

THE Chartered Tax Institute of Malaysia (CTIM) serves as a collective voice of tax consultants on tax matters in the country, and as a bridge between its members and the tax authorities. According to newly elected CTIM president Seah Siew Yun the wider public appreciates the importance of CTIM's role as the premier tax organisation in Malaysia.

CTIM champions the development of the tax industry by acting as a resource centre and a direct link to government bodies such as the Inland Revenue Board (IRB) and the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) in resolving tax issues. At present, CTIM has about 3,500 individual members, who are all tax professionals.

The number of members is growing at present and they are admitted as members selectively, says Seah, explaining that each member must have a proven tax background.

CTIM serves its main function as a technical liaison between the authorities and its members. Over the years, it has established five technical teams, each chaired by a prominent tax professional, to oversee their area of speciality in taxation.

CTIM has been given the mandate by the IRB to gather queries and issues submitted by its members and to raise them in ongoing dialogue sessions.

Some of the discussions with the authorities include operational and compliance dialogues, tax technical and transfer pricing meetings with the IRB and GST meetings with the RMCD.

"We are also in constant contact with associations and professional bodies from various industries such

# Championing tax matters

The Chartered Tax Institute of Malaysia is the foremost body representing tax professionals and taxpayer issues in the country



Seah Siew Yun, President of CTIM

as the accounting industry. We hold joint meetings after the tabling of the national tax budget for example where we sit down to deliberate on issues to bring up to the Ministry of Finance. The

Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (Rehda), for example, has approached us for GST talks for property developers," says Seah.

Being a full-fledged national tax institute and championing the development of the tax industry also means that CTIM spends resources on education and training. The Institute promotes tax specialisation as a viable career path for young graduates.

"Tax professionals are not just needed in the country – we are short of tax professionals – but internationally. People used to say that taxation is country-specific but now it is borderless when we talk about the digital economy, ecommerce and transfer pricing," says Seah.

CTIM's education initiatives include providing training, holding examinations and offering professional qualifications for those pursuing a career as a tax professional.

It also has an editorial team that produces a quarterly magazine, Tax Guardian, which offers information and updates on tax matters to its members.

Every year, CTIM co-organises the National Tax Conference together with the IRB, the foremost tax event on the Malaysian annual calendar. Now in its 17th edition, the conference serves to address a wide range of taxation

issues, with prominent key speakers and authority figures taking to the podium.

Entitled "Managing Tax Issues for Growth and Nation Building" this year, the conference will address economic issues currently affecting the tax landscape as well as specific tax issues. One of the highlights of the event, to be held over two days on July 25 and 26, is the Tax Cases Update where the speakers will provide details on the outcome of certain tax cases.

"This conference provides an opportunity for taxpayers as well as professionals to raise questions and to bring up issues of concern," says Seah.

She also reiterates the importance of being educated on tax issues to running a business. "If you are a senior executive of any company, you will need to know about the issues being addressed at the conference as it may affect your industry and profession."

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