



Fastest 4G Mobile Internet with Voice

YTL Communications Sdn Bhd.
(793634-V)

19th Floor, One Oriental Place,
No. 1, Jalan Hang Lekiu,
50100 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.

Tel: +6018-799 8888
Fax: +6018-799 8828

www.yes.my

YTL Communications Sdn. Bhd.

Press Statement

YTL Communications Stays Committed to Transforming Education

In recent weeks, there have been a series of media and news reports which have been misleading and have cast negative light on YTL Communications and the Frog Virtual Learning Environment (“Frog VLE”) which has been implemented in schools since 2011.

We are also disturbed by misrepresentations, both in the media and in semi-official exemplifications, which inaccurately represent events that led to the appointment of Telekom Malaysia, Celcom Axiata and Maxis replacing YTL Communications as the providers of interim internet services from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019.

These are the facts:

In July last year, the Ministry of Education (the “Ministry”) announced that they will be calling for a fresh tender by early this year (2019) to continue providing internet connectivity to around 10,000 schools nationwide (which was being provided by YTL Communications).

YTL Communications made repeated inquiries with the Ministry on the status of the tender and on 23 April this year, the Ministry of Education invited us together with Telekom Malaysia, Celcom Axiata, Maxis and a few other internet service providers (“ISPs”) to a meeting where we were informed that they were “not ready for a tender for implementation on 1 July” when phase 2 of the contract with YTL Communications would expire.

The meeting was informed that there would be a delay of another 6 months during which the 10,000 participating schools would continue to require interim internet services.

The Ministry requested that we provide free internet services as the Government “did not have the budget” to pay for these services.

As responsible corporate citizens, and not seeking to disrupt Internet services to the schools, YTL Communications wrote to Education Minister YB Maszlee Malik on 31 May 2019 confirming that we would provide a complete solution of **free internet services** as well as the Frog VLE for the interim period until the tender was called and awarded.

Our primary concern was to ensure teaching in schools was not disrupted in the middle of the school year. Unfortunately, we did not receive any response to our offer. A copy of our letter to the Minister is appended to this statement.

Therefore, when the Ministry announced on June 27, 2019, that it had awarded the interim services to Telekom Malaysia, Celcom Axiata and Maxis, it came as a complete surprise. **The Ministry had excluded YTL Communications, reneged on its statement to call an open tender and agreed to pay for the internet services to the 3 appointed ISPs although we had offered the services for free.**

While we were still seeking clarity, we were again shocked to learn on 28 June 2019 of a post that, perhaps not coincidentally, appeared on the Facebook page of “Friends of Maszlee Malik” that gave 7 reasons why the 1BestariNet project should be terminated. This article, which may have been using the Minister’s name without his knowledge, contained points which we deem as false and slanderous.

Background

The 1BestariNet project was awarded to YTL Communications in 2011 after an open tender for a 15 year service contract to be implemented in phases. The scope of work included providing a total learning solution comprising internet connectivity, security and the Frog Virtual Learning Environment (“**Frog VLE**”). It was intended that a review would be undertaken after each phase before reaching agreement on the next phase.

In July last year the Ministry announced that it will be calling a fresh tender for the learning solution and **confirmed that YTL Communications will not be excluded** from the tender.

Learning Platform is Key to Education Transformation not Connectivity

A learning platform is the key to education transformation as this is where teaching and learning come together using digital tools and applications. Internet connectivity merely facilitates the learning platform.

The Frog VLE is a customisable platform used in schools in 23 countries including UK, USA, Hong Kong, Middle East and Australia. **Last year, Frog won a tender by the South Australian Government to implement the learning platform in all 900 schools in South Australia modelled after Malaysia.**

The Ministry of Education has spent the past 7 years investing in building a complete solution within the Frog VLE to enable teaching and learning using the latest digital tools. Teachers have invested considerable time over the years creating content on the platform that has been shared to other teachers within their schools and nationally. Entire schools have become acculturated to using the platform.

The Frog VLE has an entire library of curated teaching and learning content that is mapped to our national syllabus in every subject from Standard 1 to Form 5 including for Chinese and Tamil schools.

There is a repository of over 7 million quizzes within the platform that can be shared. The country uniquely has a platform that has improved teaching and learning for our teachers and students. Schools have been introduced to 21st century learning and have been given the power to go completely paperless.

Having successfully completed phases 1 and 2, phase 3 would have seen the full adoption of digital teaching and learning in classrooms by January 2020. Changing the platform and starting all over again will set the entire education system backwards by years.

However, the manner in which the exercise has been conducted has led to a disruption to schools affecting close to 5 million of our students in the middle of the school year.

Following the Ministry's announcement to award the interim services to the 3 new ISPs and to replace the Frog VLE with Google Classroom, we have received numerous enquiries from teachers asking whether they would still be able to access the Frog VLE.

As stated earlier, we have every wish to ensure that studies are not disrupted and we have decided to:

1. continue to make the Frog VLE available; and
2. allow teachers to retain the smartphones provisioned with teacher data plans.

This would prevent disruption and would allow teaching and learning to continue in classrooms and at home.

With reference to the ***"Friends of Maszlee Malik" posting*** which appeared on a newly created website a day after the Ministry's announcement (www.sekolahkita.my), seven reasons were given on why the 1BestariNet project should be terminated.

The website, obviously, intended to give an "official spin" by using the Honourable Minister's name, and made allegations that are false and slanderous.

We categorically state here that YTL Communications has fulfilled all service level agreements ("SLAs") under its contract and **has not received any complaints from the Ministry.**

We would have fully expected the Minister to refute these allegations and dissociate himself from this post that bears his name, image and the name of the Ministry.

YTL Communications remains committed to serve the Nation

YTL Communications has invested more than RM4 billion building up the infrastructure in the schools for a 15 year project. It was our legitimate expectation that we would be given an extension of the contract into the next phase. **We view the Ministry's actions as being in breach of their contractual obligations to us. Disappointingly, they have not acted in good faith in respect of what we have been informed and what has actually been implemented.**

We remain committed to serving the nation in this very critical sector of our nation and believe we have a continued role to play.

3 July 2019