

Upskilling Malaysians to meet IR4.0 demands

From smart appliances like WiFi-enabled television and connected washing machines to self-ordering refrigerators, global digitalisation is a fact of life anywhere in the world.

And the race is on to ensure Malaysians are not left behind.

The coming growth will be staggering and is due in no small part to gigantic investments that continue to fuel the push to expand the boundaries of the latest technologies.

Back in January, the International Data Corporation had forecast that global investments into Internet of Things will increase to US\$745 billion this year, up over 15% from 2018, and breach the US\$1 trillion mark in 2022.

As a snapshot of the growth rates that are coming, the global smart display market — anything you can control

through voice commands, remote devices or via Internet of Things — alone was US\$861 million in 2018 and is projected to hit US\$6.7 billion by 2025.

That rising demand will inevitably include growth from Malaysia and the rest of the region, which collectively are among the fastest-growing economies in the world — the continuous rise of the middle-income group means more disposable income which translates into more demand.

Growing a digital technology-savvy workforce at home is therefore critical in order to tap the fast-growing pool of opportunities, says InvestKL acting CEO Muhammad Azmi Zulkifli.

“Digitalisation is inevitably coming to practically every industry, and the Malaysian workforce needs to be able to adapt to and be proficient in

new technologies, including artificial intelligence,” says Azmi.

InvestKL’s mandate since its establishment in 2011 is to draw high-value multinational companies to invest into Greater Kuala Lumpur. Specifically, it aims to bring in investment dollars that create high-skilled jobs for local talents with a particular focus on the establishment of regional hubs that has up to 200 employees.

It is worth noting that InvestKL operates by a strict selection criteria in terms of the multinational companies it courts to invest into the capital city. This is to ensure the right fit to the national agenda of spurring innovation, while zooming in on valuable know-how and skillsets that would add value to the country’s pool of professionals.

Hence, the investment of compa-

nies such as Electrolux is vital to further that agenda as the nation pursues high-income status by 2030, he adds.

At the agency’s parent ministry level, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry has pushed a broad agenda to promote wider adoption of groundbreaking new technologies including industry revolution 4.0, digitalisation, robotics, artificial intelligence, big data analytics and automation.

“Automation, artificial intelligence and big data are the latest market attractions and we have introduced Industry4wrd, a nationwide blueprint on IR4.0 adaptation across all market segments,” said its minister Datuk Darell Leiking.

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represents steps in the right direction. Among others, the key benefits to the nation include access to technological know-how, training and first-hand experience in the thick of the digital transformation unfolding every day.