

## MyCC steps up anti-monopoly probe on Grab

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Iskandar said MyCC is stepping up its probe on Grab. — Picture by Firdaus Latif

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 25** — The Malaysian Competition Commission is pushing ahead with its investigation against Grab Holdings Inc over possible monopolistic practices following its acquisition of rival firm Uber Technologies' networks in the region.

According to Bloomberg, MyCC chief executive officers Iskandar Ismail said his agency has stepped up its probe on the Singapore-based firm that began as a ride-hailing service but has since expanded into other logistics-related businesses.

Iskandar declined to specify, however, what the escalation entailed while Bloomberg said Grab did not respond when asked to comment.

Grab took over the local operations of Uber in March last year and immediately sparked concerns that it would form a monopoly of the ride-hailing market.

The firm is the most prominent of those in the sector but a check by Malay Mail last month showed that there are at least 31 players of various sizes in the market.

Indonesia's motorcycle ride-hailing provider Go-Jek is also making overtures in Malaysia after its interest was spurred by Youth and Sports Minister Syed Saddiq Abdul Rahman's remarks presenting it as an option to address chronic unemployment among the country's younger workers.

While Iskandar would not elaborate on the investigation on Grab, he told Bloomberg that MyCC was examining some firms for possible bid-rigging after they lobbied for government contracts.

MyCC previously disclosed that it discovered eight firms that had formed a cartel that manipulated bids to provide a government-linked entity with IT services.

“Our minister (Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Saifuddin Nasution) gives us a lot of room,” Iskandar was quoted as saying.

“He just says, ‘Go do your job and we will support you all the way.’“

Favoured by consumers for their ease of use, firms such as Grab, Uber and their ilk are coming under increasing attention by regulators worldwide over concerns they may be dismantling key public transportation services such as traditional taxis, allowing them to virtually capture the market.

In Malaysia, taxi operators have long railed against e-hailing providers over what they call unfair competition as the latter had been unregulated until recently.

The Transport Ministry has since introduced new rules and regulations to cover the entire hire car industry that also encompasses e-hailing, but drivers with these continue to enjoy more regulatory leeway than those operating taxis.

