

MALAYSIA NEWS BULLETIN



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Newsletter of the High Commission of Malaysia in London

MALAYSIA AND 11 OTHER COUNTRIES INKS LANDMARK

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

AUCKLAND FEB 04: Malaysia and 11 other countries have inked the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) which is set to expand markets, reduce tariffs and promote freer trade.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed signed the comprehensive trade pact on behalf of Malaysia at a ceremony here yesterday.

Datuk J. Jayasiri, Malaysia's chief negotiator for the TPPA who has been in the thick of negotiations from the start, was also present at the historic event here in New Zealand.

Bernama learnt that the ceremony at the SkyCity Convention Centre in downtown Auckland started at 9am local time (2pm Malaysian time) with a colourful cultural performance followed by a ministerial meeting before the signing.

The 12 countries in the TPPA are New Zealand, Australia, Chile, Mexico, Japan,

Peru, Canada, Vietnam, United States, Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia.

The signing of the TPPA, which will represent nearly 40% of global gross domestic product (GDP) worth US\$30tril (RM126tril), comes after five years and 19 rounds of tough negotiations.

Malaysia joined the TPPA in the third round of negotiations in October 2010.

The country's inclusion in the trade pact is expected to boost Malaysia's GDP by US\$107bil (RM449.5bil) to US\$211bil (RM886.5bil) from 2018 to 2027.

Investments are projected to increase by US\$136bil (RM571bil) to US\$239bil (RM1 trillion) over the same period, largely due to higher investment growth in textiles, construction and distributive trade.

The TPPA is aimed at promoting economic integration to liberalise trade and investment as well as spur economic

growth and social benefits.

More than 90% of the economic gains will be due to lower non-tariff measures.

The trade pact is also expected to create new opportunities for workers and businesses, contribute to raising living standards of 800 million people, benefit consumers, reduce poverty and promote sustainable growth. — Bernama



Trade delegates pose for a photograph after signing the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement in Auckland, New Zealand, Thursday, Feb. 4, 2016. Trade ministers from 12 Pacific Rim countries including the United States have ceremonially signed the free-trade deal.—AP

PRIME MINISTER NAJIB RAZAK PRESENTS

REVISED 2016 BUDGET



The prime minister said the changes would be more 'realistic' to suit the present economic situation.—Reuters Pic

PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has announced a revised Budget 2016 to optimise the country's developmental and operational expenditures in the face of slower economic growth.

The revised budget will include precautionary and proactive measures in managing national revenue and expenditures, while ensuring that the well-being of the people remained a priority.

Najib said the recalibration is necessary due to a slump in global oil prices and a slower economic growth in the United States and China. When Budget 2016 was unveiled in Parliament last October, the crude oil price was at US\$48 (RM203) per barrel.

However, the current price per barrel stands at US\$30 (RM127), a sharp fall since the Budget was presented.

Continued on page 2

HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2016 global economy expected to be more challenging and economic growth expected to fall from 3.6% to 3.4%.

- Malaysia not alone in facing global economic challenges. Current crude oil price stands at US\$31 (RM131) per barrel.

- Latest developments indicate that the global economy is at a very volatile stage and requires a proactive move to revise Budget 2016.

- We are not in a recession, neither are we in a technical recession.

- Eleven recalibrated measures announced.

1. EPF contributions by employees to be reduced by 3%. This is expected to increase private sector spending by RM8bil.

2. Tax relief of up to RM2,000 to those with income RM8,000 a month or lower. Two million taxpayers to benefit.

3. To reduce cost of living, Govt to liberalise APs for agricultural products including coffee beans and meats.

4. Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry ordered to increase enforcement and action against unethical traders.

5. 30% of contributions to the human resource development fund to be utilised for skills training, including those who are

unemployed.

6. MyBeras programme to be introduced until Dec 2016. Each hardcore poor family will be given 20kg of rice every month.

7. The Government will update the management system of foreign workers, with levies clustered into two categories, not including foreign maids.

8. Government will exercise prudent spending on supplies and services and to continue with grant rationalisation.

9. Development budget to focus on projects and programmes that place the people first, have high multiplier effect and reduce imports.

