



# KHABAR ASTANA

NEWSLETTER OF THE EMBASSY OF MALAYSIA IN ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN

IN THIS 2/2016 ISSUE

## From The Ambassador's Desk

*Dear Readers,*

Assalamualaikum ! Welcome to the 2<sup>nd</sup>.edition of “Khabar Astana”. As always time moves very fast here in Astana. Before we knew it, we are already in the last quarter of 2016, and it is already very cold in Astana. This year the cold spell came early. The first snowfall came on 11 October. In most other cities in the world when it snows, not only do schools shut down, the whole city shuts down but here in Kazakhstan life goes on as usual even though it was – 25 C.



It is fascinating to see how the locals go about their daily chores even under this near arctic experience. The mosques are full on Fridays. Families flocked to shopping complexes on the weekends as these places are always well heated despite the cold weather outside. As the surroundings are all white with snow, the local government decorate the town with lights and beautiful fittings to cheer up the city. December is a month full of festivities. This year Kazakhstan celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of Independence on 16 December. A myriad of celebrations has been arranged especially for Christmas and the New Year.

Living in Astana is indeed a challenging experience for most Malaysians. After all, it is the second coldest capital in the world. Coming from tropical Malaysia, one has to be prepared to experience this “strange” weather. The temperature can change instantly at any time of the day. You must be ready to be covered like a polar bear. For at least 5 months in a year, Astana is covered with snow.

Next year, 2017 will indeed be a hectic year for Kazakhstan. In January, Kazakhstan will take over Malaysia's seat on the UNSC. Almaty will host the World Universiade Winter Games from 29 January - February. Astana is busy preparing for “EXPO 2017” which will take place from 10 Jun to 10 September. The exposition theme is “FUTURE ENERGY”. Malaysia's participation headed by KeTTHA can be expected to be one of its major attractions.

Thank you for taking time to read this newsletter. We hope you will enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy sharing some of our activities here in Astana with you.

*Wassalam & Happy New Year !*

*Dato' Hidayat Abdul Hamid*  
AMBASSADOR OF MALAYSIA

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# AIDIL FITRI IN ASTANA



**Astana, 6 July 2016:** Rumah Malaysia was abuzz with guests from the expatriate and diplomatic community as well as Kazakh friends joining Malaysians celebrate Hari Raya Aidil Fitri.

Seventy percent of Kazakhstan’s population are Muslims, mostly from the Hanafi school. During Ramadhan, most mosques conduct Tarawikh prayers. During the last ten days of Ramadhan, more and more people goes to the mosque. The air of festivities started during these last days of Ramadhan.

Fasting in Ramadhan is a big challenge here in Kazakhstan. As Ramadhan falls in Summer, the fasting hours between dusk and dawn are longer. It is now around 18 hours.



Kazakhs celebrate “Ait” just like other Muslims around the world. They exchange greetings and visit friends and relatives. Traditional meals like “Beshparmak” are shared with family and relatives. Most Kazakhs live in big extended families from Grandparents to grandchildren. Children are showered with sweets and “duit raya”.

**‘AIT KABYL BOLSYN .....  
.....BIRGE BOLSYN’**



*Selamat Hari Raya & Maaf Zahir Batin*

## VISIT TO PETROPAVLOSK



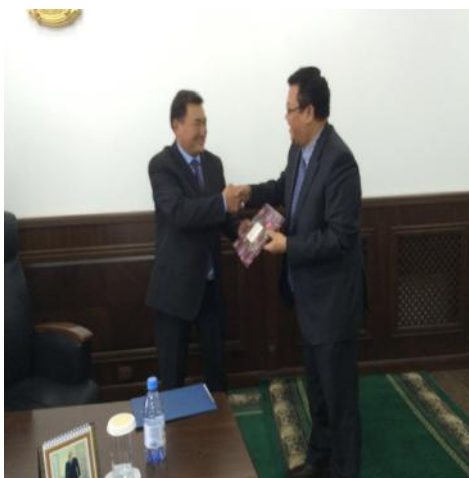
**Petropavolsk, 3 September 2016** : Ambassador of Malaysia visited Petropavlosk and called on the Governor of Northern Region H.E Erik Sultanov and discussed prospects for collaboration. The Ambassador suggested that MARDITech could provide some expertise to this vibrant agriculture region. He also met the City Mayor Marat Tasmaganbetov. Ambassador Hidayat also visited the Lycee Best Secondary School and had an interactive session with the teachers and students who are trained to be proficient in at least 2 foreign languages.



