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SELANGOR has been moving forward at a pace that was unimaginable a decade ago. From its post-pandemic acceleration of the gig economy to creating jobs and fulfilling its aim of being the nation's top GDP contributor, the state's solid performance and expansionary policies are a testament to its strength in governance.

For 15 years, Pakatan Harapan has worked hard to provide security and opportunity to the citizens of the state. With the elections just around the corner, analysts say it isn't surprising if the people's trust in the administration translates into votes.

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MB: Let facts do the talking

By **NORRASYIDAH ARSHAD**

SHAH ALAM - Selangor recorded an investment value of up to RM18 billion in 2018, making it the most significant achievement in 30 years, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

Taking a jibe at his predecessor Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, who has now defected to Perikatan Nasional (PN) and assumed the role of the party's Selangor chief, Amirudin said Azmin failed to attract significant investments during his tenure as the menteri besar.

"After you were no longer the menteri besar, we achieved a whopping RM18

billion in investments," he said.

Amirudin, who is also the Selangor Pakatan Harapan (Harapan) chairman, added: "Despite being in charge of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Azmin did not know how investments work. During his tenure as menteri besar, the investment value was only between RM5 billion and RM7 billion."

He also took the opportunity to remind Azmin of the latter's defeat in the 15th general elections (GE15) when they went head to head for the Gombak parliamentary seat.

"Don't forget, Min (Azmin), I defeated you six months ago," he said, drawing

cheers from the crowd.

Amirudin was speaking at the launch of the Selangor Harapan election machinery at Dataran Kemerdekaan, here, on June 24. Part of his speech was a response to an earlier remark made by Azmin that Amirudin's appointment as Selangor Menteri Besar was due to Azmin's influence.

In the general election last November, Amirudin snatched the seat previously held by Azmin for three terms, with a majority of 12,729 votes.

Meanwhile, at the event, Amirudin unveiled to the 2,000 people in the audience the #arusmerahkuning theme

for the upcoming state election.

He also flagged off a convoy of five four-wheel drive vehicles symbolising his administration's journey throughout his term, followed by a procession of 56 motorcycles carrying Harapan flags representing each state constituency.

The 14th Selangor state assembly was officially dissolved on June 23, paving the way for the upcoming state elections.

Selangor is one of six states set to head to the polls on Aug 12, along with Negeri Sembilan, Penang, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu.

Selangor's Ramadan bazaars record highest sales

SHAH ALAM - Selangor recorded the highest sales value by far among all the states in the country from its Ramadan and Aidilfitri bazaars, making up over one-fifth of the overall RM2.5 billion.

Selangor's sales value amounted to RM564.2 million, with the participation of 32,760 traders, according to the latest data provided by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) on June 16.

This was followed by Johor, which recorded RM411 million in sales and the participation of 35,417 traders, and Kuala Lumpur, with RM284.2 million and 10,089 traders.

The total sales value in these states alone accounts for more than half the overall figure recorded nationwide.

Perlis and Labuan recorded the lowest sales value at RM4.9 million and RM5.4 million respectively.

In a statement, DOSM said this year's overall sales figure of RM2.5 billion rose

by 5.9 per cent compared to the RM2.4 billion during last year's Ramadan.

The total number of traders and workers involved also grew by 30.3 per cent to 203,667 individuals, while the number of stalls operating during this period increased by 26.1 per cent to 77,727.

At the administrative district level, Johor Bahru recorded the highest sales value with RM207.6 million, with Selangor's Petaling Jaya and Klang completing the top three, with RM204.5 million and RM87.4 million respectively.

The study by DOSM was conducted throughout this year's month of Ramadan from March 23 to April 21, covering all bazaars registered with the local authority.

Last year, Selangor similarly topped the total sales figure, with RM0.6 billion collected, followed by Kuala Lumpur (RM0.4 billion) and Johor (RM0.3 billion).



Teng (front) visits the Selangor Aviation Show at the Skypark Regional Aviation Centre, Subang, on Nov 27, 2021

Dassault's MRO centre ready by year end

SHAH ALAM - The maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) facility for business jets operated by Dassault Aviation is expected to be completed by the end of the year, says Dato' Teng Chang Khim.

Built on a 144,000-square-foot site at the Skypark Regional Aviation Center (RAC), Subang, the state executive councillor for investment said the construction of the maintenance centre by the French aerospace giant is progressing well, with operations expected to begin in the first quarter of next year.

"This is an exciting development for the aerospace industry in Selangor and Malaysia as Dassault is the second-largest aircraft manufacturer in the world.

"The MRO centre will further strengthen Selangor's position as a regional technology hub. A range of Dassault aircraft models may visit this airport for maintenance," he said.

Previously, Teng said the new facility, worth RM100 million, is expected to accommodate nine units of Falcon 8X

and seven units of Falcon 10X aircraft once completed.

The Falcon 8X is the most recent business jet developed by the French manufacturer and was showcased to the public at the Selangor Aviation Show (SAS) in September last year.

Meanwhile, Teng and a group of representatives from Invest Selangor Berhad visited the Dassault Aviation plant in Bordeaux-Aéronautique, Bordeaux, France, on June 17 to learn more about the company's operations and aircraft installation and management.

"We had the opportunity to observe the operations at the facility, where private aircraft or business jets such as Falcon 8X and Falcon 2000 are built.

"This is significant as Dassault Aviation is now developing an MRO facility in the Asia Pacific region in Subang," he added.

Dassault Aviation is a French aerospace company with a track record of manufacturing both military aircraft and business jets.

State shows its economic might

By IDA NADIRAH IBRAHIM

SHAH ALAM - Selangor made history in 2022 when its contribution to Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) exceeded one-quarter of that of the country's at 25.5 per cent. The figure also represented a 0.7 per cent increase from its contribution to the national GDP in 2021.

The recent data released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) on June 27 stated that the manufacturing sector in Selangor now accounts for one-third of the entire manufacturing industry in Malaysia, with a growth rate of 9.0 per cent in 2022, while the construction sector contributes to more than one-third of the country's activities or 34.1 per cent.

The services sector in Selangor is also vibrant, recording the highest growth compared to any other state and reaching 13.6 per cent in 2022.

Overall, Selangor recorded an all-time high economic growth of 11.9 per cent in 2022, surpassing the national growth rate of 8.7 per cent.

Selangor is one of only four states that achieved economic growth higher than the national level. The others are Penang (13.1 per cent), Pahang (10.8 per cent) and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur (9.2 per cent).



This marks the highest growth and the highest contribution by Selangor to the national GDP since the Pakatan Harapan coalition was entrusted with governing the state in 2008.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari recently said the success demonstrates the confidence domestic and foreign investors have in the way Se-

langor is governed.

His administration is committed to steering the state towards becoming the most advanced in Malaysia, putting transparency and accountability at the forefront of its business transactions.

In its quest for advancement, it has also worked hard to ensure that people continue to have high-paying and dig-

nified jobs.

Amirudin said such achievements can guarantee the prosperity of Selangor and its status as the economic powerhouse of Malaysia, and offer a sense of well-being and stability to all who live in the state.

MORE ON PAGES 8 & 9

Key attractions to draw 25m tourists

KUALA LANGAT - The number of tourist arrivals in Selangor is expected to exceed 25 million this year, according to Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

This will mark an increase from the 22 million tourists recorded last year, thanks to new attractions in the state's tourism industry.

"The year 2022 was a leap forward in the (domestic) tourism industry, as we have various attractions like the theme parks in Bangi, Shah Alam, and Sunway Lagoon in Subang Jaya, in particular.

"With such attractions, I am certain the number of tourists will reach over 25 million this year, compared to 22 million domestic tourists and 3.2 million international tourists last year.

"This estimate also takes into account several considerations, like the decrease in Covid-19 cases," he said during a press conference after officiating the SplashMania Water Theme Park in Bandar Gamuda Cove on July 2.

Also present were Gamuda Berhad chairman Tan Sri Ambrin Buang and its managing director, Datuk Lin Yun Ling.

Amirudin said SplashMania is the balance the state government desires in



southern Selangor, as it is a good start to development.

"It can simultaneously boost the economy, increase income, provide job opportunities, and attract investments," he said.

Selangor successfully maintained its position as the top destination for do-

mestic tourist arrivals last year, with a record of 22 million, significantly higher than other states.