10. Development financial institutions and Government venture capital funds to increase allocations by RM6bil for benefit of start-ups and SMEs.

11. GLCs urged to implement initiatives to reduce the income gap between senior management and workers, to be monitored by the Economic Planning Unit.

Najib said Thursday's recalibrated budget was based on the approach of "shared responsibility" by certain segments of society.

He said lower-income groups will not be affected, and continue to benefit from measures such as the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M).

"The present rate of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) will also be retained at 6%. The Government has no plans to increase this," said Najib at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC).

He also said that Malaysia would not resort to imposing capital controls and pegging the Ringgit, such as was done during the 1997-1998 financial crisis.

"The Government remains committed to maintaining the fiscal consolidation measures for 2016, which is to achieve a GDP target of 3.1%.

"Our country's debt will be reduced and will not exceed 55% of the GDP. The Government also has no plans to impose capital controls and peg the Ringgit," he said.

Najib also made mention of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), which had been debated at a special Parliamentary sitting on Tuesday and Wednesday.

He provided assurances that with the signing of the free trade agreement, there would be no compromise on the country's sovereignty.

"The Bumiputera agenda remains intact. In fact, it is no longer a national agenda. With the TPPA, it has reached a global scale," he added.— THE STAR ONLINE

SHAHROM IS THE FIRST MALAYSIAN

TO SKI TO SOUTH POLE



National Explorer Shahrom Abdullah with the National Flag Jalur Gemilang at zero degree landmark.

KUALA LUMPUR DEC 19: National explorer Shahrom Abdullah successfully completed a Malaysian Seven Contingents Exploration Club (KE7B) expedition to reach the South Pole in a record 37 days.

Expedition adviser Datuk Akmar Hisham Mohd Yusof said Shahrom, 36, reached the landmark zero degree point of the South Pole at 4.30am on Saturday, Malaysian

time (5.30pm on Friday, South Pole time).

He said Shahrom completed the mission by skiing 890 kilometres from Messner Inlet to the zero degree point.

Shahrom, from Gua Musang, Kelantan also completed the mission in record time compared to earlier expectation of 50 to 60 days, he said.

"Alhamdulillah, we are grateful to Allah that Shahrom made it. This proves that Malaysians, with determination, can overcome any challenge," he said in a statement here, Saturday.

Akmar Hisham added that Shahrom's success marked another world-class achievement by a Malaysian.

The Prime Minister's press secretary and KE7B adviser also said Shahrom's achievement, as the first Malaysian to reach the South Pole on ski across almost

1,000 kilometres should be the pride of all Malaysians.

"I informed the Prime Minister this morning of the good news as he had been very keen on the expedition aside from being concerned about Shahrom's safety.

"He is aware of the obstacles in the expedition as he had once stepped foot on Antarctica. He is exhilarated at the good news," said Akmar Hisham. - Bernama



Shahrom Abdullah and his team with PM Najib Razak during the expedition launch.— Photo by NST

MALAYSIAN WOMAN PROVED EINSTEIN'S

GRAVITATIONAL WAVES THEORY

PETALING JAYA FEB 17: A Malaysian woman is among the worldwide group of scientists who made the frontier-changing confirmation of Einstein's gravitational waves theory.

Hafizah Noor Isa (*pic*), who was born in Machang, Kelantan, was a student and researcher at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Universiti Islam Antarabangsa (UIA)

A PhD candidate at the University of Glasgow and a member of the Institute for Gravitational Research there, Hafizah contributed to the scientific paper "Observation of Gravitational Waves from a Binary Black Hole Merger", a discovery celebrated in international headlines last week after a decades-long quest for what some had termed "the holy grail of science".

The achievement sparked a constellation of congratulations from Malaysia's academia, including Universiti Putra Malaysia physics professor Hishamuddin Zainuddin, who

shared excerpts from the paper on his Facebook account.

"Was happy that she came to the talk by Prof Martin Henry that we organised in UPM on Gravitational Wave Astronomy. Little things like this make us happy," he added in the comment thread.

