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April trade hits record RM336.73b on strong electrical and electronic exports

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia's trade performance in April 2026 remained resilient, supported by continued expansion in key export markets and products, said the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) yesterday.

Miti said that despite heightened global uncertainties stemming from geopolitical tensions in the West Asia which led to higher logistic costs, supply chain disruptions and commodity price volatility, Malaysia's trade maintained its stellar performance in April 2026 and continued an upward trajectory, with trade, exports and imports registering their highest monthly values ever.

Trade increased by 28.6% year-on-year (y-o-y), the fastest growth recorded since September 2022, reaching RM336.73 billion.

Exports sustained their growth momentum for the 10th consecutive month, rising 36.9% to RM182.74 billion, a huge jump of RM30 billion from the previous high (December 2025: RM152.77 billion).

Meanwhile, imports expanded by 20.0% to RM153.99 billion. This resulted in a trade surplus of RMRM28.75 billion, marking the 72nd consecutive month of surplus since May 2020.

Miti said the growth in exports was primarily driven by double-digit expansion in major export products, led by electrical and electronic (E&E) products, which rose RM28 billion to a new record high, primarily supported by strong demand from the artificial intelligence (AI) and automotive electronics segments.

The expansion was further bolstered by remarkable increases in

exports of petroleum products, manufactures of metal, optical and scientific equipment as well as machinery, equipment and parts, the ministry added.

Notably, exports of optical and scientific equipment as well as machinery, equipment and parts recorded the highest monthly values thus far.

In terms of markets, exports to all major trading partners, namely Asean, China, the United States, Taiwan and the European Union, recorded strong double-digit growth, with exports to Asean, Taiwan and the EU reaching new record highs.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's extensive network of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) continued to facilitate market access and diversify export destinations.

Leveraging these agreements, exports to FTA partners remained on an upward trajectory, with exports to among others, Hong Kong, South Korea, Australia, India and Türkiye expanding steadily to new record highs, supported by robust demand across a broad range of products.

Miti said the country's trade performance continued to strengthen in the January to April 2026 period, with trade surpassing the RM1 trillion mark within four months, a month earlier compared to the previous year.

Trade increased by 15.3% to RM1.127 trillion compared to the corresponding period in 2025, driven by higher exports which rose 19.0% to RM609.31 billion and imports which expanded by 11.1% to RM517.40 billion. Consequently, the trade surplus doubled from the

previous year to RM91.92 billion. Trade, exports, imports and trade surplus all recorded their highest levels for the period.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, Malaysia's economy recorded an encouraging performance in the first quarter of 2026, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rising 5.4% y-o-y, stronger than the 4.4% growth recorded in the Q1 2025.

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund economic outlook on Malaysia remains favourable amid global headwinds. In its April 2026 World Economic Outlook, the IMF revised upward Malaysia's real GDP growth forecast to 4.7% for 2026, reflecting confidence in the country's macroeconomic fundamentals, sustained domestic demand and favourable export performance.