It surpasses Kuala Lumpur with 16.9 million, followed by Sarawak (15.5 million), Perak (14.6 million), and Pahang (13.2 million).

On June 27, Tourism Selangor said the

state has recorded a consistent achievement in the travel industry, with a 33.4 per cent increase in 2022, and 38.9 per cent of domestic tourism spending being contributed by shopping activities in Selangor.

It said that the state will remain consistent in attracting tourists and has recorded an increase of 15.3 per cent in tourist arrivals for the first quarter of 2023, aiming for an increase of 5.04 million domestic and international tourists by the end of 2023.

Meanwhile, Ambrin said since its launch five months ago, the water park has received on average 75,000 visitors monthly.

"The water park welcomes the public, and it supports the positive development of the domestic and regional tourism industries.

"With today's launch, the park is operating at full capacity and is the only one in Malaysia that offers virtual reality slides," he said.

The 6.47-hectare SplashMania has been open to the public since February and offers 39 attractions, including 24 slides.



State polls on Aug 12

SHAH ALAM - Voters in six states will head to the polls on Aug 12 for the 15th state assembly elections, the Election Commission (EC) announced on July 5.

This is the first time several state polls will be held concurrently outside the general election, where voters in Selangor, Penang, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu will get to choose their preferred state representatives.

The 15th general election was held on Nov 19 last year.

At a press conference, EC chairman Tan Sri Datuk Abdul Ghani Salleh said the nomination day for candidates is July 29, while early voting is on Aug 8.

He said the six states will witness contests for a total of 245 seats — 56 in Selangor, 40 in Penang, 36 in Negeri Sembilan, 36 in Kedah, 45 in Kelantan, and 32 in Terengganu.

According to the data released by the commission, 9,773,571 million voters are eligible to cast their ballot.

The figure is inclusive of 9.67 million regular voters while the others are soldiers and their spouses (49,660 people), police personnel and their spouses (47,728), and absentee voters overseas (1,727).

A total of 661,905 voters are aged between 18 and 20, while 28,991 people are aged above 90.

"The campaign period has been fixed for 14 days, starting after the candidates' announcement on July 29, until 11.58 pm on Aug 11, 2023," he said.

Abdul Ghani said the commission has estimated the state polls to cost RM420 million.

He also said 153,760 officers would be appointed to handle the election process, and 173 nomination centres and 186 official vote-tallying centres would be opened.

Voters in the six states will be casting their votes at 3,450 voting centres. The EC will station 245 election officers for the election process and they will be aided by 740 assistant managers.

From July 17, voters can get more information on their polling centres and stations, as well as their serial numbers via mysprsemak.spr.gov.my or contact the EC Hotline at 03-8892 7018/7218/7124 or browse the MySPR Semak application.

The state elections were called after the legislative assemblies of the six states were recently dissolved.

Kelantan was the first state to dissolve its assembly on June 22, followed by Selangor on June 23, Penang, Kedah, Terengganu (June 28), and Negeri Sembilan (July 1).

Selangor leads in democracy rating

By **DANIAL DZULKIFLY**

PETALING JAYA - State governments led by Pakatan Harapan (Harapan) dominated the top five spots in a ranking of the most democratic state assemblies, with Selangor claiming the lead, according to CSO Platform for Reform, a collective of 60 civil society organisations in the country.

In a press conference on July 4, the coalition released the chart, developed under the Malaysia Democracy Watch initiative, which recognises Selangor as the most democratic state assembly with a score of 69 per cent, followed by Perak (60 per cent), Negeri Sembilan (54 per cent), Pahang (53 per cent), and Penang (52 per cent).

"The Selangor state legislative assembly has demonstrated commendable performance by meeting set parameters and emerging as a leader in key areas such as the implementation of equal allocation of constituency development funds.

"It is also the state assembly with the longest sitting period for one term, totalling 22 days, compared with other state assemblies," said the coalition's Parliament and State Legislative Assembly Reform head Tharma Pillai.

The rankings had Perlis (democratic score of 34 per cent), Terengganu (37 per cent), and Sabah (40 per cent) as the bottom three.

Tharma said the low scores were attributed to the three states' failure to implement significant reforms within their assemblies, such as appointing Public Accounts Committee chairmen from the government bloc and unequal distribution of area development allocations.

The observations highlighted the disparity in the political landscape across Malaysia, as not all state legislatures embraced the same reform agenda.

Some states have not debated or passed an anti-party hopping law, which was approved by the Dewan Rakyat and Dewan Negara last year. Seven states — Selangor, Penang, Perak, Perlis, Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan and Sarawak — have enforced the law by amending their respective constitutions.

Meanwhile, Tharma said the democratic score chart was developed based on 14 parameters.

It was created with equality in mind,

DEMOCRATIC SCORES AMONG MALAYSIAN STATES

	STATES	%
TOP 3	 SELANGOR	69
	 PERAK	60
	 NEGERI SEMBILAN	54
	 PAHANG	53
	 PENANG	52
BOTTOM 3	 KELANTAN	46
	 SARAWAK	45
	 KEDAH	45
	 JOHOR	42
	 MELAKA	41
	 SABAH	40
	 TERENGGANU	37
	 PERLIS	34

Source: CSO Platform for Reform

and efforts were made to ensure unbiased assessment.

"I understand that some state governments might have their own parameters, but our assessment was conducted based on an apple-to-apple comparison.

"We welcome any state government that wishes to discuss its chart ranking, as it would foster a debate to enhance democratic practices as a whole," he said.

The 14 parameters used in the assessment were:

1. Establishment of a Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
2. Publicly-viewable PAC meetings
3. Whether the PAC chairman is from the opposition
4. Number of special select committees
5. Prime Minister/Menteri Besar/Chief Minister/Sarawak Premier question time
6. Anti-party hopping law
7. Recognition of a shadow cabinet
8. Standing committees
9. Election of speaker and deputy speaker
10. Parliamentary and state assembly sitting period
11. Recognition of opposition leader
12. Percentage of MPs/assemblymen not in the cabinet/exco
13. Implementation of Undi18
14. Equitable constituency development fund allocations

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Pilot project for on-demand transit vehicles takes off

By ZAREEF MUZAMMIL

SHAH ALAM - The Demand-Responsive Transit (DRT) pilot project focusing on densely populated areas in Selangor is expected to take place from July to December this year, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said the six-month initiative under the first phase of Selangor Mobility involves implementing a proof of concept for the service.

"Recognising the limitations of the existing Smart Selangor buses that cannot access narrow and highly-congested routes, the state government will implement the DRT service.

"The pilot project committee will assess the feasibility of the project before expanding the service to other zones. We hope this will help to solve public transport accessibility in some areas," he said in his speech at the launch of the Selangor Mobility Forum at the Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) Convention Centre, here, on June 15.

Amirudin said the project will be managed by the Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) and overseen by Menteri Besar Selangor (Incorporated), or MBI.

Asia Mobility Technologies Sdn Bhd and Badanbas Coach Sdn Bhd will be

tasked as operators of the service, based on the approval of the Land Public Transport Commission (Apad).

"I believe that a good transport system can win the hearts of the people and make the state an ideal place to live, as well as attract domestic and foreign investors," he said.

DRT provides first and last-mile connectivity through a smart application, complementing the Smart State Vision 2025. Its routes and schedules will be provided based on passenger demand, especially during peak hours.

Previously, the state administration launched a pilot project for a DRT van service with an allocation of RM3 million.

Selangor Budget 2023 allocates RM25 million to strengthen the public transport system under the Selangor Mobility programme, with RM22 million allocated to 11 local authorities to continue operating the Smart Selangor buses.

Selangor Mobility, currently implemented in Gombak, Selayang, and Puchong, will be expanded to eight zones by September.

Aside from bus rides, the initiative will provide bus stops, micro-mobility scooters and e-scooters.

Amirudin said the initiative reflects the state government's efforts to improve the public transport system and increase accessibility.

New focus to upgrade ecotourism infrastructure

SHAH ALAM - The redevelopment of Ampang Lookout Point (Alop) is set to energise the ecotourism industry.

State executive councillor for tourism Hee Loy Sian said three more attractions — Sungai Chongkak, Hulu Langat and Kanching Eco Forest Park, Rawang — are also set for development in a bid to draw more visitors, especially international tourists.

