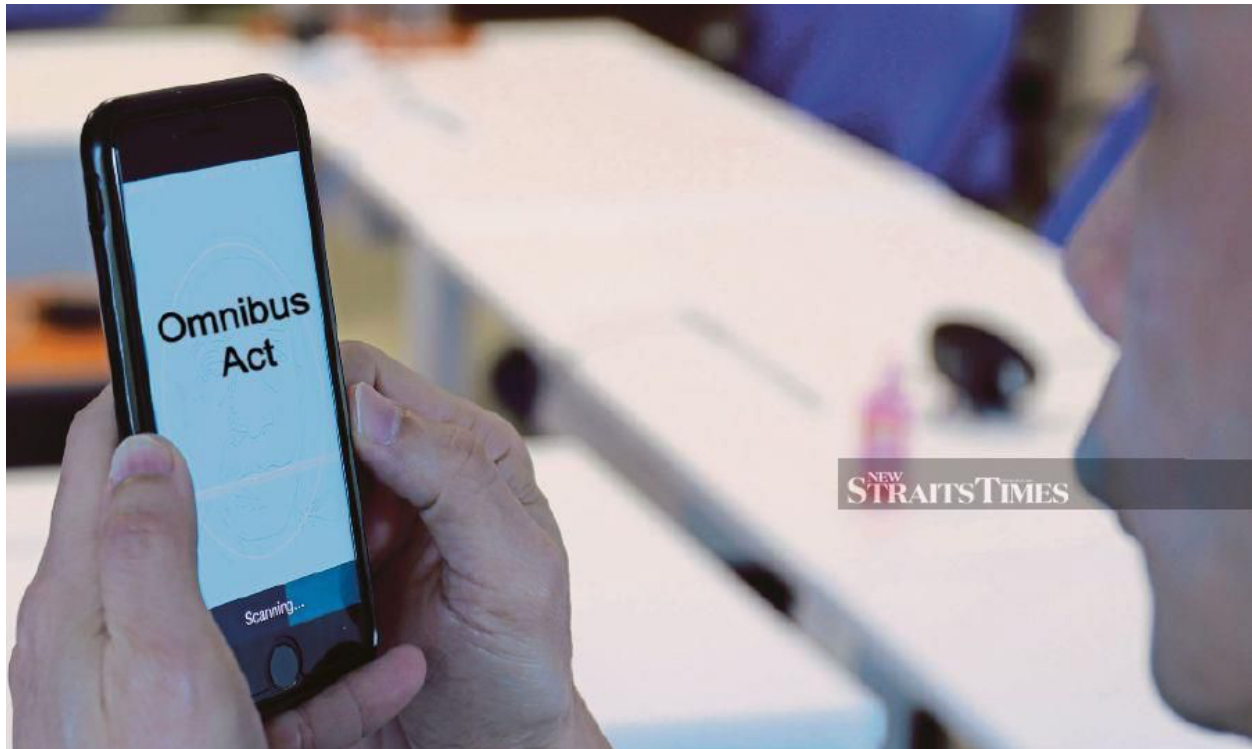


## KERATAN AKHBAR

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TARIKH : 6 OKTOBER 2022  
AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES  
MUKA SURAT : <https://www.nst.com.my/amp/opinion/letters/2022/10/837617/have-more-stringent-privacy-laws>

### Have more stringent privacy laws



For now, little is known about the Omnibus Act. - NSTP file pic

LETTERS: Recently, the government accelerated its drive towards achieving Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) in line with the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MDEB).

Last month, MyDigital Corporation and Accenture Malaysia inked an agreement, witnessed by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

This drive, which came amid a rapid return to economic post-pandemic "normalcy", has also ignited a heated debate online about the need for changes in regulations to support the growth of the digital economy.

Among the concerns is the need to balance access to information against privacy.

Some have argued that Malaysia needs an "Access to Information" (ATI) Act, as well as amendments to or a repeal of the Official Secrets Act (OSA) 1972. These are legislative and political questions worthy of consideration.

The meeting of the National Digital Economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution Council on Sept 6 this year, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, has agreed to implement strategies related to the development of an Omnibus Act.

This will include a Public Sector (Data Sharing) Act through the Public Sector Data Sharing Policy and the National Data Sharing Policy to improve the country's data-sharing ecosystem to be more conducive.

These two initiatives are in line with the MDEB objectives by acknowledging open data as part of the requirements for the country's digital transformation. The MDEB outlines the pathway to become a digital economy and embrace IR 4.0.

For now, little is known about the Omnibus Act, but we hope that it will address the issue of ATI and provide more stringent privacy laws in accordance with Malaysia's national security needs.

What is clear is that Malaysia will certainly be better off if the MDEB is successfully realised. As to whether there's a need to amend or repeal the OSA, it is a political decision, best tackled by the government of the day and the legislature. But the fact that there are passionate discussions in cyberspace on laws relating to this new economic frontier is a good indication that we are keen to embrace IR 4.0 and the digital economy.