



MINISTRY OF DIGITAL

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

YB GOBIND SINGH DEO
MINISTER OF DIGITAL

CISCO MALAYSIA AI DAY

8 OCTOBER 2024 (FRIDAY) | 9.00 AM
KL HILTON

Salutations

- 1. Ms. Raja Farhana**
Managing Director, Cisco Malaysia
- 2. Yang Berusaha Mr. Adrian Marcellus**
Chief Executive Officer, MyDigital Corporation
- 3. Yang Berbahagia Datuk Rick Ramli**
Chief Investment Officer of Private & Strategic Investments,
Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB)
- 4. Puan Siti Sapura Raffee**
Pengarah Bahagian Perundingan Digital, National Digital
Department (JDN)
- 5. Ms. Shazurawati Abd Karim**
Executive Vice President, TM One
- 6. Mr. Clarence Barboza**
Senior Director, Digital Impact Office, Cisco Asia Pacific, Japan and
Greater China

Members of the media

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning, Salam Perpaduan, and Salam Malaysia MADANI.

1. Firstly, I would like to thank Cisco for having me here today.
2. Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept. It is today's technology that is transforming industries, enhancing productivity, and is demanding that we rethink the future of our workforce.
3. The opportunities for AI are simply immense – from enhancing diagnostics and streamlining patient care, to optimising farming techniques. The potential of AI-driven solutions cuts across all sectors and geographical borders.
4. The banking sector, for example, has been using AI for some time. According to the Asian Institute of Chartered Bankers, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has the [potential to unlock](#) US\$113.4 billion (RM533.01 billion) in productive capacity in the Malaysian economy.
5. However, many companies in Malaysia have yet to fully adopt and leverage such technology. Cisco's [AI Readiness Index](#) highlighted that 87% of Malaysian organisations believe AI will have a significant impact on their business, but only 13% are fully prepared to deploy these technologies. Micro-, small- and medium enterprises (MSMEs), that form the backbone of our nation's economy, too have yet to fully embrace digital technology.

6. To realise AI's benefits, we must look at readiness in a holistic manner. We must invest in the right infrastructure, foster talent, and have in place a regulatory framework that encourages innovation while ensuring the responsible use of AI technology. Creating cyber resilience is equally important in protecting our digital assets, while creating trust among all stakeholders.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. There will be challenges that we will have to quickly overcome. No one should be left behind in our digital agenda. MSMEs, for example, face obstacles in incorporating AI into their operations mainly due to lack of expertise and cost.
8. To assist MSMEs, the Ministry of Digital has various initiatives that are under the purview of the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC). These include funding for tech adoption, business matching programmes, market access and finance facilitation, and more.
9. We also have an ongoing awareness programme for the general public called '**AI untuk Rakyat**'. Over 1 million Malaysians have successfully completed the online programme since it was rolled out in January this year.
10. Of course, one of the best ways to promote digital adoption is by showcasing real-time case studies. It's good to see that today's AI Day event will feature the latest AI innovations, and how they can be used to improve business operations. I have been informed that

industry experts from several tech giants are also present today to promote the usage of AI.

11. This event will also see partnerships being formed, including the collaboration between Cisco and MyDIGITAL Corporation (an agency under the Ministry of Digital) for its Executive Digital Leadership programme. I welcome such alliances, as we will get a better understanding of the issues concerning industry players, to enable us to come up with better policies, initiatives and regulations. A conducive ecosystem will benefit the nation's booming digital economy that is projected to contribute 25.5% of Malaysia's GDP by the end of 2025 – compared to 23% in 2022.
12. We value the power of AI and its economic impact and benefits. As such, the MADANI Government is committed to integrating AI holistically throughout our national agenda. This commitment is reflected via a series of initiatives – from the New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030), to the AI Talent Roadmap for Malaysia (2024-2030) and the Malaysia-Artificial Intelligence Consortium (MAIC).
13. We have seen law reforms, such as amendments to the Personal Data Protection Act 2010, and the introduction of the Cyber Security Act that came into force on August 26, 2024. We also hope to table a data-sharing bill in this upcoming parliamentary sitting. This bill is meant to facilitate and speed up the exchange and use of data between government agencies, while at the same time, ensuring privacy.

14. In addition to that, the Ministry of Digital, together with MyDIGITAL Corporation, is setting up the National AI Office (NAIO). It will begin operations in November. In tandem with existing ongoing initiatives, NAIO will act as a central authority and contribute to the mission of positioning Malaysia as a regional AI powerhouse, attracting global investors and fostering AI innovation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. Our nation's path to becoming a digitally-driven, high-income economy relies on strong investments in digital infrastructure and next-generation technologies, facilitated by public-private partnerships. The MoUs signed today under Cisco's Country Digital Acceleration Program in Malaysia attest to this commitment.
16. In the words of our Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, by leveraging partnerships with industry leaders, and strengthening collaboration among all stakeholders, particularly with academia and industry players, Malaysia can realise these goals and establish its role as a leading AI-driven nation in Southeast Asia.
17. Dato' Seri Anwar also said that the Government wants to empower all our citizens through digital inclusivity. This is extremely important. Digital technology is for everyone. We will ensure no one is left behind in our race to transform Malaysia into a digital nation. We will continue to be citizen-centric and inclusive, regardless of age, background or social standing. Our objective is to enhance the efficiency of public services and accessibility to these services for the people.

18. In doing so, we will ensure that the *rakyat* keep pace with the changes in the fast-evolving technology landscape. The launch of the AI hackathon in partnership with Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and MDEC, and Cisco's support for MyDigital's Executive Leadership Programme highlight how we can continue to nurture a future-ready talent pool that can participate and contribute to our digital economy.
19. The partnerships being formalised today are a testament to what can be achieved when the public and private sectors unite towards a shared vision.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

20. Today, AI is the driving force behind the future of our industries, public services, and economy. The potential for AI to enhance productivity, streamline processes, and unlock new avenues for growth is immense. It offers Malaysia an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen our global competitiveness while ensuring inclusive development for all citizens. By embracing AI, we can tackle pressing challenges, modernise key sectors, and secure long-term prosperity.
21. Cisco's AI Day offers a glimpse into what the future holds. As we look ahead, I hope that these collaborations will serve as a model for other organisations and sectors. This will help strengthen our digital economy but also ensure that all of us can enjoy the benefits of AI and other emerging technologies.

22. In conclusion, I would like to once again extend my thanks to Cisco and all stakeholders involved in today's event. Your efforts are critical to advancing Malaysia's digital future.
23. Let us continue to work together, innovate with purpose, and build a future where digital transformation serves the needs of every Malaysian.

Thank you.

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