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Malaysia's 2025 trade hits new high, breaks RM3 trillion mark

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's total trade in 2025 reached its highest value on record, surpassing the RM3 trillion mark at RM3.06 trillion, a 6.3% year-on-year increase, with exports exceeding imports to generate a RM151.8 billion trade surplus.

According to Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade), the country's exports exceeded RM1 trillion for the fifth consecutive year, rising 6.5% to a record RM1.6 trillion, while imports grew 6.2% to RM1.45 trillion.

It said Malaysia recorded its highest-ever trade, export and import values, underscoring the nation's resilience and competitiveness amid an increasingly uncertain global trade environment.

"Export growth is underpinned by record-high shipments to traditional trading partners, namely Asean, the United States, Taiwan and the European Union, reflecting Malaysia's strong integration into high-value, technology-driven global supply chains.

"Exports to China expanded at a more moderate pace," it said in a statement yesterday.

Matrade said Malaysia's extensive free trade agreements, including major regional frameworks such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Part-nership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, continued to facilitate market access, diversify export destinations and mitigate trade risks.

It said that by leveraging these agreements, exports remained on an upward trend, with Hong Kong, Mexico and Canada recording new highs, supported by broad-based growth across a wide range of products.

"This performance was achieved despite rising global uncertainties, including geo-political tensions, supply chain realignments and rising risks of protectionism," it said.

Meanwhile, December 2025 emerged as the highest monthly trade for exports and imports, with imports rising by 12% to RM133.68 billion compared to the corresponding month last year.

Matrade said the import of intermediate goods grew by 3.6% to RM63.16 billion. In comparison, imports of capital goods fell by 11.8% to RM15.31 billion, while imports of consumption goods rose by 27.6% to RM13.10 billion.

On a quarterly basis, trade in the fourth quarter of 2025 rose 11.7% to RM826.65 billion compared to the previous corresponding quarter. Exports increased by 11% to RM436.22 billion, and imports rose 12.6% to RM390.44 billion.

As to outlook for 2026, Matrade said Malaysia's trade is expected to expand at a moderate pace, consistent with the global trade outlook published by the World Trade Organisation, which projects world merchandise trade volume to grow by 0.5%.

"The outlook remains subject to downside risks arising from trade-restrictive measures, geopolitical tensions, policy uncertainty and weaker global demand conditions," it added. – Bernama