateral relations and to foster mutual growth."

He said Dubai's position as a global trade hub gave Malaysia's business ecosystem access to the GCC and Mena markets.



Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (seated, right) visiting the National Fire Fighting Manufacturing FZCO (Naffco) factory in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Monday. Next to him is Naffco chief executive officer Khalid Al Khatib. BERNAMA PIC