

## 'Growth at 4.6pc this year and next'

**PUTRAJAYA:** Malaysia's economy is expected to grow at 4.6 per cent this year and next, slightly lower than 4.7 per cent last year, due to weaker-than-expected investment and export activity, said the World Bank.

It said the country's deep financial and trade integration with the global economy, unresolved trade tensions, heightened protectionist tendencies among major economies and volatility in financial and commodity markets would pose risks to growth in the near term.

"We are still optimistic about the recovery in global trade and global growth returning to its trend rate.

"By next year, the technology cycle will move up again," said World Bank lead economist, Richard Record, at the launch of the World Bank's 20th edition Malaysia Economic Monitor, here, yesterday.

The report focuses on re-energising the public service and

building public service capacity, in line with Malaysia's transition to become a high-income and developed nation.

It also suggests that policy actions focus on strengthening fiscal buffers, facilitating private investment and ensuring adequate social protection for lower-income households.

Record said bold reforms and measures were needed in the medium term to boost human capital and public sector revenues.

Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali said the government had expected growth to be resilient in the face of a volatile external environment.

"While we navigate through the turbulence, it is important that we remain focused on our pursuit of becoming a developed nation, in line with our recent announcement of ensuring shared prosperity for all," he said.

World Bank country director

for Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, Dr Mara Warwick, said the government's priority to instil good governance and integrity in its national development plans were critical enablers for Malaysia's transition to developed nation status in the next few years.

"We expect Malaysia to cross the high-income threshold. We are ready to support the government in developing its plan. Malaysia has a long proud history of successful and robust development planning."

Warwick said the upcoming National Development Plan would likely witness Malaysia's transition to high-income country status.

"Over the next four years, policymakers and officials will be exploring a wide range of development topics and policy issues affecting this milestone in Malaysia's development journey, which we anticipate will occur by 2024," she added. **Ayisy Yusof**