"Alop is just the beginning. We will also build a five-star chalet and a glamping (glamorous camping) site at Sungai Chongkak and the Eco Forest waterfall.

"This proposal has been tabled at the Selangor Economic Action Council meeting and we are now awaiting approval. Hopefully, it will be done in the next two months," he said during the handing over ceremony of the development rights of Alop as a state forest excellence centre to Pearl Holiday Travel & Tour Sdn Bhd on June 15.

The executive councillor said all three attractions will not undergo major develop-

ments to preserve the environment.

"We have many interesting tourist spots. The only problem is facilities like accommodation and toilets are not attractive to the public.

"So, we will be focusing on that."

Meanwhile, Hee said the state government's efforts to formulate guidelines for campsites have been well received by the operators.

"We are providing guidelines for camping activities to ensure public safety. The operators have shown their support and many have registered.

"Those who have yet to sign up are urged to do so immediately," he said.

Beginning Feb 1, all campsite operators in Selangor are required to register with their respective local councils as a safety measure.

This decision follows the Batang Kali landslide tragedy at Father's Organic Farm on Dec 16 last year, which claimed 31 lives.



Mobi van service proves popular in Subang Jaya

SHAH ALAM - A new Demand-Responsive Transit (DRT) van service known as Mobi, which was just introduced in March, is already proving to be a big hit among Subang Jaya residents.

State executive councillor for public transportation Ng Sze Han said that since Mobi's introduction, some 15,000 passengers have utilised the service, with over 3,000 bookings made via its mobile application.

"As such, I urge the people of Subang Jaya to take full advantage of this service, as it makes many stops, including in housing areas," he said on June 21.

Ng said this after experiencing the service at the SS15 Light Rail Transit (LRT) station. Also present was Ibrahim Aiman Mohd Nadzmi, who is the chief executive officer of Badanbas Coach Sdn Bhd, the company that operates Mobi.

According to Ibrahim, Mobi currently makes

265 different stops, with more expected to be added based on user demand.

Mobi currently charges a RM4 fixed rate per trip or a monthly subscription plan for as low as RM3.63.

Previously, the state government allocated RM3 million to implement Phase One of Selangor Mobility, which includes a DRT van service pilot project.

DRT is a form of shared transport where the vehicles alter their routes based on demand. It provides service in areas with low passenger demand that typically do not have regular bus service.

On June 15, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari announced that Selangor Mobility would be expanded to eight zones by September, with a focus on dense locations and areas with narrow roads.

Launchpad for tech startups

By **AMAR SHAH MOHSEN**

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) has launched the Selangor Accelerator Programme (SAP) 2023, offering a comprehensive range of support for selected startups.

The initiative, which is now in its sixth year, aims to foster innovation, support entrepreneurship and drive economic growth in the region.

It is open for applications from July 3 to Aug 4.

In a statement on July 3, Sidec said early-stage tech startups with innovative ideas and entrepreneurial drive are encouraged to apply and showcase their potential.

"The programme focuses on the vertical elements of artificial intelligence (AI), sustainability impact, health tech, agritech, and biotech, reflecting the current and future trends in the smart city and digital economy domains," it said.

Among other things, SAP 2023 offers a three-month intensive and structured programme, expert guidance and feedback, networking opportunities and strategic partnerships to selected startups.

They will also be given an exhibition booth at the prestigious 8th Selangor Smart City and Digital Economy Convention 2023 on Oct 19 and

access to a dedicated co-working space at Selangor Sandbox for a year.

Sidec noted that since its inception in 2018, SAP has proven to be a launchpad for various startups, nurturing over 150 such establishments, with an impressive 34 per cent of them succeeding in securing funding.

"Moreover, 70 startups have participated in overseas exposure and study trips, gaining invaluable international exposure and expanding their horizons."

In the previous edition of SAP 2022, four top startups, Entomal Biotech, BlueDuck, Diet Ideas, and Swipecy, secured funding within six months of completing the programme.

Sidec chief executive officer Yong Kai Ping said the agency remains committed to spearheading Selangor's digital transformation as Asean's digital hub and strengthening and growing the state digitalisation ecosystem for small and medium enterprises.

"SAP serves as a testament to that commitment by providing a unique opportunity for tech startups to accelerate their growth and innovation. Apply now for the SAP 2023 and join us in revolutionising the digital landscape," he said.

SAP 2023 is backed by the state government and supported by Affin Bank Bhd as its main sponsor.

PKNS projects in full swing

KLANG - The Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) is projected to achieve substantial operating profits this year, thereby becoming an economic catalyst for the state.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said this development would facilitate the construction of housing projects and new townships, including centralised worker quarters (CLQ) in several identified areas.

The Menteri Besar stated that the consistent profitability of the corporation also contributes to job creation and supports various economic sectors.

"Taking into account PKNS' involvement in construction, real estate, and related activities, its profitability stimulates the growth of these sectors.

"The development of new residential and commercial properties also enhances the real estate sector, attracts investments and drives economic activities," he said during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Laman Lestari CLQ in Bandar Sultan Suleiman, here, on June 26.

Amirudin further stated that the state government has a 15-year plan for PKNS to continue its role as a contributor and catalyst for Selangor's economy.

He said the long-term plan reflects the state administration's commitment to ensuring continuous growth and development.

"PKNS has a clear focus and direction in driving new development and growth, especially for the next 50 years.

"This long-term perspective allows PKNS to plan and implement sustainable initiatives that will contribute to the state's progress in the coming decades," he added.

Meanwhile, PKNS aims to explore potential collaborations with Inter Great

Group Sdn Bhd to develop more worker accommodations.

Its chief executive officer Dato' Mahmud Abbas said the collaboration with the foreign worker service provider company involves the development of industrial land plots worth approximately RM1 billion based on the current market value.

"This future project will provide more than 50,000 beds in various locations, including Shah Alam, Kota Puteri, Selangor Cyber Valley, Taman Industri Hijau Kota Puteri, and Port Klang.

"Foreign workers have played an important role in Malaysia's development for several decades. We acknowledge the need to offer accommodation and comfortable facilities to enhance the well-being of the workers," he said on June 25.

The construction of the Bandar Sultan Suleiman CLQ with a total cost of RM120 million is expected to commence by the end of this year.

The 4.35-acre Laman Lestari development project will be able to accommodate 5,712 local and foreign workers in 336 housing units

Mahmud said construction is expected to be completed within three years, and that the project is aimed at fostering a quality and sustainable living environment for migrant workers in the state.

Amirudin announced that workers can rent the space for RM350 monthly.

Each unit will be equipped with three bedrooms, one bathroom, a dedicated dining area, a prayer room and open spaces for the workers' convenience.

The units will come with other amenities such as furniture, appliances and lockable wardrobes.

I-Berhad set to take i-City to new heights

SHAH ALAM - I-Berhad will launch its 'One Shah Alam, One Destination' programme next month, inviting local enterprises to partner with the noted property developer.

The year-long programme comes in the wake of the company's expectations of at least 17 million visitors to i-City by December this year, said chairman Tan Sri Lim Kim Hong.

He noted that i-City has enjoyed steady footfall growth, especially since the opening of its subsidiary DoubleTree by Hilton i-City in July last year.

"The success of I-Berhad lies upon the synergy between its property development, property enhancement, as well as leisure and hospitality segments.

"As such, last year, we allocated RM10mil towards the enhancement of our leisure

segment with the projects taking shape this year. We will be seeing the addition of a 4,654 square metre indoor Xcite Park

and a five-dimension snow experience centre on top of highly Instagrammable lightscapes," Lim said at I-Berhad's post-annual general meeting media briefing on June 28.

He added that the invitation is I-Berhad playing its part towards contributing to local cultural, eco, social and

micro enterprises, with environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices in mind.

"There are plenty of spaces both in the physical and virtual realm where we can explore opportunities to grow together and create a more inclusive environment at i-City, to benefit the community and contribute towards the socio-economic progress of the capital city of Selangor, Shah Alam.

"With the anticipation of growth, I-Berhad aims to create an inclusive environment that enables indi-

viduals and businesses to feel connected, engaged and inspired to contribute to the socio-economic progress of Shah Alam," Lim said.

The enhancements, together with a healthy pipeline of high-value retail tenants for Central Mall i-City and i-City Finance Avenue, will create a tighter synergy with DoubleTree by Hilton i-City with its meeting spaces ideal for leisure activities — meetings, incentives, conventions, exhibition (MICE), and annual events.

