



MEDIA RELEASE

THE ASEAN DAY OPENING CEREMONY 9 AUGUST 2017, MITI TOWER, KUALA LUMPUR

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) commemorates its 50th founding anniversary yesterday, 8 August 2017. This is a significant milestones year for the regional bloc. The extended community of ASEAN with the important pillars of political, economic and social shows the solidarity of its own community itself.

In conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry organised the ASEAN Day celebration with the support of other government agencies, ASEAN Member States Embassies / High Commissions in Malaysia, private sector, chambers of commerce, industry associations, business councils, civil societies, research institutes and Institutions of Higher Learning. The ASEAN Day celebration today involved various programmes such as SME Export Day, MIDA mini career fair by 15 companies from various sectors and industries, exhibitions by MITI, Agencies, ASEAN Embassies / High Commissions and private sectors, food trucks to showcase ASEAN cuisines, AEC pop quiz and prize giving ceremony for the ASEAN open essay competition.

The ASEAN Essay Competition 2017 was officially launched by Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry on 6 May 2017 at the MITI Day programme held in Meru, Perak. Three categories were offered: i) Category A - Secondary School Students; ii) Category B - Institute of Higher Learning Students; and iii) Category C - All Malaysians aged 21 years and above. A total of 159 essays were received and winners from the three categories as follow:



Category A

- 1st Prize Winner (RM1,000) : Anis Madhihah Syahira Azeiz Badlei Syah
2nd Prize Winner (RM700) : Yee Xun Li
3rd Prize Winner (RM300) : Shasither Sandran

Category B

- 1st Prize Winner (RM2,000) : Freeney Reenna Repai
2nd Prize Winner (RM1,000) : Lim Han Ying
3rd Prize Winner (RM500) : Prabakaran Rajoo

Category C

- 1st Prize Winner (RM2,000) : Nurul Ashiqin Shamsuri
2nd Prize Winner (RM1,000) : Mohana Ram Murugiah
3rd Prize Winner (RM500) : Ramilah Boje

Today, ASEAN has evolved into one of the world's most dynamic regions with accelerated economic performance in recent years. That has been attributable to ASEAN's economic co-operation and integration initiatives taking concrete shape over the past two decades. The economic development of ASEAN, which now has a population of 630 million people, has grown rapidly registered a strong pace of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at 4.8% in 2016. For 2017, GDP growth rate is projected at 4.8% with positive trends observed across all ASEAN Member States (AMS). Domestic demand will be the main driver for the region's economic growth in 2017. With a record of US\$ 2.55 trillion GDP in 2016, ASEAN is the third largest economy in Asia and the sixth largest economy in the world. ASEAN aspires to becoming the fourth largest economy in the world by 2050. Total trade in the region stood at US\$2.22 trillion, while intra-ASEAN trade constituted 24% of total trade and remained as the largest market for ASEAN in 2016. The total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to ASEAN recorded at US\$96.7 billion and are expected to regain some grounds given the expected modest recovery in the global FDI flows. ASEAN is a community of opportunities not only for ASEAN people but also for the people outside the region.



Malaysia as one of the founding member of ASEAN, will continue to focus towards economic integration by implementing the AEC Blueprint 2025 which was launched at the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015. The Blueprint is an ambitious document that outlines the measures that will be implemented from 2016-2025 to create a highly integrated and cohesive, competitive and dynamic ASEAN. The Consolidated Strategic Action Plan (CSAP) seeks to complement the AEC Blueprint 2025 by serving as a single reference document intended for the public to inform stakeholders of the key action lines that will be implemented in pursuit of ASEAN economic integration from 2016 to 2025 is now available for public to access at the ASEAN website www.asean.org.

Minister Mustapa also stressed that Malaysia is committed to implement all its commitments made under this blueprint and work towards trade facilitation initiatives such as accelerating work on early implementation of ASEAN Single Window for customs clearance, ASEAN Transit Customs System (ACTS), ASEAN-Wide Self-Certification Scheme and accelerating work on standards and conformance. To deepen regional integration and with a view to further support the narrowing of development gap, Malaysia is once again taking the lead in addressing issues related to non-tariff measures (NTMs) and non-tariff barriers (NTBs). Malaysia is also taking steps in accelerating the pace of negotiations of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). In addition ASEAN underscore the importance to discuss the impact of global economic developments and new emerging issues including the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) to the ASEAN economy. In keeping up the momentum on trade and investment liberalisation in the region, Mustapa underlined that ASEAN will continue to oppose anti-globalisation and protectionist tendencies.

In addition, the Philippines as the Chair of ASEAN this year has also organised a grand celebration today in Manila which was graced by the Philippines President Rodrigo Roa Duterte at the Philippines International convention Centre (PICC). ASEAN Foreign Ministers including YB Dato' Sri Anifah Haji Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs Malaysia joined the ASEAN Day celebration.



MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Among the activities during the celebrations were ASEAN parade & concert, ceremonial lighting of the ASEAN lantern at the Philippines Cultural Centre and lighting of landmark national monuments in all ASEAN Member States' capital, including the KI Tower.

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Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

About MITI:

MITI is the key driver in making Malaysia the preferred destination for quality investments and enhancing the nation's rising status as a globally competitive trading nation. Its objectives and roles are oriented towards ensuring Malaysia's rapid economic development and help achieve the country's stated goal of becoming a developed nation by 2020 .

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