

TARIKH : 3 MAC 2023
AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 9

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Biggest ever international technology investment in Malaysia will advance economy and create highly skilled jobs, says Anwar

BY HAYATUN RAZAK
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Amazon Web Services' (AWS) RM25.5 billion investment in a new infrastructure region in the country will advance the Malaysia Madani vision of a highly skilled, innovative, prosperous and sustainable economy, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The AWS investment is the biggest international technology investment that has ever been made in Malaysia.

Anwar said that bringing access to AWS infrastructure, technologies and cloud skills programmes to Malaysia will unlock opportunities for local businesses of all sizes to build and expand globally, cultivate a highly skilled workforce, spur new job creation, and deliver long-term economic growth.

"Today's announcement is a vote of support for Malaysia's leadership in the global digital economy, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration with AWS to advance our nation's cloud-first ambitions," the Prime Minister said in his speech - which was delivered virtually - at Amazon Cloud Day yesterday.

Meanwhile, Economic Affairs Minister Rafizi Ramli who was present at the event, said that in January 2022, AWS became the first international Cloud Service Provider (CSP) to sign a Cloud Framework Agreement (CFA) with the government, and will continue upskilling public officials in cloud technologies in line with its 'Cloud First' strategy.

"This is a significant development that



From left: AWS Malaysia country manager worldwide public sector Chuah Seng Heng and head of enterprise Azhar Abdullah; Petronas president group CEO Datuk Tengku Muhammad Taufik Tengku Kamadaja Aziz; Deputy Human Resources Minister Mustapha Sakmut; AWS Asean managing director Conor McNamara; Tengku Zafrul; Rafizi; AWS VP technology Mal-Lan Tomssen-Bukovec; Deputy Communications and Digital Minister Teo Nie Ching; AWS Asean regional managing director Eric Conrad; and AWS APJ head of public policy Quint Simon at AWS Cloud Day.

will have a profound impact on Malaysia's digital transformation and innovation efforts. The investment by AWS is particularly timely as the country is undergoing critical reforms to restructure and digitalise its economy.

"Malaysia needs real-time, granular data made available, via an environment conducive to experimentation and learning. The prerequisite for this is affordable, scalable, and secure data infrastructure, and cloud computing platforms like AWS provide all three ingredients. The government is therefore committed to supporting their rapid adoption," said Rafizi.

"The right enabling ecosystem will increase Malaysia's attractiveness to investors in the digital space, and help us become the foremost digital centre in Asean," he added.

The Ministry of Economy is leading Malaysia's digital transformation via the MyDigital initiative, which aims to drive innovation and the adoption of frontier technologies across all sectors of the economy.

International Trade and Industry

Minister Tengku Zafrul Aziz said the investment by AWS will cause a huge spillover not just in technology front but also in getting local companies more involved in the digital economy, especially small and medium enterprises (SME).

"We are still waiting for the final numbers of job opportunities to be created from this investment, but I have been informed that AWS will eventually have 80% of its workforce made up of Malaysians. Besides, the cloud infrastructure will also encourage other foreign businesses to come to Malaysia," he told reporters.

Tengku Zafrul shared that a new foreign direct investment (FDI) target for Malaysia is being finalised and will be announced on March 8.

"Our FDI target should be in percentage terms, not in absolute terms. And we need to make sure we have realistic as well as aggressive target," he said.

The 12th Malaysia Plan has set a target for private investment which is expected to grow at 3.8% per annum or an average of RM258 billion versus the 11th Malaysia Plan of RM233 billion a year.