"These developments will create reasons for high-value visitors from far and wide to come," Lim said.

Those interested in partnering with I-Berhad should submit their proposal detailing how their initiatives can positively impact Shah Alam, to selangorgoldentri-angle@i-city.my.



Charting the course for economic success

By **DANIAL DZULKIFLY**

Much of the responsibility of bringing investments to Selangor lies on the shoulders of one man — Investment, Industry and Trade, Small and Medium Industries Committee chairman Dato' Teng Chang Khim. Since 2018, he has worked hard to ensure that Selangor remains the most sought-after business destination in the country.

More recently, however, he has made known his intention to retire from public office.

In an exclusive interview with *Selangor Journal*, Teng speaks honestly about Selangor's ability to achieve consistent growth despite recording lower capital investment figures than Johor last year, and why he thinks the state will continue to make its mark in the region.

Consistency is key

Teng attributes his trust in Selangor to what he calls the state's solid groundwork for economic expansion.

"In Selangor, we always maintain steady figures," he said.

"This is unlike in other states where the figures fluctuate. One year they go up, even reaching RM70 billion, and then the following year they drop.

"That's because the (growth) rationale for each state is quite different. For instance, the electronics industry witnessed increased investments due to disruptions in the supply chains in China caused by the pandemic. As a result, some investments were redirected to Malaysia, targeting specific states.

"Recently, there has also been a significant surge in the data centre industry. I believe this is due to the migration of data centres from Singapore, which has faced electricity supply issues. Therefore, they shifted to Johor.

"However, we do not expect to benefit from such situations. We strive for consistent growth."

In 2022, Johor recorded RM70.6 billion in investments compared to Selangor's RM60.03 billion.

Selangor's figures were bolstered by its robust services sector, which contributed RM47.8 billion. Its manufacturing sector also brought in an impressive RM12.2 billion, followed by RM13.2 million from its primary industries.

Teng explained that the state experienced steady investment growth before 2020 but faced a sharp decline due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"However, it is not an excuse since everyone was grappling with the same situation. Instead, we implemented various masterplans to ensure continuous growth.

"Now, as we move forward, we are back on track with plans to establish the state as a hub for high-income jobs and a substantial contributor to the national

economy," Teng said.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia's (DOSM) recently released data on the gross domestic product (GDP) contribution by state in 2022, Selangor contributed 25.5 per cent in 2022 compared to 24.8 per cent in 2021.

This indicates that it has achieved its highest-ever contribution to the country's economic growth.

However, Teng acknowledged that the state lacks international visibility compared to the nation's capital, Kuala Lumpur.

"Kuala Lumpur has always been the most recognised among foreign investors. However, many investments, especially in manufacturing, are based in Selangor.

"For the past decade or so, we have made considerable effort to increase visibility among foreign investors. Domestic investors are already well aware (of us). Langkawi consistently records high numbers, but when it comes to FDI (foreign direct investment), we have faced challenges.

"However, in recent years, we have made progress by organising international events. The most prominent one is the Selangor International Business Summit (SIBS), which has experienced a significant increase in foreign investor participation.

"We are also hosting another investment event this year called the Selangor Asean Business Conference

(SABC), inviting investment promotion agencies not only from Malaysian states but also from Asean countries.

"This serves as a platform for investors to gather insight into the investment environment and market in one place. Consequently, our visibility has improved, and the response has been highly positive," he said.

Teng added that the Selangor government is intent on instilling confidence in investors for choosing the state, and is therefore providing them with pre- and post-investment facilitation to help them navigate through regulations and resolve taxation issues.

"I can confidently say that we are the only state offering such facilitation. Additionally, we have programmes focusing on economic development by providing special incentives for developers and investors to expedite their entry, easing their financial burdens."

Prized regions

Among the masterplans Teng speaks of are the Sabak Bernam Development Area (Sabda) and the Integrated Development Region in South Selangor (Idriss), which leverage established infrastructure, services, and products in the region as added value for investors.

"Idriss is more of a regional development plan, focusing on two districts: Kuala Langat and Sepang," said Teng.

"These are areas brimming with potential that are situated close to our airport and seaport.

"We are also looking at overall regional development. Westport, for example, has become the second-largest seaport in Southeast Asia after Singapore. To remain competitive, we need to enhance its infrastructure and services.

"Additionally, we are planning to develop Pulau Carey as the location for our third port, to create a new economic zone and drive economic development.

"We are also concentrating on strategic industries like aerospace, and we have suitable land in KLIA (Kuala Lumpur International Airport) for this purpose. We aim to develop the entire aerospace ecosystem, benefiting not only Selangor but the entire Asia Pacific region."

As for Sabda, Teng said the focus remains on attracting quality investment to the area to enhance the production of agricultural products using the best practices and modern technology.

"Sabak Bernam can learn a lot from Sekinchan. Despite its size, Sekinchan is one of the most productive rice producers in the country, employing efficient means to boost production.

"Therefore, we aim to replicate these results for other agricultural products in Sabak Bernam through Sabda."

Although Teng still brims with enthusiasm when talking about his business ideas, helping Selangor attract more investments in the last weeks of his tenure will be his last hurrah.

He believes that the next person to hold the portfolio already has a blueprint to follow.

"We have established a solid foundation. Our past efforts have laid a strong groundwork for future success. There is no reason to falter, and we should be able to achieve even better results in the years ahead," he said.





As a prosperous state, Selangor relatively has a lower poverty rate than other states but the challenge is to maintain the standards of living and manage the cost of living, especially for the lower-income households

DR YEAH KIM LENG
Professor of Economics
Sunway University

"The state has become like an e-commerce innovation hub and (a hub for) other gig activities. Another fundamental reason is rapid urbanisation that also invigorates the property sector, including industrial estates, facilities, and amenities," he said.

What voters want

With the upcoming state assembly election on Aug 12, Yeah said that voters would usually cast the ballot based on economic voting, in which the voting pattern reflects public confidence in the economy and how well the state is performing. He said there is a strong correlation between a government's ability to serve the public and its high likelihood of being voted in, which is the basis of how a ruling party would be able to continue assuming power as long as they are able to offer what voters want.

"Now that they have delivered, the important thing is to ensure there is a balanced growth, which means all regions and segments of the population, especially the low-income groups, would benefit from the economic growth. There should be an emphasis on improving the quality of living for the disadvantaged groups in the state.

"As a prosperous state, Selangor relatively has a lower poverty rate than other states but due to the rising cost of living, the challenge for the state administration is to maintain the standards of living and manage the cost of living, especially for the lower-income households."

Yeah said that the state government has implemented innovative welfare programmes and social assistance for the less fortunate, which are more extensive than those in other states.

"It's a compliment to the state. Because of the higher revenue generated, they are able to channel a sizeable allocation towards uplifting low-income groups," he said.

Setting a benchmark

In the months and years to come, Yeah said, Selangor can become the key force behind the country's aspiration to develop a high-income economy and push for more innovation, which can eventually spill over. He said the state can take the lead in the shift to a green economy and digital economy.

"Selangor is well-positioned to be the innovator in these two fields. The key here is to take steps that will increase its resilience to climate challenges. Those will be key in terms of the future, moving forward.

"The state's preparedness to take mitigatory strategies to protect itself against climate challenges could help it to develop further and contribute to the climate change agenda," he said.

While more data is needed to identify the key economic indicators contributing to Selangor's economic strength, such as disaggregated data on competitiveness, ease of doing business, policy and efficiency, Yeah said that Selangor is anticipated to be recording good performance that could serve as a benchmark for other states.

"The state's performance speaks for itself. We would foresee that all these indicators in Selangor will come out ahead of other states, otherwise, they won't be performing so well.

"But we also want to ensure other states also know the benchmark, so we can emulate Selangor's policies and programmes that can be adopted. This in turn would benefit the whole nation," he added.

By IDA NADIRAH IBRAHIM and AMAR SHAH MOHSEN

SELANGOR, the most industrialised and populous state in the nation, has established itself as the economic powerhouse of the Peninsular's west coast, serving as a magnet for capital investments and new business startups to meet the growing needs of its discerning middle-class population.

Based on the figures recently released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), the state recorded the highest economic growth last year at 11.9 per cent and the highest contribution to the national gross domestic product (GDP) at 25.5 per cent.

