



## **Strategic Advisory Malaysia's Missed Flight Path in the Global Drone AI Race**

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## **Strategic Advisory Malaysia's Missed Flight Path in the Global Drone AI Race**

**By MDCoCI Founder & Special Advisor**

**Malaysia Drone Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MDCoCI)**

**Official Strategic Partner & Endorsing Body of Drone Tech Asia 2025 (DTA2025), MITEC**

**Press Release & News**

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**Ground Survey Findings Low Industry Relevant Visitor Quality**

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MDCoCI conducted an independent survey and on site observation throughout Drone Tech Asia 2025 (DTA2025). The findings reveal a critical mismatch between the event's strategic intent and actual audience engagement

### **Key Observations**

- **Visitor quality skewed toward general public and casual interest groups**
- **Very low presence of industry relevant professionals**, including
  - Drone manufacturers and integrators
  - AI solution providers
  - Logistics, agriculture, and infrastructure stakeholders
  - Regulatory and safety experts
  - Institutional buyers and strategic investors

### **Common Complaints from Exhibitors**

- “We expected B2B leads, but got walk in curiosity.”
- “No serious buyers or partners approached our booth.”
- “No visibility of government linked companies or ministries.”
- “Media coverage was absent, no interviews, no documentation.”

### **Strategic Implications**

- **Wasted exhibitor ROI** due to poor audience targeting
- **Missed partnership opportunities** for cross sector deployment
- **Erosion of confidence** in Malaysia's drone AI event credibility
- **Disconnect between promotional claims and actual execution**

### **Institutional Breakdown Low Exhibitor Turnout & MATRADE's Silence**

#### **Alarming Gaps in International Participation**

- **DTA2025 suffered from critically low exhibitor numbers**, undermining its potential as a global commercialization platform.
  - **Many leading drone R&D countries were absent**, including
    - Japan, South Korea, Germany, France, UAE, and Australia
    - No representation from top tier drone manufacturers or AI integrators
    - No institutional delegations from foreign chambers or tech clusters
  - **Malaysia missed the chance to host cross border innovation dialogues**, strategic MoUs, and investor matchmaking.
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## MDCoCI's Outreach Blocked by Institutional Silence

- MDCoCI formally reached out to MATRADE via
  - **Official emails** with strategic proposals
  - **Direct phone calls** to designated officers
  - **WhatsApp follow ups** with clear intent to organize online meetings
- Objective **To initiate country specific brainstorming sessions** with MATRADE's overseas offices and trade commissioners, aimed at
  - Engaging local drone AI associations and chambers
  - Inviting foreign manufacturers to exhibit at DTA2025
  - Building bilateral commercialization pipelines

### No Response. No Action. No Alignment.

- **MATRADE failed to respond or acknowledge MDCoCI's outreach.**
- **No online meetings were arranged. No support was extended.**
- This silence contradicts MATRADE's mandate to promote Malaysian trade and support strategic chambers.

Malaysia's global drone AI credibility was compromised by this institutional disconnect.

## Why Drone Tech Asia 2025 Faced Low Turnout & Visibility

Despite its global potential and MDCoCI's formal endorsement, **Drone Tech Asia 2025 (DTA2025) at MITEC witnessed low exhibitor turnout and modest visitor participation both local and international.** The core issue?

- **Insufficient mainstream media coverage**
- **Weak institutional amplification**
- **Lack of strategic circulation by government linked agencies and ministries**

Many Malaysians, including industry stakeholders, reported they were **unaware of DTA2025's existence**, especially when compared to the visibility of other expos routinely promoted by national media and trade bodies. This signals a critical gap in Malaysia's drone AI ecosystem narrative one that must be urgently addressed to avoid further erosion of global positioning and stakeholder confidence.

## DTA2025's Foundational Efforts Led by Aerosea Exhibitions Sdn Bhd

Drone Tech Asia 2025 was **initiated and executed by Aerosea Exhibitions Sdn Bhd**, who led the development of Malaysia's drone AI exhibition platform. Despite limited institutional backing, Aerosea delivered

- Full scale exhibition infrastructure
  - Strategic alignment with MDCoCI's commercialization goals
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- A platform for local innovators, entrepreneurs, and drone users

This was a **groundbreaking effort to seed Malaysia's drone AI ecosystem**, encourage industry growth, and empower individuals to become users, developers, and startup founders.

**Such efforts must be supported in far greater measure** by ministries, agencies, GLCs, universities, and media institutions.

## **Government Advisory MATRADE's Missed Opportunity to Amplify DTA2025**

**MATRADE communicates daily with thousands of registered members** via its Member Portal, Business Information Centre, and MADANI Digital Trade (MDT) platform. These channels routinely circulate

- Market intelligence and export opportunities
- Business matching and trade fair invitations
- Grant and incentive updates

**Yet, no formal bulletin or strategic push for DTA2025 was observed across these platforms.**

- No targeted outreach to drone, AI, or green tech exporters
- No integration into MATRADE's marketing missions or buyer matching programs

This silence undermines Malaysia's positioning in the global drone AI race and contradicts the national directive for inclusive tech development.

