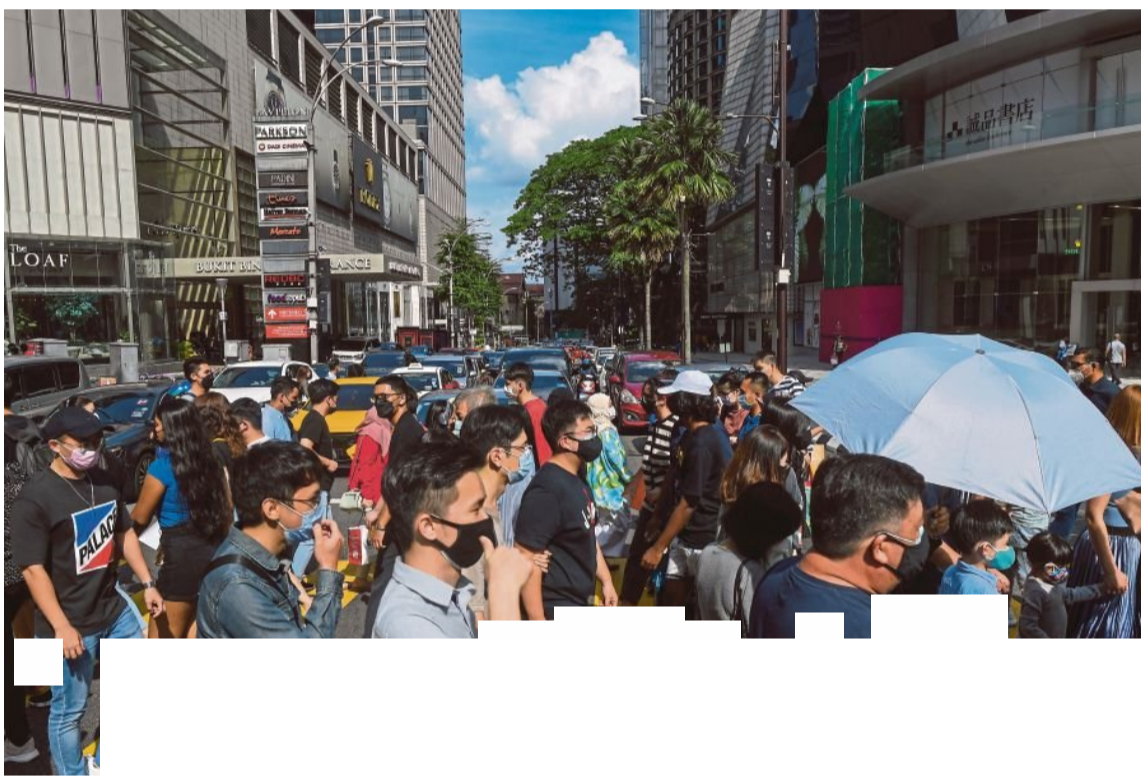


# A chance for a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Malaysia



By [Dzulkifli Abdul Razak](#) - November 6, 2021 @ 12:02am



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THE 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) boast of its transformative nature, with a number of game-changers that represent the new and innovative ideas to shift mindsets and fundamentally change the approach to national development.

These are intended to ensure that Malaysia attains the objectives of Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) 2030, "namely sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution across income groups, ethnicity, regions and supply chains".

The SPV 2030 seeks to address structural domestic economic issues and global crises beginning this year, while ensuring that Malaysians achieve an enhanced standard of living by 2030.

Specifically, "Game-changer 1" encapsulates key elements of 12MP needed to achieve the required reforms and transformation.

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However, it seems too economic-centric since the pandemic has impacted economies around the world, and negative growth has been recorded for four quarters following the deterioration of economic activities.

It is said to be predicated with the aim of (a) rebuilding the economy and building back better; (b) addressing uncertainties in the global economic landscape; (c) overcoming shortcomings in development approach, governance and implementation; and, (d) providing hope and confidence in the future of the country, especially for the youth.

Overall, it is categorically formulated to transform the economy.

The 12MP is also anchored on three key themes.

Theme one emphasises on resetting the economy with two game-changers. Meanwhile, theme two outlines four game-changers, namely enhancing national security and unity for nation-building; revitalising the healthcare system to ensure a healthy and productive nation; transforming the approach in eradicating hardcore poverty; and, multiplying growth in less developed states, especially Sabah and Sarawak, to reduce the development gap.

It continues to be economic-centric in terms of "uplifting the standard of living of the rakyat" by strengthening inclusivity and uplifting livelihoods, especially for the hardcore poor, B40 and vulnerable groups.

Similarly, theme three with two game-changers embraces the circular economy as well as accelerating the adoption of the Integrated Water Resources Management framework.

They are expected to contribute to sustainable and resilient growth, as well as the achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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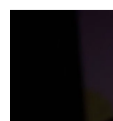
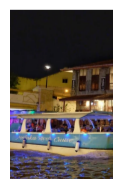
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either directly (like healthcare and housing as stated above), or indirectly (as in Education for Sustainable Development as an approach of the 2030 Agenda).