These record-breaking achievements prove that in the 15 years it has come under Pakatan Harapan's (Harapan) governance, Selangor is capable of offering security and business opportunities that are attractive to its citizens and foreign investors too.

In the past five years, Selangor's contribution to the country's GDP has shown a consistent increase from 23.7 per cent. It even recorded a 24.3 per cent contribution in 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

These figures surpass those accomplished by the previous administration under the charge of Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, which saw a GDP drop between 22.4 per cent and 23.0 per cent. The state government's performance under Azmin's predecessor, the late Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim, fared better, showing a growth in the GDP contribution from 21.9 per cent to 23.7 per cent.

Selangor also outperformed Malaysia's economic growth in the last five years, including during the pandemic when the global economy was severely affected.

In 2018, the state's economy grew by 6.8 per cent, while the national economy grew by 4.7 per cent. During the Covid-19 outbreak, the state recorded a growth rate of -5.3 per cent, slightly better than the country's -5.6 per cent.

In 2021, Selangor began to recover with a growth rate of 5.3 per cent, while the national economy was at 3.1 per cent.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said on June 27 that Selangor's economic success reflects the state's

stability and prosperity under the Harapan-led government, hence, its ability to lead in the key areas of business and industries.

The Menteri Besar also attributes Selangor's achievements last year to the teamwork, perseverance and planning of the state executive councillors and committed civil servants.

Conducive environment

The state government's efforts in drawing up conducive policies and offering an operating environment that emphasises good governance and transparency are among the key factors that make Selangor attractive to traders and investors.

Sunway University Professor of Economics Dr Yeah Kim Leng (*pic*) said creating such a business- and investor-friendly environment and supportive policies are crucial to sustaining the confidence of traders and investors

He said creating a dynamic business environment that can move the value chain up and provide high-wage employment and higher-value investment pushes Selangor ahead of other states.

"This creates a win-win situation. Enabling skills training and introducing various programmes are important to enhance consumer

Economic success worth betting on



Enabling skills training and introducing various programmes are important to enhance consumer confidence, and in turn, would also lead to higher demand and attract more investment

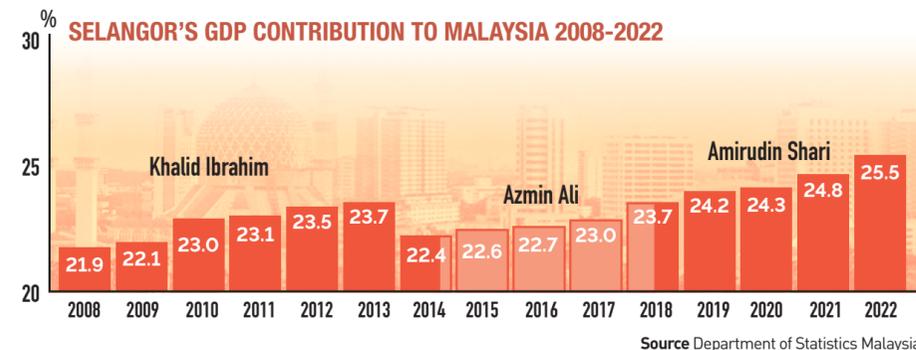
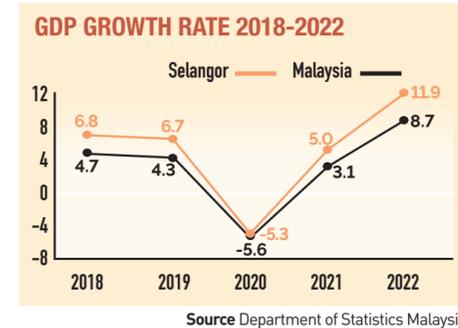


confidence, and in turn, would also lead to higher demand and attract more investment," he told *Selangor Journal* when contacted.

Yeah said Selangor's economic growth is also largely contributed by the effect of agglomeration where activities are clustered together, which in turn, attract more industries and services into the region to cater to rising demand.

He said the large market is due to the sizable concentration of the population, particularly in the Klang Valley.

"What we have here is a case of rising demand and economic activities to serve the needs of the growing population and new economic activities that also leverage both Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and fast-rising digitalisation.



Harapan set to win Selangor, despite some odds

By DANIAL DZULKIFLY

PAKATAN Harapan (Harapan) is projected to retain the states it currently governs — Selangor, Penang and Negeri Sembilan — despite mounting challenges brought about by economic difficulties and fragmented Malay political support, according to political observers.

Perikatan Nasional (PN), as the closest competitor to Harapan, has capitalised on various factors, including growing dissatisfaction and the rise of conservatism within the Malay community, to gain momentum and put pressure on the current unity government and its aligned parties.

The PN coalition has tapped into these sentiments to strengthen its position and attract support from segments of the population that may have concerns or reservations about the current government's policies or performance.

With the upcoming state elections scheduled for Aug 12, there is widespread acknowledgement among the government, opposition, and political observers that the results will serve as a significant gauge of the people's trust in the Unity Government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

It will mark approximately nine months since the government assumed office.

However, taking into account Harapan's track record in the three states, political observers agree that the ruling coalition has a significant advantage.

Nusantara Academy for Strategic Research senior fellow Azmi Hassan said that based on the 15th general election (GE15) results, Harapan voters remain solid with the coalition.

This is despite voters' uneasiness against Harapan's ally in the Unity Government, Barisan Nasional (BN) and its chairman, Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

"As I see it, it's not the Federal government that will influence Selangor voters, but the other way round because any decision made in Selangor and also in other states will reflect the wishes of the voters and what they think about the current Federal government.

"While DAP and the non-Malay supporters of Harapan feel very uneasy working with BN's Zahid, I think they are very pragmatic.

"The voters know that even though



they don't favour Zahid due to the stigma around him, they have no choice if given the choice between an Umno candidate and a PAS candidate. I'm sure they will not abstain from voting for BN as the alternative choice would be PAS. So they are pragmatic in this matter," he said to *Selangor Journal* when contacted.

Selangor has 56 state seats, out of which Harapan won 51 in the 14th general polls in 2018.

Selangor Harapan election director Mohd Yahya Mat Sahri recently said the coalition is looking to retain this number for this coming election.

In 2018, BN won four seats while PAS secured only one.

Without a doubt, PN would aim to significantly reduce the majority held by Harapan, especially in the Malay-dominated northern Selangor.

The MB candidate

PN's strategy revolves around establishing a dominant presence in the northern corridor, thereby diminishing the influence of their political opponents.

However, the opposition bloc faces a challenging task in their quest to wrest control of the state from Harapan, which has governed Selangor for the past three terms since 2008. Harapan's incumbency and established political base in the state make it a formidable opponent.

Harapan is expected to retain its seats in urban areas, particularly those held by DAP. However, the Unity Government parties and PN are making determined efforts to compete for Malay-majority seats as well as mixed seats.

In addition to the major parties, the entry of the new party Muda adds a wildcard element to the state election. Muda has chosen to contest independently after feeling sidelined in seat negotiations with other parties.

With similar principles as Parti Keadilan Rakyat (Keadilan) and Amanah, Muda is likely to contest in mixed seats, potentially transforming the competition into a three-cornered fight for these constituencies.

Despite numerous narratives that will be played by Harapan, PN, and even Muda, based on their ideologies in the state election, Azmi opined that for Selangor, the poster boy for Menteri Besar would be the most crucial factor in the campaign.

"For Selangor, I think the menteri besar candidate is very important. No doubt it will be (Dato' Seri) Amirudin Shari and not a BN candidate as BN has much less influence in the state compared to Negeri Sembilan.

"But for PN, they haven't yet announced who their poster boy for Selangor is, whether it's Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali or somebody else. This is because for Selangor, the MB seat is a hot seat, so they need to announce it

early because Selangor voters need to know.

"In this aspect, Harapan is way ahead of PN," said Azmi.

Harapan's Achilles heel

With Selangor being Malaysia's most economically viable state, its incumbent advantage at the federal and state levels should translate into an electoral edge in the state elections.

Weighing in, Universiti Sains Malaysia's political science professor Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid said this point is tampered with by the possibility that Harapan would concede some seats to BN, which Harapan supporters may find difficult to stomach.

"The Unity Government is trying its best to influence state elections via its economic policies, but they're apparently not working, at least in the short term. Without performance legitimacy, what's left of Umno to defend the Malay seats is racial legitimacy provided by its position as the protector of Malay interests and rights.

