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Digital Malaysia: Penang teacher centre transforms into Digital Maker hub

AvantiKumar | Aug. 21, 2017



Photo - (From left) Lim Wern Jie, 14 year old app developer and #mydigitalmaker Rock Star; YBhg Dato' Seri Mahdzir Khalid, Minister of Education Malaysia; Norhizam Abdul Kadir, Vice President of Growth Ecosystem Development, MDEC; and YBhg Dato' Reezal Merican Naina Merican, Member of Parliament, Kepala Batas.

A teacher centre in Penang - Guru Muda 1 Malaysia (GM1M) - together with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), and the Ministry of Education (MoE) has recently launched the first Digital Maker Hub within a Teachers' Activity Centre in SK Hashim Awang, Kepala Batas.

The newly launched Digital Maker Hub (#mydigitalmaker) is currently the fourth one located in the Northern region and the 31st hub for the whole of Malaysia.

Digital Maker, which is a major component of the Digital Malaysia framework driven by MDEC and other government agencies, was referenced in the Budget 2017 proposals last year. (See - [What Budget 2017 means for Malaysia's IT industry](#))

Speaking at the launch, YBhg Dato' Seri Mahdzir Khalid, minister of Education Malaysia said: "I am pleased to know that the Teachers' Activity Centre in SK Hashim Awang, Kepala Batas is the first one of its kind to be converted into a Digital Maker Hub."

"Other than transforming the Teacher's Activity Centre into a Digital Maker Hub, MDEC - who is also a strategic partner of the Ministry of Education - has worked together with us to train close to 70,000 teachers since 2016 through the KSSR TMK Evaluation Curriculum and the new KSSM Curriculum that integrates computational thinking into the national school curriculum," said the minister.

"The Ministry would like to take this opportunity to applaud the initiative taken by the Penang State's Education Department and MDEC for their fantastic partnership today. I call upon the Guru Muda 1 Malaysia in other states and districts to follow in SK Hashim Awang's footsteps so that we can train the teachers and in turn, they will then encourage and guide students in adopting higher order thinking skills (HOTS)," he added.

What mydigitalmaker wants to achieve

MDEC's chief executive officer Dato' Yasmin Mahmood, said: "It has been a year since the launch of the #mydigitalmaker movement and while we have indeed seen results in our children, we will not rest on our laurels. In fact, more partnerships will be formed and focus on making all teaching programmes structured so as to continuously empower students and teachers to embrace digital technology."

Supported by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE), the #mydigitalmaker movement is a collaborative effort to expose Malaysian youths to the creative and innovative aspects of digital technology.

"This, clearly, is proving to be a very important part for the next generation education processes," said Yasmin. "The possibilities are endless and with SK Hashim Awang being the first school to open a Digital Maker Hub within a Teachers' Activity Centre, we hope to see more centres in the future taking the same approach. This way, our teachers, especially young ones of GM1M, will be prepared with the right computational thinking skills and are equipped to educate our future generation."

Speaking of the Penang initiative, GM1M will be supported in its efforts to encourage students in Penang to become future makers and creators. A secondary benefit should be to improve their computational thinking skills through activities using Arduino materials and practicing Scratch Coding.

Teachers will undergo training and by the end of it, will be applying the Digital Maker Club Module, which has been specially designed for future educators.

Future plans

Besides empowering GM1M in Penang, it is compulsory for selected teachers from various participating schools to join the Young Innovate Competition 2017 that takes place every year.