

Malaysia - Strengthening the ASEAN region

In 1967, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines founded the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Fifty years later, ASEAN is a diverse community of ten member countries with a combined population of 630 million. The economically dynamic region is on a path towards greater integration through strong regional trade ties, interconnectivity and a shared vision for the next fifty years.

'On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary

of ASEAN, we can say state the inspiring vision of our founding fathers



Tan Sri Dr. Munir Majid, Chairman, ASEAN Business Advisory Council Malaysia

for ASEAN, is as true today as it was back then', says Ambassador Jojie Samuel, Director-General of the ASEAN - Malaysian National Secretariat. With the es-

tablishment of the ASEAN Community (AC15) in 2015, the region has seen economic, security and cultural progression. Last year, ASEAN's combined GDP stood at USD 2.55 trillion, with robust real GDP growth of 4.8 per cent'.

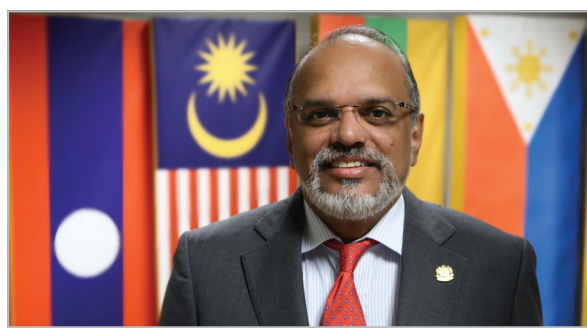
With approximately the same growth rate as the entire ASEAN region (4.6%) and ranked third within the region for GDP per capita (US\$ 28,870), Malaysia is a model for many ASEAN member nations.

'Malaysia is a country of diversity', explains Samuel. 'It is a nation that cherishes its diverse

racess, religions, cultures, food, heritage and festivals and Malaysians live harmoniously in a country with no wars or conflicts among its citizens'.

The country's role within the ten nation block has been significant. Since the first ASEAN Summit in 1976, Malaysia has held the rotating Chairmanship three times (1977, 2005 and 2015). Malaysia also established the ASEAN - East Asia Summit in 2005 and the AC15 in 2015.

Malaysia launched the 'Global Movement of Moderates' at the United Nations in 2010 and from



Ambassador Jojie Samuel, Director-General, ASEAN - Malaysian National Secretariat

2015 to 2018, the country is the acting coordinator for ASEAN-US relations.

At the 2015 ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, ASEAN leaders adopted the 'AEC Blueprint 2025'.

This initiative aims to create an 'ASEAN Economic Community' which, by 2025, is

highly-integrated, well-connected, competitive and innovative.

'As ASEAN Chair in 2015, the programs we initiated, particularly financing small to medium-size enterprises, have made a huge impact', says Tan Sri Dr. Munir Majid, Chairman of the ASEAN Business Ad-

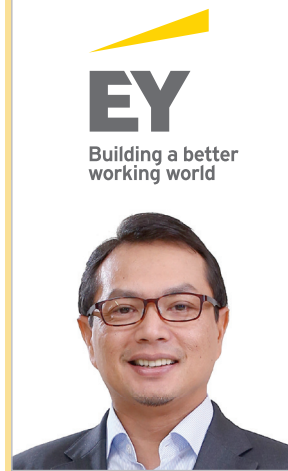
visory Council Malaysia.

'We have made significant progress during the Association's fifty year history. With regional governments and the private sector continuing to work together, this region will surely prosper and integrate even more rapidly'.

As Malaysia celebrates sixty years of independence this year, the country will continue to be a regional dialogue partner with the ultimate goal of strengthening the ASEAN region.

myasean.kln.gov.my
www.aseanbac.com.my

Visit www.synergymediaspecialists.com for the full article.



'We have the legacy of British education, the country is multi-racial, diverse and politically stable. We are blessed with natural resources but also possess economic diversity and we were the first in Southeast Asia to construct super infrastructure projects.'

Dato' Abdul Rauf Rashid, Asean Assurance Leader and Malaysia Country Managing Partner, EY on Malaysia's strengths and why the country is a role model for Southeast Asian countries.

