

INSIGHTS

April 2023



ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY INSTITUTE (ISI)

The International Strategy Institute (ISI) is a not-for-profit organisation that helps connect governments and business across Asia. We stand for universal ethical business value such as equality, transparency, fair trade, and sustainable development.

Our dialogues, programmes, research and networking platforms, are designed to drive economic growth in the region. We aim to:

- 1 Build platforms for regional dialogue and networking opportunities that allow businesses, industry captains and governments to come together to drive economic growth of the region;
- 2 Provide timely research to keep our members and governments informed and updated on global trade and political issues that may have an impact on their operations;
- 3 Match businesses to the right investors and to ensure that the companies are paired with the right strategic investment partner.
- 4 Provide strategic platforms that connects governments, businesses, and civil society organisations (CSOs) around the region to conduct CSR programmes for community outreach and to give back to the community.

VISION AND MISSION

International Strategy Institute (ISI) aims to be the leading regional connector and networking platform for governments and businesses across Asia and the Pacific.

Through our networking events, conferences, and rigorously research publications, special dialogue with key decision maker within the government, captain of industries and NGOs, we hope to promote a robust Asian socio-economic environment that is strategic, inclusive, thought provoking, innovative and sustainable for all.

ARTICLES FEATURED



ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOLUTION FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

- Cheah Chyuan Yong

Chairman & Founder of
International Strategy Institute (ISI)

The concept of “New Normal”, will demand a new and more flexible approach to weather the storm of the pandemic. With Covid-19 hit at the end of 2019, the entire world was caught off-guard by the unprecedented health crisis. In addition to the ensuing panic, the world economy has come to a virtual as the spread of Covid-19 has single-handedly disrupted the world. In what seems like the blink of an eyes, this disease has upturned our lives and our daily activities.

We are seeing many businesses across multiple sectors come to a standstill, delivering a significant blow to the global economy. However, as they say, within every crisis, there is an opportunity. Many of our businesses have drastically change their models in order to stay competitive. The use of technology, mainly to keep their businesses running and connected with the people has made many of us somewhat at a turning point: a make or break time.

Industry leaders are finding themselves in a transformational landscape, and are rolling out solutions that will not only help mitigate the impact from Covid-19, but also allow the nation’s economy to bounce back from the MCO safely and responsibly.



Over the last few years, the small and medium enterprises (SME) have stood out as the key driver behind the economic development and emerged as an important and dynamic sector for the economy.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM), SMEs contribute 38.9% (RM553 million) of the total GDP in 2019, and it is anticipated that the contribution will push to or surpass 50% mark within the next decade , this is supported with the continues outperformance of the year-to-year SME GDP growth to the total Malaysia’s GDP

The statistic above foresees that Malaysia will soon be driven by the SMEs as the main engine for the economy, and as it grows, there is a need to ensure funding options are available and aware of by the SMEs in order for them to continue growing. This sector, if provided with the right support, has the potential to spread industrial growth throughout the country.

For many years, the SMEs have been relying mostly on banks to provide financing for their expansion agenda, and many of them have failed to secure the funding due to the risk associated with SMEs generally, in which banks often avoid. With the current economic recession arising from the pandemic, the banks are being reluctant more than ever in approving financing application from SMEs.



One of the alternative funding solutions that Malaysia's capital market has to offer, is Crowdfunding. Crowdfunding as defined in the Cambridge Dictionary, is "the practice of getting a large number of people to each give small amounts of money in order to provide the finance for a business project, typically using the internet". There are four types of Crowdfunding; donation-based, reward-based, equity-based (commonly known as equity Crowdfunding (ECF)), and lending-based (commonly known as Peer-to-Peer (P2P) financing). The first two types do not provide any financial returns to the contributors nor they are regulated, the later two are otherwise and they are of concern to this article.

The Crowdfunding market has been gaining attraction, especially during this pandemic as it has accelerated the adaptation of digitalisation by all of the relevant stakeholders. Crowdfunding offers several value propositions as compared to the conventional financing option, main ones are:

- 1 It takes shorter time to obtain funding through Crowdfunding as it does not go through rigorous process as how banks would normally do. However, there are safety measures that are required by the Crowdfunding platform operator to undertake to ensure legitimacy.
- 2 Crowdfunding offers access to larger audience/ investors as compared to banks, in which it increases the funding success rate relatively.
- 3 SMEs that seek funding through Crowdfunding are required to pitch their businesses/ projects to the crowd /investors directly via online Crowdfunding platform, which provides an opportunity for the SMEs to leverage on to gain media exposure, especially through social media.
- 4 SME that list its business/ project on crowdfunding platform will also get sense of the market reaction towards its business/ project. Hence, it would provide opportunity for the SME to enhance its operation or change its business strategy depending on the reaction it gets from the crowd/ investors.
- 5 SMEs that seek to list their businesses/ projects on ECF or P2P platforms will get coached by the platform operators to ensure that the funding target is achieved and also ensure that the SMEs continue to grow. The platform operator does this to increase its rate of successful campaigns listed on its platforms and also in some cases, to manage their own risk as the operators are allowed to invest into the SMEs' businesses/ projects directly, but limited to certain percentage.

There are two types of Crowdfunding that are regulated by the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) (under the Guidelines on Recognised Market); ECF and P2P financing. Both of these types provide financial returns to the investors.

