



PRESS RELEASE



MDEC'S MDX FORUM 2026 CHARTS MALAYSIA'S NEXT PHASE OF AI GROWTH BEYOND INFRASTRUCTURE

Forum brings states, investors and industry together as MDEC strengthens its role in connecting digital investment with Malaysian businesses, talent and markets

PETALING JAYA, 28 SEPTEMBER 2026 – Malaysia is entering the next phase of its digital growth, with the focus shifting from attracting AI and digital infrastructure investment to ensuring that these investments create stronger Malaysian companies, high-value jobs, home-grown innovation and wider economic opportunities across the country.

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), an agency under the Ministry of Digital, brought together around 300 representatives from global investors, technology companies, state agencies and Malaysian enterprises at MDX Forum 2026 today to examine how this next phase can be translated into tangible economic value.

Minister of Digital YB Gobind Singh Deo said Malaysia's next phase of digital development must focus on converting the country's strong digital foundations into tangible economic value.

"Malaysia has set a clear direction towards becoming an inclusive and sustainable AI Nation by 2030. The next step is to ensure that our investments in AI and digital infrastructure translate into stronger Malaysian businesses, higher-value jobs and more home-grown innovation. Government can put the foundations in place, but the real economic impact will come when industry turns these foundations

into commercially viable products, services and solutions.”

The direction is anchored by Malaysia Digital 2030 (MD2030), which sets Malaysia’s implementation pathway towards AI Nation 2030 and signals a broader shift from being predominantly a consumer of technology towards building, commercialising and scaling more local innovation. The Minister’s MDX address also positioned MDEC as the link between national policy and economic opportunity, connecting businesses with commercialisation, investment, talent and markets.

MDEC Chairman Ganesh Kumar Bangah said Malaysia is entering a new phase in which the focus must move beyond AI adoption towards building an AI economy capable of generating measurable and lasting value.

“Malaysia’s AI opportunity is no longer simply about adopting AI. It is about building an AI economy around it. The real question is whether AI is creating measurable value by helping businesses become more productive, enabling SMEs to scale, creating Malaysian products and services, and opening higher-value opportunities for our people. This requires an ecosystem of companies that build AI, businesses that adopt it, talent that can work with it, investors willing to back it, and markets where Malaysian solutions can grow.”

MDEC’s investment role spans the investor journey, from positioning Malaysia as a destination for digital businesses and facilitating market entry, to supporting companies as they establish, grow and expand. As a specialist Investment Promotion Agency for Malaysia’s digital economy, MDEC also works to connect global investment with Malaysian businesses, talent and the wider ASEAN market.

Supporting this role is the Digital Investment Office (DIO), which provides a coordinated facilitation platform for high-impact digital investments. DIO is designed to make the investor journey while connecting investment with relevant incentives, locations and ecosystem support. Malaysia’s existing Malaysia Digital ecosystem provides an important base for this next phase.

As of the second quarter of 2026, more than 7,000 companies had been awarded Malaysia Digital Status, with over 4,400 active companies. Of the 119 companies approved during Q2 2026, 44 were primarily involved in artificial intelligence, while AI, data centre and cloud, and global business services together accounted for nearly 70 per cent of new approvals.

The 119 companies approved during the quarter are projected to contribute RM133.6 billion in investments and 4,922 jobs over their first five years, strengthening the pipeline of digital activities that can connect with Malaysian businesses, talent and state economies.

Malaysia Digital Status is also part of MDEC’s wider investment proposition. Beyond recognition, eligible companies are offered a set of incentives, rights and privileges, subject to applicable approvals and conditions, with the flexibility to operate, grow, expand or invest across Malaysia. The initiative also provides companies with access to facilitation and Malaysia’s wider digital ecosystem.

During MDX Forum today, 12 companies were recognised with Malaysia Digital (MD) Status,

representing a diverse range of digital activities including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Centre & Cloud, Internet of Things (IoT), Fintech and Creative Media Technology.

The new MD Status recipients are located across Johor, Kedah, Melaka, Perak, Penang, Putrajaya, Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, with both Malaysian and foreign-owned companies represented. The recognition further expands Malaysia's digital ecosystem and reflects the growing diversity of digital activities taking place across the country.

MDEC Chief Executive Officer Anuar Fariz Fadzil said the next phase of digital growth would be defined by what happens after investment lands in Malaysia. An investment is truly converted when it creates lasting value beyond the initial project by strengthening Malaysian businesses, developing skilled talent, creating new demand and opening opportunities across the states.

"Our focus is therefore not simply on attracting more investment but connecting that investment to the wider Malaysian digital ecosystem so that more businesses and communities can participate in the AI economy. The next chapter will not be defined simply by how much Malaysia invests in AI, but it will be defined by the value Malaysia creates with it."

MDX Forum 2026 placed particular emphasis on the role of states in capturing this value. Rather than pursuing identical investment propositions, states were encouraged to identify where their existing economic strengths and capabilities could position them within the AI value chain.

These opportunities extend beyond data centres to areas such as cloud, cybersecurity, semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, energy solutions, AI services and the application of AI across established industries. The approach reflects MDX's focus on strengthening state-level execution of national digital priorities and building stronger connections between states, industry and investors.

The forum also highlighted AI Compute as an important enabler for Malaysia's next phase of AI adoption, particularly by making computing capabilities, AI models and services more accessible to SMEs, AI builders and innovators. In his closing remarks, Anuar emphasised the importance of translating infrastructure investments into greater productivity, stronger businesses and new sources of economic growth.

MDEC will continue working with states, investors and industry across the investment journey, strengthening digital investment propositions, facilitating companies as they establish and expand, connecting global investment with Malaysian businesses and talent, and enabling more local companies to participate in the opportunities created by the AI economy.

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