Sabah Development Corridor's open door to ASEAN

Sabah is the second largest of Malaysia's thirteen states and lies in the very heart of Southeast Asia. With its vibrant economy transformed over the last decade, Sabah is on a mission to become one of Asia's most liveable places by 2025.

The Sabah Development Corridor (SDC), launched in 2008, is accelerating the growth of Sabah's economy and uplifting the lives of its 3.5 million inhabitants and 32 ethnic groups. Through SDC's three-phase development plan, significant developments have been undertaken.

'The first phase involved laying the foundations of economic initiatives in the region, investing in workplace-talent and communicating our vision for Sabah's future', explains Dr. Mohd Yaakub Johari, president and chief executive officer of Sabah Economic Development and Investment Authority (SEDIA) - the authority tasked with implementing and accelerating development of the SDC.

The Second Phase of the SDC (2011-2015) involved both public

and private sector investments aligned with the country's national key economic areas as set out in the Malaysian government's 'Economic Transformation Program'.

Investments covered tourism, oil and gas, energy, palm oil, agriculture, education, manufacturing and logistics. The State's capital and main economic driver, Greater Kota Kinabalu, also saw significant direct investment.



Dr. Mohd Yaakub HJ Johari JP, President and Chief Executive

'During the second phase of the SDC, Sabah's economy consistently grew and the gap with the national economy was reduced', says Johari. 'Today's macroeconomic indicators reveal we are on par with the national average key performance indicators. In fact, our 4.7% GDP growth last year exceeded the 4.2% national-level growth rate'.

With the third phase underway, Sabah is pushing key projects such as the Sipitang Oil and Gas Industrial Park (SOGIP), the Marine Integrated Cluster (MIC), Sabah Agro-Industrial Precinct, Keningau Integrated Livestock Centre, Kinabalu Gold Coast Enclave, Sapangar Bay Manufacturing and Logistics Cluster (SMLC) and Palm Oil Industrial Clusters (POICs).

'We are concentrating on market accessibility, container terminal upgrading and the expansion of Kota Kinabalu International Airport to meet passenger traffic demand', says Johari. 'Last year, we had a record number of tourist arrivals and we expect this trend to continue given our flight connections to thirteen major cities in the region'.

Tourists to Sabah can scale Southeast Asia's tallest peak; Mount Kinabalu, dive in the world-renowned Coral Triangle in Sipadan Island and catch the sun on the pristine beaches of Malaysia's longest coastline. In addition, investors, entrepreneurs, students and professors are also making their way to Sabah, all eager

to take advantage of the opportunities being realized by the SDC.

'The combined population of ASEAN member countries and China is close to two billion and we intend to leverage Sabah's central location in the region', says Johari. 'Singapore has tremendous expertise in the oil and gas sector and is the logistics hub for the region. As we develop the SMLC economic area and the Sapangar Bay Container Port, we invite our Singaporean friends to collaborate with us and work ever more closely together'.

Having signed numerous investment agreements with Southeast Asian companies, Johari is keen to continue creating strong partnerships. 'We want to engage with companies who are active in e-commerce, agriculture, bio-technology and the creative industries', Johari concludes. 'We have come a long way in the last decade and there are huge economic opportunities in Sabah. We fully expect the pace of development to continue and look forward to realizing Sabah's true potential'.

www.sdc.gov.my

Connecting patients to healthcare professionals – anytime, anywhere

Since being established in late 2015, BookDoc has become the highest pre-seed and seed valuation company in Asia technology start-up history. BookDoc is the brainchild of founders Chevy Beh, a healthcare industry veteran and former CEO and Managing Director of BP Healthcare Group and Joel Neoh, the founder of Groupon Malaysia and the CEO of Groupon Asia Pacific.

Founded on their healthcare and technology expertise, BookDoc is an integrated online platform created to seamlessly connect and unite patients to healthcare professionals. The ultimate goal is to improve diagnosis timeframes and help patients to gain access to suitable care. 'During my time within

the healthcare industry, I recognized the need to digitize systems through an ecosystem of prod-



Chevy Beh, Founder, BookDoc

ucts and services so that patients can benefit from a hassle-free, efficient and enjoyable experience to their healthcare appointments,' says Beh.

