

INVESTMENT

NCIA's Holistic Ecosystem Development Initiatives in supporting Investors in NCER

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Enabling Opportunities for Better Quality of Life

ISSUE 01
MARCH - JUNE
2023

Welcome to the Nonth









FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Northern, a quarterly newsletter on the happenings and the best that the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) has to offer our stakeholders, was launched in August 2022. This booklet of information aims to provide all our stakeholders, and the general public a look into life in NCER, and why it's the preferred destination for our investors and collaboration partners. You will also be given first-hand information on why the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) is the partner of choice for our programme participants and the many government agencies that we work with for the purpose of growing NCER into a balanced and sustainable socioeconomic regional corridor.

As promised, the second edition of The Northern will continue to publish articles relating to the business opportunities in NCER, the strategic partnerships and high impact projects as catalysts to growth, as well as highlight the people who work and live in NCER, who are essential in determining the success of this dynamic and fast-growing region. The front cover of this edition shows a view of the majestic waterfalls of Lata Kiniang, located in the state of Perak. We will share with our readers how NCIA helped to transform the place and people of Lata Kinjang; building on its natural beauty and assisting the Orang Asli communities there to manage and maintain Lata Kinjang as an international Eco-Tourism Resort for those who are into nature and outdoor adventures. By improving the standard of living for the Orang Asli communities here via skills training and entrepreneurship, NCIA provides them with a sustainable business model to ensure they are able to generate a living and escape poverty. This is a holistic business initiative that we hope to replicate among the Orang Asli communities across Malaysia.

In this edition, readers will get to know about the Kedah Rubber City (KRC), a national, strategic, and high impact project curated with the objective of transforming a less developed area into a strategic investment destination for the rubber related industry.

We will also be showcasing the strategic collaborations we are currently working with from a regional perspective, the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) which is an international collaboration with other major natural rubber producing countries to build a regional rubber technology hub second to none.

Our readers will also be introduced to the Integrated Economic and Community Centre (i-CON@NCER), NCIA's new approach to reduce the disparity gap between the



rakyat living in urban and rural areas by unlocking the potential of Malay Reserve Land and less developed areas, with emphasis on sustainable development and equitable distribution of wealth for all Malaysians.

As we approach the middle of 2023, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been a significant year for NCER. The rising energy costs, along with inflation and aggressive monetary tightening by central banks, has caused a dramatic uptake in prices of goods and services. Governments everywhere and corporations alike have been struggling to keep operational costs down.

I am pleased to report that NCIA put in a resilient performance and progressed on our key initiatives during the year. This was made possible with the dedication of our employees and the cooperation of our stakeholders, who were instrumental in helping us continuously meet our performance targets each

We at NCER will continue to do our best to help our stakeholders in navigating through this perfect storm via various high impact projects to catalyse growth, investment incentives to ease operational costs and human capital programmes to alleviate the hardship of locals in the northern region. NCER is a region ripe with opportunities and flush with potential, for businesses, and for all who call this region home. We have an exciting year ahead and I am confident by continuing on our current trajectory, we will achieve significant changes that will benefit stakeholders, the rakyat and the region. As we come up to the cusps of the new year, I hope you will take a leaf from this newsletter and join us to together grow and make NCER a world-class economic region and technology hub.





CONTENTS



From the Office of the Chief Executive



04 Investment

Kedah Rubber City: A Strategic National Project Stretching Kedah's Economic Potentials



06 Strategic Planning

NCIA Firms up Rubber Cities Development Commitment with Indonesia And Thailand



O7 Strategic Planning
Integrated Economic &
Community Centre (iCON)











<<

13 Programmes & Events

Recap of Pictorial Media and Event Diary 2022 & 2023

16 Kenali i-STARS #AKUDANNCIA





Kedah Rubber City: A Strategic National Project Stretching Kedah's Economic Potentials

For the past century, rubber has been a crucial export The project is the nation's first ever dedicated rubber commodity in Malaysia. The great surge in the rubber trade occurred in the 1900s with the incredible rise in demand due to rapid industrialization and the start of the automotive industry in the Western Hemisphere.