The InvestSmart (an investor empowerment body initiated by the SC) defines ECF as “a form of fund raising that allows a start-up or other smaller enterprises to obtain capital through small equity investments using online portals to publicise and facilitate such offers to crowd investors”. In short, it refers to micro funding activity targeted at the general public, where in return, the investors (crowd) will obtain portion of the equity of the company/ issuer, similar to purchasing stock of a public listed company in Bursa Malaysia. As at January 2021, there were 10 ECF platform operators registered with the SC, and these platforms have collectively raised RM 129.64 million with 119 successful campaigns (as at 30 September 2020).

P2P financing however, it is defined by InvestSmart as “a lending and borrowing activity between businesses and investors, facilitated through an online

SMEs that are interested may contact the licensed ECF or P2P platform operators directly to understand further. Additionally, the platform operators normally provide information on successful campaigns which would allow the SMEs to comprehend further and learn from the past experience of others. The list of the licensed platform operators by the SC are available in <https://www.sc.com.my/development/digital/list-of-registered-recognized-market-operators>.

Lack of access to affordable funding can easily trap SMEs in a “downward spiral”. They are unable to grow without more funds and they cannot get funds without more growth. One of the ways to help in reducing financing hurdles for SMEs is to strengthen the infrastructure that supports the financial transactions, which includes the laws, regulations, and institutions to create, register and enforce collateral,



marketplace i.e. a P2P financing platform operator. The funding needs are met by a group of investors putting in small amounts of money for a particular business need that has been vetted by a P2P financing platform operator”. In layman term, it refers to micro funding activity funded by the general public/crowd for a specific business/ project where investors expect interest/ profit in return. As at January 2021, there were 11 P2P platform operators registered with the SC, and these platforms have collectively raised RM 921.83 million with 13,039 successful campaigns (as at 30 September 2020).

ECF or P2P platform operators that facilitate the offering of Islamic campaigns are required to appoint Shariah adviser as stated in Chapter 12 of the Guidelines on Recognized Markets to ensure the campaign comply with Shariah rules and principles at all times. Currently there are one from each ECF and P2P platforms that facilitate the offering of Islamic finance campaigns, which are Ethis Ventures Sdn Bhd and P2P Nusa Kapital Sdn Bhd, respectively.

insolvency regime and credit reporting tools. It would also help for the government to develop a credit guarantee schemes for SMEs businesses, private SME lenders, and establish a hometown investment trust funds for financing risky SMEs and start-up businesses.

The lack of SME databases is another challenge for our SMEs. Their financial and nonfinancial accounts are often difficult to assess. Hence, reducing their chances in getting financial loans or any form of finance assistance. Japan has created a Credit Risk Database (CRD) that shows how SMEs can be rated based on financial and nonfinancial data. This CRD will include data that can be used to rate SMEs through statistical analysis. This is something that we should be looking at in helping our SMEs and at the same time keeping track of their business developments.

This article was written by:
Cheah Chyuan Yong
Chairman & Founder of
International Strategy Institute (ISI),
was published in Nanyang Siang Pau

PAST PROGRAMMES

3rd Malaysia Tax Policy Forum (MTPF) 2022

01 August 2022 - Everly Hotel, Putrajaya



3rd Malaysia Tax Policy Forum was held on 1 August 2022 (Monday) at The Everly Hotel Putrajaya. With this year's theme, "Reinforcing Malaysia's Ultimate Pecuniary Resilience", the Forum focused on bringing all of these concerns to light, allowing us to identify the most effective ways of strengthening economic recovery, rebuilding national resilience, and catalysing changes.

Besides, the Forum was well attended with about 250 participants from the government, private sector, academia, and NGOs. The forum was officiated by YBhg. Datuk Mohd Nizom Bin Sairi, Chairman Executive Officer, Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (LHDN).





Concerns about Malaysia's restricted tax base have grown more serious since the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was replaced by the Sales and Services Tax (SST) in 2018. According to Malaysian Rating Corp Berhad (MARC), after the reversal, direct tax rates did not rise to pre-GST levels as the indirect tax base fell.



To accomplish this, the government said that it will maintain an expansionary fiscal policy, which resulted in a record-high budget of RM332.1 billion, including a larger allocation of RM75.6 billion for gross development expenditure.

Budget 2022 included many additional taxes to restore the government's dwindling funds. In addition, initiatives aimed at increasing tax revenue were proposed as part of the budget 2022. Corporate income tax collection is estimated to climb by 8.1% to RM65.5 billion in 2019, above pre-pandemic levels.

This is encouraging, but it remains difficult because many firms are still attempting to restore from Covid-19. The COVID-19 crisis has significantly weakened state finances, necessitating a rethinking of tax and spending policies once the recovery is well established.

Containment measures, greater government spending, and fewer tax collections have resulted in an increase in budget deficits and government debt, which have reached their highest levels in decades as a proportion of GDP.



Pn. Roszita Binti Dim, the Deputy Director General of Customs Malaysia International Taxation Branch, represented Dato' Haji Zazuli Bin Johan, Director General of Customs Malaysia to give a special luncheon address at the Everly, Putrajaya.



YBhg. Prof. Adjung Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambrzy Abdul Kadir, the Former Menteri Besar of Perak, represented Dato' Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Bin Hamidi, President, United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) & Chairman, Barisan Nasional (BN), to deliver a closing keynote address at the 3rd Malaysia Tax Policy Forum.

According to YBhg. Prof. Adjung Dato' Seri Dirija Dr. Zambrzy Abdul Kadir, the purpose of this Forum, is to gather opinions on the best measures the government can take to create the 2023 Budget. He also discussed political financing, and BN has begun the process of introducing a Political Funding Bill.



