NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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Malaysia not lagging in AI literacy push

I READ with great interest the letter "Make AI literacy courses compulsory in university" (*The Star*, Aug 19; https://tinyurl.com/yr3tr4uh).

The call for the Malaysian education authorities to embed formal AI training into higher education is both timely and vital as artificial intelligence fundamentally transforms how we learn, research and work across every industry.

But while the National University of Singapore's mandatory AI modules serve as an inspiring benchmark, Malaysia is by no means trailing behind in digital readiness.

Through centralised initiatives, the Higher Education Ministry (MOHE) has already equipped students and educators across public universities nationwide with enterprise Google and Microsoft accounts.

This massive rollout grants thousands of undergraduates institutional access to modern digital ecosystems and built-in AI tools, effectively solving one of the most critical hurdles: equitable access to technology.

This proactive momentum aligns directly with national policy. Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir has emphasised that AI integration is vital for building intellectual capital, placing digital transformation at the core of the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035.

With public institutions making such strides, private universities should follow suit by adopting similar enterprise models to ensure all tertiary students, regardless of institution, are equally prepared for an automated workforce.

However, software access is only the baseline. As universities design structured AI literacy curricula, the focus must extend beyond basic prompt engineering towards quantitative decision-making.

Because AI outputs are inherently probabilistic rather than deterministic, students require strong analytical reasoning, data interpretation and statistical risk awareness.

Grounding AI education in quantitative decision-making enables graduates to interrogate underlying data, evaluate statistical uncertainty, validate predictions and spot algorithmic hallucinations or biases.

By translating widespread tool access into structured AI literacy, grounded in quantitative decision-making, supported by policy and expanded across both public and private sectors, we can guarantee that all Malaysian graduates remain exceptionally competitive on the global stage.

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