



2026 SARAWAK BUDGET CONFERENCE



**IMPERIAL HOTEL KUCHING,
SARAWAK**



08th - 09th DECEMBER 2025

Guest of Honour

The Right Honourable

**Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang
Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun
Datuk Abang Haji Openg**

Premier of Sarawak

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INTRODUCTION

The **2026 Sarawak Budget Conference** is a premier platform for dialogue on fiscal policy, economic strategy, and public-private collaboration. Centered on the theme “Understanding Sarawak’s Budget 2026: Priorities and Fiscal Direction”, the event explores the state’s financial roadmap in the context of national budget reforms.

Day One covers Sarawak’s economic outlook, fiscal sustainability, and digital growth strategies, highlighted by a keynote session with the Premier of Sarawak. Day Two shifts to federal developments, including SST reforms, e-invoicing, and legal tax issues. Forums will also address global trade, Islamic finance, and digital capital markets. With 14 CPD hours, the conference empowers stakeholders with insights to navigate emerging challenges and contribute to Sarawak’s transformation agenda.



PROPOSED AGENDA DAY 1

UNDERSTANDING SARAWAK'S BUDGET 2026 : PRIORITIES AND FISCAL DIRECTION

Proposed Time	Proposed Theme/Topic	Proposed Speakers/ Panallist
07.30 - 08.30	Registration & Breakfast	
08.30 – 08.35	Safety Briefing	Venue Manager / Video Presentation
08.35 – 08.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Opening • Briefing on Participants Kit, Landing Page & Q&A Tools 	Emcee: Puan Syerifah Farah Wan Taha
08.45 – 09 .45	Speaker Session 1 Budget 2026: Overview of Malaysia & Sarawak's Fiscal Direction	Speaker: Suhaimi Ilias <i>Chief Economist at Maybank Investment Bank</i>
09.45 – 10.00	Break for arrival of Premier of Sarawak	
10.00 – 10.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doa' Recitation • Negaraku • Ibu Pertiwiku 	Doa': Al-Fadil Ustaz Ahmad Nizam Johari Al-Hafiz <i>Islamic Affairs Executive of SALIHIN</i>
10.10 – 10.20	Welcome Address	Tuan Haji (Dr.) Salihin Abang <i>Founder & Group Managing Partner, SALIHIN</i>
10.20 – 11.05	Keynote Address & Dialogue with Premier of Sarawak	Moderator: Tuan Sayed Munawar Sayed Mustar <i>TV Presenter</i> Panellist Speaker: The Right Honourable Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, <i>Premier of Sarawak</i>
11.05 – 11.15	Break	

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Proposed Time	Proposed Theme/Topic	Proposed Speakers/ Panallist
11.15 – 12 .45	Forum Session 1 Highlight on 2026 Malaysia Madani Budget: A Dialogue with Ministry of Finance	Moderator: TBD Panellist: TBD
12.45 – 14.00	Lunch Break	
14.00 – 15.00	Speaker Session 2 Unpacking Sarawak's 2026 Budget	Speaker: YBhg. Dato Sri Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Haji Zaidel <i>Deputy State Secretary Sarawak (Economic Planning & Development)</i>
15.00 – 15.45	Speaker Session 3 Fiscal Sustainability & Revenue Reengineering	Speaker: YBhg. Datu Lester Matthew <i>Director, Economic Planning Unit, Sarawak Department of the Premier Sarawak</i>
15.45 – 17.15	Forum Session 2 Fireside Forum: Reaping Benefits of the 2026 Sarawak Budget	Moderator: TBD Panellist: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> YB Dato Sri Haji Abd Karim Rahman Hamzah <i>Minister for Youth, Sport and Entrepreneur Development (Entrepreneur Development)</i> YBhg. Dato Sri Dr. Wan Lizozman Wan Omar <i>Sarawak State Financial Secretary</i> YBhg. Datuk Ir. Ts. Sudarnoto Osman <i>Chief Executive Officer, Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation Berhad (SDEC)</i> Panellist selected by the Platinum Sponsor
17.15 – 17.45	Tea Break and Networking Session	

