

EMBARGO

**TIDAK BOLEH DISIARKAN SEHINGGA
HARI ISNIN, 28 FEBRUARI 2022, JAM 11.00 PAGI**

PARLIAMENT

MALAYSIA

**ROYAL ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY
SERI PADUKA BAGINDA
YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG XVI
AL-SULTAN ABDULLAH RI'AYATUDDIN
AL-MUSTAFA BILLAH SHAH
IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN HAJI AHMAD SHAH
AL-MUSTA'IN BILLAH**

**FIFTH SESSION
OF FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT
28 FEBRUARY 2022**

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Rahiim.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullaahi Wabarakaatuh.

Alhamdulillah Rabbi 'Alamin Wassolaatu Wassalaamu 'Ala Asyrafil Anbiyaa'i Wal Mursaliin, Wa'ala Aalihi Wa Sohbihi Ajma'iin.

Rabbish Rahli Sadri, Wayassirli Amri, Wahlul Uqdatan Min Lisaani, Yafqahu Qauli.

Honourable President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Representatives.

All praise to Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala, the Almighty who Rules over everything. He is the Almighty, who protects and governs the universe. He is the Almighty, who dominates and rules in the Day of Hereafter.

Salutations and greetings to our esteemed Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wassalam, his family members and his companions.

1. Alhamdulillah, We are deeply grateful to Allah the Almighty for His Leave and Munificence in enabling the Opening Ceremony of the Fifth Session of the Fourteenth Parliament on this meaningful day.

2. The year 2021 saw the nation's economic recovery improving post-pandemic COVID-19. However, the emergence of a new variant Omicron around the world and the catastrophic floods at the end of 2021 slightly hampered this recovery.

3. We greatly appreciate the Government's swift action to assist the flood victims by channeling aid directly to those affected involving a total sum of RM1.4 billion. Apart from that, the Government also provided financial allocations amounting to RM6 billion for the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and public facilities.

4. For 2022, let us continue to strengthen our strategies and resilience to face the challenges posed by COVID-19. The nation's economic recovery needs to be accelerated so that our nation will not be left behind. Ease the people's affairs to help them rebuild their lives with a sense of security, peace, and wellbeing for the sake of our beloved country.

Honourable Members,

5. We are very pleased and grateful for the political stability following the bi-partisan cooperation through the Memorandum of Understanding on Transformation and Political Stability signed between the Government and the Opposition.

6. Alhamdulillah, at present the political climate is more stable to ensure the success of the nation's development agenda for the benefit of the people and the nation's future.

7. As a result of this agreement and maturity, amendments to the Federal Constitution related to the 1963 Malaysia Agreement was successfully approved by more than two-thirds of Dewan Rakyat and Dewan Negara members last December. Indeed, the event will definitely be ranked as a historic moment for *Keluarga Malaysia* (Malaysian Family).

8. Political maturity as such is eagerly awaited by all. Moving forward, We urge all Honourable Members to continue maintaining this understanding and preserve the political stability that has been achieved.

Honourable Members,

9. Malaysia has succeeded to be the best in Asia and ranked 13th out of 122 countries in the Nikkei Asia COVID-19 Recovery Index. The National COVID-19 Immunisation Program has successfully achieved complete vaccination coverage of up to 98% of the adult population. To ensure optimum level of immunity and guard against new COVID-19 variant, We urge the people to obtain the booster dose that is being provided by the Government.

10. While the nation at the moment is increasingly ready to enter the endemic phase, We hope that the transition will be made carefully. We support the National COVID-19 Testing Strategy and the affirmative action taken by the Government to reduce the price of self-test kits as a means to strengthen public health actions and community empowerment. Such an approach will enable the opening of economic and social sectors safely.

11. We welcome the National Strategic Plan for Mental Health Year 2020-2025 which is designed to address the mental health issues faced by the people, especially those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through various intervention measures and aid to those affected.

12. On this occasion, We urge Our people to continue safeguarding their health as well as their mental well-being and always adopt a healthy lifestyle to achieve the goals of the Healthy Malaysia National Agenda.