PAST PROGRAMMES

Majlis Makan Malam Amal Bersama Bossku

29 July 2022 - Casuarina Convention Centre, Ipoh, Perak



The Charity Dinner was organized by the International Strategy Institute (ISI), which took place in the Casuarina Convention Centre Ipoh, Perak, on Friday 29th July 2022. The main purpose of this Charity Dinner was to collect donations for orphanage's homes and disabled associations that went through difficulties in the current economic situation.

This event was also specifically being made to help orphans and disabled persons along with the generosity of private donors and business communities.





The bidding for the BOSSKU Manchester United Jersey with the signatory of YBhg Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak was won by Datuk Sri Vermillion Ng, who bid it for RM50,000. The Soccer ball with the remarkable signatory got bidding amounted to RM50,000 which was won by Mr. Vang Hua Cheng. The Framed golf ball, went to Datuk Seri Navaratnam Narayanan who bid it for RM60,000.



YBhg. Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, the VIPs, the auction winners and representatives from 16 charity organisations, gather for the group photo session.

HAPPENINGS

3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF) 2022

24 May 2022 - Everly Hotel, Putrajaya



Corruption, recognized as one of the world's oldest deep-rooted, pervasive problems, has crippled economies, small and large, around the world.

Corruption remains rampant around the world, not solely in developing countries and certainly not in Malaysia alone. Corruption affects ordinary people everywhere. The poorest in all societies are the ones hit the hardest, as they are the most susceptible to bribes.



The impact on the private sector is also considerable - it hinders economic growth, distorts competition, and represents serious legal and reputational risks. Corruption is very costly for businesses.

With the extra financial burden estimated to add 10% or more to the costs of doing business in many parts of the world. The World Bank has stated that "bribery has become a \$1 trillion industry".

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Efforts in containing corruption have been put in place by the Malaysian Government. The MACC has been embarking on various initiatives and renewed policies, but without support from all sectors of society, namely government, private sector and civil society, the fight against corruption will be an exercise in futility. To restore the citizens' trust, everyone must work together to demand accountability towards a transparent national governance agenda.



Malaysia dropped to 62nd place in 2022, from 57th in 2020, in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), and it seems that we are sliding down to a dangerous slope. If we practice continue apathy on corruption any longer, the damage to the country will be irreparable for many decades.





The 3rd Malaysian Anti-Corruption Forum organized by ISI on 24th May 2022, provides a platform that brings together concerned citizens, government authorities, policy makers, media and the private sector to discuss, exchange ideas, and formulate key proposals to be submitted to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), with the hope that Malaysia will soon be able to tackle corruption head-on to claim back our title as a trusted and transparent nation.





2nd Penang International Business And Investment Summit 2022

25 March 2022 - Setia SPICE Convention Centre, Penang



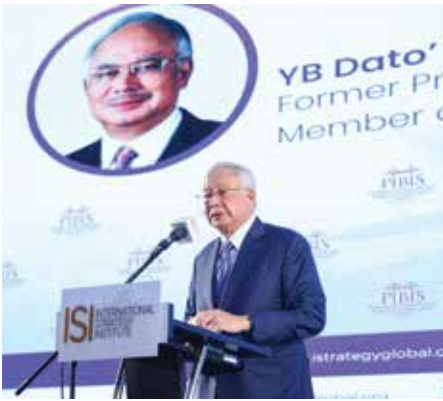
The 2nd Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS) was held on 25 March 2022 (Friday) at the Setia SPICE Convention Centre with the theme of "Growth Through Partnerships, Capitalizing On Opportunities".

The second PIBIS is aimed at showcasing Penang's flagship projects such as the Penang Port, Penang International Airport, and other promising investment opportunities available in the state. The summit also intends to bring attention to the green development of Penang, where sustainability is a key agenda in the economic sector, evident through Penang2030.



Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, former Prime Minister of Malaysia (middle), Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong, the International Strategy Institute (ISI) Chairman (left side), Dato' Tan Teik Cheng, the Penang Port (PPC) Chairman (right side) are waiting at the holding room together with all the award recipients, speaker, sponsor, and the supporting organization.

Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, flipping through Kwong Wah Yit Poh's newspaper at the 2nd Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS).



Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, former Prime Minister of Malaysia said that he recognized the state Government's efforts in paving the way forward with the Penang2030 Master Plan while giving a speech for the Opening Keynote Address.

Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong, Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI) gives a welcoming speech during the 2nd Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS).



(From the left) Dato' Sri Dr. Md Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid, Dato Sri Clement Lee, Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong, Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Dato' Tan Teik Cheng, Dato' Lee Teong Li, and Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat on the stage during the Opening Ceremony on the 2nd Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS).



The Special Luncheon Presentation presented by Ms. Khor Xin Yun, CEO of National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF).



The moderator, Mr. Kamarul Bahrin Bin Haron with the panelists, Mej. Prof. Logistician Chang Kah Loon, Log. Leong Kin Wah, and Dato' Sasedharan Vasudevan brought a fruitful discussion entitled "Paving The Future of Penang Logistics And Transportation Systems".



The moderator, Mr. Kamarul Bahrin Bin Haron with the panelists and, Dr. Chan Tze Haw, Dato' Lee Teong Li, and Mr. Saiful Bahari Baharom brought an interesting discussion entitled "Penang Economic Outlook 2030: Where We At Now?"



The moderator, Mr. Kamarul Bahrin Bin Haron with the panelists, Dato' (SN) See Nee Lee, Mr. Chan Huan Gee and Mr. Kishva Ambigapathy brought a consequential debate entitled "#TECH-DEBATE: Is Penang Really Ready for A Digital Makeover?"



