



OPENING REMARKS BY

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**MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY,
MALAYSIA**

**MICROSOFT AI TOUR 2025
CEO EXECUTIVE CONNECTION**

MITEC KUALA LUMPUR

11:20 AM – 11:30 AM | 28 MAY 2025

[SALUTATIONS]

Distinguished guests,

Microsoft leadership, valued partners, industry captains,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum, good morning, and Salam Malaysia MADANI.

INTRODUCTION

1. It is an honour to address such a distinguished gathering at today's Microsoft AI Tour. This event is more than a milestone for Microsoft and Malaysia, it signals to ASEAN and the world that Malaysia's digital ambitions are becoming reality, powered by global partnerships and bold investments.
2. On behalf of the Malaysian Government, I extend my warmest appreciation to Microsoft for your steadfast confidence in Malaysia. The launch of the Malaysia West Cloud Region is not just a technological achievement. It is

a catalyst for partnership, innovation, and shared regional progress in the digital era.

3. Today, our focus exceeds infrastructure alone. We are here to recognise the immense value that these digital investments bring: empowering Malaysian businesses, transforming public service, and unlocking opportunities for every Malaysian, and every ASEAN citizen, to benefit from the digital economy.

MALAYSIA–MICROSOFT: A BLUEPRINT FOR DIGITAL INCLUSION AND DELIVERY

Ladies and gentlemen,

4. The Malaysia West Cloud Region, anchored by three high-availability zones in Cyberjaya and MRANTI Technology Park, brings world-class security, ultra-low latency, and robust compliance to Malaysia. This positions our country as a preferred hub for digital business in Southeast Asia.
5. Malaysia's ambition is to lead not only in digital scale, but also in sustainability. We have launched comprehensive guidelines for the sustainable development of data

centres—focusing on reducing energy consumption, managing carbon and water use, and setting high benchmarks for operators. These efforts are core to our commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and ensure our digital future is resilient and responsible.

6. Our partnership with Microsoft is driven by a shared focus on inclusivity and talent. The National AI Innovation Hub and “AI for Malaysia’s Future” initiative will empower 800,000 Malaysians with digital and AI skills, preparing our workforce for a fast-evolving global economy.
7. These initiatives go beyond large corporations. They are designed to uplift the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that represent 97% of Malaysia’s business landscape. Through BINA AI Malaysia, we ensure even the smallest firms can innovate, grow, and participate in global digital value chains, making the digital revolution truly inclusive.
8. Our progress is clear in the data. In 2024, Malaysia approved a record RM133.3 billion in new digital investments, bringing the total approved from 2021 to 2024 to RM278 billion across 23 major projects. These investments, anchored by advanced data centres and

cloud infrastructure, have created nearly 88,000 new jobs and established Malaysia as a digital leader in ASEAN.

9. Microsoft's commitment is pivotal: from Project Big Blue in Johor and Project Baby Blue in Cyberjaya, to the USD1 billion Bersama Malaysia Initiative and the recent USD2.2 billion GoSEA announcement. These are investments in Malaysia's future, our people, and our status as a regional AI and digital hub.

DIGITAL INVESTMENT AND POLICY: THE ENGINE OF TRANSFORMATION

10. The impact of Microsoft's investments, along with other strategic digital projects, has propelled Malaysia into the upper echelons of regional digital competitiveness.
11. As of April 2025, Malaysia has a digital investment pipeline of RM59.1 billion, with a projected IT load of more than 300 MW. From 2021 to 2024, approved investments in data centres and cloud computing alone total RM113.8 billion, with 23 landmark projects proposing nearly 1,900 MW in IT load.

12. Our policy ecosystem supports this momentum. The government has introduced the Digital Ecosystem Acceleration (DESAC) incentive to attract high-quality, sustainable digital infrastructure. All new data centres must now meet strict standards, including Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE), Carbon Usage Effectiveness (CUE), and Water Usage Effectiveness (WUE), so Malaysia remains attractive to global investors and leads the region in green digital growth.
13. Malaysia's AI ecosystem is vibrant: we have over 140 local AI solution providers in the Malaysia Digital framework, delivering real-world applications in healthcare, agriculture, cities, and manufacturing.
14. Our talent focus is seen in the AI Talent Roadmap 2024–2033 and the launch of Malaysia's first AI faculty at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. By collaborating with global partners, Malaysia is diversifying its semiconductor supply chain and training the next generation of engineers and AI specialists.