"But this itself is being eroded by its collaboration with Harapan, especially with DAP in the unity government. Therefore, votes by discontented Umno voters may not necessarily end up in Harapan-BN's favour," he said.

Comparing this to Harapan-led Penang, Fauzi said things are more clear-cut for the island state to defend its government. Even then, the margin of its victory is predicted to be lower.

"Harapan states cannot leverage the Unity Government's lacklustre performance on the economic front but have to rely on their own state governments' economic management to shore up their credentials.

"Muda's cause is a lost cause, but it can hope to secure some consolation votes from disaffected Harapan and BN supporters," he said.

However, Fauzi also concurs with Azmi that the Menteri Besar candidate remains a key factor in Selangor, where the state administration can rely on its solid track record since 2008.

"The sentiment is still largely positive on account of Selangor's own economic strength. The key figure for Harapan-BN is Selangor's own menteri besar (Amirudin) who has proven to be his own man, out of Azmin Ali's shadow," he said.



Performance vs perception: The case for voting wisely

By **AMAR SHAH MOHSEN**

WHEN Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim assumed prime ministership on Nov 24, 2022, the Pakatan Harapan (Harapan) chairman made it his primary mission to address the soaring cost of living in the country, recognising its impact on the people.

It is the government's priority, he said, to tackle what was "suppressing and gripping" the lives of Malaysians.

However, more than seven months into his tenure, the cost of living, as with the value of the ringgit, remains a hot-button topic for many. While efforts have been implemented to resolve it, rumblings of discontent are still reverberating.

With the state elections drawing near — polling for Selangor, Penang, Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan, Terengganu and Kedah has been set for Aug 12 — questions are being asked if this could ultimately determine the outcome.

Perikatan Nasional (PN) has even declared that economic concerns affecting the rakyat will be its focus during the campaign period, knowing fully well that this issue resonates closely with the public.

Observers, however, are not entirely convinced that bread and butter issues will shape the election results. The general consensus is that, while it may have an influence, it will not be enough to alter the polls' outcome, and that Harapan is likely to defend its three states.

Improved quality of life

Political analyst Prof Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani said while concerns have been raised over the falling ringgit and high cost of living, the overall quality of life for Malaysians has improved, owing

largely to initiatives like Payung Rahmah and the People's Income Initiative (IPR).

Commendable economic policies, like the move away from blanket subsidies to target instead lower-income households, have also aided underprivileged groups, he noted.

"In this context, we can say that people's lives have improved. There are no major cases of starvation, and the prices of essential goods like eggs, chicken and vegetables have also stabilised," he told *Selangor Journal*.

"For PN, it is expected that they will play up on the issue of living cost, but I believe voters are rational. If their lives have improved, then that's a good sign."

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari himself said it is erroneous for the opposition to describe the nation's economic performance as a failure and use it as a point of reference, in a desperate bid to secure political brownie points.

This is particularly considering that the Federal government has been in power less than a year and yet has been able to put the economy back on track.

The Selangor Harapan chairman, in a press conference on July 7, pointed out that the government has stabilised the prices of basic goods and ensured their sufficient supply. In Selangor, the state's *Jualan Ehsan Rakyat*, which offers basic necessities below market price, has served as a key intervention to assist the people.

Opposition out of ideas?

Azizuddin said those in Harapan-held states, in particular, would recognise and appreciate the contributions made by their respective state administrations that assisted the rakyat during trying times. As a result, he believes it is unlikely there will be an electoral tsunami against the governments of Selangor,

Penang and Negeri Sembilan.

If anything, Azizuddin said, only a minor swing of support can be expected in the states comprising more Malay constituents, chiefly influenced by racial and religious rhetoric accentuated by PN leaders.

As for PN, the Universiti Utara Malaysia senior lecturer said rather than merely training its guns on the Harapan government over the cost of living issue, the political outfit ought to present its own policy ideas.

"They need to show what they can offer. Selangor, for example, has recently presented its economic performance report, but we have not seen any from Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu.

"They may claim that their focus during campaigning will be on the economy, but my suspicion is that nearing polling day, they will desperately play up sentiments on race, religion and royalty, like in the 15th general election."

Malay-majority seats key

Universiti Tun Abdul Razak academician Prof Dr Barjoyai Bardai believes a considerable number of constituents in Harapan states, made up largely of 'disappointed' voters, could be tempted to switch their support in protest of the high cost of living.

Chiefly, he said a shift can be expected in the Malay heartlands of Selangor and Penang.

"These are voters who harbour high hopes that the cost of living would improve under the new Federal government but are now fed up. As an alternative, they may vote for the opposition. I would say the Malay majority seats will be the key," he said when contacted.

However, Barjoyai agreed that it would take more than just protest votes over rising costs to see a collapse of the

Harapan administration and that other more crucial factors would come into play.

"Yes, I believe it (living cost) will be a factor in the polls. The question is, will it be enough to cause a change of administration in Harapan states? I think not."

Barjoyai said there will be greater clarity on voting patterns closer to the polling day, once the respective parties release their manifestos and hit the campaign trail.

A public relations disconnect

Commenting on the initiatives rolled out by Anwar's administration to date, Barjoyai said these deserve credit, but took issue with the government's strategic communications.

He opined that more needs to be done to better deliver messages to the ground, notably on efforts to assist the rakyat and the challenges that the government currently faces, as well as to counter false narratives and allegations.

"I really commend the government for programmes like Menu Rahmah, *Jualan Rahmah* and IPR, but exactly how many people have taken full advantage of these? To me, that is the current government's biggest weakness — communications."

Azizuddin concurred that there appears to be a problem with the Federal government's communications system, and that if unresolved, could pose a major problem that can be capitalised by the opposition.

"People often believe what's on social media, and may be fed with false information. The issue is that proper communications do not reach the ground.

"Like it or not, I feel the government needs to make full use of the media available to them like RTM to deliver their messages better."

Keeping the welfare promise

By NADIAH ZAMLUS

FOLLOWING a changing of the guard in the state government 15 years ago, the people of Selangor began to experience the benefits of the new administration's welfare agenda.

What started as an economic democratisation policy involving seven aid packages has since grown to include 44 initiatives implemented through Iltizam Selangor Penyayang (ISP).

This marked increase in the number of people-centric initiatives can be attributed to the state's revenue growth, which is a direct result of good and efficient governance, and the state leadership's determination to 'give back' to its voters.

Under ISP, the state has now spent over RM600 million to help marginalised groups, including children, women, students, disabled individuals, farmers and small businesses.

In conjunction with the five-year anniversary of Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari's administration on June 19, *SelangorKini* looks at some of the ways the people have been empowered.

Jelajah Ehsan Rakyat (JER)

This programme was introduced to address the rising cost of living. The Selangor Agricultural Development Corporation (PKPS) offers grocery items like chicken, eggs, fish, cooking oil and rice at about 30 per cent below market price. The programme has benefitted about 800,000 people.

Bantuan Kehidupan Sejahtera Selangor (Bingkas)

Prior to its introduction, financial aid was channelled through the Kasih Ibu Smart Selangor (KISS) and KISS Ibu Tunggal (KISS-IT) programmes, where each recipient received RM200 a month. Recognising the pressing need to offer more, Amirudin increased the monthly aid to RM300.

The number of participating households also increased from 25,000 to 30,000, benefiting about 180,000 individuals.

Skim Insurans Am Selangor (Insan)

This scheme provides coverage of up to RM10,000 per person to over six million Selangor residents aged between 30 days and 80 years old. It covers a person's permanent disability or death due to an accident.

Registration is open for a year from October 2022. A total of 3,563,844 individuals have signed up.

Rumah Idaman Project

In 2019, the state launched Projek Rumah Idaman, which offers 1,000 sq ft houses with basic furnishings at just RM250,000 a unit. Each unit comes with two parking lots, air conditioners in three bedrooms, water heaters in both bathrooms, a kitchen cabinet, a television, a refrigerator and wardrobes.

The state has also rolled out other housing-related initiatives under Iltizam Perumahan Selangor, such as Rumah Selangorku and Skim Smart Sewa.



Skim Bantuan Biaya Rumah Selangor

During the tabling of the 2023 Budget, Amirudin said the government, with a starting allocation of RM100 million, will help first-time buyers pay between 10 and 15 per cent of the deposit for a house. The programme is expected to benefit 4,000 people.

