

Unifying the region's data

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THE Malaysian Statistics Department (DOS) hosted the fifth session of the Asean Community Statistical System (ACSS) committee from Nov 3 to 5, with chief statistician Datuk Dr Abdul Rahman Hasan chairing the meeting alongside Dr Samaychanh Boupha from the Lao Statistics Bureau in Laos.

During the meeting, a milestone was set when the ACSS committee was incorporated as a sectoral body in the Asean Charter, as agreed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to Asean in September.

The move signified the importance of ACSS's role in the development of Asean, and the meeting that was held discussed statistical matters that supported the building of the Asean community.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Senator Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar officiated at the opening of the meeting.

A total of 72 delegates, comprising the heads of various Asean national statistical offices, donors and development partners attended the session.

The session focused on four major themes: the response to greater Asean data needs; strengthening ACSS and its sustainability; enhancing communication, visibility and use of Asean statistics; and narrowing the development gap.

The session also endorsed the ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025 and adopted a communication strategy to reaffirm the production of relevant, timely and comparable statistics to support the Asean Community establishment.

In ensuring trust, accountability and the highest professional standards in producing Asean statistics, the ACSS Code of Practice will be implemented.

Furthermore, the Asean-Help-Asean initiative in capacity building activities will be intensified through the participation of Asean member countries, donors and development partners.

Malaysia is the chairman of Asean in 2015, which is why Dr Abdul Rahman chaired the session, which also saw the ACSS committee releasing a joint statement after the event.

The next session will be held in Vientiane, Laos, in November 2016.