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PROPOSED AGENDA DAY 2

MADANI BUDGET 2026: IMPLICATIONS FOR STATES AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

Proposed Time	Proposed Theme/Topic	Proposed Speakers/ Panallist
07.30 - 08.30	Break/Morning Refreshment	
08.30 - 08.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Event Opening• Briefing on Participants Kit, Landing Page & Q&A Tools	Emcee: Puan Syerifah Farah Wan Taha
08.45 - 10.15	Forum Session 3 E-Invoice Meets SST Revision & Expansion: Shaping Malaysia's New Tax Landscape	Moderator: TBD Panellist: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. YBhg. Datuk Dr. Abu Tariq Jamaluddin <i>Chief Executive Officer of Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia</i>2. YBhg. Dato' Anis Rizana Mohd Zainudin @ Mohd Zainuddin <i>Director General of Royal Malaysian Customs Department</i>3. YBhg. Dato' Abd Aziz Abu Bakar <i>SALIHIN Tax Advisor & President of the Malaysian Association of Tax Accountants (MATA)</i>4. John Patrick Antonysamy <i>Secretary of the Tax Division (SBC), Ministry of Finance</i>
10.15 - 10.45	Break/Morning Refreshment	
10.45 - 11.30	Speaker Session 4 Legal Lens: Recent Tax Cases	Speaker: Ivy Ling Yieng Ping <i>Partner of Lee Hishammuddin Allen & Gledhill</i>
11.30 - 12.15	Speaker Session 5 (Diamond Sponsor/Strategic Partner Session) Topic: TBD	Speaker: TBD

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Proposed Time	Proposed Theme/Topic	Proposed Speakers/ Panallist
12.45 - 14.00	Lunch Break & Special Luncheon Performance	Proposed Artist: TBD
14.00 - 15.15	Forum Session 4 Navigating Trade Uncertainty: Malaysia's Response to Global Tariff Policies & Geopolitical Conflicts	Moderator: Kamarul Bahrin Haron <i>Independent TV Presenter</i> Panellist: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YB Dato' Hajah Hanifah Hajar Taib <i>Deputy Minister of Economy</i> 2. Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) 3. YBhg. Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Nizom Sairi <i>SALIHIN Tax Advisor & Former Chief Executive Officer of the Inland Revenue Board</i> 4. YBrs. Dr. Firdausi Suffian <i>Chief Executive Officer of Invest Sabah Berhad</i> 5. Panellist selected by the Sponsor
15.15 - 16.30	Forum Session 5 Digital Finance & Islamic Capital Markets: Opportunities and Challenges	Moderator: TBD Panellist: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YM Raja Datin Paduka Teh Maimunah Raja Abdul Aziz <i>Chief Executive Officer, AEON Bank (M) Bhd</i> 2. Dr. Ahcene Lahsasna <i>Chief Executive Officer of SALIHIN Shariah</i> 3. Samer Yousef Elesawi <i>Head, Center of Excellence in Kuala Lumpur, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)</i> 4. Abdullah Haron <i>Deputy Secretary-General, Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB)</i>

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Proposed Time	Proposed Theme/Topic	Proposed Speakers/ Panallist
16.30 - 16.45	Keynote Closing Address	Speaker: YB Datuk Amar Haji Mohamad Abu Bakar Bin Marzuki <i>Sarawak State Secretary and Chairman of Sarawak Centre of Performance Excellence (SCOPE)</i>
16.45 - 17.00	Lucky Draw Session	
17.00 - 17.30	Tea Break and Networking Session	

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TOPIC DISCUSSION

DAY 1

UNDERSTANDING SARAWAK'S BUDGET 2026: PRIORITIES AND FISCAL DIRECTION

08:45 – 09:45

SPEAKER SESSION 1

DAY 1

Topic : Budget 2026: Overview of Malaysia & Sarawak's Fiscal Direction

This opening session sets the tone for the conference with a comprehensive overview of both the Federal Budget 2026 and the Sarawak State Budget, offering key insights into their fiscal direction, priorities, and economic outlook. It provides a timely macro-level perspective on how both budgets address national and state-level goals in the face of evolving economic and geopolitical challenges.

