



MEDIA STATEMENT

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

33rd ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY (ASCC) COUNCIL MEETING AND RELATED MEETINGS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SARAWAK, 24 APRIL 2025 – The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) successfully hosted the 33rd ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council Meeting and Related Meetings at Sheraton Kuching Hotel, Sarawak on 24 April 2025. The event was attended by ASCC Council Ministers and Senior Officers from ASEAN Member States (AMS) and Timor Leste as an observer country.

Recognised as the ‘people’s pillar’, the MOTAC-led ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) pillar, continues to elevate the quality of life for the region through cooperative initiatives that are people-oriented and people-centred. Five priority areas were outlined together with deliverables which include arts and culture; health; youth and sports; artificial intelligence (AI), digitalisation and green jobs; as well as climate action.

In addition to the endorsement of the ASCC Strategic Plan and three other strategic plans which will be adopted at the 46th ASEAN Summit in May 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the meeting also discussed the pillar’s progress and updates. A soft launch of the ASCC Post-2025 Strategic Plan was held in conjunction with the meeting.

The 33rd ASCC Council Meeting and Related Meetings were officiated by The Right Honourable Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Dr Abang Haji Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, Premier of Sarawak, and attended by The Honourable Dato Sri Tiong King Sing, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia and ASCC Council Ministers, and His Excellency Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN.

During his keynote address, The Right Honourable Premier of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Abdul Rahman Zohari Tun Datuk Abang Openg welcomed the ASCC Council Ministers and Senior Officers, while showcasing Sarawak's rich cultural heritage and biodiversity. He reaffirmed Sarawak's strong commitment to environmental sustainability as a cornerstone of its development, emphasising that protecting the environment supports long-term resilience, strengthens the tourism sector, and safeguards cultural heritage for future generations. He also highlighted Sarawak's leadership in renewable energy—hydrogen, solar, and hydro—which has positioned the state as a key ASEAN Power Grid contributor, currently supplying clean energy to Sabah, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore.

“Since 2015 when Malaysia assumed the ASEAN Chairmanship, ASEAN's combined economy has grown from the 15th to the fifth largest globally, with a combined GDP of 3.8 trillion US dollars, and a total population of 677 million people. This phenomenal growth of ASEAN as a region is due to the proximity, people-to-people relationships and cultural diversity”, said The Honourable Dato' Sri Tiong King Sing, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia.

Issued by:

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