## VISIT TO PAVLODAR

**Pavlodar, 6 September 2016:** The Ambassador of Malaysia visited Pavlodar and met the Governor of Pavlodar Oblast H.E Bulat Bakauov . Pavlodar is a major industrial region. It's power stations supplies a third of Kazakhstan's electricity. Ambassador Hidayat also met City Mayor Nurzhan Ashimbetov and discussed potential for tourism and hospitality development in the city.

He also visited an ethnography museum, Nazarbayev Intellectual School and a Sports & Youth development complex.





## ASEAN COMMITTEE IN ASTANA (ACA)

The ASEAN Committee in Astana(ACA) comprises of four embassies of ASEAN countries resident in Astana, namely the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, the Embassy of Malaysia, the Royal Thai Embassy and the Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Malaysia is the Chairman of the ACA from 1<sup>st</sup>.June 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup>.December 2016. During this period the Embassy of Malaysian hosted 4 ACA meetings. Amongst activities carried out during the period were visits to Kazakh corporations, sports and cultural activities.

### ASEAN AMBASSADOR’S VISIT TO EUROCOPTER KAZAKHSTAN LLC.

**Astana, 16 November 2016:** As Chairman of ACA, the Embassy of Malaysia arranged a visit of ACA Ambassadors to the Eurocopter Kazakhstan Engineering company in Astana.

The ACA Ambassadors were briefed on the operation of the company by the General Director Mr.Alain Salendre. The company is the only helicopter assembly line and service provider for Airbus helicopter products in Central Asia. It also provide trainings for helicopter pilot and maintenance engineers. The Aviation Training Centre has it own helicopter simulator.



Kazakhstan’s Aviation Industry is fast growing into an important sector in the country’s economic development. Helicopter services are in big demand in the O & G industry in Kazakhstan.



# ASEAN SPORTS CARNIVAL

To advocate healthy lifestyles and promote friendship and camaraderie amongst the ASEAN Community in Astana, the ACA had tasked each ASEAN embassy to organize a sporting activity during the Summer months. The Embassy of Malaysia organized a Friendly Futsal Tournament on 24 July 2016.

## MALAYSIAN FUTSAL TOURNAMENT

**ASTANA, 24 July 2016:** The Embassy of Malaysia organized an ASEAN Futsal Friendly Tournament in conjunction with the 49th Anniversary of ASEAN. Five teams (men and women' category) from ASEAN Embassies participated in the friendly tournament held at Alatau Sports Center.

About 80 ACA members and families gathered as early as 10:00am to watch the tournament and support the participating teams. It was delightful to see that all the players have exemplified the highest spirit of sportsmanship and enjoyed the game.



The friendly tournament concluded with a prize giving ceremony by the ASEAN Ambassadors. All participating teams were awarded with medals and trophies for champions of both category.



# ASEAN SPORTS CARNIVAL

As part of the ASEAN Sports Carnival, the Embassy of Vietnam organized a Bowling Tournament on 18 June 2016, the Embassy of Indonesia organized a Table Tennis Tournament on 24 September 2016 and the Royal Thai Embassy organized a Badminton Tournament on 2 October 2016.

## INDONESIAN TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT

**ASTANA, 24 Sept. 2016 :** The Embassy of Indonesia hosted a ASEAN Friendship Table Tennis Tournament on 24 September 2016 at Duman Sports Centre. The tournament was participated by a total of 50 players from ASEAN community, diplomatic corps and locals.

## THAILAND BADMINTON TOURNAMENT

**Astana, 2 Oct. 2016 :** The Royal Thai Embassy organized a Friendly Badminton Tournament at Alau Sport Complex, Astana. The tournament comprised five categories, including Men’s Doubles, Women’s Doubles and Mixed Doubles. After two and half hours of competition, the first prizes in men double’s went to Mr. Foster Gultom, Ambassador of Indonesia and Dato’ Hidayat Abdul Hamid, Ambassador of Malaysia.



## VIETNAM BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIP



**Astana, 18 June 2016 :** The ASEAN Bowling tournament was held at the Duman Hotel Bowling lanes on 18 June 2016, organized by Embassy of Vietnam. After 3 hours of competition, the 1<sup>st</sup>. prize in men’s section went to Indonesian Ambassador Foster Gultom and the women’s winner was Vietnamese Ambassador Doan Thi Xuan Hien.





# ASEAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL

To commemorate the 49<sup>th</sup>.Anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, the ACA organize an ASEAN cultural festival at Nazarbayev University.

**ASTANA, 14 October 2016:** ACA Embassies in Astana, organized a cultural festival at Nazarbayev University to commemorate the 49th Anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN. The event was aimed to promote awareness about ASEAN as well as deepen friendship and camaraderie between the ASEAN Community with the people of Kazakhstan and the international community.