## **PMX's Directive vs Reality**

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim (PMX) emphasized that **Malaysia's AI vision must uplift lives, foster inclusion, and reflect Southeast Asian values not merely chase technological prestige**. He launched the ASEAN AI Malaysia Summit 2025 with a call for **real world impact, not symbolic headlines**.

**Yet, DTA2025's muted visibility and lack of institutional support contradict this directive.**

- No coordinated amplification from federal ministries
- No state level engagement or coverage
- No mainstream media spotlight despite MDCoCI's strategic endorsement

## **State Level Coverage Sparse and Fragmented**

Only **a handful of state linked news outlets** acknowledged DTA2025. Coverage was limited to

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- **Federal level remarks** by MITI's Deputy Minister
- **NAICO Malaysia's participation** under MITI's aerospace mandate
- **Organiser statements** via PR channels

No coordinated coverage from state governments such as Selangor, Penang, Johor, or Sarawak despite their active roles in tech and industrial development. This absence reflects a broader disconnect in regional engagement.

## **Who Should Have Participated Malaysia's Drone AI Ecosystem Authorities**

### **Policy & Strategic Oversight**

- Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI)
- Ministry of Digital
- Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI)

### **Coordinating & Innovation Agencies**

- MRANTI
- MDEC
- NAICO Malaysia

### **Regulatory & Safety Bodies**

- Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM)
- Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC)
- Department of Survey and Mapping Malaysia (JUPEM)

### **Trade & Promotion Agencies**

- MATRADE
- Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC)
- SME Corp Malaysia

### **Defence, Security & Emergency Response**

- Ministry of Defence (MINDEF)
  - National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA)
  - Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM)
  - Fire & Rescue Department (BOMBA)
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## Sectoral Ministries for Use Case Deployment

- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Higher Education

## MDCoCI's Institutional Blueprint

MDCoCI is actively

- Formalizing new chambers and founder documentation for cross border expansion
- Segmenting communications for LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Knowledge Rhythm
- Integrating new partners into MoU scope documents with clear roles and recognition
- Activating media platforms to honor contributors and document institutional legacy

## Speaker Composition & Strategic Warning Reality Check Against Global Standards

With the absence of international exhibitors and institutional support, **the DTA2025 organizer is now left to manage a speaker lineup that is almost entirely local.** While this offers a platform for Malaysian voices, it also exposes a critical gap in global benchmarking.

### Current Reality

- **Speaker pool is 90%+ local**, with minimal foreign expert participation
- **No representation from global drone manufacturers, AI labs, or regulatory bodies**
- **Panel diversity and technical depth fall short of international standards**
- **Sessions lack cross border commercialization insights, investor perspectives, and policy harmonization dialogues**

### Strategic Warning to Speaker Teams

- **Yes, it's free. Yes, it's appreciated. But the reality must be acknowledged.**
  - **Malaysia's drone AI credibility is on display this is not a casual seminar.**
  - **Every speaker must elevate their delivery, content, and strategic framing.**
  - **Benchmark against global events like Japan Drone Expo, InterDrone USA, and Dubai Drone Show.**
  - **Avoid generic slides and shallow commentary this is a legacy building moment.**
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## MDCoCI's Advisory to Organizers

- **Curate speaker sessions with precision and strategic intent**
- **Include chamber led panels, MoU showcases, and commercialization case studies**
- **Activate media documentation to honor contributors and amplify institutional value**
- **Prepare post event speaker digest for international circulation and benchmarking**

## Our Call to Action

We urge

- **Government ministries** to issue formal endorsements and deploy regulatory support
- **GLCs and MNCs** to participate in DTA2025 and initiate strategic partnerships
- **Mainstream media** to spotlight Malaysia's drone AI journey and institutional milestones
- **MATRADE and MITI** to circulate DTA2025 updates across all member channels with urgency
- **State governments** to align with national directives and amplify drone AI initiatives
- **Educational and research bodies** to integrate drone AI into national development frameworks

Malaysia must not remain a spectator in the global drone AI race. DTA2025 was the launchpad. MDCoCI stands ready to lead but we need every institutional engine firing.

*We call for an official meeting for rectifying the unattended issue by the most important and relevant organisation.*

## Press Release & News

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Yours sincerely,

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## Government Advisory MATRADE's Role in Drone AI Ecosystem Visibility

As Malaysia's national trade promotion agency, **MATRADE maintains daily communications with its registered members** including manufacturers, traders, service providers, chambers, and associations through its **Member Portal**, **Business Information Centre**, and the **MADANI Digital Trade (MDT) platform**. These channels offer

- **Market intelligence and product research**
- **Business matching with international buyers**
- **Access to export grants and incentives**
- **Virtual trade fair participation**
- **Daily updates and curated trade opportunities**

Yet, despite this robust infrastructure, **there is no evidence of consistent or strategic circulation of Drone Tech Asia 2025 (DTA2025) content to MATRADE's member base**. This includes

- No formal bulletins or circulars spotlighting DTA2025 as a national level drone AI showcase
- No targeted outreach to drone, AI, or green tech exporters to participate or align with MDCoCI's endorsed platform
- No integration of DTA2025 into MATRADE's specialized marketing missions or international buyer matching programs