Closing Address by Dato' Seri Dr. Md Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid, the Vice President of Persatuan Muafakat One Belt One Road Malaysia (PMOBOR) at the end of 2nd PIBIS summit on 25 March 2022 in the Setia SPICE Convention Centre.



While waiting for our Guest of Honor, Datuk Syed Sobrie Syed Kechik and Datin Azie, performed a fantastic song for the audience.



All the participants are sitting in their own seats while awaiting for the Gala Dinner and Award Ceremony Session to begin.



Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak presented a token of appreciation to Ms. Koh Lee Peng, a former Malaysian Paralympian who was chosen as the Inspirational Individual of the Year Award Recipient for her perseverance and positivity towards society.



The item of an Autographed Cap and three BOSSKU crew neck shirts from Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak is up for auction in the 2nd PIBIS special segment. All auction proceeds will be donated to the Not Profit OKU Disabled Person Cooperation Team Group (ODP).

Dato' Clement Lee bid for the autographed cap at twenty-five thousand ringgit, and Mr. Ma Xiu Jin bid for the three BOSSKU crew neck shirts at sixteen thousand ringgits.

During the Gala Dinner and Award Ceremony at the Setia SPICE Convention Centre, all the award recipients had a grand finale photo session with Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong, and Dato' Sri Dr. Md. Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid.



WORLD CHINESE ECONOMIC FORUM 2021

27 December 2021 - Sheraton Petaling Jaya

The 2021 WCEF Special Edition is a world-class premier event connecting China and other countries with investment opportunities and business linkages. The 2021 WCEF Special Edition is a global platform with a track record of more than 11 years, where pertinent issues related to China are discussed. Government officials, private sector leaders, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders gather to explore potential collaboration that can create a positive impact on the global economy.



After the successful WCEF Forum in Hangzhou, China from 7 to 8 November 2019, the 2021 WCEF Special Edition is set to have government leaders, captains of industries, emerging entrepreneurs and strategists exchange views related to the global economy amidst the pandemic. The forum will be held back in Malaysia. The decision to move back to Malaysia this year is partly due to Covid-19 pandemic, where strict restriction for foreign travellers into China is in place at the moment. Hence, the forum this year will be held in hybrid mode for the first time.



With China leading the global recovery, it is the hope of all citizens that countries reach a consensus in rebuilding trust and fostering partnerships to find solutions in expediting economic recoveries. As many countries turn to protectionism which affects global trade, China promotes the concept of shared development for all nations, with hopes of steering the world away from a global recession.

Malaysia has forged its global reputation as a high-income, multicultural nation with strong GDP, despite the relatively small population. Malaysia is also ranked high on the ease of doing business, as well as on trade connectivity. This is due to its strategic geographical location and connectivity which served as the gateway to ASEAN, and the rest of the world.



Many countries are shifting towards promoting high-value economy and sustainable development. Some island-states are also adopting a blue bond economy.

Besides that, both the government and corporations need to address global waste issues to reduce pollutants from entering the ocean and land. Among the ways to address are through innovative technology and comprehensive policy. Meanwhile, governments play a vital role in reducing of the use of fossil fuels and in promoting renewable energy in its economy.



The forum will continue to remain significant, relevant, and current on discussion related to trade, investment, health, social and cultural development. We will continue to look at China and the Chinese diaspora link to the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society in shaping global, regional, and industry agendas.



Malaysia, the venue for this year, is a melting pot of cultures as the cities are incredibly diverse and rich in cultural heritage. Centrally located within Southeast Asia, not too far from the oceanic states, Malaysia is a prime location for trade and investment. Its capital city, Kuala Lumpur, is a crossroads of business and trade for the region. Kuala Lumpur is connected by a network of reliable public transport services, including the main public bus service, rail systems and the KL International Airport, which ranked 18th World Best Airports, is only an hour away from the city.



As digital media enters our everyday lives, areas such as data privacy and fake news need to be addressed. Many media organisations and social media tech companies have taken the initiative to create platforms for fact checking. However, long-term solutions must focus on providing free media, law enforcement, and media literacy. The global impact of climate change, pollution, and for-profit development are redefining the long-term partnership between China and ASEAN. Companies must look beyond maximizing profits and invest for the benefits of the people and the environment.

The Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony is presented to honor Malaysia's top companies and individuals for their contributions to the economy and society. It included World Chinese Outstanding Credible Global Financial Award, World Chinese Outstanding Young Person Award, World Chinese Most Outstanding Host Award, World Chinese Most Talented Celebrity Artist Award, World Chinese Excellent Sports Achievement Award, World Chinese Top Ten Young Entrepreneur Award, World Chinese Top Ten Entrepreneur Award and World Chinese Lifetime Achievement Award.



The Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony has gathered different industry elites. It included the sports industry, entertainment industry and business industry. Cheah Liek Hou is the national athlete who had the outstanding performance in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games.

WCEF has honored him with the World Chinese Excellent Sport Achievement Award due to the demonstrated dedication and perseverance in his respective fields. Jack Lim and Jasper Lai has attended the awards ceremony to receive the World Chinese Most Outstanding Host Award and World Chinese Most Talented Celebrity Artist Award respectively.



Tan Sri Dato' Sri (Dr.) Mohamad Norza Zakaria is being honored at the World Chinese Economic Forum 2021 for his outstanding contributions to the Olympic Movement, Commonwealth Sports Movement, and the growth of the sport in Malaysia. Tan Sri Norza's dedication to the sport is outstanding, and he truly deserves this Lifetime Achievement Award.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak together with awards recipients gather in the holding to discuss the current pandemic situation and exchange their points of view.