13. We also greatly appreciate the National Vaccine Development Roadmap including implementing a strategy to develop our own vaccine to enhance the nation's preparedness in facing pandemics and other epidemic threats in the future.

14. We also support the Government's aspiration to popularise science and humanise technology. In line with these aspirations, the cultivation of science through social innovation will generate human capital that is altruistic in addressing issues of poverty, health and social well-being. We hope that the Government will continue to strengthen research, development, commercialisation and innovation programmes in priority areas including artificial intelligence, robotics, bioscience and space.

Honourable Members,

15. Malaysia's economy grew by 3.1% in 2021 after experiencing a contraction of 5.6% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic growth shows the effectiveness of the 8 series of economic assistance and stimulus packages in 2020 and 2021 totalling RM530 billion, in addition to the annual budget allocation. For 2022, the nation's

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is projected to continue to grow strongly between 5.5% to 6.5%.

16. Among the indicators of economic recovery include declining unemployment rates and improving labour market conditions. We congratulate the Government on successfully actualising 558,633 job placements for Our people compared to the 500,000 targeted for 2021. Meanwhile, for 2022 under the Jamin Kerja Keluarga Malaysia initiative, the Government has targeted the creation of almost 600,000 job opportunities.

17. All these aims at promoting business sustainability as well as in regenerating economic activity so as to ensure that Malaysia remains a major exporter and investment destination in the region. In addition, the nation's productivity and competitiveness need to be further enhanced to attract quality foreign investments towards generating high-income employment opportunities for Our people.

18. The Government's proactive actions in accelerating and improving the nation's investment and trade performance in order to generate sustainable economic growth have received recognition from global institutions. The Milken Institute Global Opportunity Index 2022 has ranked Malaysia the most attractive investment destination for foreign investors among Emerging Southeast Asian Economies.

19. The performance in investments amounting to RM220.8 billion that were approved for the manufacturing and services sectors under the supervision of the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA)

in 2021 is also outstanding and encouraging where 80,000 new jobs will be created for local talents.

20. Malaysia's outstanding trade performance in 2021, for the first time has reached more than RM2 trillion with total exports valued at RM1.24 trillion.

21. Consequently, the nation's total export target of RM1.25 trillion for 2025 as outlined in the 12th Malaysia Plan has been achieved four years earlier. We believe this success reflects foreign investors confidence in our economic fundamentals and investment ecosystem.

22. Through National Investment Aspirations (NIA), focus will be on new economic growth sectors that are able to attract high-impact and technological investments, create quality and high-skilled employment opportunities and strengthen the country's competitiveness.

23. We are confident that the nation's economy will benefit significantly through regional and international economic free trade agreements which represent the backbone of the rules-based multilateral-trading system.

24. The ratified Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will also provide wider market access as well as multiple opportunities for local companies, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to increase participation in the regional and global value chain.

Honourable Members,

25. The Twelfth Malaysia Plan (12MP) aimed at achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive and Sustainable *Keluarga Malaysia* (Malaysian Family), is designed to address the socio-economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic by taking into account each and every hope and need of Our people. Altogether, 9 key focus areas have been outlined to restore the momentum of economic growth in driving Malaysia towards becoming a developed nation.

26. We hope that the Special Monitoring Committee involving various Federal and state agencies set up to oversee the 12MP will closely monitor the implementation and its performance so that the targeted outcomes can be achieved towards further meeting the nation's socio-economic needs.

27. The Government's commitment to maintain development as a national agenda is evidenced by the allocation of RM75.6 billion for Rolling Plan 2 in 2022 under the 12MP that has been channeled to various ministries and agencies for the implementation of 6,749 programmes or projects.

28. We urge that all programs and projects which will be implemented are ensured to complete on schedule and meet the standards for the benefit of Our people. To promote the well-being of the rural community, special focus should be given to the provision of better-quality rural infrastructure.

29. Development and economic disparities between income classes, regions and states as well as among ethnic groups such as the Orang Asli and others must be reduced to ensure that the nation's prosperity is equally enjoyed by everyone.

30. The availability of comfortable and conducive housing also needs to be expanded through assistance for new construction and repair of dilapidated houses, especially for the poor and underprivileged to improve their well-being.