### MATRADE Communications vs DTA2025 Visibility

#### MATRADE's Regular Outreach

- **Daily email bulletins sent to thousands of registered exporters and members**
  - Weekly trade updates covering:
    - Export opportunities
    - Trade missions and exhibitions
    - Market intelligence and buyer matching
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- Specialized circulars for sector specific events (e.g., halal, E&E, green tech)
- MADANI Digital Trade (MDT) platform used for curated digital outreach

### **DTA2025 Coverage: Practically Absent**

- **No formal circulars or bulletins spotlighting Drone Tech Asia 2025**
- No targeted outreach to drone, AI, or green tech exporters
- No integration into MATRADE's specialized marketing missions
- No mention in weekly trade highlights or member alerts
- No coordination with overseas trade offices to promote DTA2025 globally

### **Strategic Consequences**

- **Members unaware of DTA2025 despite daily MATRADE updates**
- Missed opportunity to mobilize exporters, manufacturers, and investors
- Contradiction between MATRADE's mandate and actual support for drone AI sector

### **Strategic Implications**

This lack of visibility and alignment risks

- **Undermining Malaysia's positioning** in the global drone AI race
- **Missing cross sectoral export opportunities** for drone, AI, and green hydrogen ventures
- **Diluting institutional recognition** for MDCoCI's chamber led initiatives and MoU expansions

### **MDCoCI's Recommendation to Government**

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We urge

- **MATRADE and MITI** to formally circulate DTA2025 updates across all member channels with urgency
- **Integration of DTA2025 into export promotion missions**, buyer matching, and grant eligible activities
- **Dedicated spotlight on MDCoCI's strategic role** as the chamber formalizing Malaysia's drone AI ecosystem

Malaysia's drone AI future demands institutional amplification. DTA2025 is the launchpad. MATRADE must be the megaphone.

## Strategic Warning TVET & MOE Absence Contradicts National Directive

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim (PMX) has repeatedly emphasized the importance of **TVET, drone technology, and AI integration** as pillars of Malaysia's future economy. Yet, **DTA2025 saw zero participation from technical schools, vocational colleges, or TVET institutions**. This is not just an oversight it's a strategic failure.

### What Was Expected

- **MOE, JPK, and TVET institutions** to actively integrate DTA2025 into their school calendars
- **Delegations of students and educators** to attend, observe, and engage with drone AI exhibitors
- **Curriculum alignment** with real world drone applications showcased at the event
- **Joint panels or workshops** featuring educators, innovators, and chamber leaders

### What Actually Happened

- Not a single technical school delegation visited with students
- No formal involvement from MOE, JPK, or TVET colleges
- No student showcases, drone demos, or institutional booths
- No effort to connect education with industry at a national level exhibition

### Strategic Consequences

- **Malaysia's youth were denied exposure** to cutting edge drone AI technologies
- **TVET credibility weakened** by lack of real world engagement
- **PMX's directive diluted** by institutional inaction
- **DTA2025's educational legacy lost** due to absence of structured participation

### MDCoCI's Advisory

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- MOE and JPK must immediately align future exhibitions with TVET deployment
- Vocational schools must be mandated to participate in national tech events
- Drone AI curriculum must be activated through chamber led partnerships
- Student delegations must be prioritized in future commercialization platforms

## **Institutional Failure Where Were UTeM, Jelita TVET, MTUN TVET & Global Technical Universities?**

**Malaysia's drone AI ecosystem demands high quality industrial engagement and academic alignment. Yet, when it mattered most during DTA2025 key technical institutions were absent, silent, and disengaged.**

### **What Happened to UTeM, Jelita TVET, MTUN TVET?**

- No formal participation, no booths, no speaker representation.
- No student delegations, no drone showcases, no curriculum tie ins.
- No effort to align their TVET programs with the national level exhibition.
- No media activation or institutional amplification of DTA2025.

### **Global Technical Universities Ignored the Call**

- No invitations extended to overseas drone tech universities or R&D labs.
- No joint panels, no MoUs, no academic industry matchmaking.
- No cross border institutional presence despite MDCoCI's strategic outreach.

### **One Year of Planning Still No Engagement**

- DTA2025 was not a surprise. It was planned about a year in advance.
- Local universities had every opportunity to align, prepare, and participate.
- Yet none launched relevant activities, student mobilization, or research showcases.
- No integration of drone AI into academic calendars or innovation pipelines.

### **Strategic Consequences**

- Malaysia's academic credibility weakened in the eyes of global drone AI stakeholders.
- TVET and technical universities missed a legacy building moment.
- DTA2025's institutional depth diluted by absence of thought leaders and educators.

### **MDCoCI's Advisory**

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- UTeM, Jelita TVET, MTUN TVET must be formally engaged in future exhibitions.
- Global technical universities must be invited through chamber led diplomacy.
- Academic institutions must activate drone AI curriculum and showcase talent.
- Malaysia must never again host a national tech event without full spectrum academic participation.

## POSTED BY

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