Event Report

AI's Next Wave: Chips, Code, and Localisation
Date: 20 June 2025
Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Venue: Asia School of Business
Speaker: Dr Jack Lau

Executive Summary

FIDE FORUM hosted the session *AI's Next Wave: Chips, Code, and Localisation* on 20 June 2025 at the Asia School of Business. The keynote was delivered by Dr Jack Lau, a renowned tech entrepreneur and deep-tech adviser.

Dr Lau underscored the inevitability of AI's rapid rise, likening it to the certainty of sunrise: *"AI is just like the sun rising from the east. It's just happening."* His message was clear – understanding AI and its pace of evolution is the only viable response.

Demonstrating practical tools, he personally developed, Dr Lau showed how AI is already accessible on everyday devices – from finance tools in Google Sheets to personalised health monitors. He emphasised that thanks to semiconductor breakthroughs, today's smartphones are powerful enough to run complex AI locally, making privacy-preserving "edge computing" a practical reality.

He also highlighted Malaysia's unique strengths – fast internet, open access to global AI services, low costs, and local talent – as advantages to seize in the coming wave of AI innovation.

Key Segments

1. Opening Remarks

Dr Lau began by affirming his admiration for Malaysia's tech ecosystem and introduced the theme: *AI is here, now*. A fully AI-generated video was screened to showcase the immediacy of consumer-grade AI capabilities.

2. Demonstrations of AI in Action

Through live demos, Dr Lau illustrated how he had built tools for banking, finance news curation, and corporate training – largely on his personal computer with minimal coding. His projects reinforced his central thesis: AI is at everyone's fingertips.

3. Four Steps to Embrace AI

- **Know-how** – Cultivate curiosity and understand AI's possibilities.

- **Access** – Leverage Malaysia's open, censorship-free digital landscape.

- **Experiment** – Start creating; even non-programmers can build tools.

- **Contribute** – Share knowledge and creations for collective growth.

4. Chips and the "Edge" Revolution

Dr Lau explained how advanced semiconductors enable modern AI, detailing how nanometre-scale transistors have transformed smartphones into AI-capable devices. He forecast that many applications will soon run locally, reducing reliance on cloud services.

5. AI in Finance and Health

Dr Lau highlighted finance and healthcare as the most immediately impacted sectors. From portfolio management to personalised health tracking, AI is democratising access to insights once reserved for large institutions.

6. The Next Generation's Role

Contrasting younger innovators' eagerness to build apps quickly with older generations' caution, Dr Lau predicted that youth-driven experimentation would disrupt traditional players.

Audience Q&A Highlights

- **Balancing adoption with governance:** Boards should combine reliance on established providers with in-house "AI scouts" to experiment and advise.

- **Consulting and self-awareness:** Human consultants remain vital as AI cannot replicate trust, experience, or empathy.

- **AI in warfare:** Military use is inevitable; governance lags behind technology.

- **SMEs and AI:** Smaller firms should "just try" – experiment safely and treat AI as a secretary that can generate starting points.

- **Malaysia's AI readiness:** Data centres are valuable, but talent development matters more. Quantum remains a research area rather than a commercial reality.

- **ASML's dominance:** Success stems from ecosystem-building and specialisation; disruption would require a paradigm leap, not imitation.

Conclusion

Dr Jack Lau delivered an engaging and pragmatic exploration of AI's trajectory, blending technical depth with humour and accessible analogies. His core message: AI is no longer futuristic – it is present, local, and ready to be harnessed.

For Malaysia, the opportunity lies in leveraging open access, talent, and curiosity to build meaningful AI solutions. As Dr Lau put it:

"AI for coding will accelerate, allowing all of us to create our own stuff. So it's incumbent on all of us to know what is possible. Don't ask, just do it… It's not that hard. You won't crash."

The event concluded with enthusiastic applause and extended discussions, underscoring its impact and resonance with participants.

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