



## **MEDIA RELEASE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE**

### **ASEAN-KOREA MUSIC FESTIVAL (ROUND) 2025 SHOWCASES UNITY THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

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**KUALA LUMPUR, 20 June 2025** — The ASEAN-Korea Music Festival (ROUND) 2025 was officially launched this evening by The Honourable Khairul Firdaus Akbar Khan, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, at Saloma, Kuala Lumpur. The opening ceremony gathered diplomats, cultural leaders, artists, and guests from across ASEAN and the Republic of Korea in a vibrant celebration of unity through music and culture. In line with the spirit of Malaysia MADANI, which champions inclusivity, sustainability and mutual respect, the festival reflects the country's vision of building a compassionate and culturally rich society through international collaboration.

In his officiating remarks, Khairul Firdaus emphasised the festival's theme "Come Around, Here to Shine" as a powerful reflection of Malaysia's commitment to harness new model of cultural diplomacy under its ASEAN Chairmanship this year.

"Through the ASEAN-Korea Music Festival, we reaffirm the importance of cultural exchange as a conduit for social cohesion, deepening our mutual understanding and strengthening the bonds between the peoples of ASEAN and the Republic of Korea," said the Deputy Minister. "Malaysia continues to prioritise creative and cultural cooperation, recognising it as a vital tool for people-to-people connectivity and regional growth."

Malaysia and the Republic of Korea share over six decades of diplomatic relations. This partnership is further strengthened through programmes like ROUND 2025, jointly organised with Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) and Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC). Reflecting the values of Malaysia MADANI, the event encourages harmony and mutual enrichment between nations, underlining how culture and creativity can be guiding forces for progress in a diverse world.

Representing the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Ambassador Yeo Seung-bae lauded the spirit of ASEAN-Korea cooperation and highlighted the broader diplomatic context of the event:

"Korea's hosting of APEC and Malaysia's ASEAN Chairmanship this year offer a timely and valuable opportunity to elevate our cooperation to the next level. Building on this shared vision at the leadership level, our two countries are set to pursue a broad range of collaborative initiatives with cultural exchange taking centre stage," said Ambassador Seung-bae.

"I hope to further strengthen, through the universal language of music, the bonds of friendship and cultural exchange between Korea and ASEAN."

The two-day festival features electrifying performances by acclaimed ASEAN and Korean artists, offering a platform for creative expression and cross-cultural appreciation. ROUND 2025 not only celebrates music and the arts, but also symbolises the unity, resilience and shared aspirations of the ASEAN-Korea community.

MOTAC will continue to leverage the power of culture as an engine for sustainable tourism, socio-economic development and international cooperation. The event also sets the stage for Visit Malaysia 2026, positioning Malaysia as a hub of cultural convergence and artistic innovation. This initiative resonates deeply with the Malaysia MADANI framework, which aspires to uplift

the nation through unity in diversity, cultural empowerment, and global cooperation.

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