In fact, at one point, Malaysia was the world's largest producer of natural rubber during the 1960s and 1970s. Today, Malaysia remains one of the major producers of rubber products, signified by RM71 billion worth of rubber exports in 2021.

Realising the potential from the rubber industry, the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) championed the development of Kedah Rubber City (KRC). This new industrial park is set to further stretch the industry economic potentials by moving the rubber industry in Kedah towards high-tech products down the value chain. The KRC project was officially launched by then the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob in February 2022.

eco-industrial park, which aims to attract state-of-the-art investments in rubber-related industry and services.

Set on a 1,244-acre parcel of land in Padang Terap, Kedah, KRC is situated in the region known as Natural Rubber Economic Belt where rubber growing is a major economic activity. The park will also leverage on this strategic location along this "Rubber Belt" area near to the Malaysia-Thailand border and within the Indonesia-Malaysia -Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) to gain access to the large consumer base in Asia Pacific.

KRC aims to be a modern and state-of-the-art rubber industrial park, and for this, the park's business model is based on the successful international rubber industrial parks, i.e., Akron Rubber City in US and Qingdao Rubber Valley in China. These models' emphasis on ecosystem development as a litmus test to ensure the success of any rubber industrial park.

Key Enablers of a Successful Rubber Industrial Park Ecosystem

Availability of industrial land with adequate infrastructure and relevent utilities

Synergistic collaboration between industry, government, academia/ training institutions

Sufficient supply of skilled talents and strong human capital development

Incentives and facilitation from Federal & State Governments to attract local and global investors The presence of R&D, innovation centre of excellence

approval process, workforce upskilling and talent enhancement programmes, rubber products certification programmes, raw material sourcing and local vendor development are given special emphasis in the development of KRC.

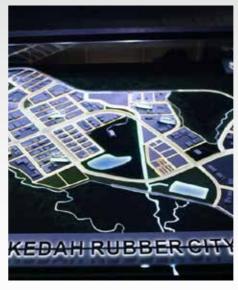
By 2030, KRC is set to welcome RM10 billion worth of private investment, creating 15,000 skilled and semi-skilled job opportunities along the way. The newly developed rubber industrial park will be a testament to the Government's commitment to modernize the industry ecosystem as highlighted by the National Investment Aspirations to prioritise the nurturing of innovative, high impact and high-tech investments which would be conducive to the creation of high-skilled jobs. KRC will also improve the region's competitiveness level on the onset of advanced progress in the rubber industry and close the regional gap in the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER).

Key enabler initiatives such as efficient land development. Investors will be able to capitalise on the extensive supply chain and access to trained labour, as well as the network of adjacent businesses and institutions of higher learning, thanks to NCIA's integrated human capital programmes and Kedah's increased economic and talent ecosystem.











NCIA FIRMS UP RUBBER CITIES DEVELOPMENT **COMMITMENT WITH INDONESIA AND THAILAND**

The Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Industry Indonesia (MOI) and the Rubber Authority of Thailand (RAOT) to firm up the commitment to jointly develop rubber cities at the 28th Indonesia- Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) Ministerial Meeting held on 16th September 2022 in Phuket, Thailand.

On 18-26 June 2023. The IMT-GT Rubber Cities Visit Programme, jointly organized by the Centre for IMT-GT Subregional Cooperation (CIMT), the Ministry of Industry of Indonesia, the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) of Malaysia, and the Rubber Authority of Thailand (RAOT), is set to pave the way for a strategic and timely collaboration among the participating countries.

This visit programme, across three prominent rubber cities - Sei Mangkei Special Economic Zone in Indonesia, Kedah Rubber City in Malaysia, and Songkhla Rubber City in Thailand - is poised to unlock new opportunities and foster growth in the rubber industry.

The IMT-GT Rubber Cities and Rubber Industry Cooperation represent a significant milestone in the journey towards







regional integration and collaboration. Through this initiative. Indonesia. Malavsia, and Thailand aim to leverage their collective strengths, knowledge, and expertise to create a vibrant and sustainable rubber industry ecosystem.

