NEW STRAITS TIMES

Empowering education and innovation

By Elena Koshy - August 18, 2024 @ 5:41pm



Attendees of the MNCU Network Dialogue 2024, held both in-person and on a hybrid platform.

THE Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation (APU) in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur, hosted a transformative event on Aug 8 — the MNCU Network Dialogue 2024.

Organised by the Malaysia National Commission for Unesco (MNCU) in partnership with APU, which holds the Unesco Chair on Harnessing Innovations in Technology to Support Teachers & Quality Learning, the dialogue attracted a global audience of educators, policymakers, experts and youths to explore the crucial intersection of education, technology and innovation.

The event was a vibrant showcase of pioneering practices and initiatives from Malaysia, Unesco and their international partners. Spanning a wide array of fields — including education, science, social sciences, culture and communication — the dialogue aimed to highlight how these areas contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The discussions provided a platform for examining how collective efforts can foster peace, celebrate diversity and drive sustainable development forward.

The dialogue was officiated by Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek, who is also president of MNCU. Her keynote address set a forward-looking tone for the day, emphasising the urgent need for innovative approaches in education, empathy and mental health support, particularly in post-normal times.

Fadhlina underscored the significance of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the need to appreciate and preserve cultural and natural heritage, and the importance of encouraging Malaysian schools to become part of the Unesco Associated

Schools Network (ASPnet). Her vision reflected a commitment to creating inclusive and progressive educational environments that prepare students for the future.



An interesting forum from the MNCU Network Dialogue 2024.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

The highlights of the event focused on strategic partnerships in implementing ESD in Malaysian schools, nurturing cultural creativity and innovation on social media platforms and the collaborative efforts in conserving nature, with emphasis on efforts to inscribe the Lenggong National Geopark as a Unesco Global Geopark.

The dialogue also focused on the usage of technology in education and the benefits of joining the ASPnet. This year's dialogue attracted 400 participants from 17 countries.

The event showcased a series of dynamic exhibitions by MNCU's strategic partners. These displays highlighted a range of innovative projects that blend education with science, social sciences, culture and communication.



The event also featured dynamic exhibitions from schools under the Education Ministry.

Each exhibition demonstrated the active participation of these partners in the Unesco network, reflecting their commitment to advancing educational practices and contributing to global goals.

As the day drew to a close, MNCU secretary-general Fadzilah Fadzil delivered the concluding remarks. She emphasised the importance of strategic collaboration across various disciplines and advocated for a holistic approach — both top-down and bottom-up — to effectively implement the goals discussed throughout the dialogue. Her speech reinforced the necessity of a united effort to tackle challenges and seize opportunities in the realms of education and innovation.

The MNCU Network Dialogue 2024 was more than a conference; it was a celebration of the potential of education and technology to shape a better future. The event served as a powerful reminder of our collective commitment to fostering quality learning, embracing diversity and advancing sustainable development.

As participants left, they carried with them not only fresh insights, but also a renewed sense of purpose and collaboration, ready to contribute to the ongoing journey towards a more inclusive and innovative world.