The interface allows users to search and book appointments with healthcare professionals in their area in a convenient manner while also offering transport and accommodation solutions through partner-

ships with Uber, Grab, TripAdvisor, Agoda and Airbnb.

BookDoc has also joined forces with health and fitness retail partners to encourage clients to live a healthier lifestyle and earn rewards.

BookDoc's endorsements from Malaysia's National Heart Institute, Subang Jaya Medical Centre and Tun Hussein Onn National Eye Hospital and partnerships with the National Kidney Foundation Malaysia and the National Cancer Society of Malaysia have created interest on both national and regional levels.



'We established partnerships with healthcare provider, Quality Healthcare, Town Health and Lauren Bramley &

Partner in Hong Kong in late 2015,' recalls Beh. 'These first partnerships enabled us to expand regionally and spurred our more recent ventures into Thailand and Brunei'.

Today, BookDoc's partners in Singapore include Thompson Medical Group, NTUC Dental, Q&M Dental, Pacific Healthcare and Asian American Radiation Oncology among many others.

The BookDoc app is available in the Apple Apps Store and Google Playstore and Beh has set his sights on future growth.

'We intend to enter new markets over the next twelve months and we encourage healthcare providers and other partners to partner with us in order for us to grow the ecosystem together,' says Beh.

sites.bookdoc.com

Malaysian Re's 'ASEAN Insurance Pulse' contributes to the transparency of the ASEAN region

In 2015, the ASEAN economic community (AEC) came into force with the vision of establishing a cohesive economic unit amongst its ten member states. With multiple industries establishing frameworks for cross border integration, the insurance sector lagged behind. A dedicated study was needed to assess opportunities across ASEAN's US\$23 billion non-life insurance markets.

Malaysian National reinsurer, Malaysian Reinsurance Berhad (Malaysian Re), became the exclusive partner for the inaugural ASEAN Insurance survey and published the ASEAN Insurance Pulse on 30 October 2017.

The ASEAN Insurance Pulse draws on in-depth interviews with senior executives of thirty-five national, regional and

international insurance and reinsurance companies, intermediaries and trade associations operating across the ASEAN region.

'With our strong presence in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and our role as a significant player in ASEAN's reinsurance market, we felt the need to contribute to the industry's development', explains Zainudin Ishak President and CEO of Malaysian Re.



'Our undertaking was in line with our regulator's aspirations for regional economic integration and we expect the findings to support the development of the insurance across the region'. ASEAN member coun-



Zainudin Ishak, President and CEO, Malaysian Reinsurance Berhad

tries have a combined GDP of approximately US\$2.5 trillion and a growth rate of 5.6 per cent in the next five years. In recent years, the non-life insurance penetration rate was a third of the global average at just one per cent of GDP.

'The huge growth potential in the non-life insurance spectrum in the region drove us to initiate this study, together with our research partner in Zurich, Switzerland,' says Zainudin. 'ASEAN Insurance Pulse represents market intelligence

for companies that are looking for more business exposure in South East Asia'.

The insurance industry a whole is highly regulated with the main aim of balancing between business growth and capital adequacy. On that note, there is a need to discuss the regional business integration agenda to ensure a smooth transition in the future.

'Through the ASEAN Insurance Pulse, Malaysian Re demonstrated its commitment to improving the transparency of the regional market place', says Zainudin. 'By providing the regional insurance community with an important benchmark for strategic and operational decision-making, the industry is expected to be more informed about the business surroundings of the region'.

www.malaysian-re.com.my



A place of Business, Culture and Nature

The Sabah Development Corridor (SDC) was established in 2008 with the aim of promoting sustainable economic growth, distributing wealth in the state and unlocking its vast wealth of diversified resources that can bolster tourism agriculture and manufacturing reinforced by the introduction of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP), Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) and the Tenth Malaysia Plan.

The state of Sabah is a breathtaking, warm and welcoming place for tourists and investors alike. A region from which to build a better world. SDC is definitely the corridor to expand your business in Sabah.

*Come and discover the secrets of Sabah:
How your holiday can turn
into an exciting
business opportunity!*

SEDIA
Sabah Economic Development and Investment Authority (SEDIA)
P.O. Box 17251, 88873 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, MALAYSIA
Phone: +6088450050 Fax: +6088450099
info@sedia.com.my www.sedia.com.my