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Hafizah's kind nature was also praised by Anne Annira Azmahira, who congratulated her on Facebook. "Yup, this is the girl who gave me (a) place to stay when I was at Glasgow," she said.

Hafizah was involved in the United States' LIGO-led (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory) project through her work in the GEO600 experiment.

The GEO600 is part of a worldwide network

of gravitational wave detectors.

"All members of GEO600 are also members of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration," the LIGO website states.

LIGO, pair of giant laser detectors in the United States, detected remarkably small vibrations from gravitational waves as they passed through the Earth.

The scientists converted the wave signal into audio waves and listened to the sounds of the black holes merging. Reports say that the scientists first detected the waves last Sept 14.—The Star Online



Ms Noor Hafizah Isa is part of a scientific research team who confirmed Albert Einstein's gravitational waves theory

TM SIGNS WI-FI ROAMING AGREEMENT

WITH BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS

KUALA LUMPUR: Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM) has paired up with British Telecommunications Plc (BT) in a Wi-Fi roaming agreement.

The agreement allows both parties to leverage on each other's Wi-Fi networks in Malaysia and the United Kingdom and enables the monetising of UK-Malaysia roaming.

"We understand that telecommunications infrastructure is critical in providing quality solutions and services to our customers across the world. As Malaysia's leading communications provider and Convergence Champion, TM is committed to its customers' and their increasingly sophisticated requirements. To this end, we continue to venture into strategic collaborations with other telecommunications players, including regional and global players," said TM executive vice president for global and wholesale Mohamad Rozaimy Abd Rahman in a statement.

Through the agreement, TM's national Wi-Fi footprint will be included in BT's

global Wi-Fi roaming hub, and will enable BT's customers to leverage on TM's Malaysian Wi-Fi estates while roaming in the country and region.

TM will also be interconnected with BT's global Wi-Fi roaming hub, which allows its end customers to access the full range of global and UK based Wi-Fi capabilities for a converged mobile roaming experience while travelling abroad and in the United Kingdom.

"The UK is a key roaming destination for Malaysians and connecting TM to our global Wi-Fi roaming hub helps TM address convergence needs and differentiate in a competitive market. In turn, with access to TM's domestic Wi-Fi estate, BT is enhancing the global footprint of its Wi-Fi Hub in a vibrant Southeast Asian key market, extending our long-standing relationship with Malaysia's incumbent operator," said BT vice president for global telecom markets Andrew Dodsworth.

BT's global Wi-Fi roaming hub integrates Wi-Fi estates globally to provide mobile and Wi-Fi operators Wi-Fi roaming for their

end users. This allows for seamless Wi-Fi roaming embedded in the Mobile Network Operator standard authentication processes to reduce capital expenditure requirements. It will also roll out stand-alone, complementary or converged Wi-Fi roaming that is simple and easy to manage.

The hub creates a global Wi-Fi roaming ecosystem that has significant traction in the Asian market, and will be especially attractive to UK and global customers roaming in Malaysia with over 4,600 hotspots locations at airports, hotels, convention centres and cafes. TM will also gain access to nearly 400,000 hotspots in the UK supporting Wireless Internet Service Provider roaming (WISPr) authentication including 12,000 for both WISPr and Extensible Authentication Protocol (EAP) authentication to enhance its converged roaming offerings to their end customers. - The Star Online



Discover the beauty of Malaysia

"At any time of the day, there's always something happening around Malaysia. Places to explore, food to feast on, shopping to indulge in, or festivals to celebrate – it's a non-stop adventure for everyone."



Malaysia

To know Malaysia is to love Malaysia - a bubbling, bustling melting-pot of races and religions where Malays, Indians, Chinese and many other ethnic groups live together in peace and harmony. Our multiculturalism has made Malaysia a gastronomical paradise and home to hundreds of colourful festivals. It's no wonder that we love celebrating and socialising. As a people, Malaysians are very relaxed, warm and friendly.

Geographically, Malaysia is almost as diverse as its culture. 11 states and 2 federal territories (Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya) form Peninsular Malaysia which is separated by the South China Sea from East Malaysia which includes the 2 states (Sabah and Sarawak) on the island of Borneo and a third federal territory, the island of Labuan.