Even though theme three is aimed at "advancing sustainability", which ought to involve education as an equally important impetus of change as highlighted by the relevant United Nations website dedicated to this issue, headlined by "17 (Sustainable Development) Goals to Transform the World". Whether the omission is intentional or an oversight is hard to tell.

What is sure is that without a "transformative" education, it's hard to imagine the implementation of 12MP, with respect to meeting aspirations aligned to SDGs summarised in the 5Ps of people, planet (resources), prosperity, peace (*kesejahteraan*), and partnership (Keluarga Malaysia).

After all, sustainability is about fair, just, equitable and inclusive distribution across all income groups, ethnicities and regions to provide a decent standard of living for all Malaysians, summed up by the 17 SDGs.

In addition, the 12MP encompasses strategies and initiatives that safeguard national renewable interest, which is vital for not just sustainable development, but also sovereignty in strengthening the Malaysian identity by inculcating noble values.

This is imperative as a consequence to the pandemic experience that calls for a stronger values-based human chain globally.

What's more, ethics, spirituality and national identity makes up the six student aspirations advocated by the Higher Education Blueprint (2015-2025), which will end at the same time as 12MP.

How it will fare is still uncertain since to date, these are not given the desired priority in the nurturing of future-ready (see Chapter 10 – Developing Future Talents), "holistic" and globalised citizens.

That is to say, Covid-19, as an unprecedented wake-up call laying bare the deep inequalities and failures in many sectors, including "education" in the context of 2030 Agenda, must not be taken lightly.

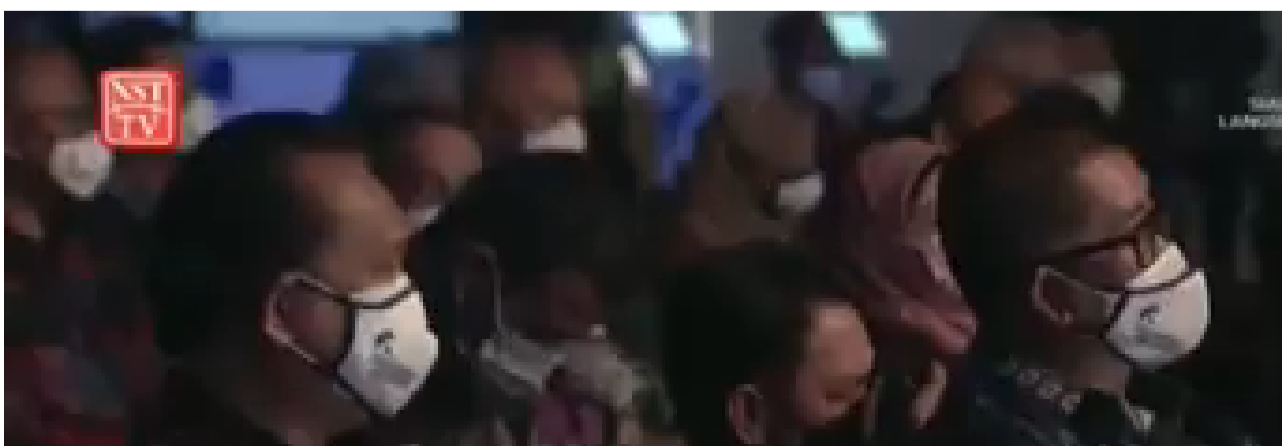
Failure to game-change this moment of crisis by not taking enough game-changing steps towards humanising the "education" ecosystem is to miss a chance of a lifetime.

In turn, it can cause more lives to be wasted, which is indeed a very high price to pay, including that of Keluarga Malaysia.

**The writer, an NST columnist for more than 20 years, is International Islamic University Malaysia rector**

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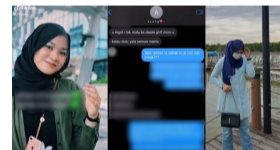
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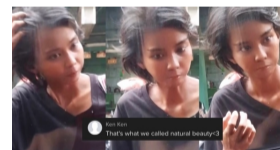
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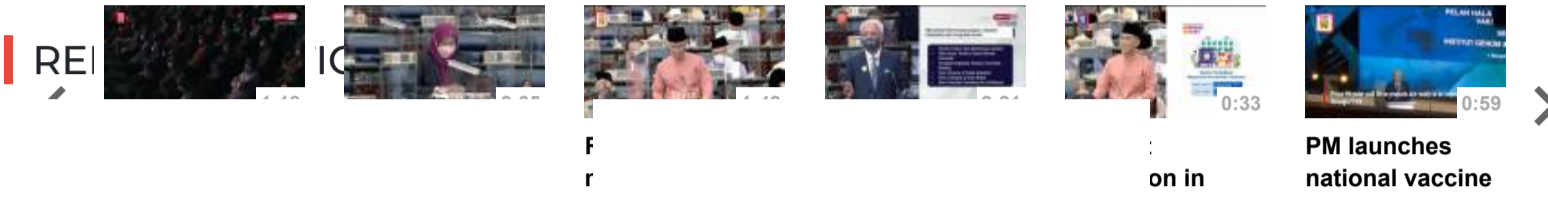
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