Roda Darul Ehsan Initiative (RiDE)

Introduced during the height of Covid-19 in 2020, RiDE helps unemployed youths get involved in the gig economy. Participants are offered a RM350 subsidy for a B2 motorcycle licence, an e-hailing course worth RM150 and a RM70 annual contribution to Socso. They will also receive EPF contributions and be registered under the Insan insurance package.

As of January, 6,500 out of more than 14,000 youths have taken part.

Skim Air Darul Ehsan

While the provision of 20 cubic metres of free water for low-income households has long been synonymous with Selangor, Amirudin expanded the initiative to include households with income levels of up to RM5,000. All Malaysians who reside in the state are qualified for the programme that comes under Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd.

Skim Mesra Usia Emas (SMUE)

All senior citizens in the state are entitled to a yearly RM150 shopping voucher (up from RM100), and RM500 in funeral expenses in cases of deaths.

Selangor Legal Aid Fund

This initiative provides low and middle income groups with free legal advice services, particularly in cases involving family issues (civil) and domestic violence. It is implemented together with the Malaysian and Selangor Bar Councils.

Selangor Platform (PLATS)

PLATS was rolled out in May 2020 to help businesses generate an income during Ramadan, following the implementation of movement restrictions by the Federal government in response to Covid-19. PLATS 2.0 was introduced in 2021, and extended to beyond the fasting month. It also served as a catalyst to Selangor's digitalisation agenda.

The programme has expanded from 400 entrepreneurs to 20,000 as of last year.



Independent Living Support Centre (ILSC)

ILSC provides job training to people with disabilities to help them integrate into society and be able to live more independently.

Iltizam Selangor Sihat (ISS)

An improvement from the Skim Insurance Peduli Sihat, ISS offers protection to 100,000 cardholders and 150,000 registered family members. With a RM45 million allocation, it provides coverage for basic medical treatments, permanent disability due to accidents, critical illness and funeral assistance.

Selangor Saring

The state's free health screening programme, introduced last year, allows the public to test for a range of non-communicable diseases.

Iltizam Pendidikan Fardu Ain

Some 14,000 underprivileged students from 296 religious schools across the state are given a monthly subsidy of RM30 each for their Al-Quran dan Fardu Ain (Kafa) classes.





Making it attractive for traders

By **DANIAL DZULKIFLY**

IN an effort to solidify its position as Malaysia's leading business hub in the region, the Selangor International Business Summit (SIBS) has unveiled its ambitious plan to promote the state as the gateway to Asean.

Investment, Industry and Trade, and Small and Medium Industries Committee chairman Dato' Teng Chang Khim, in an interview with *Selangor Journal*, explained that the state aims to expand SIBS into a larger-scale event but more time is required to achieve it.

He said as part of its strategic vision, SIBS aims to enhance the profile of its sub-brands, including the Selangor International Expo F&B (SIE F&B), the Selangor International Expo Medic (SIE Medic), and the Selangor Industrial Park Expo (SPARK), which will be independently organised as industry-focused events.

"In the future, these expos can be organised on different dates and maybe in venues that can accommodate greater participation by both exhibitors and visitors.

"Although SIBS is no longer being held in the state, the objective of SIBS in promoting Selangor as the gateway to Asean remains.

"This is because Selangor intends to continue branding itself as the best investment destination for exporters and manufacturers looking at Southeast Asian countries as a market.

"And with the support from the state government in organising SIBS annually, in addition to the existing favourable ecosystem in the state, Selangor is the business hub in the region," he said.

Not a retail expo

SIBS 2023 will be held from Oct 19 to 22 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC).

This year, Selangor is striving to achieve sales of up to RM1.5 billion, an increase from the RM1.45 billion in transactions documented during the 2022 summit.

The upcoming expo has also set its sights on drawing the participation of 1,050 booths and 50,000 trade visitors.

Currently, 43 per cent of booth space has been booked, said Teng.

Teng also expressed confidence in SIBS' role in establishing itself as a prominent business platform and trade event, distinguishing itself from tradi-



tional retail expos. With its primary focus on trade visitors, SIBS has limited public access, reserving it only for the final two days, Teng pointed out as an example.

"This trade event aims to grow in size and scale each year. SIBS originated in 2015 as a single event focusing on the food and beverage industry, but it has now evolved into a summit encompassing multiple concurrent events spanning various industries, all taking place within the same operational timeframe.

"Moving forward, our aspiration is for SIBS to expand its scope by incorporating additional industries, particularly those with significant influence that

align with the region's focal sectors," he said.

Undeterred by challenges

Despite confronting unparalleled challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent implementation of movement control orders, SIBS has demonstrated remarkable resilience and sustained growth even during the pandemic's peak, said Teng.

In 2020, the state administration introduced the Selangor Business Hub, a dedicated online portal designed for SIBS' virtual exhibitions, conferences and business meetings.

This platform aimed to provide exhibitors with an alternative means of communication for their business endeavours, and many of them actively participated in the virtual format and successfully connected with potential buyers online.

In 2021, SIBS was hosted in a hybrid manner. Despite the stringent Covid-19 restrictions, the expo complied with the regulations outlined by the National Security Council, including measures such as limiting the number of visitors allowed at any given time.

"That year, we recorded over 20,000 visitors and over RM200 million in potential transaction value.

"Because of our continued support and facilitation for our exhibitors, we received positive feedback, and in return, in 2022, SIBS recorded the largest number of exhibitors, visitors and

the highest potential transaction value," said Teng.

Teng also emphasised that SIBS will maintain an assertive approach to self-promotion by actively participating in major trade exhibitions across the region.

These include prominent events such as Gulfood in Dubai, Foodex in Tokyo, Thaifex in Bangkok, Hofex in Hong Kong, Healthcare Expo in Taipei, and Bio Korea in Seoul, among others.

Teng stated the aim for such attendance is to actively engage with potential exhibitors and buyers, with a specific goal of securing 20 per cent of international exhibitor participation in SIBS.

Similarly, SIBS is also working closely with trade organisations, and both local and international chambers of commerce and industries, as a means to attract more visitors to the summit.

Additionally, SIBS intends to offer a special two-night stay package specifically tailored to attract valuable trade delegations and buyers to the event. This package serves as an incentive for their attendance, enhancing the overall appeal and value of the summit.

By SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM

ON first impression, Ng Sze Han appears to possess an easygoing demeanour, with his trademark friendly smile.

But behind his cool composure and well-kept appearance is a no-nonsense, consummate politician who is firm on addressing challenges head-on and delivering for the greater good of the public.

This was demonstrated when he, in his first month of being appointed state Local Government, Public Transport and New Village Development Committee chairman in May 2018, issued a stern warning to illegal dumpers following cases in Seri Kembangan that led to fire — “we are watching you”.

Ng has also proven that inexperience does not necessarily mean an inability to perform.

Despite this being his first term as an executive councillor, Ng has delivered on many fronts.

From improving the state's public transportation services to enhancing businesses and the lives of the people, Ng's achievements speak for themselves.

Enforcing rules

The DAP lawmaker spearheaded efforts to crack down on illegal factories involved in the processing of plastic waste in the state.

In just three years in office, over 200 such factories were ordered to shut down, with the owner of the premises fined and the lands seized, as noted by Ng's report card released recently.

Beginning in 2022, the state government also criminalised the importing of plastic wastes, while the issuance of new business licences to plastic recycling factories was suspended for five years.

He also led the state in rolling out a programme to legalise unlicensed factories from October 2019 to December 2021. The initiative was meant to encourage factory owners to operate legally, while those that failed to abide were issued notices to move out.

As a result, the state was able to collect close to RM100 million in land pre-



Ng lends a Han

mium revenue, while pollution in water sources also improved drastically after the illegal factories located close to these locations were ordered to move.

Helping traders

Businesses and the general public, particularly those from the lower-income group, also benefited under Ng's watch.

Among other things, Ng noted that between 2016 and 2023, the state agreed that assessment tax for low-cost housing, as well as licensing fees for small-time traders, would be exempted. In total, the public saved RM546.6 million.

In his report card, Ng highlighted that over 10,000 temporary business licences were also issued during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, as part of a larger bid to address the issue of unemployment then.

