

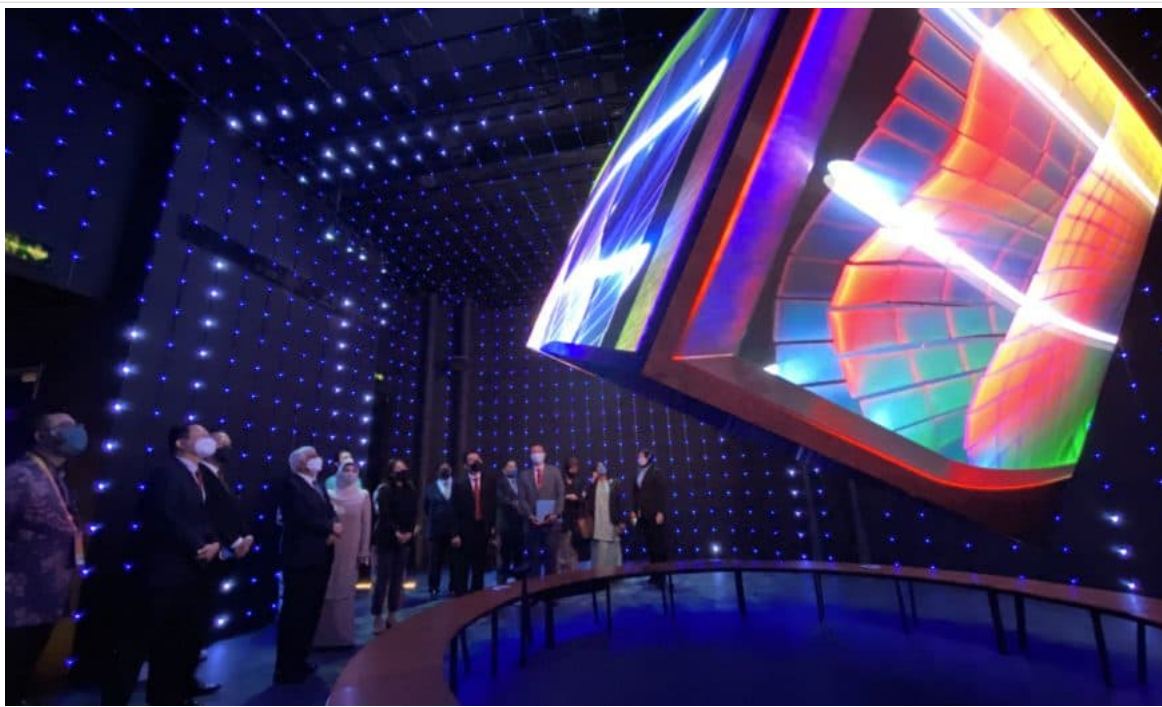


Penang in the global arena: Penang Week at Expo 2020 Dubai opens

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THIS year marks the Golden Jubilee of industrialisation in Penang and the state has incubated a year-long event to showcase its transformation journey, focus and opportunities, Penang Governor Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak said.

“Penang has been making quantum leaps forward since its industrialisation journey began in 1972.

“The key success factors for Penang include its robust industrial ecosystem and strong talent pool that are imbued with advanced technology and future-proof offerings, alongside all-rounded state initiatives that support the ecosystem.

“In a post Covid-19 era, leveraging on digitalisation towards new opportunities is a must.

“Penang’s ecosystem has the right ingredients to enable the adoption and participation of all stakeholders in the digitalisation and Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0) road maps, thanks to its 50 years of experience and excellence in the electrical and electronics (E&E) industry.

“We believe that incorporating digitalisation in every aspect, is the only way for the state to compete in the global arena,” Ahmad Fuzi said in his keynote address before launching the Penang Week at the Expo 2020 Dubai, themed ‘Entrepreneurship and Energy’, yesterday (Jan 17).



Ahmad Fuzi delivers his keynote address.

Ahmad Fuzi said the state’s competitive edges in E&E, Medical Technology and Digital Economy, and Global Business Service (GBS) served as enablers for the its digitalisation journey.

“Penang is also exploring the opportunities in the food and space technology that are ripe for the picking,” he added.

Ahmad Fuzi said Penang is a key regional hub for E&E equipment manufacturing and commanded 5% of the global semiconductor sales, despite its diminutive stature with just over 1,000 square kilometers of land area and a 1.8 million-strong population.

“Proudly, Penang is also a hub for medical device industry in the region, having the highest concentration of medical technology companies in Malaysia and Southeast Asia.