One of Malaysia's key attractions is its extreme contrasts which further add to this theme of 'diversity'. Towering skyscrapers look down upon wooden houses built on stilts while five-star hotels sit just metres away from ancient reefs.

Rugged mountains reach dramatically for the sky while their rainforest-clad slopes sweep down to floodplains teeming with forest life. Cool highland hideaways roll down to warm, sandy beaches and rich, humid mangroves.

For the perfect holiday full of surprises, the time is now, the place is Malaysia.

SONGKRUN WATER RUN AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

SongkRUN™ is bringing the World First Water Fun-Run experience to the casual runners and fun seekers. AN un-competitive 5KM fun run, SongkRUN™ course splits into five Water+Music Zones, each has its own uniquely designed experience awaiting you. The party continues when you cross the finish line and the Wet-Music Festival kicks into gear! Jive and groove with the latest beats whilst friends tries to drench you and vice-versa. Run. Play. Get Drenched. Make Friends. Dance. Happening in Sepang International Race Circuit Selangor on 3rd April 2016.

PESTA AIR LABUAN

This is the biggest annual event in Labuan. Major competitions include the Labuan International Deep Sea Fishing Tournament, Cross Channel Swimming Challenge and Round Island Kayak Challenge. Happening at the Labuan International Sea Sport Complex, Labuan from 29 April 2016 - 01 May 2016.

IRONMAN 70.3

Ironman is triathlon's marquee challenge and the world's most captivating and testing single day endurance test consisting of a 3.8km swim, a 180km cycle and a 42.2km run. In 2012, more than 124,000 athletes from across the globe compete for slots at the prestigious Ironman World Championships held every October in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. In 2012 only, there are 31

World Championships held every October in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. In 2012 only, there are 31 Ironman Triathlon races throughout the world that enable qualification for the Ironman World Championships. The Ironman qualifying events for 2012 include 9 races in Europe, 14 races in North America, 1 race in South America, 5 races in Oceania and 2 races in Africa. Happening in Putrajaya on 3rd April 2016.

WORLD HARVEST FESTIVAL

World Harvest Festival helps to steer and commemorate the unique Hari Gawai Harvest Festival. Happening at the Sarawak Cultural Village, Kuching, Sarawak on 1st May 2016.

ELECTRIC RUN 2016

One of the world's most popular nocturnal fun run is set to light up Malaysia again this year in what will be its biggest, most creative, neon coloured night run the country yet on May 7 at the Selangor Turf Club, Kuala Lumpur. Organized by The Livescape Group and supported by Malaysia Major Events (MME), the one-night-only 5km night time fun run this year is set to attract over 15,000 runners of all ages. Electric Run™ will return with the seven dazzling course lands from its debut in Kuala Lumpur and will feature two new, never before seen course lands which will highlight Malaysia in all its neon glory. As runners run, or dance through the route to the finish line, their senses will be stimulated as they encounter various unique activations, different course lands

decorated with more gusto than the last, and smells to keep them going throughout the run making their way to the finish line where an international headliner will take to the stage. Happening at the Selangor Turf Club on 7th May 2016.

BORNEO JAZZ FESTIVAL

Borneo Jazz Festival was introduced in 2006. It is a festival awaited by fans of jazz music and promotes Miri as a tourist destination. Happening at the ParkCity Everly Hotel, Miri, Sarawak from 13th to 14th May 2016.

IFTAR@KL

Celebrate Ramadan in true Malaysian style by observing Iftar (breaking of fast) amidst the backdrop of the historic Merdeka Square. This Islamic themed festival will also feature a bazaar and religious activities. Happening at Jalan Raja/ Merdeka Square, Kuala Lumpur from 11th to 26th June 2016.

HARI GAWAI OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION

Experience the Hari Gawai festivities in an open house celebration, a programme that brings people together to celebrate the country's various festivals. Happening in Sibul, Sarawak on 2nd June 2016.

1MALAYSIA MEGA SALE SHOPPING CARNIVAL

The country's biggest shopping event offers mega shopping excitement and great entertainment. Happening throughout Malaysia from 27th June to 31st August 2016.

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