



**SPEECH:**

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**KEYNOTE ADDRESS:**

**MALAYSIA-CHINA FORUM ON EV, BATTERY AND NEW  
ENERGY TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION  
(MCEF 2026)**

**ON:**

**12 MAY 2026 (TUESDAY)**

**10.00 AM**

**VENUE:**

**ASIA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS,  
KUALA LUMPUR**

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,  
Salam sejahtera and salam Malaysia Madani

## **SALUTATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. The world today is not merely changing. It is being reshaped. Across the globe.. **economies are being redefined by technology, artificial intelligence, digitalisation, automation, and the global transition towards clean and sustainable energy.**
2. What we are witnessing today is not a small adjustment in industry. It is the remaking of industry itself. **Manufacturing is becoming smarter. Mobility is becoming electrified. Energy systems are becoming cleaner and more decentralised. Even the meaning of competitiveness has changed.** Nations are no longer judged only by the resources they **possess** - but **by** the talent they develop, the technology they master, and the speed at which they adapt.

3. **This is why electric vehicles, battery technologies and new energy systems are so important.** They represent a new industrial ecosystem - one that connects research and development, advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, software, energy storage, charging infrastructure and, most importantly, human capital.
4. In this new landscape, **countries that move early will shape the future. Countries that invest in talent will lead the future** and countries that build strong partnerships will benefit from the future.
5. Malaysia **recognises** this reality. We are not here to watch the future economy from the sidelines. We are here to participate in it... to contribute to it and to position Malaysia as a trusted partner in the region's next phase of industrial growth.
6. Furthermore, the global economy is undergoing a fundamental transformation. What we are witnessing today is not incremental change, but a structural shift driven by technology, artificial intelligence,

digitalization, and the global transition towards clean and sustainable energy.

## **MALAYSIA–CHINA: FROM TRADE PARTNERSHIP TO FUTURE INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. Over the decades, Malaysia and China relationship has grown far beyond traditional diplomacy. It has become a strong economic partnership, supported by trade, investment, manufacturing, infrastructure, technology and people-to-people ties.
8. In 2025, **China remained Malaysia's largest trading partner for the 17th consecutive year, with bilateral trade reaching RM541.90 billion.** This reflects confidence. It reflects a partnership that has stood the test of time and continues to grow with new strategic meaning.
9. But as the world enters a new industrial era, **Malaysia and China must now move beyond trading with each other.** We must begin building the industries of the future together.

10. Malaysia values the foundation of trust that has brought our two countries to where we are today. But in today's fast-changing world, **trust must also be translated into future-facing cooperation.**
11. This means expanding our collaboration into electric mobility, battery technology, renewable energy, smart manufacturing, digital systems and talent development. Malaysia brings strategic geography, a growing industrial base and a young, trainable workforce. China brings technological depth, industrial scale and proven leadership in new energy industries.
12. Together, we can build more than bilateral success. We can strengthen regional value chains, support ASEAN's industrial transformation and create a partnership that is not only good for Malaysia and China, but meaningful for the future of this region.

## **EV, BATTERY AND NEW ENERGY AS THE NEXT GROWTH FRONTIER**

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. The transition towards electric vehicles, battery technologies and new energy systems is moving at a pace the world has never seen before. **This is no longer a niche environmental agenda. It has become one of the most important industrial revolutions of our time.**
  
14. In 2025 alone, **global electric vehicle sales reached approximately 21 million units, making up one in every four new cars sold worldwide.** China continued to lead this transition, **producing more than 16 million new energy vehicles**, while in **ASEAN-6, electric and electrified vehicle sales grew by 62 per cent** during the first nine months of 2025.
  
15. **But this transition is not limited to vehicles.** It extends to batteries, charging infrastructure, semiconductors, software systems, energy storage, grid readiness and advanced manufacturing. In other

words, EV is not a single industry. It is an entire ecosystem.

16. Malaysia has made a clear decision. We do not intend to remain a passive consumer in this transition. We want to be an active participant in the regional EV and clean energy ecosystem.
17. Under our national low-carbon mobility agenda, **Malaysia aims for electric vehicles to account for 15 per cent of total industry volume by 2030, and 80 per cent by 2050. Meanwhile, under the National Energy Transition Roadmap, Malaysia is also targeting 70 per cent renewable energy installed capacity by 2050.**
18. For Malaysia, this agenda is not only about greener mobility. **It is about creating new jobs, attracting high-value investments, strengthening industrial capability and preparing our people for the economy of the future.**

19. This is why.. I believe EV, battery and new energy must be seen together - not as separate sectors, but as one strategic national growth frontier. It is a mobility transition. It is an energy transition. It is an industrial transition. And ultimately, it is a talent transition.

## **TVET AND TALENT AS THE ENGINE OF NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS**

Ladies and gentlemen,

20. At the heart of every industrial transformation is one critical factor talent. Technology may open the door, investment may build the foundation, **but it is human capital that determines whether a nation can truly compete, innovate and lead.**
21. No country can build a strong EV, battery or new energy ecosystem without a skilled workforce to support it. We need technicians, engineers, system designers, battery specialists, software talent, energy managers, maintenance experts and innovators who understand not only theory, but the real demands of industry.

22. This is why TVET is no longer a secondary pathway. TVET is a strategic national agenda. Let me be clear: TVET is not an alternative option. **TVET is Malaysia's first line of readiness for the future economy.**
  
23. The results already speak for themselves. **Last year national graduate employability has reached 95.9 per cent compare to 95.6 in previous year (2024).** These are not small achievements. They prove that when training is aligned with industry, our young people are not only employable, but highly relevant to the economy.
  
24. Moreover, Malaysia is strengthening TVET to support high-growth sectors, particularly advanced manufacturing, digital economy, green technology and energy transition industries. **We are also targeting the creation of 700,000 new manufacturing jobs and 500,000 digital economy jobs.**
  
25. But the real question before us is this: are we preparing our young people merely for the industries of today.. or

are we preparing them to lead the industries of tomorrow?

26. Traditional education models alone are no longer sufficient. Curriculum must adapt faster. Industry must be more deeply involved. Training institutions must be closer to the factory floor, the research lab, the charging station, the battery plant and the real production environment.
27. In this new economy, **industry must become a co-designer of talent**. TVET institutions must become part of the industrial ecosystem. And our graduates must leave training not only with certificates, but with confidence, competence and the ability to keep learning as technology continues to evolve.

## **CLOSING**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

28. Malaysia enters this transition with confidence. **In 2025, Malaysia recorded RM426.7 billion in approved investments... *the highest in our nation's history*** -

involving more than 8,000 projects and nearly 245,000 potential new jobs. This reflects growing confidence in Malaysia's stability, infrastructure, talent ecosystem and long-term policy direction.

29. But I believe, investment numbers alone are not enough. **What matters now is execution.** Policies must translate into programmes. Partnerships must translate into capability and industrial growth must translate into opportunities for our people.
30. In this regard, I welcome the establishment of the **Green and Smart Mobility Cooperation Platform** as an important mechanism to deepen cooperation in EV, battery and new energy innovation.
31. I also welcome the launch of the **Flagship EV Talent Programme**, which aims to develop **10,000 highly skilled professionals over the next five years** through strong industry-TVET collaboration.
32. Lastly, I want to leave with a note that the future will not wait for countries that are still preparing. It will belong to

nations that prepare their people before the world changes again. That is why Malaysia is ready to move with China as a trusted partner, industry as a co-builder, and talent as the true engine of our future growth.

Thank you.

Wabillahi taufiq walhidayah,

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.