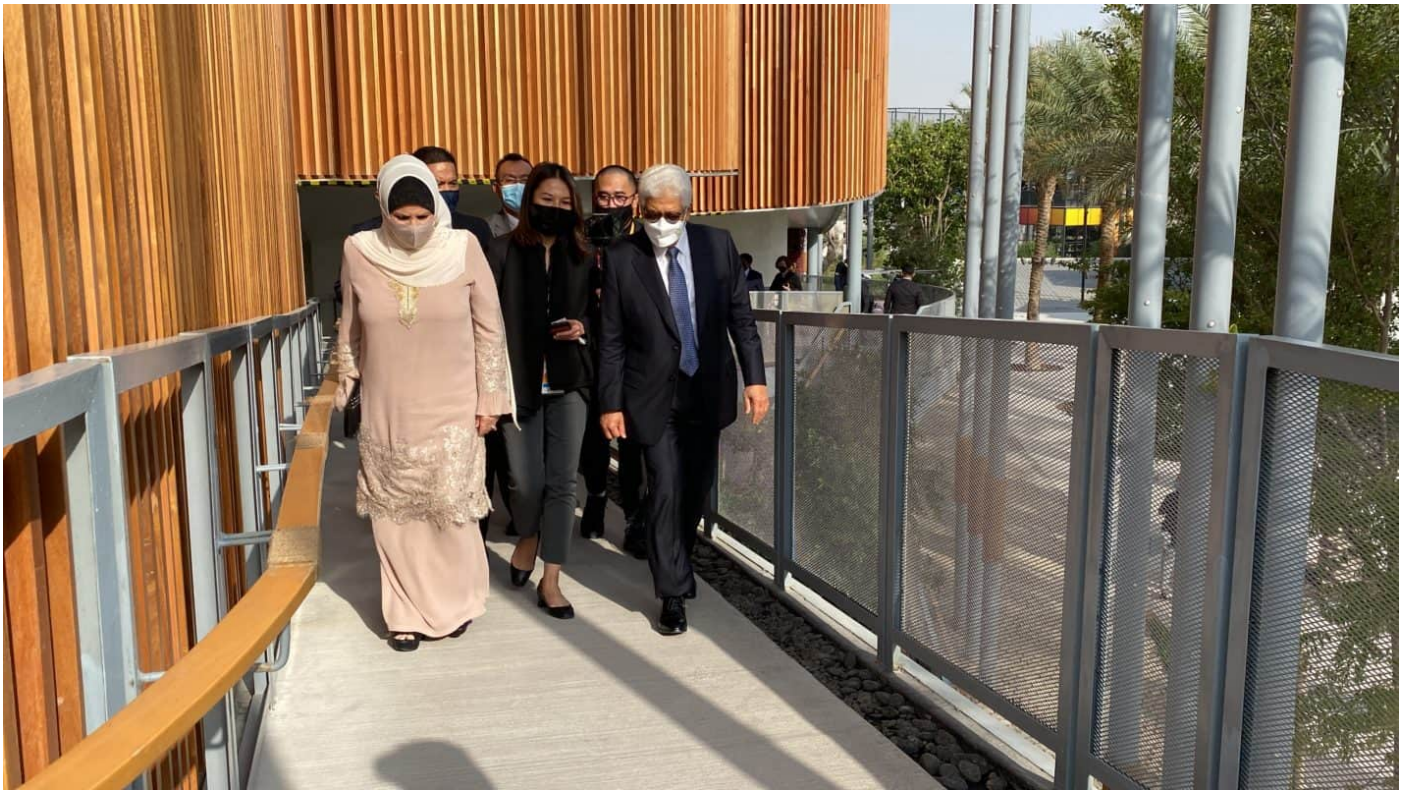
Malaysia Pavilion Expo 2020 Dubai project leader and director Michelle Lau (second from left) briefing Ahmad Fuzi (centre) upon his arrival.

"In 2020, Penang generated US\$74 billion (RM310 billion) of export and US\$26 billion (RM110 billion) of trade surplus. This represented 32% and 60% of Malaysia's total, respectively, punching well above its weight.

"In terms of direct manufacturing investment, Penang has clocked in its second highest record of all time of RM14 billion in 2020, after achieving an all-time high of RM17 billion in 2019.

"As for 2021, Penang is on track to break the record that we have achieved in 2019, following the investment of a mega semiconductor project at the end of last year.

"While we were clouded by the repercussions of the pandemic, such performance underscores investors' confidence in Penang's ability to navigate the crisis," Ahmad Fuzi said.



Ahmad Fuzi and his wife Khadijah visit the Malaysia Pavilion at the Expo 2020 Dubai.

He added that the state is also a vibrant location for Global Business Services (GBS) activities in the country.

“According to a recent report from Global Data Findings, Malaysia’s GBS market is estimated to reach US\$1.5 billion (RM6 billion) by 2024.

Being one of the key players in Malaysia’s GBS landscape, Penang is indeed in a good position to attract more knowledge-driven GBS investments, such as Robotic Process Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data Analytics and Cybersecurity,” he said.

On tourism, Ahmad Fuzi said the state had scored on numerous tourism accolades, including medical tourism.

“Just earlier this month, Penang is chosen by CNN as one of the 22 world’s best destinations to travel.