2021 TYT Charity Golf Tournament

17 - 22 December 2021 - Dalit Golf Club Sabah



The TYT Charity Golf Tournament event was organized by International Strategy Institute (ISI) and Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai (MPSP) in conjunction with TYT's 72nd birthday during a working visit to Sabah. This event is proposed to be held annually as a fundraiser event. The golf tournament took place from the morning until late afternoon on 20 December 2021.

The working visit was held from 17 - 22nd December 2022. ISI were invited to be the main Secretariat to organize the one-day charity event. The event was held in Dalit Golf Club Sabah. Over 60 participants have participated in the tournament. TYT has delivered the opening and closing speeches during the event.

The proceeds for this event will directly benefit the services and projects involving health, education, and youth development. As a not-for-profit institution, ISI counts on friends and business organisations in the community to help make this tournament a success. It is important to note that the money raised through this golf tournament remains local.

The TYT Charity Golf Tournament is being organised mainly to provide an opportunity for local non-profit and charity organisations to help raise awareness of their organisations, their mission, and their mandate to the public. The event is also to provide fund-raising opportunities for the local non-profit and charity organisations serving in the state of Penang.





11 August 2021

Courtesy call by our Chairman Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong on YAB Dato' Sri Wan Rosdy bin Wan Ismail, Chief Minister of Pahang today despite the Chief Minister busy schedule. A very positive meeting indeed with various topics discussed on current issues and issues related to Pahang and how best ISI could contribute to the State by the two gentlemen. The Chief Minister was also very supportive of the work done by ISI.



20 May 2021

Courtesy call by our Chairman Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong on TYT Tun Dato' Seri Utama Ahmad Fuzi bin Haji Abdul Razak, Yang di-Pertua Negeri Pulau Pinang today. A very positive meeting indeed with various topics discussed by the two gentlemen. TYT Tun was also very supportive of the work done by ISI.



21 April 2021

Courtesy call by our Chairman, Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong, upon TYT Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak, 8th Yang Di Pertua Negeri Pulau Pinang. During the courtesy call, our chairman on behalf of the International Strategy Institute congratulated His Excellency on his inauguration and wish His Excellency all the best. Current issues related to Penang were also discussed and how best the Institute could contribute to the State.



16 April 2021

Courtesy call by our Chairman Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong on Minister of Home Affairs Malaysia, YB Dato' Seri Hamzah Zainudin today. A very positive meeting indeed with various topics discussed. YB Minister was very supportive of the work done by the Institute and has agreed to attend one of our future events.



06 April 2021

Courtesy call by International Strategy Institute Chairman, Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong to YAB Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji Bin Haji Noor, Chief Minister of Sabah today at the Chief Minister's office in Sabah.

Discussed on future collaboration with the State Government. It was indeed a very insightful and fruitful meeting.



10 March 2021

Courtesy call by our chairman, Mr Cheah Chyuan Yong with Yang Di-Pertua Dewan Negara Malaysia, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Utama Dr. Rais Yatim at Parliament Malaysia today.

Exchanged views and positive discussion pertaining to the upcoming Malaysia Democracy Forum due to be held this 30 March 2021 with Yang Di-Pertua Negara's confirmed attendance.



30 December 2020

Courtesy Call by Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI) upon Mr. Kuik Cheng Kang, Editor in Chief of Sin Chew Daily where both parties had an interesting and encouraging discussion on 30 December 2020.

Sin Chew Daily gave assurance of support and coverage in events, researches and collaboration with the Institute. The International Strategy Institute would like to thank Sin Chew Daily for its support.



28 December 2020

Courtesy Call by Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI) upon His Excellency Ambassador Hermono, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Indonesia to Malaysia on 28 December 2020. It was a very interesting and exciting discussion exchanging views on current issues as well as ISI's future plans.

His Excellency Ambassador gave assurance of his support and participation in events, researches and collaboration with the Institute. The International Strategy Institute would like to thank His Excellency for his strong support and time. Welcome back to Malaysia Your Excellency.



23 December 2020

Courtesy Call by Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI) upon YBrs Dr. Fadhlullah Suhaimi Abdul Malek, Chairman and Adjunct Professor for the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia) on 23rd December 2020. We had a very fruitful and positive discussion. MCMC Chairman gave assurance of his support and participation in events, researches and collaboration with the Institute. The International Strategy Institute would like to thank the Chairman of MCMC for his time and support.



11 December 2020

Courtesy Call by Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI) upon YB Senator Ras Adiba Radzi, BERNAMA Chairman on 11 December 2020. Positive discussions on collaboration with BERNAMA. YB Senator gave assurance of her support and participation in events, researches and collaboration with the Institute.

The International Strategy Institute would like to wish YB Senator Ras Adiba Radzi the best of luck with her new position as the BERNAMA Chairman.



10 December 2020

Courtesy Call by Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI) upon H.E. Khalid Ghanim Al-Ghaith, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Malaysia. Discussed many bilateral and multilateral issues. Very positive discussion with His Excellency giving assurance of support towards the Institute.



07 August 2020

ISI would like to thank YBhg. Dato' Shamsun Baharin Bin Mohd Jamil, Deputy Chief Commissioner (Prevention), Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for the warm welcome during the courtesy visit on 7 August 2020.

ISI is humbled with the support from the MACC for our upcoming 2nd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum scheduled on 3 September 2020.



05 August 2020

ISI is privileged to meet the Yang di-Pertua Dewan Rakyat, YB Datuk Azhar Azizan Harun, on 5 August to share and exchange ideas about the future of democracy in the country.



