

Malaysia stays among 15 most competitive economies

MalaysiaKini.com

May 30, 2013

Malaysia has slid notch among competitive economies of the world but is still among the top 15, while United Arab Emirates made the highest jump, from 16th place last year eighth now, a study shows.

The Switzerland published World Competitiveness Yearbook 2013, released by the Institute of Management Development (IMD) put Malaysia at 15th place out of 60 world economies. Last year Malaysia was 14th among 59 countries.

International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed said Malaysia and 13 other countries, including the United States, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Sweden and Singapore, maintained their top 15 positions.

Malaysia is ahead of Australia (16th), United Kingdom (18th), China (21st), Korea (22nd) and Japan (24th).

Among countries with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of less than US\$20,000, Malaysia improved to top position from its second place last year, Mustapa said.

Among Asean countries, Malaysia is placed in second behind Singapore, while in the Asia-Pacific region, Malaysia maintained fourth position and was placed fifth among countries with a population of more than 25 million.

Mustapa said Malaysia's economy performed better than expected despite the weak external environment.

He said Malaysia recorded a strong growth of 5.6 percent in 2012, backed by consumption and investment spending.

Consumer and investor confidence up

"Consumer confidence picked up amidst positive income growth, improvement in employment, low inflation and a supportive government.

"Investor confidence in Malaysia continues to be strong, with foreign direct investments increasing to RM18.3 billion in the first quarter of this year," Mustapa said.

NONEHe said the government had implemented many initiatives to enhance competitiveness, such as the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) as well as procedural reforms to improve the regulatory framework.

These initiatives would be further intensified to ensure that the objective of a high income economy is achieved.

Mustapa said the government is also committed to building a resilient, dynamic and innovative economy; enhancing security and public safety; strengthening women's participation; fighting corruption as well as revitalising the public service and enhancing good governance.

"To ensure that competitiveness is further enhanced, Malaysia will strive to achieve fiscal balance for economic sustainability through further reducing budget deficit; intensifying regulatory review initiatives to modernise the business environment," he said.

In addition, the country will leverage on flexible skills and talent development for higher productivity and to meet market needs; enhance environmentally sustainable development for a better quality of life and strengthen the innovation ecosystem as well as intensify the commercialisation of research and development and technological capabilities.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/231564>