PIKOM LAUDS DECISION ON TECH AS ESSENTIAL SERVICE, CALLS FOR PROPER PLANNING IN IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCKDOWN

KUALA LUMPUR, 1 June 2021: PIKOM thanks the Government today for proclaiming that I.T. remains as an essential service during the Full Movement Control Order (FMCO) that takes effect from 1st June till 14th June, 2021.

PIKOM Chairman Danny Lee said, "PIKOM has been emphasizing that I.T. is an important enabler in ensuring that businesses and sectors that are allowed to operate proceed with minimal disruptions. This calls for I.T. support and services to be made available during any lockdown."

"During MCO1.0, there were delays in providing support for I.T. network infrastructure and applications that require regular maintenance. This resulted in downtime for some I.T. systems and affecting the Work-From-Home and online learning. Thankfully, this time around, I.T. is an essential sector," says Lee.

While I.T. was classified an essential sector, there remains ambiguity on the status of internal I.T. support in an end-user organisation. "The internal I.T. departments also perform a key role in keeping systems up and running. While some of these functions are performed by external service providers, the internal I.T. departments will need to be onsite for some of the support operations," added Lee, highlighting that this also applies to businesses that are non-essential, but depend heavily on I.T. support.

The implementation of the full lockdown also left much to be desired. Since the announcement on Friday till further clarity was made over the weekend, businesses have been left guessing which sector will be allowed to operate. Further compounding the anxiety was the registration for approval to operate was with the respective ministries/agencies that the industry comes under.

"Yesterday, at the eleventh hour, a statement was issued for sectors that are allowed to operate, where they are to submit their request on MITI's CIMS portal, after much anticipation and wait from other ministries. As the previous approvals to operate expires on 31st May, 2021, businesses were naturally alarmed," highlighted Lee.

"This has resulted in many of our members having to wait anxiously on which ministry or agency they have to apply from. We have been getting many calls and inquiries to get clarification. While using the MITI CIMS portal is certainly the right decision, this could be avoided if proper planning was made earlier," remarked Lee.

"It was disappointing that the late decision for application process was haphazard as this is not the first time we go through a lockdown. It was truly frustrating that we had lost a day of productivity, not only for the I.T. sector but most other industries as well. During the current challenging times, every single business day is critical. This is a failure of the process planning

and not the limitations of an I.T. system, having noted that heavy traffic to the MITI CIMS has resulted in intermittent access since this morning," concluded Lee.

PIKOM has advised members to keep trying to get the permit printed and hope that issues will be resolved expeditiously. The tech association currently serves over 1000 members commanding over 80% of the total tech business in the country.

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, and 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.

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