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267TH CONSECUTIVE MONTH

# MALAYSIA'S TRADE SURPLUS UP 4.2PC

The RM12b recorded is the highest for January since 2011

KUALA LUMPUR

**M**ALAYSIA recorded a trade surplus of RM12 billion in January this year, 4.2 per cent higher than January last year. It was the highest monthly trade surplus for January since 2011 and the 267th consecutive month of surplus.

The International Trade and Industry Ministry said exports totalled RM84.08 billion, a marginal decrease of 1.5 per cent compared with January last year, while imports slipped 2.4 per cent to RM72.08 billion.

Total trade amounted to RM156.17 billion, a contraction of two per cent from January last year.

Lower trade was seen with China, Thailand, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Taiwan, while higher trade was recorded with the United States, Australia, South Korea and Indonesia.

On a month-on-month basis, total trade, exports, imports and trade surplus decreased by 2.6 per cent, 2.7 per cent, 2.4 per cent and four per cent, respectively.

The ministry said in January, exports of manufactured goods

logged an expansion of 1.1 per cent to a total value of RM71 billion and accounted for 84.4 per cent share of Malaysia's total exports.

The main contributors to the increase in exports were petroleum products, which increased by 45.8 per cent, iron and steel products (43 per cent), rubber products (10.7 per cent), followed by machinery, equipment and parts (5.7 per cent).

Palm oil and palm oil-based agriculture products exports, however, recorded a marginal increase of 0.5 per cent.

Trade with Asean in January this year, which constituted 25.6 per cent of Malaysia's total trade, declined by 4.6 per cent to RM40.03 billion compared with January last year.

Exports to Asean decreased by 4.1 per cent to RM23.95 billion, owing mainly to lower exports of electrical and electronics (E&E) products, crude petroleum, liquefied natural gas (LNG) as well as chemicals and chemical products.

Higher exports were seen for petroleum products, iron and steel products, transport equipment, as well as textiles, apparels and footwear, it said.

In January, trade with China, which constituted 16.9 per cent of Malaysia's total trade, contracted by 8.7 per cent year-on-year to RM26.4 billion.

Exports declined by 5.7 per cent to RM10.4 billion, owing to lower exports of LNG, metalliferous ores and metal scrap, chemicals

and chemical products as well as E&E products.

The ministry said, however, exports of manufactured goods increased by 5.4 per cent, particularly for iron and steel products, manufacturers of metal as well as optical and scientific equipment.

Agriculture goods exports were also higher by one per cent, buoyed by the increase in exports of seafood, natural rubber, vegetable oil and saw log.

Imports from China reduced by 10.6 per cent to RM16 billion. Lower imports were recorded for petroleum products, machinery, equipment and parts, as well as iron and steel products, while higher imports were registered for wood products, palm oil and palm oil-based agriculture products, and plastics.

Compared with December last year, imports rose by 0.3 per cent, while trade and exports contracted by 10.9 per cent and 23.9 per cent.

The ministry said Malaysia's total trade with the US posted an increase of 16 per cent year-on-year to RM15.41 billion and accounted for 9.9 per cent of Malaysia's total trade.

Trade with the European Union slipped 6.7 per cent year-on-year to RM14.26 billion, or 9.1 per cent of Malaysia's total trade.

In January, trade with Japan, which constituted 7.2 per cent of Malaysia's total trade, slipped 2.7 per cent year-on-year to RM11.2 billion.