

Teachers: The mentors that shape a nation

IN conjunction with Teachers' Day celebration this year, themed "Guru Bitara, Nadi Negara" (Teacher Champions, the Nation's Pulse), Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (Masa) extends its appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to all educators across the country for their immeasurable dedication, iron commitment and selfless sacrifices to forge the soul of Malaysia's future.

This year's theme is more than a symbolic expression. It represents a profound recognition of teachers as the driving force behind national development and societal progress.

The role of teachers as catalysts for change and agents of social transformation requires continuous support from all stakeholders.

To sustain and amplify their monumental impact, unwavering and comprehensive support must flow from every corner of the society – the Education Ministry, policymakers, educational institutions and every citizen – who cherishes Malaysia's growth and future.

In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the transition towards a digital economy and artificial intelligence, our national education

system faces an urgent need to adapt rapidly to technological advancements and evolving global market demands.

Today's teachers are expected to be more than traditional educators. They must possess technological proficiency, understand the dynamics of digital learning and be capable of fearlessly integrating cutting-edge innovation into their teaching.

A key challenge lies in ensuring that the emphasis on future-ready skills does not come at the expense of foundational education, including literacy, numeracy and values-based learning.

There is a real risk that the future-ready agenda may become overly rhetorical if foundational learning disparities, particularly between urban and rural communities, are not addressed systematically.

The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2026–2035, launched by the Education Ministry in January, positions teachers as the primary drivers of national education transformation. But bold positioning alone is woefully insufficient. The policy must go beyond cosmetic



improvements to deliver real, structural change.

Long-standing structural issues such as excessive non-academic workloads, assessment pressures and limited opportunities for continuous professional development must be resolved.

Teachers' well-being remains a national priority. Findings by the National Union of the Teaching Profession indicate that mental health concerns among teachers demand sustained and urgent attention.

As such, work-life balance and

mental well-being must be placed at the forefront of the ministry's agenda as educators who are emotionally, mentally and physically resilient are better equipped to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Masa urges the Education Ministry to undertake more proactive and systematic measures to strengthen the dignity and standing of the teaching profession through improved access to modern educational infrastructure and technology, continuous competency development opportunities and appropriate

recognition for their contributions.

Masa wishes all educators a meaningful and inspiring Teachers' Day. Thank you for your unwavering service, sacrifices and dedication in nurturing the champions and visionaries of tomorrow.

You are not only teachers; you are the unshakeable backbone, the blazing torch and heartbeat of national development.

Azril Mohd Amin
Chief Executive Officer
Masa

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– **MASRY CHE ANI/THESUN**