

# 59th National Day of Malaysia



## Message from High Commissioner



**H.E. Nur Ashikin Mohd. Taib**  
High Commissioner of Malaysia to Bangladesh

put in place a target of sustained growth rate of 5% per annum until 2020. Since 2010, the Government has implemented its transformational agenda to give impetus to Malaysia's developmental growth. Various policies were put in place, from "1 Malaysia: People First Performance Now" where steps were taken to improve public service delivery, to the Government and Economic Transformation programmes, in order to provide a fillip to the Malaysian economy following the Global Financial Crisis in 2008-2009.

As an open economy, Malaysia's economic well-being is very much influenced by the vagaries of the global economic environment. For the past four decades, Malaysia has made structural transformation to its economy and introduced pragmatic and innovative policies to encourage trade and foreign direct investment into the country, and currently ranks 18th worldwide in ease of doing business according to the World Bank Doing Business Report 2016.

On the international front, Malaysia is a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2015-2016. The theme "Peace and Security through Moderation" was chosen to guide the work under Malaysia's Presidency in the month of August. Since 2010, Malaysia has championed the principles of the moderation through the Global Movement of Moderates in working towards regional and global peace and prosperity. This concept is even more pertinent today given the present threat to people's lives arising from violent extremism in so many parts of the world. Malaysia will continue to work with the international community to address issues in maintaining international peace and security, as well as finding lasting resolutions to conflicts through peaceful means.

At the regional front, ASEAN continues to be the cornerstone of Malaysia's foreign policy. The realisation of the ASEAN Community in 2015, during Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN, has laid the foundation for a stronger and deeper integration for ASEAN in the three pillars of cooperation - ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). To chart the direction for the next decade, the 'ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together' document has been agreed upon by the 10 member states of ASEAN.

On this auspicious occasion of the National Day of Malaysia, I would also like to reflect on the excellent state of bilateral relations between Malaysia and Bangladesh. The overall cordial and strong bilateral relations between

Malaysia and Bangladesh continue to grow from strength to strength. Ever since the establishment of our diplomatic relations in 1972, the relations between the two friendly countries have grown in depth and diversity, at the political, social and economic levels. As members of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Commonwealth, D-8 and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and as strong proponents of multilateralism and fellow Muslim nations, Malaysia and Bangladesh share common views on many regional and international issues and also work closely to promote peace, stability, and development in the international arena. South South Cooperation provides ample opportunity for cooperation between Malaysia and Bangladesh. An example being through human capital development under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) through which Malaysia shares its developmental experience with other developing countries.

Malaysia stands firm with the People's Republic of Bangladesh in the country's fight against terrorism and militancy in the aftermath of the heinous attack on the Holey Artisan Bakery on 1 July 2016 in Dhaka and subsequently in Sholakia on the morning of Eidul Fitri this year. Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia expressed his shock, sorrow and determination to cooperate with H.E. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the fight against the scourge of terrorism and militancy. Malaysia too shares the pain of the Bangladeshi people during these difficult times.

Bangladesh has set for itself an ambitious development and poverty reduction goals and has been making impressive economic progress over the past decade. Malaysia deeply appreciates the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the country's development through the participation of Malaysian companies in various sectors in Bangladesh. These have been reflected during the bilateral talks between Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh during the Malaysian Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh in November 2013 and during the visit of H.E. Prime Minister of Bangladesh to Malaysia in December 2014, where both leaders reiterated their commitment to working together towards enhancing cooperation and strengthening the relations of our two countries.

The bilateral trade and investment between Malaysia and Bangladesh continue to expand over the years. Trade between Malaysia and Bangladesh was recorded at

USD1.14 billion towards the end of 2015. Bangladesh exports to Malaysia grew by 25.9% to USD144.3 million, mainly in textiles and clothing. There is a wide scope for further expansion of trade and investment in both countries. The annual trade exhibition Showcase Malaysia and Showcase Bangladesh that is held in Kuala Lumpur and Dhaka respectively in alternate years would encourage entrepreneurs from both countries to familiarise themselves with the products and services available in their respective markets. The collaborative efforts from the private sector and government agencies to promote trade and investment must be encouraged. In this regard, the Bangladesh-Malaysia Chambers and Commerce and Industries has played an active role in encouraging trade and investment in our two countries.

Malaysia's presence in Bangladesh include Robi Axiata, E.co Group, Malaysia Airlines, Air Asia, Malindo Air, Malaysian Maritime Dredging Corporation (MMDC), Kenny Rogers Roasters franchise among others. Malaysia will also be entering a joint venture with Bangladesh to build a 1320 MW coal-based power plant in Maheshkhali.

Malaysia welcomes visitors from Bangladesh to Malaysia, be it to work, to study, to seek medical treatment or to frequent our many tourist and shopping destinations. At present there are 56 flights weekly from Kuala Lumpur to Dhaka, reflecting the robust people-to-people relations. Malaysia is also appreciative to the many thousands of Bangladeshi expatriates that earn a living in Malaysia as they have contributed significantly to Malaysia's economic growth. At the present time the intake of expatriates have been suspended but is expected to be lifted fully in the near future.

To facilitate the visit of diplomatic and official passport holders in Malaysia and Bangladesh, the Partial Abolition of Visa Requirement for Diplomatic and Official Passports between the two countries came into effect on 15 October 2015, allowing the holders of these passports to enter the two countries for 30 days without visa.

On 23 June 2016 Malaysia officially launched its upgraded One Stop Centre in Baridhara, Dhaka to assist with visa issuance. The new rate for visa application is now BDT 5400. The E-visa online visa application facility is also now available to Bangladesh nationals.

On that note, I pray to Allah Almighty for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of our two countries. May the bond of friendship between our two countries and peoples continue to flourish in the years ahead.

Thank you.



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**HAPPY 59<sup>th</sup>  
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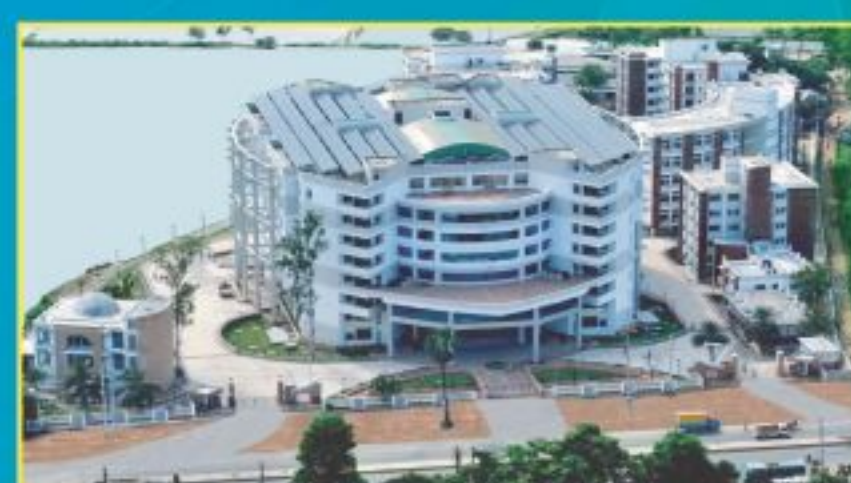
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