

KERATAN AKHBAR

TARIKH : 5 JANUARI 2024

AKHBAR : THE STAR

PAUTAN : <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2024/01/05/padu-not-under-third-party-vendor>

Padu not under third-party vendor



Safety first: Data has to be handled by civil servants to reduce the risk of third-party vendors gaining access to government information, says Rafizi. — Bernama

PUTRAJAYA: To reduce the risk of data leakage, the Central Database Hub (Padu) will be placed under the purview of civil servants instead of third-party vendors, says Rafizi Ramli.

The Economy Minister said data leakages had previously happened when third-party vendors were contracted to develop government data applications.

“It has to be handled by civil servants because we need to reduce the risk of third-party vendors gaining access to government information.

“The difference is that civil servants will be bound by the Official Secrets Act (OSA), so if they went against it, they can be charged,” he told a press conference here yesterday.

Rafizi said there were incidents involving data leakages by third-party vendors because the subcontractors had access to data but were not bound by any rules or regulations.

“I hope this will explain why the government decided that it (Padu) should be developed by civil servants.

“It is not about the database, but about building and transforming our public service to be world-quality,” he added.

Since Padu was launched on Tuesday, there have been concerns raised over possible data leakages.

Former deputy international trade and industry minister Ong Kian Ming had said that Malaysians who do not register with Padu could expose themselves to identity theft because their identity cards and postcodes could be used and registered by others.

Rafizi refuted Ong’s claims, saying that the issue has been dealt with. The ministry has addressed several issues about Padu registration such as bugs and vulnerabilities as raised by social media users, he said.

Developing digital products is a continuous process involving constant improvements from time to time, said Rafizi.

Meanwhile, the government has targeted 500,000 users to access Padu and 200,000 users to update their information on a daily basis.

Rafizi said that as of 4pm yesterday, 516,168 Malaysians had registered with Padu, whereby 261,158 had completed the electronic know your customer (eKYC) process.

“The Padu registration process is taking place smoothly as planned. We expect that it will be more challenging in the second week, but it should peak in March,” he added.

The public would be given a three-month period until March 31 to update and verify their information in the database.

They can update and confirm 39 personal details on Padu, which includes identification number, number of household members and their address.

Padu was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Tuesday to ensure the distribution of aid and subsidies is efficient and reaches target groups.

Meanwhile, Rafizi criticised Lawyers for Liberty (LFL) for proposing Padu be suspended until the Personal Protection Act (PDPA) was amended.

“As we speak, there are tonnes of data available in the government database. If you project the same argument ... this means the government cannot proceed with anything that involves data.

“I’m hoping the LFL, before issuing statements like that, would have understood what the PDPA is and publicly available data.

“Each government agency is governed by its own regulations on data. I would have thought that a so-called lawyers’ group would understand that,” he said.

Earlier yesterday, LFL said there was a need for an immediate amendment to the PDPA to place responsibility and liability on the government as well as the agencies responsible for the data collected.