

Understanding of AI facilitates acceptance of technology: Expert

SERDANG: With AI technology, one of the branches behind Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) increasingly taking place in the economic and industrial landscape globally, Malaysians are becoming worried, seeing it as a threat rather than a positive step forward.

Several experts said the lack of understanding among the public of the true context of the importance of AI led to the perception that it would take over human functions and subsequently "conquer the world".

To such individuals, the application of AI would eliminate employment opportunities for humans, replacing them with machines, as it is happening in some employment sectors currently, such as the hospitality sector.

However, that assumption is completely unfounded because the transition to AI technology will not completely replace human resources, but will create highly skilled job opportunities that can be filled by individuals.

"Society needs to change and be ready to accept the use of AI technology because that technology will allow the country to produce a new generation of workers who can use various technology applications, thus increasing employment opportunities for the people.

"In the past, the country's labour industry depended on foreign labour. This will change with AI technology, which will also help deal with problems in various sectors such as agriculture," said Prof

Dr Rusli Abdullah.

The National Council of Professors ICT Cluster deputy chairman sees the AI For the People programme launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Tuesday as one of the best initiatives of the unity government in disseminating the importance and benefits of the technology.

"A basic understanding of AI technology is very important because it is the most important stage in attracting the community to together adapt the technology to realise the government's aspiration towards building a digital economy thus generating higher value on the world stage."

He said society will also be able to open a wider context that AI

technology is not a substitute for human labour but complements it and if explored well, it could inject positive effects into various sectors.

This is also in line with the "The Economy Impact Of Generative AI: The Future of Work In Malaysia" report issued by the Malaysia Centre for 4th Industrial Revolution that generative AI technology alone has the potential to open productive capacity worth US\$113.4 billion (RM534.11 billion) in the Malaysian economy if it is fully adopted across all industries.

The government's move to introduce the AI For the People programme, which is a collaboration with Intel Malaysia, is also seen by experts as helping to address the gap in digital literacy and understanding of AI among the community,

especially between the urban and rural residents.

Universiti Putra Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah said the biggest problem is when society does not understand it and this gives rise to various assumptions.

"This needs to be addressed, especially for rural communities and those in the urban areas considering the country is currently dealing with the problem of the digital divide.

"However, I see the implementation of the AI For the People programme as one of the best approaches of the government to expose to society as a whole the most basic things when we talk about AI so that people are not left behind or refuse to change," he said – Bernama