NCER's Kedah Rubber City (KRC) will play a key role in helping to catalyse the development of the region's rubber industry in facing the market challenges by giving emphasis on the adoption of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) for a sustainable industry.





Integrated Economic & Community Centre (iCON)

iCON is the new initiative by the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) that aims to reduce the disparity gap between the rakyat living in urban and rural areas, thus reducing regional development imbalances.

This approach is in line with the Government's Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 which emphasises on sustainable development and equitable distribution of wealth for all Malaysians.

iCON is a catalytic project to nurture entrepreneurship among rakyat living in rural, as well as encouraging the participation of local entrepreneurs in economic activities.



To create a catalytic hub linking rural-urban for catalyzing local economic development.

To increase entrepreneur

opportunities and local involvement. To reduce urban-rural

socio-economic gap (income level, poverty, jobopportunies)

To reduce out-migration to

To ensure a more balanced growth between urban-rural area

ırban area

iCON is currently being implemented in two districts as pilot projects in Baling and Yan, Kedah. NCIA in collaboration with Kedah Regional Development Authorities (KEDA) is implementing iCON Baling which is located at Pekan Baling, and secondly with State Secretary, Kedah (Incorporation) (SSK) for iCON Yan which is located at Guar Chempedak.

NCIA is also collaborating with other Federal and State agencies such as the Road Transport Department Malaysia, Kedah (JPJ Kedah), Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Kedah (MOTAC, Kedah), Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA), Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA), Baling District Council, Yan District Council and other related agencies to establish iCON.





Implementation Authority





Implementation Authority



Components for both iCONs are selected based on the main strengths and activities respective district:

















Potential tenants of iCON are selected through NCER's Human Capital programmes such as entrepreneurNCER, empowerNCER, Dana Usahawan (DU@NCER) and JomNiaga@NCER, as well as other local entrepreneurs. There are a few potential tenants that have been identified, such as Road Transport Department Malaysia, Kedah (JPJ Kedah), and Al Haddad Marketing Sdn Bhd among others.

Impact of iCON

Creating more than 500 job opportunities



Benefiting more than 100 small & medium entrepreneur



Increase the value of local product



New tourist attraction area



Located in Chenderiang, just 18 km from the small quaint town of Tapah, in the Batang Padang district of Perak, lies the magnificent, breath-taking Lata Kinjang waterfall. If you are travelling from Kuala Lumpur, you will be rewarded with a view of the waterfall slowly coming into view through misty clouds, on your right after roughly two hours' drive northbound along the PLUS North-South Expressway (NSE). It is a sight one should savour, and a visit to the waterfall is one not to be missed.

Deep in the heart of a forest reserve in Bukit Tapah, Lata Kinjang is famous for its multi-tiered waterfall that cascades down the side of the Titiwangsa Range (Banjaran Titiwangsa). Measuring at almost 850 meters in height, the Lata Kinjang waterfall is one of the highest waterfalls in Southeast Asia and is home to several Orang Asli settlements.

According to folklore, a magical "giant" called Sang Kelembai resides in the area and every so often he would visit Lata Kinjang. It is said that Sang Kelembai has the power to petrify any living thing and can even turn them into stone. Many believe that stones and markers that resemble animals or of Sang Kelembai's existence.

Lata Kinjang used to be a popular hunting ground for the colonial British, who would hunt for deer or kijang. standard of living for Apparently, they had problems the 270 strong Orang pronouncing the word correctly, calling Asli community in it "kinjang" instead. Today, the place is Lata Kinjang through visited mostly by adventure seekers skills training and and hikers who need some respite from the hustle and bustle of the city.

The Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA), as part of their focused efforts to lessen the income parity and



the different states and communities in ment. This initiative was a

holistic plan aimed at improving the entrepreneurship, in

line with the Government's target of zero hard core poverty by 2025.

regional economic imbalance between The plan was to develop an ecosystem of interdependence between participants the Northern Corridor Economic Region in a community to promote business (NCER), implemented a Socio-Economic sustainability through the establishment Development Pilot Project specifically of a cooperative, Koperasi Orang Asli for the Orang Asli Community in Lata Lata Kinjang Berhad (KOALKB) as a Kinjang in 2021 in collaboration with vehicle for the community to generfootprints found in the area are proof the Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli ate sustainable income by managing (JAKOA) and the Perak State governthe recreational park as well as other economic activities.