ASEAN AND MALAYSIA: RISING TOGETHER IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. The Malaysia West Cloud Region is being launched as ASEAN stands as the world's fifth-largest economy, with GDP exceeding USD3.8 trillion and a population of over 680 million.
16. In 2024, ASEAN's merchandise trade grew by 8.9% to USD3.84 trillion, services exports reached more than USD550 billion (USD554.2 billion), and FDI inflows remained robust at approximately USD224 billion (USD224.3 billion). These are clear signs of a region on the rise.
17. Malaysia's digital economy is projected to contribute 25.5% of GDP this year, with national GDP growth forecast between 4.5 and 5.5%. Our ambitions are tightly linked to our role as ASEAN Chair in 2025, where we are championing the theme: "Advancing for a Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable ASEAN."

ASEAN INTEGRATION: STRATEGY, VISION, AND RESULTS

18. As ASEAN Chair, Malaysia is driving several landmark initiatives:

- a. **Firstly, the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and ASEAN Community Vision 2045:** These frameworks, launched at the 46th ASEAN Summit, chart a path for a cohesive, competitive, and future-ready region;
- b. **Secondly, the Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA):** On track for substantial conclusion this year, DEFA will harmonise digital standards, enable seamless data flows, and unlock up to USD2 trillion in digital economic value by 2030;
- c. **Thirdly, the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap (BSBR):** Over 80% of digital action items delivered, including rollout of unique business IDs and stronger cybersecurity frameworks; and
- d. **The ASEAN Industrial Project Based Initiative (AIPBI):** Turning policy into practice to scale up industrial projects and value chain integration across the region.

19. But resilience is about more than economic data. It is about shared values and leadership. In the face of global trade tensions, ASEAN has chosen engagement and multilateralism over retaliation. We are intensifying efforts to grow intra-ASEAN trade, now at 23%, to keep our region strong, stable, and future-focused.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY: NEW STANDARDS

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

20. Sustainability is central to our digital journey. The Malaysia West Cloud Region supports both our ESG ambitions and ASEAN's energy transition, powering growth that is green, resilient, and future-proof.
21. Our policies enable real progress. Malaysia's Corporate Renewable Energy Supply Scheme (CRESS) allows major consumers, including data centres, to directly source renewable energy from independent producers. This supports our target for 70% renewable energy in Malaysia's generation mix by 2050, and enables

businesses to meet global ESG commitments transparently and competitively.

22. Malaysia's regulatory environment now enables not just growth, but sustainable and responsible growth. Our guidelines for data centre sustainability, renewable energy, and transparent digital infrastructure are setting new regional standards.

BUSINESS, CONNECTIVITY, AND CALLS TO ACTION

23. My invitation to all partners and stakeholders is clear:
 - a. Integrate more Malaysian SMEs into supply chains, ensuring the digital dividend is widely shared;
 - b. Co-develop digital content and platforms that meet ASEAN's diverse business and community needs;
 - c. Invest in talent and innovation ecosystems, so our people are ready for the jobs of the future; as well as

d. Collaborate on responsible, secure AI, with digital trust and public good at the heart of all progress.

24. With the right policy, infrastructure, and leadership, Malaysia and ASEAN are ready not just to participate in the next wave of digital and AI innovation, but to lead it.

CONCLUSION: BUILDING OUR SHARED DIGITAL FUTURE

Ladies and gentlemen,

25. Today, as we celebrate the launch of the Malaysia West Cloud Region, let us remember: This is only the beginning. The investments, partnerships, and vision we forge now will shape our region's resilience and prosperity for years to come.

26. Malaysia stands ready to lead, to partner, and to deliver. We are committed to a digitally connected, resilient, and forward-looking ASEAN; open for business, open to collaboration, and open to the world.

27. Let us seize this moment to unlock growth, create new value, and ensure a future where digital prosperity is truly shared by all.

Thank you.