16 April 2019

ISI Chairman, Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong, visited the Deputy Commissioner of the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, Datuk Seri Azam Baki, to discuss the preparations for the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Forum, organised by ISI to be held in July. As a country increasingly beset with corruption cases, it is high time that we unite the government and the people on this deep-rooted problem, as we move towards a high-income nation status in the near future.



ANNOUNCEMENT

SIGNING OF MOU WITH PMOBOR

17 December 2020

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between International Strategy Institute (ISI) and Persatuan Muafakat One Belt One Road Malaysia (PMOBOR) on 17 December 2020. The MoU was signed by the Chairman of ISI, Mr. Cheah Chyuan Yong and President of PMOBOR, H.E. Ambassador (R) Datuk Iskandar Sarudin.



ISI COVID-19 INITIATIVES AND FOOD DRIVES IN PENANG

ISI COVID-19 INITIATIVES AND FOOD DRIVES IN PENANG

30 July 2021



ISI is extremely grateful to be able to work with our partners items for 500 families around Penang. These food baskets were distributed with the cooperation of PDRM Penang IPD Branch (Daerah Seberang Perai Tengah, Daerah Seberang Perai Utara, Daerah Seberang Perai Selatan, Daerah Timur Laut & Daerah Barat Daya).

The food basket delivered, was well received by the Officer in Charge of Police District from Seberang Perai Tengah District. The food baskets will be distributed to affected families that is in need during this pandemic.

ISI hope to have more programs as such to help the nation during this tough time.





DIGITAL INCLUSION AND LITERACY CULTURE OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR ORANG ASLI COMMUNITY IN NEW NORM

22 April 2021 - Orang Asli Village Kampung Jeram Kedah in Ulu Beranang, Negeri Sembilan

Digital inclusion and literacy culture outreach programme for Orang Asli community in the new norm is jointly organised by the International Strategy Institute and Digital Education Organisation Malaysia mainly focusing on the efforts from various campaigning parties and creating awareness on the importance of ICT knowledge, health, healthy lifestyle practices and community service activities to be able to empower the natives and maintaining the welfare of the Orang Asli community.



MALAYSIA DEMOCRACY FORUM

30 March 2021 - InterContinental Hotel Kuala Lumpur

The inaugural International Strategy Institute (ISI) Malaysia Democracy Forum with the theme Charting the Future of Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia was organised on 30 March 2021 at the InterContinental Hotel Kuala Lumpur. The Forum marked as a landmark event with an objective to increase the quality of discourse in Parliament, one that is befitting Malaysia's aspiration to become a mature and efficient parliamentary democracy, and to increase the voice and participation of the youth in our political process in order to do away with racial politics that has stifled our country's progress for decades. As the world is transformed through this pandemic crisis, Malaysian democracy also finds itself at a unique crossroad. The window for reform has been thrown open by the uncertainties of the pandemic, affording us an opportunity for us to revisit the institutions that have served the people all this while.







2ND MALAYSIA TAX POLICY FORUM

29 September 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya



The 2nd Malaysia Tax Policy Forum with the theme “Tightening Malaysia’s Fiscal Regime Amidst Covid-19” was attended by about 190 participants from the relevant government agencies, private sector practitioners, academia and the NGO sector. The Forum focused on issues such as whether GST is the best tax regime for the country amidst a fiscal deficit and the Covid-19 pandemic, taxation of the rich segment of society, a comparative tax analysis between Asian countries, including a special head-to-head session with YBhg Datuk Mohd Nizom Sairi, the Deputy CEO (Tax Operation) of the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (LHDN).



2ND MALAYSIA ANTI-CORRUPTION FORUM

3 September 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya

The 2nd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum at The Everly Putrajaya. The Forum was well attended with about 250 participants from the government, private sector, academia and NGOs. With this year’s theme, “Restoring Trust and Building A Culture of Integrity”, the Forum focused on the importance of trust and culture of integrity in our constant journey towards nation-building.

The forum was officiated by YBhg. Dato’ Sri Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil, Deputy Chief Commissioner (Prevention) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).



WORLD ISLAMIC TRADE FORUM 2020

14 May 2020 - LIVE @ Zoom



This special dialogue by the World Islamic Trade Forum (WITF) organised by ISI brought together government representatives, private sector and civil society in the Muslim World from 12 countries (Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, France, UK, Germany, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, Spain, Saudi Arabia and Senegal) to share policy ideas and trade solutions to this global conundrum, offers critical insights into the future of our world in the Covid-19 era. The WITF Honorary Chairman, YTH Bapak Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno delivered the forum Special Keynote Address.



WORLD CHINESE ECONOMIC FORUM 2020

29 April 2020 - LIVE @ Dingtalk

ISI together with the China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC) had organised the World Chinese Economic Forum 2020 (Special Live Conference). As we know, the world is facing the devastating effects of the covid-19 pandemic. As the first country to see the first surge in outbreak, China sacrificed freedom and its economy, to successfully curb the outbreak. Today China has resumed life and business, while other countries are experiencing lockdowns and standstill economies. The WCEF 2020 brought together government and private sector representatives in China to share their experiences, as well as speakers from Asia and Europe, to exchange ideas on how to solve this looming crisis.



MALAYSIA TAX POLICY FORUM

9 January 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya



ISI organised the Malaysia Tax Policy Forum with the theme “Strengthening Malaysia’s Fiscal Future”. The forum keynote address by YB Dato’ Wira Ir. Haji Amiruddin bin Haji Hamzah, Deputy Minister of Finance Malaysia was read by YBhg. Dato’ Sri Dr. Sabin bin Samitah, CEO and Director General of the Inland Revenue Board Malaysia. The forum received 200 participants from the government sector, private, tax practitioners, academician and public at large.