Crucially, the session aims to separate myths from facts—clarifying common misconceptions around government spending, fiscal capacity, debt levels, and revenue streams. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of what the budgets truly reflect versus public assumptions often shaped by fragmented narratives.

The speaker will explore strategic spending areas, revenue sustainability, and federal-state fiscal alignment—especially in areas like rural development, infrastructure, and green economy initiatives. This session will help stakeholders grasp the structural realities behind budgetary decisions and how Sarawak's fiscal strategy fits into Malaysia's broader economic agenda.

11:15 – 12:45

FORUM SESSION 1

DAY 1

Topic : Highlight on 2026 Malaysia Madani Budget: A Dialogue with Ministry of Finance

This session provides a national perspective on Malaysia's 2026 Budget under the MADANI framework. It aims to draw connections between federal fiscal direction and state-level development, particularly in Sarawak. The dialogue will address key national priorities such as managing the cost of living, accelerating the green and digital transitions, and ensuring inclusive growth.

Participants will gain insights into federal-state coordination mechanisms, intergovernmental fiscal transfers, and how Sarawak is positioned to leverage national programs for rural development, B40 support, and infrastructure funding.

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Topic : Unpacking Sarawak's 2026 Budget

This in-depth session will provide insights into the formulation of Sarawak's Budget 2026, key economic priorities, and strategic fiscal commitments aimed at driving sustainable and inclusive growth. The speaker will outline how the budget supports economic resilience, digital innovation, and infrastructure acceleration.

A highlight of this session is Green Budgeting and ESG Integration. Participants will explore how Sarawak embeds Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into its budget planning and public sector investment decisions. Discussion will also cover green incentives designed for MSMEs and larger industry players, the use of environmental taxes, and how carbon credits are being positioned as part of Sarawak's fiscal and environmental strategy.

Topic : Fiscal Sustainability & Revenue Reengineering

YBhg. Datu Lester Matthew, Director, Economic Planning Unit, Sarawak Department of the Premier

This session examines the structural measures and policy shifts undertaken by Sarawak to future-proof its fiscal base. With declining reliance on oil-based revenues, Sarawak is actively exploring diversified revenue streams to sustain development spending.

Key focus areas include the optimization of State Sales Tax (SST), rationalization of user fees, and innovative financing models such as public-private partnerships. Special attention will be given to the role of local councils and statutory bodies in strengthening state-level revenue collection frameworks.

This session will also feature a dedicated segment on Sarawak's Energy Transition. Participants will gain insight into the budgetary support for renewable energy sectors, hydrogen fuel development, and participation in carbon markets. The discussion will highlight how Budget 2026 aligns with the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) and the business opportunities this creates for investors and sustainability-focused enterprises.

Topic : Fireside Forum – Reaping Benefits of the 2026 Sarawak Budget

This high-impact forum session explores how various sectors—youth, entrepreneurship, digital economy, and public finance—can maximize the benefits of Budget 2026. The panel will address sector-specific allocations, incentives, and reforms with practical implications for grassroots entrepreneurs and established businesses alike.

Key discussion themes include:

- Support for Youth, Startups, and MSMEs: Exploring training programs, tax reliefs, grants, and loan schemes.
- Digital Economy and Budget Allocations: Government spending on smart cities, 5G, AI, and public-private collaboration.
- Navigating Budget Incentives: Using digital platforms to access schemes and funding programs.

DAY 2**MADANI BUDGET 2026: IMPLICATIONS FOR STATES AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES****Topic : E-Invoice Meets SST Revision & Expansion**

Malaysia's tax system is undergoing major transformation, with the dual implementation of e-Invoicing and SST expansion reshaping compliance and revenue collection. This session brings together key figures to explore the timeline, readiness, and implications of these reforms. Discussion will include automation, audit preparedness, policy harmonisation, and support mechanisms for MSMEs.

Topic : Legal Lens – Recent Tax Cases

In this session, a seasoned legal expert will walk participants through recent landmark tax litigation and decisions in Malaysia. The session covers implications for corporate governance, compliance, and evolving interpretations of tax law.

