

*“Balancing
Domestic Growth
and Consumer Rights”*



MALAYSIA DOMESTIC TRADE AND CONSUMER FORUM

Keynote Address by:
**YB Datuk Seri
Saifuddin Nasution bin Ismail**
Minister of Domestic Trade
and Consumer Affairs, Malaysia

28 MAY 2019 | PUTRAJAYA

OVERVIEW



Malaysia has always been the bastion of stability in the ASEAN region, with very strong economic fundamentals, one of the cheapest places to do business and a very competitive cost of living.

However in recent times, the country is beset with several challenges that threatens its regional competitiveness namely the trade war between China and the US, the Brexit conundrum, the protectionist tendencies of the EU which affects Malaysia's palm oil industry and other external shocks.

It is in times like this that Malaysia must adopt a very sound and solid domestic growth agenda, in order to mitigate the debilitating effect of these external shocks.

Chief among these is the rising cost of living and doing business which does not commensurate with a rise in wages. Such conditions can spell disaster as the economy goes into stagnation and a decrease in consumption and investment appetite.

It is therefore of pivotal importance that the government works closely with the private sector in ensuring the domestic economy continues to become vibrant through the implementation of critical policies aimed at managing the rising cost of living, and bring Malaysia back on track.

Malaysia Domestic Trade and Consumer Forum, brought to you by International Strategy Institute (ISI), is a platform to bring together policymakers on domestic policy, business associations and entrepreneurs operating within the domestic economy, 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.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This event is targeted but not limited to:

- Board Directors
- CEO and COO
- VPs/ Directors/
Heads of Management

For further enquiries or registration please contact
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Luqman Al-Hakim at luqman@istrategy.global

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PROGRAMME

8.00 am - 9.30 am	Forum Registration
9.30 am – 9.40 am	WELCOMING SPEECH MR. CHEAH CHYUAN YONG Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI)
9.40 am – 10.00 am	KEYNOTE ADDRESS YB DATUK SERI SAIFUDDIN NASUTION BIN ISMAIL, Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, Malaysia
10.00 am - 10.30 am	Morning Refreshments
10.30 am – 11.30 am	BALANCING DOMESTIC GROWTH AND CONSUMER RIGHTS As the economy experiences serious challenges due to external shocks, the new government faces a wide array of problems. Rising cost of living has become a bane for Malaysian citizens as the cost of doing business rises, thereby increasing overall prices in the economy. Since the rise is attributed partly because of the global trade war between US and China and the protectionist mood in Europe, lowering cost is almost impossible. It is therefore imperative that Malaysia looks inwards to reinvigorate the economy and manage the rise in price, rather than lowering them. At the heart of this conundrum is the importance of stimulating economic activity by incentivising merchants, but only to an extent where rights of consumers are protected, where prices are not predatory. How can we reach that delicate balance? What are the fundamental balancing factors?
11.30 am – 12.30 pm	ACHIEVING THE RIGHT BALANCE IN TAXATION Tax is the crucial bloodline for any government to execute its duties and responsibilities properly and effectively. An efficient tax regime collects much needed revenue from citizens in order for the government to deliver adequate public services and goods. This delicate equilibrium is what determines an optimal functioning government with solid institutions and a vibrant economy. Unfortunately, fiscal mismanagement in the past has affected this equilibrium. This is compounded by the fact that our taxation regime has changed twice, creating much confusion in the economy. From SST, to GST to SST again. Such abrupt transitions has a huge cost on the economy, and discussion on the actual merits of these different regimes always end up becoming politicised. To move as a country, we need to dig deep on which taxation regime suits our context without worrying about political affiliations. What are the main considerations for a suitable tax regime? How can we address this issue now before the economy suffers further?
12.30 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch Break
2.00 pm – 3.00 pm	PROTECTING LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS OR INCENTIVISING FOREIGN PLAYERS? This almost classic conundrum of infant industry argument vs free trade has a new shape in the digital economy. This is not referring to local traders vs. foreign traders. This is between local brick and mortar businesses and vendors who pay taxes vs. foreign online players who do not pay taxes. In the F&B and hospitality sectors for example, foreign online players charge between 15%-32% to the local vendors for their service, on top of charges to customers. And yet, they do not get taxed, while local vendors still have to pay taxes. This imbalance is what creates problems in the domestic front, and putting local players out of business. Though the service of these foreign online players are still needed to boost the sectors, what can be done to mitigate the pressure on local businesses? Should the digital services sector be regulated? Should Digital Tax be introduced?
3.00 pm – 4.00 pm	ADDRESSING THE BLUE COLLAR SECTOR In an ideal world, a country employs its local citizens to become workers who form the backbone of our main industries. In reality this is never the case. Due to differences in living standards, foreign blue collar workers are almost always more cost efficient, lower maintenance and higher productivity levels. Thus the current setback due to stricter regulation on the importation of foreign workers, has adversely affected these labour intensive industries and posed problems on the economy, as prices are due to rise as a result of higher cost of doing business. Should the government relax the regulation for critical labour-intensive industries for now, while waiting for digital disruption to make business cost cheaper? How can the government make local labour more attractive? Can affordable housing around urban and suburban areas increase local labor efficiency?
4.00 pm – 5.00 pm	PITCHING NEW VENTURES As digital disruption continue to make inroads and make businesses cheaper and more efficient, it is imperative for domestic players to keep an eye on new ventures to collaborate with and invest in. This special session brings to stage several new ventures to come and pitch their digital business offerings and explore new opportunities thereafter.
5.00 pm	Afternoon Refreshments/End of Programme

