

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

PIKOM EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED THAT IT SUPPORT AND SERVICES NOT INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF INDUSTRIES ALLOWED TO OPERATE DURING MCO

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 April 2020 – When Prime Minister YAB Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced that several sectors will be allowed to operate in stages, the tech industry was hopeful that IT support and services would be included. Unfortunately, when MITI released the list of industries yesterday, IT support and services was left out.

“We are extremely disappointed that IT support and services is being left out from the list of industries allowed to operate during this third phase of MCO. In fact, for the past two weeks, we have submitted our request and appeal to the Government, the Prime Minister, Ministry of International Trade and Industry and to the National Security Council on this matter. We explained and reiterated that IT support and services is essential to keep businesses running during the period of lockdown. This should not just be for essential services but also the millions who are working from home,” expressed Danny Lee, Chairman of PIKOM, the National Tech Association of Malaysia.

“Technology should be at the forefront in enabling our economy and providing tools for safe social distancing. The technology Industry cannot comprehend how some approved sectors can help sustain the fragile economy or promote safe social distancing at this time. In fact, the contrary may be the case,” added Danny.

PIKOM is the largest tech association in the country representing more than 1000 technology companies, covering the entire spectrum of products and services.

While the Government has allowed telecommunication companies & data centres to operate and ensure connectivity and flow of information, the last mile is access to the IT systems in the organisations. This includes having many systems to access the file server, HR, payroll, accounting, logistics, inventory and warehouse, sales and CRM. This can only be done if the IT infrastructure and applications continue operating on site and be made available to the employees. It means that some of the functions cannot be done from home. It requires having a technical staff on site or at the office to ensure that the application is available. Cybersecurity will also need to be monitored as we businesses cannot afford to let their guard down at this time. In addition, hardware parts and storage would need to be replaced. This requires IT personnel to be physically in the office to perform some of these functions. The supply chain should also not be disrupted and to allow IT products, parts and components to reach both essential and non-essential businesses to ensure business continuity.

“Singapore has gone into similar social distancing precautions. However, the technology sector has been allowed to continue operations subject to certain limitations such as safe distancing rules. The reason is, technology is an essential service,” Danny explained.



National Tech Association of Malaysia

In Singapore, the telecommunications (Fixed, Mobile and Internet Access), data centres, software and services, broadcasting services (radio and television), submarine cable operations, postal services, security printing services, newspaper publications continue to operate.

While the industry understands that this may undermine the effectiveness of the MCO, it is imperative that Malaysians are able to work from home with as much of the tools as possible, as long as the infrastructure and connectivity is up and running. This makes it easier for many companies to adopt work from home arrangements.

Danny also mentioned, "Technology plays a critical enabling role for both essential and non-essential services. This is even more acute during the enforcement of MCO. Technology is an integral component of our economy, contributing 18.5% to the GDP with employment over a million Malaysians. I don't have to stress further that technology has been an essential enabler to almost all sectors across all industries, from manufacturing to mining, services to construction. Big and small companies rely on stable IT infrastructure and application to operate."

Without IT support and services being allowed to operate, more than a million businesses are at risk without a robust and up-to-date system. The government needs to prioritize and look into IT support and services as a very essential service, making sure that technology remains available and accessible at this very trying time.

About PIKOM

PIKOM, THE NATIONAL TECH ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA, is the association representing the technology (TECH) industry in Malaysia. Its membership currently stands at more than 1,000 active companies involved in a whole spectrum of TECH products and services which command 80% of the total TECH business in Malaysia.

The 5 Chapters under PIKOM cover OM, CIO, Cybersecurity; E-Commerce: Venture Investment. These chapters help improve and drive the business climate for all member companies, together with promoting industry growth in line with different national aspirations, along the following approaches:

As the Voice of the Tech Industry, PIKOM embraces the task of growing the size and capabilities of the TECH industry in Malaysia by creating opportunities for its members as well as all Malaysians to capture the benefits offered by advances in TECH by focusing on the following:

- Spearhead, promote & encourage development of resources, professional skills and programmes in Malaysia's TECH industry.
- Represent the local TECH industry to the Government and private sector both local and overseas.
- Provide a platform for TECH players and users to meet, network, learn and share ideas in order to grow the industry and improved applications.
- Foster high standards of conduct, service and performance throughout the TECH industry.
- Promote and market local TECH services to the region and overseas.

For more information, contact Nor Azlina Ishak, GM Corporate Affairs at azlina@pikom.org.my