The issue of taxation is a hotly debated topic among Malaysians and has been the centre of an intense debate which has unfortunately divided the country along political lines. Taxes and the people. Fiscal policy should also help people fully participate in and adapt to a changing economy. Better access to education, jobs, and health services, as well as social insurance, can make it easier for people to spring back from a job loss or illness.



WORLD CHINESE ECONOMIC FORUM

11 - 12 December 2019 - Midtown Shangri-La, Hangzhou, China



The World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF) is a world-class premier event connecting China and the Chinese diaspora network through business and the narration of the China story. It is a global platform with a track record of more than 10 years, discussing the most important global issues related to China and the Chinese diaspora. 11th World Chinese Economic Forum- “Realising The Vision of Shared Development For A Better World” which was held in Hangzhou, China on 11-12 December 2019 was co-hosted by China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and International Strategy Institute (ISI) while China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC) was the organiser of this event.

It was a great success on strengthening ASEAN-China Trade under Belt and Road Vision. Speakers and delegates from various countries played active part in the discussion of the future of

global trade, redefining global trade through Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), impact of new tech wave and 5G to the world and strengthening the long-term partnership between China and ASEAN.

Since China’s economic reform and opening up 40 years ago, it has grown to become an important economic powerhouse in the world. Under the Belt and Road initiative, it has paved closer ties with ASEAN in global trade and investment. With the rise of US-China trade war, as well as the global economy marred by uncertainties, closer cooperation between China and ASEAN matters even more. The key is to uphold multilateralism to maintain broader cooperation among institutions and nations based on mutual respect, equality and shared prosperity.



At the ASEAN Summit 2019 in Bangkok, China and ASEAN synergised the ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the BRI into the Master Plan to develop and finance the ASEAN Infrastructure projects and promote innovative infrastructure financing. Many Chinese investors are attracted to invest in ASEAN due to the region's diversity, middle-class population, and similar cultural values, besides it being a region with emerging economies.



China and ASEAN trade is about US\$ 600 billion in 2019, and it has opened doors to many Chinese investors into the ASEAN market. Under BRI, China plans to collaborate with Southeast Asian countries on a high-speed railway project connecting Kunming province, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and so on. The infrastructure development would provide opportunities for South east Asia to spur business opportunities and FDI in the ASEAN region through free trade zones and tax incentives.

Panel 3, BRI Initiative-Redefining Global Trade has hosted Dr. Bhokin, the President of Chinese Culture and Economy Association of Thailand who believed that China's decision to stand firmly with the international community is a good move, as it is important to consult and negotiate with other countries in trade to create mutual trust and



respect. As a result, Thailand imports from China increased to USD50 billion in 2018 or a 150 percent increase, meanwhile, Thailand's exports to China in 2018 was USD1.8 billion or an 88 percent increase. China also plans to collaborate with Thailand on a flagship project, a high-speed railway project connecting Kunming province, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Dr. Bhokin viewed that the BRI project ought to be international, involving collaborations with Japan, South Korea, India and even European countries. If the project is done successfully, it would be a showcase project for the 21st century of the Maritime Silk Road.

China is a new player, having in the last five years become a major capital exporter to Malaysia. China has also gradually moved away from manufacturing sectors in the last three years. There is currently over US\$50 billion worth of projects under the pipeline between Malaysia and China, and Dato' Abdul Majid, the Chairman of Malaysian Investment Authority (MIDA) is optimistic with its future outcomes by the end of the year.



MALAYSIA ANTI-CORRUPTION FORUM

5 December 2019 - Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa



The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has ranked Malaysia in 2018, number 61 out of 180 countries. These perceptions determine to an extent whether foreign direct investments come in or bypass us. Business must be committed to high standards of integrity, fairness and accountability. With this in mind, ISI organised the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum with the theme “Understanding and Addressing the World’s Biggest Problem” and was well attended with almost 300 participants from the government, private sector, academia and NGOs. YB Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim, President Parti Keadilan Rakyat delivered the Opening Keynote Address.



MALAYSIA DOMESTIC TRADE AND CONSUMER FORUM

28 May 2019 - The Everly Putrajaya

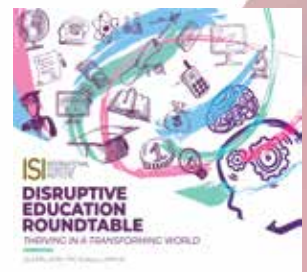


The Malaysia Domestic Trade and Consumer Forum was organised following the closed-door ISI Ministerial Dialogue between YB Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution, Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs and members of the private sector. This important Forum brought together policymakers, business associations and entrepreneurs, the media and concerned citizens of the country, towards addressing the most pressing issues on domestic trade, the rights of consumers and the necessary measures to be taken in the foreseeable future.

DISRUPTIVE EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE

25 April 2019 - TPC Kuala Lumpur

Policymakers and practitioners in the education sector participated in a discussion on the evolving role of the Malaysian education system in the rapidly changing world as a result of disruptive advanced technology at the Disruptive Education Roundtable organised by ISI.



ISI MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE

9 April 2019 - Le Meridien, Putrajaya

The ISI Ministerial Dialogue with the Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Malaysia, YB Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution bin Ismail focused on the future of domestic trade in Malaysia, its policies and future direction, in line with the “Malaysia Baharu” spirit under the leadership by the Pakatan Harapan government.



