

Incorporate Islamic knowledge, Turath into AI, says Anwar

By [Mohd Nasaruddin Parzi](#) - June 1, 2024 @ 4:57pm



The field of artificial intelligence (AI) in Malaysia needs to be applied with the values of 'turath Islam' (Islamic scholarly tradition), and not completely guided by the Western model, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. - Bernama pic

SHAH ALAM: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called for the youth to integrate and incorporate the wealth of Islamic knowledge and Turath (heritage books) into the corpus of artificial intelligence (AI) technology.

He said this was to prevent the technology from being dominated by Western elements and materials.

"If we want to succeed, we must train our children who have AI skills and expertise to integrate and incorporate the wealth of Islamic knowledge and Turath into the AI corpus.

"What the new AI robots project and regurgitate is based on the knowledge that has been input into them. Right now, we are leaving it to the West.

"That's why I said Turath is relevant... because Turath must also be included in AI so that what is produced and expressed from Islamic countries is not separated from the system of Islamic values and morals."

He said this in a speech before launching the Riyadus Salihin Imam Al-Nawawi Seminar at Masjid Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah here today.

Present were former grand imam of Egypt Prof Dr Ali Jum'ah, Quantum Akhyar Institute Islamic Studies Center director Dr Adi Hidayat and Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari.

Anwar said Malaysia could not be left behind by the technological advancements and rapid developments currently introduced.

"It is impossible for Malaysia or Islamic countries to be safe without reaching for the skies, exploring, and discovering new digital and AI innovations. All of this has value. Who says digital, science or AI has no value? They do.

"I asked the executive directors of Microsoft and Nvidia... Nvidia is among the top AI companies in the world. I asked him, I expressed my concern in Malaysia about developing AI and digital, the values being nurtured are Western values and Western thinking.

"Even though AI is considered neutral, the entire corpus of knowledge can be included and when there is a question, the answer seems complete.

"But their answer was relevant. (They answered) it is up to us. If AI is to be developed in Malaysia, (that's why) we strongly push for universities and AI faculties to be established and so on," he said.

Meanwhile, Anwar said never in history has the government set a policy on the essential knowledge students must have, referring to the introduction of Imam Al-Nawawi's 40 Hadith appreciation activity in schools.

"The reason is, now in the world of social media... knowledge is only one to three minutes away. Whereas in the tradition of knowledge, it must be digested, read, and internalised.

"The challenge of appreciation cannot possibly be achieved through shortcuts like this. One-minute- and three-minute news immediately makes someone knowledgeable and discuss it superficially," he said.

The Education Ministry in a statement said Imam Al-Nawawi's 40 Hadith appreciation will be introduced in all educational institutions in the 2024/2025 school session.