



**MINISTRY OF
INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

**YB SENATOR DATUK SERI UTAMA TENGKU ZAFRUL BIN
TENGKU ABDUL AZIZ**

MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI)

FOR

**THE MALAYSIA SMART MANUFACTURING
AWARDS DINNER**

1 DECEMBER | 4:30 pm

Dewan MATRADE, Aras 3, Menara MATRADE

- **YBhg. Dato' Wan Kamaruzaman Wan Ahmad, Chairman MBSB Group**
- **YBhg. Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Mamat, Chairman of MIDF**
- **YBhg. Dato' Hairil Yahri Yaacob, Secretary General of MITI**
- **All Deputy Secretary-Generals of MITI, Datuk Hanafi Sakri, Datuk Bahria Mohd Tamil, Dato' Mastura Ahmad Mustafa**
- **YBrs En. Rafe Haneef, Group Chief Executive Officer MBSB**
- **YBrs En. Azizi Hj Mustafa, Chief Executive Officer of MIDF**
- **YBrs En. Yap Keng Teck, Founder & Chief Business Strategist, Bizsphere Sdn Bhd and Head of Smart4wrld Ecosystem (*co-organiser of MSMA 2025*)**
- **Mr. John Carroll, Chief Executive Officer of Navigator Global**
- **Distinguished CEOs and representatives from MITI and Government Agencies**
- **Esteemed members of the Board and leadership team of MBSB Group**
- **Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen**

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, good evening, and Salam Malaysia MADANI

1. **Saya merakamkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan kepada MIDF, Bizsphere dan Smart4WRD. Kehadiran para pemimpin industri, rakan teknologi, PKS, syarikat pertengahan, agensi serta para**

inovator pada hari ini mencerminkan **tekad bersama kita** dalam **memperkokuh kemajuan industri negara**.

2. **Anugerah Malaysia Smart Manufacturing**, kini memasuki tahun kedua, terus menjadi **pemangkin penting**—mengiktiraf **kecemerlangan**, meraikan **inovasi** dan mendorong lebih banyak syarikat untuk melaksanakan **operasi yang lebih pintar serta berasaskan teknologi**.

Continuity with New Industrial Master Plan 2030

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. The **MSMA** is more than award ceremony; it is **a checkpoint – reminding us how far we have come, and how much further we must go** in driving Malaysia's industrial transformation.
4. At last year's inaugural MSMA, we underscored digitalisation as a core driver of the New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP2030). **That call remains as urgent today as it was then.**
5. **To remain competitive, we must evolve.** For example, NIMP 2030's mission to establish **3,000 smart factories** is not merely a target, but **a pledge to future-proof Malaysia's industry** through **automation, digital integration, data utilization, and workforce upskilling.**

6. By honouring excellence in **Smart SME, Smart Mid-Tier, Technology Excellence**, and **People Categories**, we celebrate both the pioneers of digital adoption, and the enablers — our local technology providers. Above all, we recognise leadership, capability-building, and the human dimension of industrial progress.

7. **The numbers speak for themselves.** I am pleased to share that, since NIMP2030 was launched:

- a. The **manufacturing sector's value added to GDP increased by 13.5% or RM45.3 billion** in value, to reach **RM382.0 billion in 2024** (*cf.* RM336.7 billion in 2021). This indicates sustained growth, contributed by higher investments, business expansions, as well as increasing exports.
- b. **Employment increased by 8.5% (or 222,000)**, reaching **2.84 million** in 2024 (*cf.* 2.62 million in 2021), indicating **a steady rise in job opportunities** within the industry, including jobs from new realized investments.
- c. The **median salary** in the manufacturing sector **rose by 26%** to **RM2,490 in 2024** (*cf.* RM1,976 in 2021) - indicating improved wage conditions in line with sectoral growth.

Malaysia's Economic Landscape and SME Performance

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. The consistent strength of our industrial and manufacturing sector have translated into recent trade performance. From January to October 2025, trade reached **RM2.5 trillion**, with **exports** amounting to **RM1.3 trillion**. These figures reflect the **resilience and competitiveness** of Malaysian businesses, and the **vital role of SMEs in anchoring supply chains, creating jobs, and driving export growth**.
9. NIMP2030 has also contributed to the **13.2% year-on-year increase in approved investments** for January-September 2025, at **RM285 billion**, set to create over **150,000 jobs for Malaysians**.
10. Hence, to take advantage of this growth, **SME readiness remains a priority**. To stay competitive globally, our SMEs must scale, innovate, and venture abroad – with **access to capital, technology, talent and reliable guidance**.

Strengthening SMEs through 'Navigator Global'

Ladies and Gentlemen

11. The **merger**, the **combined strengths of MBSB Group and MIDF** have **further reinforced support for SME development** through various initiatives — making the **Navigator Global a timely next step**.

12. Today, that SME support is accelerated through **MBSB's collaboration with Navigator Global and Santander – guiding SMEs to scale up with structured insights, tailored export pathways, and trusted service providers.**
13. By **easing regulatory requirements**, connecting firms to credible partners, and offering actionable intelligence, **the platform enables SMEs to enter new markets** with greater clarity and confidence.
14. I am also pleased to know that MBSB business customers will enjoy **complimentary access to Navigator Global's Standard Package for one year.** For SMEs and mid-tier companies, Navigator Global truly complements MITI, MATRADE and our agencies' support. **Export success demands readiness, innovation and guidance** – tools that strengthen preparation and empower growth.

Closing

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. I would like to add that **manufacturing** is more than an economic engine; it is **the backbone of our nation's well-being** - contributing over one-fifth of GDP and employing millions.
16. It sustains livelihoods by **providing millions of jobs, anchors supply chains that keep businesses competitive, and drives innovation that uplifts communities.**

17. **Every factory floor, every skilled worker, and every enterprise contributes** not only to GDP but to the dignity of families, the resilience of industries, and the confidence of Malaysia's future. When manufacturing thrives, **businesses grow, households prosper,** and the **nation stands prouder, and stronger in the global economy.**
18. As this is my penultimate day serving as Minister of MITI, today's ceremony holds special meaning to me. From my very first day in MITI, it has been **a real privilege to have worked closely with industry partners, agencies, financiers, tech enablers, SMEs and mid-tier firms,** to drive Malaysia's industrial transformation. Together we **overcame challenges, seized opportunities and reinforced our economic fundamentals.** Your collaboration has made this journey deeply meaningful and fulfilling. For that, I express **my sincerest gratitude.**
19. To MIDF, MBSB, Bizsphere, Smart4WRD and all ecosystem partners, **thank you for your trust.** I urge you to continue supporting MITI and working closely with my successor to advance NIMP 2030, and other sectoral policies.
20. To all award recipients and nominees, your achievements prove **Malaysia can compete globally** – thriving through innovation, perseverance, and collaboration. Our nation has so much going for it, and you should **be proud to be part of the national movement reshaping Malaysia's manufacturing landscape.**

21. So, to the organisers of the MSMA 2025, thank you for elevating excellence within Malaysia's SME community. Let us keep building an industrial ecosystem so Malaysia can position itself as a regional hub for smart manufacturing.
22. Dengan lafaz Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, saya dengan sukacitanya merasmikan the Malaysian Smart Manufacturing Awards 2025.

Wabillahi taufik wal hidayah, wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Sekina, terima kasih.