31. In addition, access to housing should be given priority through various income-friendly initiatives such as the provision of Affordable Housing (RMM) and housing financing schemes for the B40 and M40 groups. A comprehensive, practical and sustainable housing strategy must be formulated through consistent engagement with all stakeholders. The involvement of government-linked companies (GLCs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should be continued in effort to provide housing to the needy as part of their corporate social responsibility to the community.

32. In facing the challenges of urbanisation, We welcome the Malaysia Livability Aspirations programme that aims to measure well-being of the people through the Malaysian Livability Index (iDAM). iDAM will be a high-impact tool for measuring well-being of all localities at the local authority level and a policy instrument towards assessing urban sustainability.

33. Municipal governance through the use of digital technology in urban management, planning and development should be diversified. Efforts to provide direct solutions to the physical, economic and social issues faced by the residents must also be further intensified.

34. We support the Government's efforts to develop mega rail infrastructure projects such as the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project, the Johor Bahru-Singapore Rapid Transit System (RTS) link and the Mass Rapid Transit Line 3 (MRT3). The implementation of these strategic projects will provide comfort and connectivity to various locations as well as generate development spillover effects to all regions and further improve the living standards of Our people.

35. The development of connectivity and accessibility networks for existing road networks should continue. We welcome the Highway Network Development Plan 2030 which has been formulated to identify road infrastructure needs towards creating better communication network systems.

36. The highway construction projects such as the Central Spine Road (CSR), West Coast Expressway (WCE), Sarawak-Sabah Link Road and the Sabah and Sarawak Pan Borneo Highway will drive regional development and local economic growth. At the same time, infrastructure development for new growth centres in Sabah and Sarawak must be accelerated following the relocation of Indonesia's capital to the province of Kalimantan.

Honourable Members,

37. In ensuring that the nation's prosperity is enjoyed equally, We sincerely hope that the Government will focus on eradicating hardcore poverty by 2025 through integrated actions and various approaches. All parties should mobilise their efforts and be highly-committed so that the living standards of the hardcore poor can be improved through sustained increases in income.

38. We also welcome efforts led by the Malaysian Social Protection Council (MySPC) which offers a new dimension in strengthening the country's social protection system. Existing social protection programmes must be enhanced and restructured to meet the challenges that may impact the quality of life and future development potential.

39. At the same time, recovery efforts for micro, small and medium enterprises as well as informal entrepreneurs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent flood disaster are extremely important and critical. Special groups such as hawkers and petty traders, women, youths, graduates, B40 groups including those worthy of zakat, and those who have lost their jobs should continue to be assisted through entrepreneurship guidance programmes and appropriate funding to enable them to continue their livelihoods.

40. The digitalisation of operations will be further strengthened to assist local entrepreneurs recover and contribute to the socio-economic upliftment of the people and the economic development of the country. The objectives of creating a Nation of Entrepreneurs and transforming

Malaysia into an outstanding entrepreneurial nation under the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (DKN 2030) will be achieved.

41. The recovery of the tourism industry must also be undertaken immediately to maintain its sustainability. The new-norm postpandemic tourism activities must continue to be created to provide vacation opportunities for the people as well as to create a culture of safe tourism for all.

42. To this end, the focus should not only be on domestic tourism but also on exploring opportunities to once again receive foreign tourists to Malaysia as one of the efforts to further accelerate recovery of the nation's tourism industry.

43. The new COVID-19 postpandemic norms also require society to adapt through empowerment of the digital economy ecosystem at every level of service across sectors. Thus, We welcome the Government's efforts in developing the National Digital Network Plan (JENDELA) to improve and accelerate the development of the country's digital infrastructure.

44. The implementation of MyDIGITAL through various initiatives, especially through the transformation of Community Internet Centres into Malaysian Family Digital Economy Centres and its expansion to various State Legislative Assembly (DUN) constituencies will bridge the digital divide among communities and subsequently create new value.

