

Striving for a 'Digitally United', sovereign Malaysia



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It is not something that a single agency can achieve on its own, it needs collaborative efforts from all stakeholders

Pic by MUHD AMIN NAHARUL

YESTERDAY (Sept 16) marks the second Malaysia Day since the global pandemic swept across the world. As we continue our fight against the pandemic, now, more than ever, is a time for us to celebrate unity and our collective strength as Malaysians.

The pandemic forced society to face technological change, not something that we were prepared for — a McKinsey and Co study found on average, seven years' worth of digitalisation was condensed in a matter of months.

This unprecedented rate of digitalisation is causing displacements across society and industries.

This also resulted in a radically shifting job landscape.

The Future of Jobs Report 2020 by the World Economy Forum indicated that Covid-19 has greatly accelerated the digitalisation of work processes, necessitating upskilling and reskilling employees to adapt to market demands.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We must be united to take on the challenges and to address it as a united family. The family that requires everyone to contribute to its wellbeing. It requires us to be united on the digital front, with the independence to define digital destiny and sovereignty.

This is the time for Malaysians to be “Digitally United”.

For us to flourish in the digital age, we need a digital ecosystem that is healthy and balanced. An ecosystem is not just made from a select few entities.

Similarly, in the tech space, it is not just innovators and creators, but the presence of enablers and supporters that complete the equation. It is also about the users — the people that are impacted by technology.

Each entity in an ecosystem relies on each other to thrive and survive. As such, we need an ecosystem that is not only technologically advanced, but an inclusive one.

Digital advancements cannot just be progress for progress’ sake. There needs to be solutions — to bridge gaps and democratise access.

An inclusive ecosystem is one that communicates and collaborates. We can no longer be an ecosystem consisting of silos. Further digital disruptions can only be tackled together, by the government, agencies, corporates and the rakyat, as one united family, as Keluarga Malaysia.

It is important for us to rally behind a common goal. The Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDigital) and the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 introduced by the government provide clear directions we can aspire towards, while the Jendela plan to widen and improve quality connectivity forms the infrastructural backbone that we can build and innovate upon.

Over the past years, Malaysia Digital Economy Corp (MDEC) has run several campaigns and initiatives aimed at helping Malaysians navigate disruptions and overcome the challenges by digital approach. They are also testaments to how public-private collaborations can lead to an encompassing and inclusive outcome.

Succeeding in a new and fast digitalising world requires new strategies. We launched the #SayaDigital campaign to provide digital skills and increase incomes for both the rakyat and businesses.

This includes MyDigitalWorkforce Work in Tech, an initiative to upskill and subsidise talents and businesses with RM100 million in digital skills training and salary incentives.

Through this, more than 300 companies within the tech sector are expected to benefit from the programme, while an estimated 6,000 job opportunities will be created.

We had also introduced the “Go-eCommerce Onboarding” and “Shop Malaysia Online” campaigns, to help Malaysian businesses in various sectors to onboard onto the e-commerce and e-payment platforms to enhance their capabilities as part of the Budget 2021.

The initiative sees the government injecting RM200 million in subsidies, incentives, discounts and rebates to benefit 300,000 local businesses, and help generate over 10 million transactions in aid of economic recovery.

With our “Heart of Digital Asean” campaign, we aim to raise local start-up champions and to provide the best possible investment hub for investors to land and expand into Malaysia and Asean.

With this, we are poised to uphold digital sovereignty for the nation and establish Malaysia as truly the Heart of Digital Asean.

These initiatives help feed into a healthy and sustainable digital ecosystem. But it is not something that MDEC could achieve on its own nor do we want to — it is a collaborative effort, upheld by all stakeholders, united, towards the common goal of shared prosperity and economic recovery.

Tunku Abdul Rahman once said: “We are all Malaysians. This is the bond that unites us. Let us always remember that unity is our fundamental strength as a people and as a nation.” MDEC will drive more of such unity going forward — united in purpose and action.

In the spirit of Malaysia Day, let us strive to be “Digitally United”, for a future that enables equality and prosperity for all.

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