> Today, the Taman Eko-Rimba Lata Kinjang is fully managed and operated by the KOALK, which has created jobs and other spill over economic benefits.

Taman Eko-Rimba Lata Kinjang (TERLK) will create jobs and other spill over economic benefits.

To increase the potential of TERLK as an In supporting the Government's efforts exciting and sustainable eco-tourism to eradicate poverty and generate a destination to support KOALKB's sustainable income through tourism business venture, the tourism facilities related activities for the Orang Asli at the park were upgraded to include community in Lata Kinjang, NCIA has such as air-conditioned accommodation (Tube Cabins), camp sites, changing rooms, public toilets, surau, F&B outlets, barbecue pits and much more for those who wish to experience the tranquillity of staying close to one of the highest waterfalls in Malaysia!

The park was reopened to the public on 30 July 2022 with upgraded facilities. After ten (10) months, the park has earned RM580,392.00 from a total of 83,220 visitors, out of which more than 1119 are foreign tourists.



also implemented various Human Capital Development programmes such as JomNiaga@NCER and empowerNCER to strengthen the capabilities of KOALK management and manpower from the Orang Asli community



These programmes are designed to empower and uplift the skills and entrepreneurship of the local community through courses such as Culinary, Facilities Management, Creative Sewing, Reflexology Massage, Electrical Repair, and Mobile Photography Courses. This programme is designed to meet socio-economic needs of the community and open up employment opportunities with TERLK as well as prioritizing the involvement of the surrounding Orang Asli communities in Lata Kiniang. These programmes have been successfully carried out from April 2021 until March 2022 involving 63 participants from Kampung Orang Asli Lata Kinjang and Kampung Sungai Genting located in Chenderiang, Perak.



One of the participants of the Facilities Management Course who is currently employed as a cleaner (housekeeping) at the TERLK Tube Cabin, Nur Shawala Binti Osman, 35, said, "I am grateful to NCER because through my participation in the skills development programmes, I have gained the necessary training and knowledge to secure a job at the eco-park,".

The Orang Asli-led cooperative has the potential to make the eco-tourism park one of NCER's most successful tourist attractions whilst at the same time become a replicable business model that other Orang Asli or poor, hard core poor communities can emulate to create job opportunities and earn a sustainable income.

So, don't delay another day and play your part in supporting this noble initiative. Taman Eko-Rimba Lata Kinjang (TERLK) is open daily from 9am to 6pm. Come with your family and enjoy the peaceful and refreshing environment whilst making a difference in the lives of the community!

SCAN FOR TAMAN EKO-RIMBA LATA KINJANG **LOCATION**



EMPOWERING THE RAKYAT

The Northern Corridor Economic Region's (NCER) human capital programmes are designed to address the challenges faced by the region, which includes low household income, low-skilled talents, less-than-optimal labour force participation and high rate of graduate unemployment.

To mitigate these challenges in an inclusive and holistic manner, various human capital development initiatives have been introduced by the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) such as Kasih Ibu NCER, empowerNCER Skills and Entrepreneurship, empowerNCER Akademik, entreprenuerNCER, JomNiaga@NCER, JomKerja@NCER, NTEP@NCER and DU@NCER. These programmes have benefitted more than 109,630 locals and many micro entrepreneur communities across the entire 30 districts in the NCER including women, youth and Orang Asli communities since 2019.

The empowerNCER Akademik programme with the objective of preventing future poor through education is designed to improve students' academic achievement and personality development through comprehensive and advanced teaching methods packaged in a well-thought-out programme. This programme targets underperforming Form 5 students from B40 families and Orang Asli students from Years 5 and 6. Participating students of this programme has shown impressive achievements, with 93% of students passing the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2021 compared to 88.09% pass percentage at the national level.

empowerNCER Akademik Programme Achievements



93%

students from 6,000 students passed the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2021



8% managed to obtain 5A and above



Standard 5 Orang Asli students have shown a marked improvement in 3M (mathematics, reading and writing) skills.