Honourable Members,

45. The Government's initiative through the Large-Scale Smart *Padi* Field (SSB) programme has the potential to increase the yield and quality of local *padi* and in turn uplift farmers out of poverty. We also welcome the Government's efforts to strengthen the nation's food security through Federal and state level cooperation based on the National Agro-Food Policy 2.0 (2021-2030) and the National Food Security Policy Action Plan (2021-2025).

46. The nation's agro-food sector has shown an increase with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growing by 5% in which the sector contributed 4.4% or export value of RM27.7 billion up to the third quarter of 2021.

47. Thus, the development of the agro-food sector should continue to be intensified. Efforts to increase the income of farmers, livestock farmers and fishermen must also continue through the implementation of effective marketing methods and to avoid exploitation by middlemen.

48. The agri-commodity sector also contributed RM61.98 billion up to the third quarter of 2021 with total exports reaching RM171.1 billion by October 2021. This increase is in line with the national economic development agenda and economic activities which are now shifting to high value-added manufacturing and services. The National Agri-Commodity Policy (DAKN) 2021-2030 will form the guideline for industry players to strengthen the contributions of the agri-commodity sector to the nation's economic growth.

49. To ensure that Our people are not burdened by the rising cost of living and the cost of daily necessities, price stabilisation and standardisation programmes, goods distribution programmes, and continuous enforcement must be effectively implemented.

50. We welcome the Buy Malaysian Goods Campaign and the Malaysia Sales Programme initiatives to support the recovery of the domestic economy. These programmes will offer new sources of employment and income through the empowerment of the franchise industry and direct sales.

51. Apart from that, the implementation of the Malaysian Family Sales Programme throughout the country will enable the people to purchase essential items at affordable prices. These efforts are also in line with the aspirations to care for the welfare of the people, reduce the cost of living and improve the living standards of Our people.

Honourable Members,

52. Environmental degradation and climate change phenomenon pose threats to the world and human well-being. To effectively face uncertainties in the future, disaster management mechanisms must be constantly improved and enhanced to also include cross-social roles and responsibilities of the Government, private, civil society organisations (CSOs) and volunteers especially from the youth and the general public.

53. At the same time, the coordination between the Federal and state governments and local authorities should be continued. The development of a centralised disaster warning system and improvements to drainage systems, especially in densely populated and high-risk areas, must be further intensified.

54. Short and long-term measures including flood-mitigation infrastructure readiness as agreed upon by the Central Disaster Management Committee Meeting should be undertaken immediately. In addition, the cleaning of public areas and maintenance of flood mitigation facilities should be undertaken regularly.

55. Environmental protection and sustainability must be a priority. Our people must always be vigilant and concerned about the importance of ensuring cleanliness and safety in their respective areas.

56. We urge the Government to ensure that at least 50% of the country's land area will remain covered with forested areas and trees through the implementation of sustainable forest management practices. In addition, areas that have the potential to be recognised as geoparks should be maintained and protected.

57. In line with the aspiration to achieve a net-zero carbon emission target by 2050, the green growth strategies will be implemented to include applying circular economy principles, low carbon development and strengthening resilience to climate change and disasters including geological factors.

58. We believe that the strategies that have been formulated will make the nation's economy more sustainable, innovative and competitive as well as create new opportunities for economic growth.

Honourable Members,

59. The Government will continue to strengthen and support learning through cultivating good practices and values as well as having safe and conducive school environments. We welcome the Sekolahku SEJAHTERA initiative aimed at students' formative development.

60. All parties must support the efforts to bridge the student learning gap that exists due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Appropriate and positive cooperation must continue to be established and supported to provide meaningful learning experiences to our children.

61. We also support the Government's initiative to develop the Higher Education Prosperity Blueprint (SEJAHTERA IPT) in ensuring excellence in higher education in the post-pandemic era. We welcome the efforts such as the establishment of the National TVET Council (MTVET), the launch of the Graduate Marketability Strategic Plan (PSKG) 2021-2025 and the Entrepreneurship Action Plan for Higher Education (PTK IPT) 2021-2025 which represents a new narrative in producing holistic and balanced graduates.

