

KERATAN AKHBAR

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Govt needs to consider policies to help maintain business continuity-Microsoft

KUALA LUMPUR (May 20): The Government needs to consider policies to address issues that could derail business continuity, especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and how they provide services to the customers during this difficult period of COVID-19.

This can be achieved by leveraging digital transformation, of which Microsoft (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd is keen to cooperate with the Government, Sunny Park, assistant general counsel and APAC regional director, corporate, external and legal affairs Microsoft ASEAN, said.

But she said first, there should be a mindset shift - a cultural transformation that needs to take place among the SMEs in parallel with digital transformation.

“The pandemic COVID-19 has given us a wake-up call. We have been talking about digital transformation for many years now, and in fact, the fourth industrial revolution was the theme that came out in the 2016 Davos meeting. However, the adoption is still less than ideal.

“So now, the Malaysian Government needs to consider how they want to deliver the citizens services in a different way digitally, and to develop resiliency. This will require digital workforce and skilled civil servants which will be critical in adopting the technology,” she said in a policy webinar entitled “Rebuilding the Economy with Enabling Policies” today.

Park noted that part of the recent stimulus package announced by the Government should have a policy for businesses, mainly the SMEs.

She opined that the subsidy provided for the country’s backbone was not enough. But what is needed is to rescale and upscale these companies for them to truly embrace the digital technology for their businesses going forward (differently).

“The same technology that Microsoft used to get our operation going is available for even the smallest company. So, I think it is important to realise that they too can harness the power of technology and it is available to all,” she said.

In addition, she said there is a need for a policy that will provide inclusiveness, making sure that there is inclusivity in the healthcare, education and the financial sectors.

“Public and private partnership is more important than ever, and we are here to work with the government to ensure that the government going forward will be more resilient, and ensure continuity either during pandemic or natural disaster.

“Digital transformation is non-negotiable at this point. How quickly the Government shapes the policy to embrace the technology and use of data, as well as allow data to move freely could have a profound impact on its economic recovery and global leadership,” she said.

John Low, co-managing partner SEA of Roland Berger, said Malaysia currently faces several challenges in developing its digital workforce.

He said lack of investment in digital industry, low pace of digital adoption (by enterprises), shortage of digitally skilled workforce, and mismatch of digital/critical skills demand and academic curriculum are the main challenges. By 2025, 3.2 million workforce would be equipped with digital skills, he added.