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## Powering AI, transforming energy: The core synergy at ETCon26 Malaysia



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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The upcoming Energy Transition Conference 2026 (ETCon26) will serve as a key platform to advance artificial intelligence (AI) as a new frontier for innovation, powering the next phase of Malaysia's energy transition.

To be held from June 3 to 5, 2026, at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, ETCon26 is a flagship conference envisioned by Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB), bringing together global stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the national energy transition agenda.

Themed "Energy & AI: The Synergy for Energy Transition", the conference is anchored on three content pillars, namely Energy for AI, AI for Energy, and Energy Transition (ET) for People, reflecting the growing interdependence between energy systems and digital technologies.

TNB president/chief executive officer Datuk Ir Ts Shamsul Ahmad said the 2026 edition will focus on translating Malaysia's National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) into actionable outcomes, shifting from strategy formulation to execution.

"We will gather participants, industry players and stakeholders to collaborate and come up with a solid implementation plan laying out the national energy transition roadmap," he told Bernama in a recent interview.

Shamsul said a reliable and resilient energy system is fundamental to supporting the rapid expansion of AI-driven industries, particularly data centres, which are increasingly energy-intensive.

"AI cannot move without energy. In fact, nothing in the country operates without energy," he added.

Shamsul noted that the growth of data centres in Malaysia underscores the need for a stable and competitive electricity supply, with TNB playing a key role in enabling this expansion.

At the same time, AI is becoming integral to transforming how energy systems are managed, enhancing efficiency, predictability and overall system performance.

Shamsul said AI is already



Shamsul says the 2026 edition will focus on translating Malaysia's NETR into actionable outcomes, shifting from strategy formulation to execution. — Bernama photos

being deployed across TNB's operations, including predictive maintenance, load balancing and weather forecasting.

"For example, with predictive maintenance and weather forecasting, we know which assets to prioritise. These are fantastic things that can be done with AI embedded into operations," he said.

Shamsul added that AI is critical in addressing intermittency challenges associated with renewable energy, particularly solar generation.

Beyond technology, Shamsul said the energy transition must deliver tangible benefits to society, including job creation, skills development and broader economic spillovers.

He said the expansion of the renewable energy sector has created new economic opportunities, prompting TNB to support Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes in areas such as solar and battery storage.

"We have worked with vendors to support TVET, creating ready employment opportunities. The whole ecosystem benefits from this new economic sector," he said.

Shamsul said TNB is also advancing the electrification of mobility, with more than 300 electric vehicle (EV) chargers already installed nationwide under the TNB Electron charging network.

He added that the initiative

aims to accelerate EV adoption while supporting domestic automotive players and reducing emissions.

He said these initiatives are expected to generate broad spillover effects across industries and communities, supporting Malaysia's transition to a low-carbon economy.

At the regional level, Shamsul said Malaysia is well-positioned to emerge as a smart and sustainable energy hub within ASEAN, supported by initiatives such as the Asean Power Grid.

He said stronger collaboration and grid connectivity among countries will be critical to enabling cross-border electricity flows, with AI playing a key role in integration.

ETCon26 has already secured participation from global partners, including Hyosung, Trilliant, Schneider, EdgeConneX and Siemens, reflecting the importance of a collaborative ecosystem.

"Policymakers cannot act alone, and the industry needs policy clarity. ETCon26 provides a platform for all parties to come together, exchange ideas and drive execution," he said.

Shamsul said the conference is expected to deliver concrete outcomes, including new projects and initiatives that will enhance productivity, strengthen economic growth and improve national competitiveness. — Bernama



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