

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Towards Media Freedom and Combatting Fake News**

**3-5 Afternoon Insights with Minister of Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia**

**Bandar Sunway, 26 September 2019** – The Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) had its 3-5 Afternoon Insights, an engagement platform with government personalities deliberating pertinent and pressing political and social issues aimed to provide an open dialogue for *rakyat* to air their opinions and bring forth their suggestions to the authorities. YB Tuan Gobind Singh Deo, Minister of Communications and Multimedia, Malaysia was on the dialogue happening at the Sunway University. The dialogue themed “Towards Media Freedom and Combatting Fake News”.

The conversations with YB Tuan Gobind Singh Deo was timely as he reiterated Pakatan Harapan government’s commitment in safeguarding the freedom of press and expression. In addition, he spoke of the Government’s intention on the proposal to set up an independent Media Council by an Act of Parliament.

The Minister believed that efforts at curbing fake news and maintaining media freedom is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders and must be accompanied with a responsible use of that freedom. Towards this end, he looked forward to having more regular discussions and consultations with key stakeholders on how best to navigate the challenging environment of freedom of media and speech in the age of rapid technological change.

He also elaborated on the National Fiberisation and Connectivity Plan (NFCP) whereby essentially, the plan seeks to “bridge the digital divide” between the rural and urban areas in Malaysia—aiming to provide more equal opportunities for citizens. He stressed his commitments to a new constitutional right, the “right to internet access” whereby the proposal is aimed at allowing Malaysians to benefit from the national e-economy and e-commerce. YB Tuan Gobind Singh Deo also expressed his agreement that there is a need for public-funded media which puts public interest first and free from political interference and will be working towards that.

Ms Melissa Ong, ASLI CEO said, “ASLI is honoured to have the Honourable Minister sharing his insights on a timely topic of media freedom and fake news. We believe such a discourse is vital for Malaysia in charting its reform agenda going forward. We look forward to working closely with the Ministry on devising key policy recommendations to ensure media freedom is consistently safeguarded and racial unity enhanced.”

ASLI **3-5 Afternoon Insights** is a signature talk series focusing on the social development agenda, and its critical areas for strengthening and reform. This series engages leading figures in the various fields of social development, sharing their insights on the latest initiatives, trends, challenges and solutions in the global movement towards a better and more sustainable future for all. The areas of discussion range from poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice. ASLI champions the social development agenda through partnerships between the public and private sectors, civil society organisations and citizens in ensuring a better planet for the future generations.

-END-

About Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI)

Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute or in short “ASLI” is Malaysia’s leading independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit think-tank. Since its establishment in 1993, ASLI has established a renowned reputation as the definitive link between the public sector, the private sector, academia and civil society in pursuit of its mission of creating a better society. ASLI is owned and governed by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation. We curate thought-provoking and intellectual dialogues in an effort to bring change in public policies for the betterment of society. We provide strategic analysis and advice on critical issues impacting the nation and beyond. In the wider Asia Pacific region, we capitalise on our influential network to harness best practices and connect strategic partners across APAC on highest-value business investment and trade opportunities to foster bilateral relations and economic growth.

Media Contact:

**Farhah Aziz**  
Media Relations Manager, ASLI  
03-76228285  
[farhah@asli.com.my](mailto:farhah@asli.com.my)