“In addition, Penang’s capital, George Town, was named as an UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2008 and Penang Hill was designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in September last year.



Ahmad Fuzi writes the guest book during his visit to the Malaysia Pavilion at the Expo 2020 Dubai.

"Moreover, being a hotspot for medical tourism, Penang is a key contributor for Malaysia's frequent recognitions by the International Medical Travel Journal as "Medical Travel Destination of the Year".

"While the tourism industry took a hit during the pandemic, the state is ready to make a strong comeback in the post Covid era, underpinned by the cultural varieties and vibrant attractions that Penang possesses," he said.

Ahmad Fuzi congratulate state Entrepreneurial Development, Trade and Industry Committee chairman Datuk Abdul Halim Hussain for his leadership in the organisation of Penang Week.

"My heartfelt thanks also go to all representatives of the participating state agencies and industry players, whose presence here in Dubai made it possible for Penang to showcase its products and technologies in the international arena.



Aziz (second from right) briefing Ahmad Fuzi at the Malaysia Pavilion.

"We are also grateful to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia (MOSTI), the lead Ministry, for facilitating Penang's participation at the expo," he said.

Abdul Halim thanked the Penang Governor for his continuous support, and for taking time from his busy schedule to officiate the Penang Week at Expo 2020 Dubai.

"Your presence here brings a great boost to our Penang Week.

"I would like to congratulate the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the success of its Expo 2020 Dubai. Distinctively, this mega event has marked another milestone in the effort of strengthening trade and investment, as well as to boost post-pandemic economic recovery.

"The UAE is one of Malaysia's biggest trading partners in the Middle East and west Asia. Bilateral trade reached US\$5 billion in 2020 despite the repercussions of the Covid-19 and the global economic slowdown.

"Thus, with Penang's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai, we look forward to stronger ties between our countries and strengthening this bond in the future.

"We certainly have much to offer to each other, with both UAE and Penang, Malaysia, serving as international business hubs in our respective regions," he said in his speech.

"Today (Jan 17), with the theme 'Entrepreneurship and Energy', marks the start of Penang Week – a week which aims to not only to position Malaysia and Penang as a preferred investment location to the world, but also to showcase the best of Penang in multiple areas and sectors.

"Be it in the field of business and industry, technology, health, education, agritech, tourism or culture, we are proud to be here to bring Penang to you!



The Malaysia Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai.

"Various programmes and showcases, forums, cultural dance performances and product demonstrations have been arranged throughout the week to introduce Penang's economy, industry, tourism and culture to the whole world," Abdul Halim said.

Ahmad Fuzi and Abdul Halim also proudly witnessed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) exchange ceremony between Penang Development Corporation and a few parties, which expected to generate a total of US\$4.3 billion (RM18 billion) investment leads.



Abdul Halim takes on questions from the media after the launching of Penang Week.

The details of the MoUs are as follows:

- i) The MoU between Penang Development Corporation and Penang International Islamic College of Technology (KITAB) is a collaboration to develop a 6.8ha land at Bandar Cassia, Penang, Malaysia, for the purpose of educational institutions and an academic university which includes an Islamic centre, schools, a commercial and business centre, students residential complex and an administrative complex. The gross development cost for this project is US\$93.25million (RM390million) and it is expected to be completed in five years.
- ii) The MoU between Penang Development Corporation and Titijaya Land Berhad is for the development of Medi-Tech City, occupying 93ha land in Batu Kawan, Penang. The gross development value of this project is estimated at US\$2.4 billion (RM9.9 billion) and it is expected to be completed in 10 years. Medi-Tech is earmarked to be an integrated, sustainable and high-technology medical city and business hub in Penang.
- iii) The MoU between Penang Development Corporation and Jadem Ganjaran Sdn Bhd is for the Linear Park Development in Bayan Lepas, Penang. Jadem Ganjaran Sdn Bhd through the MoU will look into the feasibility of the reclamation and development of approximately 80ha of land. This project is estimated at US\$1.3 billion (RM5.5 billion) and is expected to be completed in 10 years. This mixed development project will in compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- iv) The MoU between Penang Development Corporation and iHeal Health Sdn Bhd to jointly develop a parcel of land at Bandar Cassia into a health tech hub with the gross development value of RM1 billion.

Ahmad Fuzi, his wife Toh Puan Khadijah Mohd Nor, state Tourism and Creative Economy Committee chairman Yeoh Soon Hin, Penang Entrepreneurial Development, Trade and Industry Committee member Goh Choon Aik, Penang State Financial Officer Datuk Dr Mohamad Farazi Johari, Seberang Perai City Council mayor Datuk Azhar Arshad, Penang Development Corporation chief executive officer Aziz Bakar, Penang Global Tourism chief executive officer Ooi Chok Yan and the Embassy of Malaysia to the UAE counsellor Anis Wajdi Mohd Yusoff were among the dignitaries who participated in the launching of the Penang Week.

Story by Christopher Tan



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