The event received over 250 guests comprising faculty members and students of Nazarbayev University, expatriat and diplomatic corps and the ASEAN Community in Astana. The Vice-President for Student Affairs and International Cooperation of the Nazarbayev University Mrs. Kadisha Dairova welcomed the ASEAN embassies for their effort to promote ASEAN to the university community. She hoped that the cultural festival will be an annual affair to bring the ASEAN and university closer together.



The international audience enjoyed the traditional dances and songs performed by the respective embassies. Apart from the cultural show each embassy showcased their respective countries' unique arts and crafts as well as food. The huge economic potential and touristic opportunities of ASEAN countries were displayed to the visitors

Many guests conveyed their appreciation of the cultural diversity of ASEAN countries and were happily presented with promotional and tourism brochures and souvenirs.

## PMRM VISIT TO ATYRAU



**ATYRAU, 16 Sept. 2017** : Malawakil Astana has always been in constant contact with the Malaysian communities in Kazakhstan both through Program Mendampingi Rakyat Malaysia (PMRM) and as well as other social and festive gathering events. This year, our biggest PMRM gathering thus far was held in conjunction with Malaysia Day celebration in Atyrau on 16 September 2016. The Ambassador of Malaysia together with all HBS, Matrade and Tourism Malaysia officers from Almaty, travelled to Atyrau to participate in the said event.

The biggest Malaysian community in Kazakhstan resides in Atyrau. They are mostly Malaysian professionals working with multinational O&G companies. This year's Malaysian gathering was held at the Shell Caspian Club, Atyrau. It was made more significant as the special "Malaysia Day" celebration coincided with the opening of the first Malaysian O&G office - MyConsortium office in Atyrau. During the gathering, Ambassador addressed issues concerning the well-being of fellow Malaysians, the importance of updating their contact details and profiles regularly to ensure that they are contactable during an emergency. The PMRM dinner was attended by 70 guests including business people from MyConsortium.

Special guests for the event was a group of children from an orphanage in Atyrau who were also invited to perform Kazakh dance and songs. The event was well-received and organized with the support of the Malaysian community in Atyrau. Overall, the event was a success. All participants gave positive feedback and many expressed hope that such events would be conducted again in Atyrau.

Thanks to the Organizing Committee and all Malaysians in Atyrau. We hope to see you again !

## Visitors from Home..



### Visit by CRC

A delegation from CRC led by Tan Sri Bashir Ahmad visited Astana on 14 September 2016



### Visit by Deputy Minister MOSTI

YB Dato' Dr. Abu Bakar Mohd Diah, Deputy Minister MOSTI visited Astana from 26-28 Sept. 2016 to participate in an Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Science, Technology & Innovation. A Dinner in honor of the delegation was hosted by the Ambassador at Rumah Malaysia.



### Visit of DPIM

The Embassy received a business delegation from Dewan Perdagangan Islam Malaysia (DPIM) on 10 October 2016.

## Opening of MyConsortium Office



**ATYRAU, 16 Sept. 2016** : Ambassador of Malaysia and Deputy Governor of Atyrau Region officiated the opening ceremony of MyConsortium representative office in Atyrau city on 16 September 2016. The first Malaysian O&G supply and service base in Atyrau consisted of 4 companies led by HADID Engineering Sdn. Bhd.

HADID was a recipient of MATRADE Fund for Feasibility Studies (FFS), a grant for conducting feasibility study for specific international project overseas. A feasibility study on “Market Potentials in Engineering, Fabrication & Construction sub-sectors of the Oil and Gas Industry within the Caspian Sea Region of The Republic of Kazakhstan” was conducted by HADID Engineering Sdn. Bhd. and Deloitte Kazakhstan. As a result, 4 Malaysian companies (HADID Engineering Sdn. Bhd, Oilfield Technical Inspection (OTI), Innovative Fluid Processes (IFP) and Nusapetro) agreed to form the Consortium to venture into Kazakhstan’s O&G market and thus the opening of MyConsortium in Atyrau.

MyConsortium is the first Malaysian O&G supply and service base in Atyrau. Malawakil is encouraging fellow Malaysian professionals in Atyrau to support the Malaysian Consortium. Malawakil has also managed to get the support and cooperation of the Governor’s office for the Malaysian venture.

## Malaysia-Kazakhstan Culture Day Kazakhstan International School (KIS)



**ATYRAU, 17 Sept. 2016**: Malawakil together with Malaysians in Atyrau participated in a Malaysia-Kazakhstan Culture Day at Kazakhstan International School(KIS). The event was organized by Malaysian volunteers in Atyrau in collaboration with the school. This public outreach programme was aimed to disseminate information on Malaysia to the local and expatriate community. The Ambassador of Malaysia as guest of honour delivered a welcoming address at the event.

