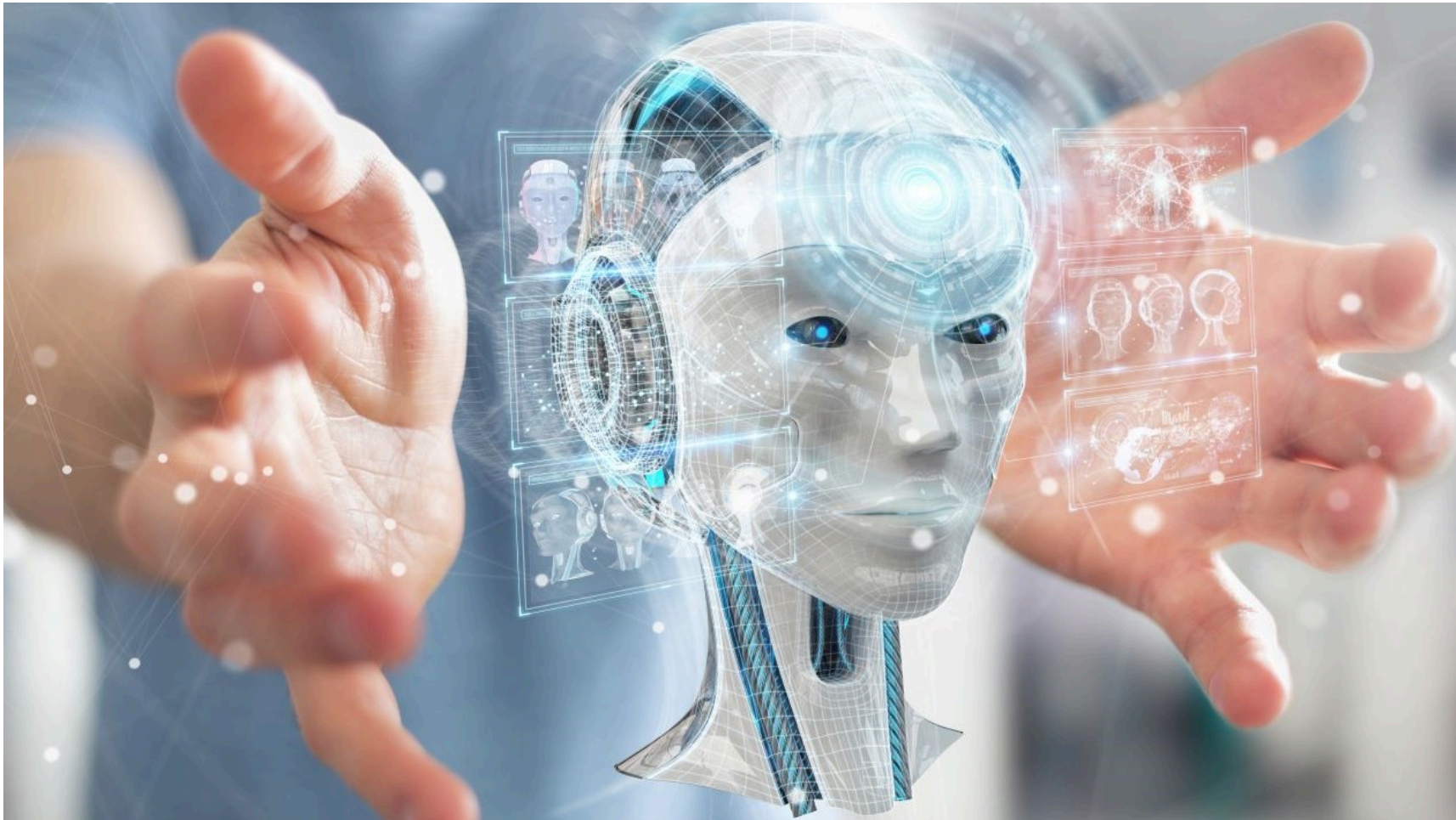


Malaysia: Advances AI with a Focus on Safety and Ethics

Alita Sharon(<https://archive.opengovasia.com/author/alita-sharon/>) | December 5, 2024(<https://archive.opengovasia.com/2024/12/05/>)



