General

Tripartite collaboration hopes to boost TVET education and human capital development in the East Coast

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Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) has recently partnered with the Asia Centre of Excellence for Smart Technologies (ACES) to cooperate and collaborate on activities in connection with accelerating the adoption of related smart technologies and digital initiatives of the fourth industrial revolution (now popularly referred to as Industry Revolution 4.0, or IR4.0) – especially where it concerns human capital development in the East Coast Economic Region (ECER) of Malaysia, and in Southeast Asia, generally.

Based at the Cybercentre in Pahang Technology Park (PTP), ACES is an initiative between ECER Development Council (ECERDC) and Germany's TUM International GmbH – a networking of government agencies, industry players and academic institutions – to boost technical and vocational education and training (TVET), as well as to enhance smart technology skills, training and consultancy, specifically in the digitalization and automation processes under IR4.0.

TUM International is essentially the subsidiary of Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany's top-ranking university based on the "QS World University Ranking" and one of the best universities in Europe.

It is well regarded as a leading provider for the development, coordination and operation of integrated science and industry clusters as well as technology transfer and talent management programmes with international partners from research, politics and industry.

Leveraging TUM International's experience and expertise, ECERDC will be collaborating to provide technical blueprints and roadmap, trainings, certifications, as well as advisory and consulting works for the introduction and upscaling of technology in various fields within the private and public sector for IR4.0, as well as other innovative and smart technologies.

The tripartite collaboration, sealed vide a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Germany on October 17, 2019, saw UMP Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ir. Dr. Wan Azhar Wan Yusoff signed on behalf of the university, whilst Chief Executive Officers (CEO) Baidzawi Che Mat and Daniel Gottschald represented ECERDC and TUM International, respectively.

Present to witness the MoU was Malaysia Minister of Education, Dr. Maszlee Malik, who was on official working visit to Germany.

"This tripartite collaboration will definitely benefit UMP, through sharing of expertise in order for us to meet future industry demands, including several soon-to-be-implemented projects, especially ones related to products commercialization, Executive 4.0 Programme and TVET," remarked Professor Ir. Dr. Wan Azhar.

In conjunction with the visit to and signing ceremony in Germany, UMP's delegation also took the opportunity to enhance its bilateral academic programme cooperation with two other tertiary institutions there, namely Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences (HsKA) and The Knowledge Foundation @ Reutlingen University (KFRU).

The delegation met up with the Dean of Faculty of Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering at HsKA, Professor Dr. Robert Weis; and Professor Ing Dr. Daniel Palm, who lectures on Logistics and Supply Chain Management at ESB Business School at KFRU.

The bilateral academic programme cooperation is part and parcel of the present dual degree programme offered at UMP – Bachelor's in Automotive and Mechatronics Engineering, which will be expanded to include new programmes and other topical subjects in the automotive engineering field.

UMP strongly believes this bilateral academic programme cooperation will greatly benefit the country, as the university endeavours to introduce German's engineering education module known as Fachhochschule – which focuses on and specifies in topical subjects – to its engineering teaching and learning system.

The effectiveness of this engineering education module has resulted in Germany producing competent engineers.

This module is seen as the best model for us to spearhead, being one of the four public institutions of higher learning in the Malaysia Technical University Network (MTUN) – an umbrella network comprising UMP, Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM)."

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