11:30 – 12:15

SPEAKER SESSION 5

DAY 2

Topic : Sponsor Showcase (Topic TBC)

This dedicated session offers thought leadership from one of the conference's strategic partners. Details will be released soon.

14:00 – 15:15

FORUM SESSION 4

DAY 2

Topic : Navigating Trade Uncertainty

This session explores Malaysia's strategies to manage rising trade tensions and geopolitical risks, viewed through the lens of Budget 2026. It will examine how fiscal allocations support Sarawak's export diversification, tariff policy adaptation, and participation in regional trade agreements like RCEP and CPTPP.

With increased focus on trade resilience, the session will highlight how Budget 2026 is funding infrastructure, customs enhancements, and targeted incentives to help Sarawak-based exporters and manufacturers remain competitive in a volatile global environment.

15:15 – 16:30

FORUM SESSION 5

DAY 2

Topic : Digital Finance & Islamic Capital Markets

This session explores how Budget 2026 supports the advancement of digital finance and Islamic capital markets as part of Malaysia's broader economic transformation. With growing emphasis on digitalisation and financial inclusion, the session will unpack how budget allocations are facilitating innovations such as digital banking, ESG-aligned Islamic investments, and Halal fintech platforms.

The discussion will also address policy developments, Shariah compliance, and how digital infrastructure funded under Budget 2026 is enabling the evolution of Malaysia's financial landscape—ensuring it remains ethical, inclusive, and globally competitive.

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PROPOSED LINE UP

SPEAKERS / PANELLISTS / MODERATOR



YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg
Premier of Sarawak



Ministry of Finance Representative



YB Dato Sri Haji Abd Karim Rahman Hamzah
Minister for Youth, Sport and Entrepreneur Development (Entrepreneur Development)



YB Datuk Amar Haji Mohamad Abu Bakar Marzuki
Sarawak State Secretary



YB Dato' Hajah Hanifah Hajar Taib
Deputy Minister of Economy



YBhg. Datuk Dr. Abu Tariq Jamaluddin
Chief Executive Officer of Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia



YBhg. Dato' Anis Rizana Mohd Zainudin @ Mohd Zainuddin
Director General of Royal Malaysian Customs Department



YBhg. Dato Sri Dr. Wan Lizozman Wan Omar
Sarawak State Financial Secretary



YBhg. Dato Sri Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Haji Zaidel
Deputy State Secretary Sarawak (Economic Planning & Development)



YBhg. Datu Lester Matthew
Director,
Economic Planning Unit, Sarawak,
Department of the Premier Sarawak



YBhg. Datuk Ir. Ts. Sudarnoto Osman
Chief Executive Officer, Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation Berhad (SDEC)

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YBhg. Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Nizom Sairi
SALIHIN Tax Advisor & Former Chief Executive Officer of The Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia



YBhg. Dato' Abd Aziz Abu Bakar
SALIHIN Tax Advisor & President of the Malaysian Association of Tax Accountants (MATA)



YBrs. Tuan Haji (Dr.) Salihin Abang
Founder & Group Managing Partner, SALIHIN



John Patrick Antony Samy
Secretary of the Tax Division [SBC], Ministry of Finance



YBrs. Dr. Firdausi Suffian
Chief Executive Officer of Invest Sabah Berhad



Suhaimi Ilias
Chief Economist at Maybank Investment Bank.



Ivy Ling Yieng Ping
Partner of Lee Hishammuddin Allen & Gledhill



YM Raja Datin Paduka Teh Maimunah Raja Abdul Aziz
Chief Executive Officer, AEON Bank (M) Bhd



Dr. Ahcene Lahsasna
Chief Executive Officer of SALIHIN Shariah



Samer Yousef Elesawi
Head, Center of Excellence in Kuala Lumpur, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)



Kamarul Bahrin Haron
Independent Journalist



Tuan Sayed Munawar Sayed Mustar
TV Presenter

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Day 2,

Special Performance

Stay tuned! We'll be revealing the performer soon!



Day 2,

Lucky Draw

Be there for your chance to win!
It might just be your lucky day.





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