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Malaysia is advancing its efforts to deploy Artificial Intelligence (<https://www.bernama.com/en/general/news.php?id=2371007>) (AI) comprehensively across sectors to drive development and improve societal well-being. At the same time, the nation is steadfast in ensuring AI's ethical use, addressing potential risks, and preventing misuse. This dual approach reflects the country's ambition to harness AI's transformative potential responsibly while safeguarding public interests.



Image adapted from BERNAMA

In Perak, the state government has initiated various programmes to promote AI usage among key groups, including government servants, entrepreneurs, and local communities. These initiatives, implemented by Digital Perak through its Innovation and Multimedia Hub (HiM), aim to improve AI literacy and adoption.

AI training sessions for government officials are designed to enhance public service delivery efficiency, while seminars for digital entrepreneurs focus on equipping them with tools to leverage AI in business.

Additionally, courses on utilising AI for social media platforms, such as TikTok, and periodic awareness briefings for communities and schools, aim to address gaps in AI understanding. Mohd Azlan Helmi, Chairman of the State Communications, Multimedia, and Non-Governmental Organisation Committee, emphasised that these activities aim to improve quality of life and career opportunities.

The programmes have drawn significant participation from diverse groups, including job seekers, students, persons with disabilities, and those from low-income households, highlighting the widespread interest in AI's potential to empower and uplift communities.

While Malaysia is eager to integrate AI into daily life, the government remains vigilant (<https://www.bernama.com/en/general/news.php?id=2370985>) about its misuse. Deputy Communications Minister Teo Nie Ching revealed a significant rise in AI-generated explicit content, with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) removing 1,225 instances of such material as of December 2024, compared to just 186 cases in 2022.

Alarming, child sexual exploitation content surged from 34 cases in 2022 to 800 in 2024. To combat this, the government has proposed amendments to the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, which would impose penalties of up to RM1 million (US\$ 211,000) in fines and five years in prison for distributing explicit content for commercial purposes.

These measures underscore Malaysia's unwavering commitment to protecting vulnerable groups, safeguarding digital spaces, and upholding ethical standards in an increasingly digital, borderless landscape.

The government is also addressing the growing use of AI in scams. Deputy Communications Minister Teo noted that MCMC identified 274 fake advertisements impersonating government bodies within just 13 days. These scams, often facilitated through paid advertisements on social media platforms, target unsuspecting Malaysians.

"Social media platforms must take responsibility and cannot profit from scammers deceiving Malaysians," Deputy Communications Minister Teo asserted, calling for greater accountability from tech giants.

To counterbalance these challenges, Malaysia is fostering the responsible use of AI through initiatives that encourage positive content creation. Programmes such as the Effective Content Creator on TikTok course, organised by the Tun Abdul Razak Broadcasting and Information Institute, empower digital creators to produce educational and impactful materials.

Similarly, the Creators IRL programme not only raises awareness about online safety but also offers grants to support content creators in addressing critical issues such as fraud and cyber safety.

Under the 2025 Budget, the government has allocated RM30 million (US\$ 6.3 million) to the National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (FINAS) to support youth-focused creative projects as part of the MADANI Creative Youth Community initiative.

These efforts aim to inspire a new generation of digital creators to use AI constructively, benefiting society at large.

Malaysia's approach to AI adoption is both ambitious and measured. By investing in education, promoting ethical practices, and implementing strict regulations, the nation is setting a benchmark for balanced AI integration.

While AI holds immense potential to transform industries and improve lives, Malaysia's vigilance in addressing its risks ensures that progress is achieved responsibly, fostering trust and confidence in this powerful technology.



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