PENANG INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT SUMMIT

26 February 2019 - Hotel Equatorial Penang

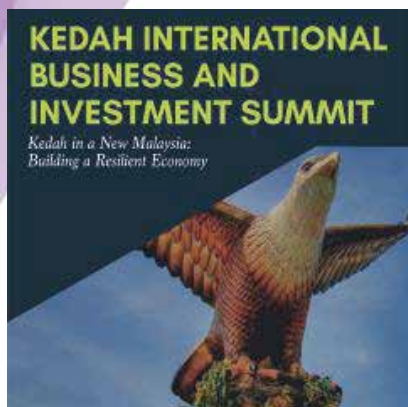
Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS) is a high-level networking summit brought together stakeholders from the government and private sectors to explore business and investment opportunities in the state of Penang. The strong partnership will bring forth Penang’s vision towards 2030. YB Dato’ Haji Abdul Halim Haji Hussein, Penang Exco for Domestic & International Trade, Consumer Affairs & Entrepreneurship Development delivered the Keynote Address on behalf of Chief Minister of Penang, YAB Chow Kon Yeow.



KEDAH INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT SUMMIT

13 December 2018 - Aloft Langkawi, Pantai Tengah

Kedah International Business and Investment Summit (KIBIS) was graced by the Chief Minister of Kedah, YAB Dato' Seri Hj. Mukhriz Tun Mahathir. With the theme "Kedah in a New Malaysia-Building a Resilient Economy", the summit focused on the strategic development plans of the state of Kedah, and how the state builds a resilient economy amidst the drastically changing landscape both politically and economically.



WORLD MUSLIM LEADERSHIP FORUM

6 - 7 December 2018 - Lambeth Palace and House of Commons, London, UK

ISI as the WMLF Asian Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur, was honoured to be given the opportunity to partner with Global One Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation based in UK to organise the World Muslim Leadership Forum. Held biannually, WMLF is an effort initiated in 2010 where its main purpose is to provide a platform to address leadership issues which are critical for the upliftment of the ummah, the global community at large and the Muslim community in particular. The Hon. Datuk Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia delivered the forum Keynote Address.



WORLD CHINESE ECONOMIC FORUM

9 - 10 November 2018 - Palace of The Golden Horses, Selangor

2018 marked the 44th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia. In view of that, the World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF) was held to celebrate the 44th Anniversary of Malaysia-China diplomatic relations. More than 500 delegates including 200 from China as well as delegates from 50 countries attended the Forum, which also discussed the US-China Trade War, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Digital Economy. YAB Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia delivered the Keynote Address and the Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, H.E. CY Leung also delivered another Keynote Address.



NEW MALAYSIA SUMMIT

18 October 2018 - Connexion Conference & Event Centre, Kuala Lumpur



This inaugural national summit was set as a platform for Ministers and related Ministries, agencies, business leaders, NGOs civil society to address emerging issues, exchanging ideas, sharing of knowledge and experiences, with an aim to collectively develop the nation under the new administration. With the theme “Building a New Malaysia, Fulfilling Hope”, the summit was officiated by YB Senator Tuan Waytha Moorthy, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department for National Unity and Social Wellbeing.



#WOMEN IN TECH

18 September 2018 - Sime Darby Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur



ISI organised #Women in Tech Summit with the theme “Preparing Women for Digital Age and the 4th Industrial Revolution”. The summit aimed at providing a platform for women leaders in addressing emerging issues, exchanging ideas, sharing of knowledge and experiences, all in pursuit of exemplary leadership as we move towards IR4.0. YB Hannah Yeoh, Deputy Minister of Women, Community and Family Development Malaysia (KPWKM)’s Opening Keynote Address was read by YBhg. Datuk Yatimah Sarjiman, Director General, Department of Women Development of KPWKM.



CORPORATE MALAYSIA SUMMIT

4 September 2018 - Sime Darby Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur

ISI organised the Corporate Malaysia Summit to provide a much needed platform, especially in the context of a New Malaysia to connect the new government and the business sector of this country. The summit focuses on the fundamental issues affecting the business climate in Malaysia. The summit was officiated by YB Puan Teresa Kok, Minister of Primary Industries Malaysia.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2023

JUNE

World Anti-Corruption Conference (WACC) 2023 - TBC
Millennium Hilton, Bangkok, Thailand - TBC

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

KEY STRATEGIC THRUSTS



To promote Asia in the global market

To promote investments into Asia, particularly into ASEAN and Malaysia

To promote sustainable development in Asia

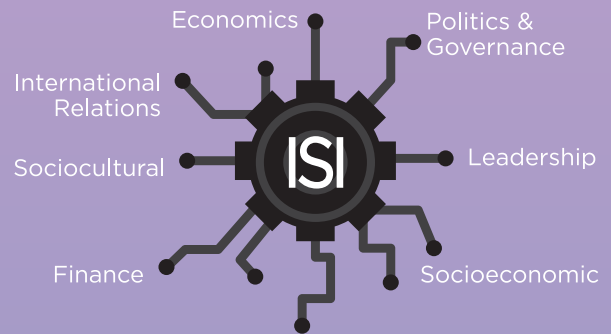
To promote dialogue between Government and Business

To promote social enterprises and Asian young entrepreneurs

To conduct research and dialogue with key decision and policy makers



SUPER CONNECTOR BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESSES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION (CSO)



ISI is dedicated to providing quality programmes and we can only achieve this with your honest feedback.

We also know that no man is an island. Together, we can create impactful programmes that can improve the well being of our shared economy and society. We are therefore, open to proposals for partnerships and collaborations, and we hope you can join us in this journey.

Do drop us a line at info@istrategyglobal.org or give us a call at **+6 03 2242 3799**

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