



**SPEECH OF
DATUK SERI DR. NORAINI AHMAD
EDUCATION WORLD FORUM
“INNOVATION IN EDUCATION”
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A very good afternoon.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

[INTRODUCTION]

- 1) I am glad that we are finally able to meet in person after 2 years of travel restrictions.
- 2) I would like to thank the organizers for allowing me to share insights on Malaysia's innovative education with all of you today.
- 3) Allow me to begin by introducing the Malaysian higher education landscape.

[MALAYSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE]

- 4) In a nutshell, Malaysia is home to 20 public universities, 435 private higher education institutions, 105 community colleges and 36 polytechnics.
- 5) In total, approximately 1.2 million students are under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- 6) The driving force behind the Malaysian higher education landscape is the Malaysia Education Blueprint for Higher Education 2015-2025.
- 7) It highlights 10 shifts which touch on the development of high-quality graduates, the empowerment of higher education institutions and internationalization.
- 8) Five of our universities are ranked in the top 100 best universities in Asia, and the top 200 best universities in the world in the QS World Universities Ranking 2022.

9) And our capital city, Kuala Lumpur is consistently highly ranked in the QS Top Universities “Most Affordable Cities for Students”.

[GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY]

10) Graduate employability has been a concern for us in the higher education sector regardless of the situational occurrences.

11) However, this issue has been amplified during the pandemic.

12) A Tracer study conducted by the Policy Division of the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia shows that in 2019, Malaysia’s graduate employability was at 86.2%.

13) However, largely due to the pandemic, this percentage fell by 1.8% to 84.4% in 2020.

14) As a strategic response to avoid further decline, the Ministry implemented several intervention initiatives.

15) As a result, in 2021, our graduate employability rate improved by 1.1% to 85.5%.

16) In today’s presentation, I will share 5 of the intervention initiatives carried out in Malaysia.

[PENJANA KPT-CAP]

17) First is a reskilling and upskilling career advancement program referred to as ‘PENJANA KPT-CAP’.

18) The Malaysian government allocated RM150 million, equivalent to approximately 34 million USD for the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia to implement this program.

19) The 4 to 6-weeks program involving the industry benefitted 20,000 graduates.

- 20) The uniqueness of this program is the “Letter of Commitment” signed by participating companies with the Ministry, ensuring the employment of the graduates for at least 12 months upon program completion.

Ladies and gentlemen,

[TEACHING FACTORY]

- 21) At yesterday’s breakfast meeting, we were briefed on the long-term academic-industry partnerships in the UK.
- 22) We, in Malaysia, have also been acknowledging the importance of such partnerships.
- 23) We have been striving to ensure that our graduates are well prepared for the current and future demands of the job market.
- 24) In line with this, the Teaching Factory initiative has been implemented.
- 25) Our Teaching Factories are set up by the industry in universities for teaching and learning, as well as for training and services in related fields.
- 26) In this initiative, the industry offers equipment to be used at the universities which allows students to undergo the real working experience.
- 27) This set-up also allows students to put theory into practice, and exercise problem-solving techniques, as well as critical thinking while working in teams.
- 28) The Teaching Factory has been implemented by four of our public universities.
- 29) These 4 universities specialize in higher technical and technology programs that are practical-oriented.

[TRANSFORMATION OF TVET]

- 30) In Malaysia, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, TVET, has not been the first choice for those who wish to pursue their tertiary education.
- 31) In addition, TVET is run by 11 ministries, causing challenges in terms of coordination and regulation.
- 32) To address these challenges, the cabinet of Malaysia has approved the formation of a national TVET council, MTVET, at the end of 2020 to actualize the TVET agenda.
- 33) The MTVET is one of the Malaysian government's priorities and is a national agenda.
- 34) Malaysia's Prime Minister himself is the chairman of the council and the Minister of Higher Education is the chairman of the technical committee.
- 35) A national TVET meeting earlier this year resulted in the setting of the Government Industry TVET Coordination Body, GITC, which is led by the industry.
- 36) Its members consist of 12 individuals representing different industry sectors ranging from automotive and aerospace to food technology.
- 37) Their roles include advising the government on talent required by current and future industries, as well as the technologies that need focus at universities.
- 38) The progressive nature of this initiative will ensure that TVET will become a preferred choice among those interested in furthering their studies.

39) It will also close the gap between the qualifications of our graduates and available jobs in the market.

[FLEXIBLE EDUCATION-APEL & MICROCREDENTIALS]

40) The Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education strongly supports the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with emphasis on the fourth SDG on Quality Education.

41) We simultaneously champion Education for Sustainable Development through the empowerment of learners of all ages with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to address interconnected global challenges.

42) To achieve these goals, Malaysia emphasizes on Flexible Education.

43) We have a national policy known as the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning or APEL, which is administered by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency, MQA.

44) MQA regulates the accreditation of all programs in Malaysia to ensure that the quality of our higher education is never compromised.

45) Based on APEL, applicants can use their experiences to earn credits in their study program.

46) As of January 2022, we have more than 24,000 applicants pursuing APEL.

47) Additionally, several Malaysian higher education institutions offer short courses, known as micro-credentials to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, values and competencies that are suitable for non-traditional learners.

- 48) It allows learners to take short courses at different institutions and combine them for conversion into an awarded certification.
- 49) To date, we have more than 11,000 micro-credential courses in Malaysia.

[MOBILITY PROGRAMS]

- 50) Malaysia is an international education hub that offers education at affordable costs. Students who come to Malaysia are also able to experience its rich culture, which is, education in and of itself.
- 51) We currently have 131,000 international students enrolled in Malaysian higher education institutions.
- 52) And we target to host 250,000 international students by 2025.
- 53) One of our initiatives to achieve this is through the Education Tourism program known as EduTourism.
- 54) EduTourism will provide an immersive education experience in Malaysia's most scenic destinations that comes with exposure to rich cultures and diverse traditions.
- 55) EduTourism will soon be launched to enhance international student enrolment numbers while promoting our higher education institutions as part of Malaysia's tourism centres.
- 56) The program ranges between 1 day to 6 months and we welcome all those interested to gain an education while experiencing our diverse cultures and beautiful sights to enrol in this program.

[CLOSING]

- 57) In essence, Malaysia has been innovative in our education even before the pandemic struck.

58) Nevertheless, when movement restrictions were in place, we found the need to boost existing efforts to avoid compromising the quality of our higher education and graduate employability rates.

59) Should new situational occurrences arise, I believe we will be ready to take on the challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen,

60) I will end my speech with a quote by Malcolm X who once said, "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today".

With that, I thank you very much.