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY INSTITUTE (ISI)



The International Strategy Institute (ISI) is a not-for-profit organization that functions as a super connector between government and business leaders across Asia, promoting universal values, equal societies and sustainable development. ISI is also a house of strategic studies, and a platform for capital raising and investment activities in Asia.

ISI runs conferences, summits and networking programmes on various topics covering a wide array of sectors, to bring forth the latest contemporary issues on politics, economics and business, as well as connecting the different stakeholders in society namely government, private sector, NGOs and the media, to create synergy to spur economic growth.



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PERSONAL DETAILS

Yes! I would like to attend the Malaysia Domestic Trade and Consumer Forum.
28 May 2019 | The Everly, Putrajaya

Please make a reservation for the following:

Name:

Organisation:

Designation:

Address:

Office Number:

Mobile Number:

Email:

Fax:

REGISTRATION FEE

PRICE PER PERSON (Please tick (✓) your choice)

Normal Fee **RM500**

Early Bird (Registration
before 20 May 2019) **RM300**

*The registration fee includes conference materials, two coffee breaks and lunch.
Muslim delegate will receive a 'Buka Puasa' voucher.*

PAYMENT METHOD

MODE OF PAYMENT (Please tick (✓) your choice)

Cheque / Bank Draft Payment by cheque or bank draft must be made payable to:
IAF Strategy Sdn Bhd

Bank Transfer (kindly email or fax the payment slip to the Secretariat)

Account Name	IAF Strategy Sdn Bhd
Bank Name	Public Bank Berhad
Address	48, Jalan PJS 11/28a, Bandar Sunway 46150 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan
Account Number	3210096818
Reference	MDTC2019
Swift Code	PBBEMYKL

- Registration will only be confirmed when the full payment is received.
- Admittance may be denied upon failure to make full payment

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CANCELLATION/SUBSTITUTION POLICY

Upon registering, participant(s) are considered successfully enrolled in the event. Should participant(s) decide to cancel/transfer their enrolment, a cancellation/transfer policy shall be applied as follows.

- a) Written cancellation/ transfer received less than seven (7) days from the date of the event:
 - A refund (less administrative charge of 20%) will be made
 - Unpaid registrations will also be liable for 20% administrative charges
- b) Written cancellation/no show on the day of the programme:
 - No refund will be entertained
 - Unpaid registrations will also be liable for full payment of the registration fee - Partial cancellation is not allowed

You can substitute an alternate participant if you wish to avoid cancellation/transfer charges. Any difference in fees will be charged accordingly.

BILLING AND APPROVING AUTHORITY INFORMATION

Organisation/Company:

IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE:

Name:

Designation:

Department:

Address:

Office Number:

Mobile Number:

Email:

Fax:

Purchase Order # or other reference:

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT & PERSONALITY / IMAGE RIGHTS

By filling out the registration form, the participant gives consent that International Strategy Institute (ISI) can process the personal information provided, whether now or in the future, may be used, recorded, stored, disclosed or otherwise processed by or on behalf of ISI for the purposes of facilitation and organisation of this or similar conference, research and audit, maintenance of a delegate database for the promotion of this or similar conference, and such ancillary services as may be relevant. This includes the placing of photographs in the ISI's social media platform, in the ISI's newsletter or selecting some for articles on the conference in a journal or newspaper, or in any other web/printed publication.

DISCLAIMER:

International Strategy Institute (ISI) reserves the right to change the speaker(s), date(s) and to cancel the programme should circumstances beyond its control arises. ISI also reserves the right to make alternative arrangements without prior notice should it be necessary to do so. Upon signing the registration form, you are deemed to have read and accepted the terms and conditions.

REGISTRATION

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FOR ENQUIRY

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