During the event, students of KIS performed 2 Malaysian songs, which are “Rasa Sayang” and “Chan Mali Chan”. There were also “Teh Tarik” challenge, shadow play (Wayang Kulit) performance, cultural display and information booth/brochure about Malaysia.

The Cultural Day at KIS was a success. The children, parents and guests enjoyed the event. The cultural exchange programme demonstrated many similarities between Malaysia and Kazakh cultures from different perspectives. It managed to reach out to the local community and demonstrated our multi-faceted cultures from different regions of Malaysia.

## Malaysian Expedition Promotes Pahang as Tourist Destination 2017

**Astana, 17-19 Oct. 2016** : A Malaysian road expedition team from the Malaysian state of Pahang visited the capital Oct. 17-19 as part of “Visit Pahang 2017” campaign that aims to promote Pahang to international tourists.

The expedition crew consists of 69 members traveling in 17 4X4 vehicles. “The team entered Kazakhstan via Khorgos Oct. 14 and will depart from the country via Uralsk on Oct. 22,” the press release stated. Malaysian Ambassador to Kazakhstan Dato’ Hidayat Abdul Hamid expressed his hopes for the expedition to promote friendship and relations between Malaysia and Kazakhstan. “While the Pahang expedition promotes the ‘Visit Pahang 2017’ campaign, they are also disseminating information on the places they visit in Kazakhstan to fellow Malaysians back home,” the message read.

This will encourage Malaysians to visit Kazakhstan when Astana hosts EXPO 2017 exhibition next year and where Malaysia will be one of its major exhibitors. The ambassador commended efforts of the Kazakh government to modernize infrastructure and transportation facilities along the old Silk Route from Europe to Asia to improve the connection between the two regions, according to the embassy.

The expedition crew began their journey in Pahang Sept. 24, making their way to Thailand, Laos and China before reaching Kazakhstan. The team will next travel to Moscow (Russia), Belarus, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and France before their final stop in London (England). The crew expects to complete the 17,000-kilometre journey in 52 days.



Pahang is the largest state on the Malaysian Peninsula. Genting Highlands, Cameron Highlands, Fraser’s Hill, Taman Negara National Park, Tioman Island and Cherating Beach are the main attractions of this state.

The “Visit Pahang 2017” campaign aims to promote Pahang to tourists. The campaign seeks to increase tourist flow to 15 million visitors per year with \$3.5 billion in tourism income by the end of next year, according to the embassy press release.

About 18,000 Kazakh tourists visited Malaysia in 2014, which is the same year the Malaysian Tourism office under the Malaysian Embassy in Kazakhstan opened.



## National Sports Day (HARI SUKAN NEGARA) 2016



### ASTANA, 08 October 2016:

In line with the Government's effort to transform Malaysia into a sporting and healthy nation, the Embassy of Malaysia in Astana organised a National Sports Day event at the QSI International School.

Hari Sukan Negara 2016 began at 9.00 am with a welcoming speech by Ambassador Dato' Hidayat Abdul Hamid followed by stretching exercises.

Friendly Badminton matches ensued participated by staff of the Embassy and Malaysian community. The programme which ended at 11.00 am was also joined by H.E the Ambassador of Indonesia.

Till next year, keep fit and stay healthy!

## PERWAKILAN ASTANA

PERWAKILAN ASTANA has had a busy second half of the year . The Malaysian ladies association had actively participated in charity bazaars, cooking competitions, master classes and many other activities organized by the International Community.

The main event for the year was the Christmas Charity Bazaar organized by the Ambassador Spouses Association (ASA). The President of PERWAKILAN Astana was a member of the organizing committee. The Christmas Charity Bazaar was a huge success. The Malaysian booth was flocked with visitors wanting to taste Malaysian delicacies and crafts on sale. Proceeds of the bazaar were donated to orphanage and the needy in Kazakhstan. PERWAKILAN also won 2<sup>nd</sup>.prize in the QSI Marriott Cooking Competition.



## Upcoming Public Holidays 2017

Holiday	Date
New Year	01 January
Chinese New Year	28 January
Women's Day	8 March
Nauryz Holiday*	21-22 March
Labour Day	01 May
Victory Day	09 May
Eid-ul Fitri*	25-26 June

*\*Date subject to change*  
*Note : Should a public holiday falls on a weekend, it shall be observed on the succeeding working day;*



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From left to right (up) LRS : Mr. Erkebulan (Driver), Mrs. Zhuldyz (Clerk), Mrs. Makpal (Translator), Ms. Akerke (Receptionist) & Mr. Azamat (Driver)

From left to right (up) HBS : Pn. Noor Atika ( Third Secretary), Pn. Farah Fazarina (Second Secretary), Dato' Hidayat, Datin Rosie and Pn. Suryati Tampit (PA to the Ambassador)