6,900 students from 30 districts in NCER



93% placement in IPTA/TVET and job placement

Testimonials



NUR ANISA AINA BINTI SAMSURI SPM 2022 9A - SMK Sultan Idris Shah II



This program helped me greatly in my studies and built confidence in communicating with others. The experience of attending extra classes, getting exam tips, and sharing knowledge with other friends made me feel good about studying. I am grateful for being given this good chance. Alhamdulillah, this opportunity I used to the best of my ability, and I fixed all past mistakes by applying the new knowledge I have gained. As the saying goes, you will only get the sago if it's broken. If you don't try and use the opportunity, it's a success.



MIRZA A/P BALASUNDRAM SPM 2022 11A - SMK Tasek



Online classes handled by the USM were very helpful to me. Many new tips and knowledge have been shared. In addition, the class approach also makes me feel good about the conducted classes." The notes and partnerships given throughout the program are among my additional notes to review before each exam. As a result, I obtained excellent results in the SPM trial exam and, subsequently, the actual SPM exam in 2022.

These rakyat-centric human capital programmes, especially the empowerNCER Skills and Entrepreneurship and JomNiaga@NCER, have succeeded in providing participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to allow them to increase their income and open the prospect to more job and entrepreneurial opportunities, resulting in overall household-income growth among the B40 group. Participating students in the empowerNCER Akademik programme have shown impressive achievements, with 3,400 students for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2022 from 15 districts.

empowerNCER Skills & Entrepreneurship and JomNiaga@NCER IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM RM 105.3 Million 6.510 1.294 1.679 **Participants** Participants move Jobs Created by **B40 Entrepreneurs Poverty Line** M40 and T20 (PLI) 2019 RM 9.6 Million INCOME INCREASED THROUGH NEW BUSINESS Cumulative Info (2019 - May 2023)

A total of 18,418 people from the local communities are now empowered with skills improvement and entrepreneurship training and are now able to generate an accumulated income of RM83.2 million through the empowerNCER and JomNiaga@NCER programmes.





Under the tutelage of NCER, participants are taken to participate in various expos and events such as the Program Jelajah Aspirasi Keluarga Malaysia in Perlis, Perak, and Kedah; the 2022 edition of the Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agrotourism (MAHA); Battle of The Chefs; and Transformasi Komuniti Business Exchange between East Coast & NCER.





Participants who completed training under these programmes are celebrated and awarded in the Convocation Ceremony held at various locations in NCER

Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of the local economy. In an effort to support the development of MSMEs as well as addressing their cash flow challenges to stay competitive, the entrepreneurNCER programme is set to elevate and expand existing businesses through strategic partnerships developed with selected banks such as Maybank, Agrobank and most recently CIMB and AFFIN Bank.

These banks provide soft loan assistance through a 50% topping up method of bank interest rates in addition to providing soft loan assistance to entrepreneurs who intend to grow their business. entrepreneurNCER programme also provides product and packaging development, promotion, and marketing services, as well as e-commerce and digital technology adoption.

entrepreneurNCER Programme Achievements (For the year 2019 until May 2023)



entrepreneurs **24,212**



Women **22%**

Testimonials



GSM RACING





Narongrit Khunphithak A/L Erun, an entrepreneurNCER participant from Arau, Perlis started his workshop business dealing with spare parts, and motorcycle accessories 5 years ago with the help of seven workers. His business expansion was funded through the NCIA-MAYBANK Entrepreneur Scheme. Through this programme, he was able to expand an additional shop lot next to his current shop to fulfil the increasing demand from his customers.

For NCER to become a high-income region, human capital development must maintain to be a key priority. Thus, NCIA will continue to bridge existing skills gaps in the labour market through various interventions and initiatives, which include reforming the labour market and prioritising skilled job creation, improving labour efficiency and productivity, enhancing access to quality education, and training. NCIA will also continue to encourage entrepreneurship as a growth engine in rural areas, in order to provide additional income for the rakyat in NCER.

Testimonials



NOR HAMIMI DARUS





Before participating in the empowerNCER Skills and Entrepreneurship programme, Nor Hamimi was living in poverty and was a recipient of Kasih Ibu Darul Aman (KIDA) aid. She has to be the 'backbone' of the family after her husband suffered a spinal cord injury almost 6 years ago.

empowerNCER changed everything. Nor Hamimi was given basic entrepreneurship training in addition to guidance for personal growth and motivational guidance to increase her daily subsistence income.

Participants of this programme have the opportunity to learn new skills. From Nor Hamimi's participation in this programme is where Nor Hamimi's viral Talam pizza story begins.

Now, she manages to generate a steady income through online orders as well as orders received for private events. "I am very grateful to the empowerNCER programme for freeing me from the shackles of poverty," she said with gratitude.

Recap of Pictorial Media and Event Diary 2022 & 2023



















































#AKUDANNCIA



Nurhasnizah Binti Man

Corporate Communications Department

low long have you been working with NCIA?

What is your precious moment working with NCIA?
I enjoy most participating in various programmes and events organized by NCIA such as Kembara Kasih to give donations and assistance to underprivileged communities.

How do you manage stress at the workplace?

If I am stressed, I take a short walk downstairs to calm myself down. I also try to be always be positive and open minded.

I would love to see the beautiful scenery in Japan or Korea. For a local destination, I choose Sabah.

In your free time, what are your hobbies or activities?
I like to catch up on movies that I missed.

What is your hope for NCIA?

I hope that NCIA continues being a respected and admired organization through the various programmes that benefit the rakyat.



Shuhamizul Md Masri

Asset Management Unit/Corporate Services Department

ow long have you been working with NCIA?

I am happy to be able to meet various levels of society, being able to serve the rakyat and visit every corner of the NCER to help flood victims and do so much

n your opinion, what is the characteristics that must be

I always emphasize in myself, always practice the nature of trust in carrying out tasks, clean from the practice of corruption. I am always ready to help anyone

How do you manage stress at the workplace?

I find playing sports with family or friends twice or thrice weekly as helpful to manage stress. Also, once or every two months I try to take my family on short vacation.

What is your hope for NCIA?

My hope to NCIA is that it remains always relevant to help the people for a better economy. I also hope that NCIA is able to reduce the rate of inflation and generate many job opportunities for the rakyat.



Hew Shen Choong Investment - Tourism, Investment Cluster

How long have you been working with NCIA?

What is your precious moment working with NCIA?

The most significant would be to have the honour of serving four different Chief Executives

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Mohd Annuar bin Zaini from the start of NCIA, Datuk Redza Rafiq Abdul Razak,

Datuk Seri Jebasingam Issace John, Tuan Mohamad Haris Kader Sultan

Plus, also 4 Prime Ministers so far

n your opinion, what is the characteristics that must be

The commitment to serve this organization and the Rakyat

How do you manage your stress at the workplace? When I am stressed, I have a talk and joke around with my colleagues!

What is your hope for NCIA?

I hope that all my friends and colleagues in NCIA have a healthy and happy life always!



Siti Fadhilah Binti Daud

Finance Department

How long have you been working with NCIA?

11 years

What is your precious moment working with NCIA?

My precious moment working with NCIA is when I participate in any event /activity / team building / meeting conducted by NCIA. That made us build our strong of relationship between bosses and staff and getting to know each other better among NCIA staff.

n your opinion, what is the characteristics that must be

In my opinion, NCIA staff should have an open-minded attitude and be able to accept any opinions or objections from other people.

How do you manage your stress at workplace?
Handling stress is easy by thinking about it positively. If we still can't deal with the problem or any issue at work or work-related, share it with your boss. From there we may find a way to solve our problem together.

I just hope NCIA will remain and always be relevant for our country and people in need.



NORTHERN CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY (NCIA)
PULAU PINANG, MALAYSIA