A RM500 one-off financial aid was also given to traders to offset the impact of the health crisis and movement restrictions at the time.

To ease Malaysians in applying for licences, low-risk businesses were allowed to make applications online, with the approval process taking no more than a day.

In view of Covid-19, the state government also instructed that the construction of centralised labour quarters and temporary labour quarters for foreign workers be expedited. This is in light of concerns raised over their poor living conditions.

Enhancing mobility

Ng has also successfully formulated the Selangor Mobility initiative to integrate public transportation servic-

es, encompassing various programmes like the Smart Selangor bus service, the introduction of micro-mobility vehicles and the demand-responsive transit system.

The goal was to increase public transportation utilisation in the state from 20 per cent to 40 per cent by 2025, promoting sustainable mobility for Selangor residents.

To support this, the Selangor government allocated RM4 million to upgrade pedestrian walkways in five local authorities, namely Petaling Jaya, Sepang, Klang, Ampang Jaya, and Subang Jaya.

Similarly, the Smart Selangor bus service, implemented in 2015, offers free rides and has served around 60 million riders. Currently, it operates 166 buses on 50 routes, with an annual allocation of RM50 million.

In 2018, Ng also launched the Smart Selangor parking app, enabling online payments for parking across the state. The app has made the parking system paperless since 2022, benefiting three million residents of Selangor.

To ease parking congestion, a two-hour limit was introduced in public parking locations under the Subang Jaya City Council. This ensures parking turnover and fair access for all users.

Improving lives

Under Ng's tenure, the state government allocated RM13 million for the upgrading of public facilities, including markets, multipurpose halls, and recreational facilities.

Additionally, four local authorities underwent upgrades during Ng's leadership. The district councils of Kuala Langkat, Kuala Selangor, and Hulu Selangor were elevated to municipal council status between 2019 and 2021. Similarly, the Subang Jaya Municipal Council was

elevated to a city council in 2020.

Ng also played a key role in streamlining solid waste management for all 12 local authorities in the state through KDEB Waste Management Sdn Bhd (KDEBWM), a state-owned firm, since 2020.

To improve transparency and public service, KDEBWM solid waste collection trucks are equipped with cameras and GPS tracking. Complaints can be directly channelled to the operations centre through the i-Clean app.

KDEBWM's material recovery facility, meanwhile, has been collecting 20 tonnes of recyclable goods daily since its inception.

Similarly, since 2020, KDEBWM has played a crucial role in disposing of waste caused by massive floods in the state. As of Jan 5, 2023, the waste management firm has safely disposed of approximately 77,000 tonnes of flood-related waste materials.

The state government allocated RM12.9 million to KDEBWM for this purpose, enabling them to handle waste materials in 110 flood-affected areas.

During Ng's stint, Selangor witnessed an increase in the number of confinement centres for mothers and newborns. Additionally, Selangor became the first state to issue licences for confinement centres, ensuring they abide by appropriate guidelines and procedures.

Ng also saw the construction of a cat park in Cyberjaya that was officiated by Her Highness Tengku Permaisuri Nora-shikin, equipped with a veterinary clinic and can shelter 200 stray cats captured in the Sepang district.



September start date for construction

By SUHAILA SHAHRUL ANNUAR

SHAH ALAM - The Shah Alam Sports Complex (KSSA) development project, spanning across a 76.08-hectare area, is expected to begin in September, says Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

He said the complex, which is expected to be completed in 2026, will help the state government strengthen its sports development programme.

"The construction will start no later than September because we want to change the approach and the role of the stadium," Amirudin said in a special Selamat Pagi Malaysia interview broadcast live from Pantai Batu Laut

in Tanjung Sepat, on July 2.

The programme will be implemented consistently to ensure that Selangor is able to produce sporting talents across generations.

"In the 1990s, we were the best at sports but after 2010, there have been competitors like Terengganu and Kuala Lumpur because they have more consistent sports development programmes.

"What is necessary now is a consistent programme, funding and facilities. God willing, even if Selangor is not at a world-class level, the facilities we have are always up to date."

On June 13, Amirudin said that the sports complex will be built following its original plan that was formulated

in 2008.

It would be developed based on best practices, and will also incorporate a flood mitigation and traffic dispersal plan.

Earlier, Menteri Besar Selangor (Incorporated), or MBI, said the project is expected to be completed in parallel with the construction of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) 3 through a public-private partnership with Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad, without utilising public funds.

Its redevelopment was decided after it was estimated that repair works would cost RM787 million.

Between 2013 and 2022, a total of RM56 million was spent on maintenance and repair.

TSSC ticket sales to open in August



KUALA LUMPUR - Football fans can buy tickets for the 19th edition of the Sultan of Selangor Cup (TSSC), which is being held again after a three-year hiatus, at the end of August.

TSSC chairman and team manager Tan Sri Abd Karim Munisar said tickets will go on sale for as low as RM10 for fans to be a part of the event at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil on Oct 28. They will also be treated to a performance by Datuk Jamal Abdillah.

"We are selling tickets cheap while fans stand a chance to win a car, a motorcycle and accommodation prizes in a lucky draw. We are aiming for 70,000 spectators to fill the stadium," he told Bernama after the 19th TSSC committee meeting at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil, on July 4.

The stadium is currently undergoing a facelift, with its cow grass turf being replaced with zeon zoysia grass to prepare for the showdown between Selangor and Singapore.

The Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj, conceived the tournament in 2001 to strengthen ties between the Selangor FA and Singapore and rekindle their rivalry after Singapore pulled out of the Malaysian League in 1994.

The last time the tournament was held in 2019, Selangor defeated Singapore 1-0. - Bernama



It's time for the Selangor State Election

Your ballots COUNT



Vote for the economy ✓
Vote for unity ✓
Vote for the common good ✓

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS TOGETHER

9 AREAS OF FOCUS BY SECTOR

PORTS AND LOGISTICS

- To build a regional logistics hub and a world-class port
- With capacity to meet industry demand



DIGITAL ECONOMY



- To increase digital startups and SMEs
- To be main contributor to digital economy in GDP
- To provide comprehensive and stable telco facilities

ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS, MECHANICAL AND ENGINEERING

- To boost domestic and foreign investment
- To increase value of downstream activities



LIFE SCIENCES



- To achieve status as regional Life Science Cluster in biotechnology

TOURISM

- To increase tourist arrivals and spending



AEROSPACE



- To be the primary choice of investors in Asia Pacific

AUTOMOTIVE

- To build an automotive manufacturing and service hub



HALAL INDUSTRY



- To penetrate the global halal market
- To uplift the local halal industry

AGROTECHNOLOGY

- To produce high-value agricultural products
- To utilise Industrial Revolution 4.0 technology (IR 4.0)
- To adopt the latest breeding technology



THE First Selangor Plan (RS-1), a five-year framework for 2021 to 2025, focuses on developing the state via sector and geographical clusterisation.

Nine economic focus areas have been outlined in the plan, spanning across three development zones.

Two zones will include the Sepang, Kuala Langat and Sabak Bernam districts to ensure that the state's wealth reaches rural communities.

The details of the plan, announced by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari on July 25, 2022, are as follows.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

SABAK BERNAM DEVELOPMENT AREA (SABDA)

- 1,317 hectares
- RM1.9 billion in estimated investment
- 3,600 jobs
- Around RM248 million in annual revenue
- Five core activities: high-value commodities, the industrial chain, agrotourism, downstream industrial activities and infrastructure and public facilities

SELANGOR MARITIME GATEWAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE (ZPE SMG)

This project is a new economic development corridor that covers two zones:

- 27,960 hectares from Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur, to estuaries and islands near Port Klang
- Sungai Klang and Westport and Northport of Port Klang
- Both zones to focus on environment conservation, and providing affordable homes and jobs

FIVE HIGH-IMPACT PROJECTS

- Integrated water and river management for flood mitigation, new off-river storage and a rainwater harvesting system
- Improve Pulau Indah's facilities
- Redevelop the Shah Alam Stadium
- Early warning system for floods
- 5G connection at 150 sites

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT REGION IN SOUTH SELANGOR (IDRISS)

- 3,276 hectares
- Gross development value of RM1 trillion
- Integrated private investment development in Sepang and Kuala Langat
- To encourage high-impact and high-value development and investment activities
- A task force to oversee development process, nature conservation, welfare of locals and prepare performance reports