

# Polytechnics upgrade: Malaysia plans degree-level studies to meet future industry needs

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PONTIAN,—The government is drafting a restructuring plan for all 36 polytechnics nationwide to strengthen their role beyond offering certificate and diploma programmes, enabling them to provide degree and master's level studies in the future. Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir said the move was aimed at ensuring the institutions can meet current and future industry demands, particularly in high-technology sectors.

The ministry is reviewing the relevant legislation and is expected to table restructuring proposals involving all 36 institutions by the end of this year or early next year, he said. "We will review the overall ecosystem of the polytechnics, including the courses offered, to ensure they meet present and future demands and industry needs." For example, in areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Electrical and Electronics (E&E), and semiconductors, where Malaysia is among the world's major semiconductor producers," he told reporters after the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pontian Community College at the Penghulu Mukim Benut Complex here today. Zambry said the role of polytechnics needed to be re-evaluated, including their existing structure, as they could no longer function solely at the low- or mid-skilled training level. "We need higher-level polytechnics capable of producing skilled talent in the sectors I mentioned. If we look at the world's leading polytechnic models, they are also moving towards these broader ideas," he said. On today's programme, he said the Pontian Community College project would be developed on an eight-acre plot owned by the Education Ministry, which has since been transferred to the Higher Education Ministry. The RM70 million project is expected to begin construction next year and be fully completed by 2028 or 2029. "The college will focus on agrotechnology, sustainable agriculture and entrepreneurship to meet local industry needs, as proposed by Pontian MP Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Maslan," he said. Meanwhile, Ahmad, who is also Deputy Works Minister, said the Lifelong Learning Programme (PSH) in Pontian would begin within the next two weeks at the Penghulu Complex while awaiting completion of the permanent community college building.



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