62. In line with the rapid changes in the employment world and the creation of new job opportunities including the increasingly open gig economy, employees need to be trained in soft as well as cognitive skills. To ensure that the employment ecosystem remains competitive, the

Government will pursue labour law reforms to ensure the well-being of employees and encourage employers and employees to undergo training to upgrade and diversify skills.

63. Efforts to improve the well-being of children and the elderly, empower women and the disabled (OKU) and strengthen family institutions must be further intensified. We also welcome the Government's effort to table the Anti-Sexual Harassment Bill that will provide benefits and protection to those affected.

64. In addition, the policy of ensuring at least 30% participation of women at decision-making levels must be continued in recognition of the role and contributions of women in the development of the country.

65. We support the Government's efforts to introduce the New Youth Development Model 2021-2030 which aims to provide youths, who are the nation's most important assets, with the opportunities and space to be actively involved in national development. In addition, the implementation of *Undi 18* (Vote 18) which has been approved by Parliament opens up new dimensions to youth in determining the future and leadership of the country.

66. We also place high hopes in the development of the National Sports Vision 2030 (VSN 2030) which is the Government's effort to set a new direction for the development of national sports in the next 10 years.

67. Of late, We have seen the emergence of various ideologies and streams of thought that confuse the Muslim community and efforts to normalise cultures that are in conflict with the customs and religious practices in this country.

68. Hence, We call on the public to educate themselves on the dangers of such trend. These ideologies and streams of thought must be controlled through focused and strategic actions involving all religious authorities, security agencies and other responsible parties.

69. In ensuring that the nation's harmony is preserved, national unity must continue to be the nation's core agenda. Efforts at cultivating a culture of tolerance and respect should be the responsibility of Our people. Thus, We welcome the National Unity Action Plan 2021-2030 and KAMI@Malaysian Family Unity Plan 2021-2025 which are comprehensive in nature.

70. Priority should always be given to capability and readiness of the national security. These include efforts to strengthen capacity building, acquisition of new assets and maintenance as well as upgrading of national security assets.

71. This is to ensure that our nation is always at highest level of preparedness to face any threat from within and outside the country. The concept of comprehensive defense must also be enhanced through bilateral and multilateral cooperation platforms to ensure that the nation's security and sovereignty is always preserved.

72. We would like to express our congratulations on Malaysia's third election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the 2022 to 2024 term. This election reflects the confidence of the international community in Malaysia's diplomatic credibility.

73. In this regard, Malaysia must take the opportunity to ensure the country's interests continue to be safeguarded as well as play an active role in voicing the interests of small countries and the oppressed. We believe that Malaysia's international relations will continue to flourish with the implementation of the Foreign Policy Framework. Emphasis and new approaches to important matters should continue to be focused covering Health Diplomacy, Digital Economy, Cultural Diplomacy, Cyber Security and Peaceful Coexistence.

Honourable Members,

74. In building a nation state that is transparent and of integrity, We look at the issue of corruption seriously. We believe the Government is currently implementing policies and initiatives of the National Anti-Corruption Plan through enforcement, prevention and education to combat all forms of corruption.

75. The Government is also improving its service delivery system through Digital Government initiatives through end-to-end service delivery to ensure greater transparency, efficiency and professionalism.

76. On this occasion, We greatly appreciate the loyalty and invaluable contributions of all the nation's frontline personnel, members of the Civil Service, the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM), the Royal Malaysia Police

(PDRM) and government agencies who have rendered their services to make Malaysia a peaceful and prosperous nation.

77. Their contributions are huge and beyond the call of duty. May all public servants remain committed, dedicated and always focused on constantly improving the quality of services for the well-being of Our people.

78. At the same time, the well-being of public servants whether currently serving or retired, including ATM veterans must continue to be taken care of in terms of health, education, housing and welfare assistance.

79. To all Honourable Members, We wish you all the best. May all of you have a fruitful discussion and debate. We hope the Fifth Session of Fourteenth Parliament will forge a platform towards the upliftment of our beloved nation's dignity and sovereignty.

80. We pray that Malaysia and our beloved people will continue to be blessed and endowed by Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala with His benevolence and guidance, peace and togetherness in unity under His protection.

Wabillaahi Taufik Walhidayah,
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh.