



First state to have integrity unit in the Chief Minister's Office

THE Sarawak government has always placed great emphasis and strong commitment on integrity and transparency in its civil service.

This is evident through continuous initiatives to instil the culture of integrity and enhance transparency and accountability in the Sarawak government service delivery system such as the setting up of the State Integrity and Ombudsman Unit (Union) under the Chief Minister's Department.

Union, which was formed under the leadership of Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg on Feb 1, 2018, marked another milestone for Sarawak as it became the first state in Malaysia to have an integrity unit in the office of a Chief Minister or Menteri Besar.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief



Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg

commissioner Latheefa Koya commended the establishment of the unit and urged all states to emulate Sarawak in the effort to eliminate corruption and irregularities as well as to avoid any criticism against the state government administration, and initiate

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the process of administrative transparency.

On Feb 11, 2019, former MACC Sarawak deputy director Zulhairi Zaidel was seconded to Union to serve as its chief integrity officer, where his role is to help strengthen integrity in the state civil service and pave the way for closer cooperation between MACC and the unit to carry out integrity-related activities more effectively.

Union has also taken the first step in collaborating with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption

Academy (Maca) by introducing the Certified Integrity Officers (CeIO) programme in Sarawak.

When announcing this in April last year, Abang Johari said Sarawak was taking the initiative to ensure those in the civil service have high integrity to develop the state.

"As we bring the state towards a developed state by 2030, we want it to be developed with a high spirit of integrity because without integrity the state will fall," he said when closing the programme on April 13.

As of November, 94 state civil

service officers had completed the programme.

As CeIOs, these officers will lead the integrity units in all Sarawak ministries, government departments and statutory bodies to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, systems, and procedures to instil a zero-tolerance culture against corruption, power abuse, and embezzlement, and provide advisory and consultative services to the management in which they are attached.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister's Department also created another first when it became the pioneer in the preparation of the Organisation of Anti-Corruption Plan (OACP).

During the last State Legislative Assembly (DUN) Sitting last November, Minister in the Chief Minister's Department (Integrity and

Ombudsman) Datuk Talib Zulpilip said the OACP draft was being fine-tuned by the Malaysian Integrity Institute.

"The OACP is an anti-corruption policy document at the organisational level, aimed to address the concerns and weaknesses of governance, integrity, and anti-corruption within the organisation."

He said based on the second strategy of the National Anti-Corruption Plan namely Strengthening Public Service Delivery Efficiency, all public sector agencies are required to provide an OACP by June this year.

"As such, the State Integrity and Ombudsman Unit will train qualified CeIOs to be facilitators to the ministries, departments, and administration of the division for the preparation of their respective OACPs," said Talib.

Never faltering on mission to restore Sarawak's rights

SINCE taking office on Jan 13, 2017 as the sixth Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg has never faltered in his mission to restore Sarawak's rights under the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63).

Having inherited this monumental task from his predecessor Pehin Sri Adenan Satem, Abang Johari made sure that one of his top priorities as the leader of the state is to restore Sarawak's autonomy.

He vowed to continue to fulfil the promises made by the late Tok Nan and that the Sarawak government would vigorously pursue the devolution of powers.

Abang Johari has proven he is a man of his word through the progress and achievements he has made in the quest of devolution of administrative power over the last two years.



Abang Johari (left) makes a point during the meeting with Dr Mahathir (centre) and Mohd Shafie on Dec 16 at the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya.

March 6, 2018

Sarawak becomes the first in Malaysia to form a state-owned oil and gas company, Petroleum Sarawak Berhad (Petros) and announces that it has assumed complete mining rights over its territory.

Abang Johari said the formation of Petros, which was founded in August 2017, was part of the promise made by the federal government to return eroded rights from MA63 signed when Sarawak agreed to be part of the formation of Malaysia.

"This gives Sarawak full regulatory authority of the upstream, downstream aspects of the oil and gas industry," he said at an event to launch Petros in Kuching.

June 4, 2018

Petroleum Nasional Berhad (Petronas) challenges the Sarawak government's claim to regulatory authority in the upstream oil and gas (O&G) sector in the Federal Court.

June 22, 2018

The Federal Court dismisses Petronas' application for leave with RM50,000 costs to commence legal proceedings against the Sarawak government, in its challenge against the latter's claim to regulatory authority in the upstream O&G sector within the state.

July 1, 2018

Sarawak implements its regulatory rights on oil and gas activities in the state. This means that some of the powers under the Oil Mining Ordinance (OMO) 1958 would be implemented by Petros.

July 8, 2018

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Liew Vui Keong announces the government has formed a committee to identify the best method to ensure Sabah and Sarawak's rights under MA63 can continue to be pursued.

July 10, 2018

The Sarawak Legislative Assembly (DUN) passes the Oil Mining (Amendment) Bill 2018 to update several provisions in OMO 1958 and to bring the Ordinance in line with the current practices and operations in the upstream sector of the O&G industry.

Sept 16, 2018

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad pledges to restore rights of Sabah and Sarawak on Malaysia Day 2018 and restore their status as regions in the federation.

In 1976, the Constitution was amended to downgrade Sabah and Sarawak as the 12th and 13th states of Malaysia.

Oct 10, 2018

Liew announces the names of the 16 members of the Steering Committee headed by Dr Mahathir to review and streamline MA63 comprising Abang Johari, Chief Minister of Sabah Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng, Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo, Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, Works Minister Baru Bian, International Trade and Industry Minister Darell Leiking, Transport Minister Anthony Loke Siew Fook, Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Bakar, Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak Datuk David Wong Dak Wah, Attorney-General Tan Sri Tommy Thomas, University of Malaya Law professor Prof Emeritus Datuk Dr Shad Saleem Faruqi, Sarawak Attorney-General Datuk Talat Mahmood Abdul Rashid, and Sabah Attorney-General Datuk Zaleha Rose Pandin.

Oct 11, 2018

Mohd Shafie flies to Kuching to meet Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg to discuss issues surrounding MA63.

Dec 17, 2018

MA63 Steering Committee holds its first meeting chaired by the Prime Minister. The committee was tasked to resolve 21 issues among the three parties. Of these, 13 are joint issues involving Sabah and Sarawak, and eight more are specific to Sabah.

Jan 1, 2019

The 5 per cent State Sales Tax for petroleum products comes into effect.

Jan 3, 2019

Sarawak's Consultative Committee on MA63 meeting. Abang Johari holds a press conference to announce Sarawak raised four non-negotiable issues during the MA63 Steering Committee meeting namely immigration autonomous power; the right to enforce state ordinances in accordance with the Federal Constitution; protection of Sarawak's borders; and sovereignty on the sea, underground, and resources within the state.

Sarawak raised five issues that have to be discussed with the Special Cabinet Committee:

- the need to review the special allocation for Sarawak and Sabah under Article 112D of the Federal Constitution
- the right to additional revenue under the Tenth Schedule of the Federal Constitution
- residual power under Article 77 of the Federal Constitution
- lands that are no longer needed by the federal government but placed under

the Federal Land Commission ● the exercise of power in relation to education, medical and health that is not satisfactory

During the MA63 Steering Committee meeting, Abang Johari thwarted Lim's attempt to stop Sarawak from imposing the sales tax on petroleum products.

He stressed that Sales Taxes is stated in Part 5 of the Tenth Schedule in the Federal Constitution, additional sources of revenue assigned to the state of Sabah and Sarawak include import duty and excise duty on petroleum products.

The Sales Tax would generate a projected revenue of RM3.897 billion through petroleum products sales tax in 2019.

Aug 19, 2019

The Special Cabinet Committee resolves seven of the 21 issues related to the implementation of MA63 in Sabah and Sarawak. Another 14 issues involving the two East Malaysian states and the federal government require further discussion.

The issues, which were resolved in the meeting among the three parties, were:

- The Federal Government agrees to hand over regulation of gas distribution in Sarawak to the state in accordance with the state's Distribution of Gas Ordinance 2016.
- Sabah and Sarawak also agree to form a committee to boost collaboration on federal-funded public works.
- On labour supply, the federal government said it had no objection to handing over authority to Sabah and Sarawak through a subsidiary legislation of 'labour conditions peculiar to the state' under the respective state labour ordinances.

● On health issues, the federal government and both states agree to form a special management committee which will have discussions periodically on the issue.

● Agriculture and forestry issues were dropped during the meeting, as both issues are already listed under state Taskforce MA63 list, whose final report would be presented at the next meeting.

● On Sabah's claim to export duties for logs and forest products, the federal and state governments were agreeable that the matter had been resolved as authority on the matter was delegated to the Sabah Forestry Department since June 2017.

The negotiations were said to be in line with pledges made in Pakatan Harapan's (PH) manifesto for the 14th general election campaign, which promised to review the implementation of MA63.

Aug 20, 2019

Abang Johari says issues related to oil and gas in Sarawak would be exclusively discussed between him, Mohd Shafie, and Dr Mahathir.

Sept 4, 2019

Liew says the special taskforce on the implementation of the MA63 had completed its final report on Aug 31, 2019.

Sept 27, 2019

While in New York, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says he has lost hope of Sarawak and Sabah having their oil royalty raised to 20 per cent under the PH government, although this was promised in the PH election manifesto.

Sept 30, 2019

Sarawak collects RM5.653

billion in revenue through petroleum products sales tax.

Nov 4, 2019

Abang Johari, when tabling the Sarawak Budget 2020, says Petronas is required to pay the overdue sales tax to the state government as stipulated under the existing legal framework.

Nov 18, 2019

The MA63 Steering Committee decides that issues surrounding oil royalty and cash payment for petroleum and gas extracted in Sabah and Sarawak would be discussed separately in December.

The discussion to be held between Dr Mahathir, Abang Johari, and Mohd Shafie would be on the basis of 'business to business' between Petronas, Petros, and the Sarawak government.

The committee also resolves issues in regards to regulatory authority over distribution of gas and electricity as well as agreed to set up a Federal Project Implementation and Collaboration Working Committee to monitor the mechanism and implementation of federal projects in Sabah and Sarawak.

Dec 16, 2019

Abang Johari holds a tripartite discussion with Dr Mahathir and Mohd Shafie, to discuss issues relating to Sarawak and Sabah's rights on oil and gas resources at the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya.

The meeting is a separate forum from the MA63 Steering Committee to discuss and address issues relating to Sarawak and Sabah's on oil and gas rights vis-a-vis the Federal Constitution and MA63.

Sarawakians continue to wait for more good news from the MA63 negotiations.