



MINISTRY OF DIGITAL

PRESS RELEASE

ACCELERATING REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH, BUILDING SAFER DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCING REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR MALAYSIA AT ADGMIN 2025

BANGKOK, January 17, 2025 – ASEAN must develop and deploy consistent digital and cybersecurity standards, especially in the rapidly evolving area of artificial intelligence (AI), to advance a trusted digital environment.

Minister of Digital, Gobind Singh Deo added that such a move by Southeast Asian nations will drive interoperability of solutions across the region, thus benefitting ASEAN Member States which will result in augmenting their growth and bolstering the region's position in the global digital economy.

Gobind, who led the Malaysian delegation to the 5th ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN) in Bangkok, Thailand that ended today, said the meeting also highlighted the need for better collaboration in preventing online scams and fraud, enhanced connectivity, and the importance of concluding negotiations on the Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA).

"Malaysia fully supports the call to conclude the negotiations on DEFA as soon as possible, due to the significant economic benefits that it would bring to the region. Once negotiations are completed, DEFA is projected to double the region's digital economy value to USD2 trillion by 2030, up from the projected USD 1 trillion," said Gobind.

The three key takeaways from ADGMIN were:

- i. **Accelerating regional economic growth**, especially through DEFA.
- ii. **Building a safer digital environment** by combating online scams and ensuring proper AI governance, among others. These measures aim to protect individuals and businesses from cyber threats while promoting trust and safety in digital spaces.

- iii. **Enhancing regional connectivity** as Malaysia, had during ADGMIN, advocated for consistent digital and cybersecurity standards across ASEAN to ensure the interoperability of solutions. This benefits people by enabling seamless cross-border digital services, fostering innovation, and improving access to digital technologies across the region.

The Meeting also endorsed five projects that Malaysia will champion in 2025. The five projects are:

1. **Championing the safe deployment of AI in Southeast Asia**
Malaysia is leading the declaration on the establishment of an ASEAN AI Safety Network (ASEAN AI Safe). The network will be a platform responsible for facilitating to facilitate AI safety research, promoting safe and responsible development and adoption of AI across public and private sectors, and encouraging harmonisation and interoperability of AI safety within ASEAN Member States.
2. **Sustainable data centre development**
Malaysia is initiating the “ASEAN Guide for Sustainable Data Centre Development”, a comprehensive framework designed to provide policymakers with the essential tools and insights to build a data centre industry that drives economic growth, while prioritising environmental sustainability.
3. **Cross Border Cloud Computing Framework**
This project is proposing the development of a framework that sets out the principles for data governance in the cloud computing era.
4. **Developing 5G workforce**
To enhance the expertise of the 5G workforce through the development of specialised courses, and training programmes aimed at reskilling and certifying professionals.
5. **Development of ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy**
Malaysia is leading this one-year project and this proposal aims to outline the development and establishment of the ASEAN Cyber Cooperation Strategy 2026-2030, aiming to address above challenges and ensure a resilient and secure cyberspace for the ASEAN community. This project is aimed at addressing challenges, and to create a resilient and secured cyberspace in the region, fostering stronger collaborations and enhance the sharing of information among ASEAN Member States to effectively address evolving cyber threats.

Gobind also had a productive bilateral meeting with Dr Kao Kim Hourn, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, on January 16, followed by several other important bilateral meetings with ASEAN's Member States and Dialogue and Development Partners, namely Indonesia, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Japan, Republic of Korea, Thailand, and the USA.

In the meeting with ITU, he discussed their role in assisting the newly-established National AI Office Malaysia (NAIO). Among the key discussions include NAIO and ITU establishing AI standards and promoting the interoperability of AI solutions across ASEAN; and providing regulatory and policy support.

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