

New Malaysian Currency Series

Introduction

The introduction of the third series of Malaysian coins and the fourth series of Malaysian banknotes marks yet another significant milestone for Bank Negara Malaysia as the sole currency issuing authority in Malaysia. Each of the banknote and coin series showcases the unique and distinctive aspects of the country. The latest banknote and coin series also incorporates numerous innovations and security features that are more technologically advanced than in the previous issuance of the coin series in 1989 and the banknote series in 1996.

The Third Series of Malaysian Coins

The third series of Malaysian coins was launched on 25 July 2011 and has been introduced into general circulation since 16 January 2012. The new coins, in denominations of 50 sen, 20 sen, 10 sen and 5 sen, will gradually replace the existing series, which has been in circulation since 1989. Themed 'Distinctively Malaysia', the new coins reflect the diversity and richness of Malaysia's national identity. The obverse side of all coins features fourteen dots to represent the thirteen states and the Federal Territory, while the five horizontal lines represent the five principles of the 'Rukun Negara' (national pillars), with exception of the 50 sen coin. The fine lines in the motif background of the new 50 sen coin are part of the security features. The different motifs featured on the reverse side of the respective denominations are as follows:

Denomination	Icon
50 sen	Pea tendrils motif
20 sen	Jasmine flower
10 sen	'Orang Asli' motif
5 sen	<i>Destar Siga</i>



In general, the new coins are smaller, lighter and more user-friendly. The new series of coins has been introduced in two colours – yellow and silver, with different features at the edge for easy recognition and differentiation. This design has been adopted bearing in mind the difficulties faced by the visually challenged.

The new coin series also embodies the latest minting technology that integrates improved anti-counterfeiting security features. The latest security features such as the latent image and indentions have been included in the new 50 sen coins to prevent counterfeiting and also to make authentication easier. The public will be able to see the lettering of the denomination “50” and “SEN” when the coin is tilted slightly. At the same time, the use of new metal alloys will extend the lifespan of the coins, with enhanced protection against wear and corrosion. The technical specifications of the new coin series are as follows:

Denomination	50 sen	20 sen	10 sen	5 sen
Alloy	Nickel Brass Clad Copper	Nickel Brass	Stainless Steel	Stainless Steel
Diameter (mm)	22.65	20.60	18.80	17.78
Thickness (mm)	1.92	1.75	1.50	1.12
Weight (gram)	5.66	4.18	2.98	1.72
Shape	Round with 9 indentations	Round	Round	Round
Edge	Plain	Coarse	Milled	Plain
Colour	Yellow	Yellow	Silver	Silver

The Fourth Series of Malaysian Banknotes

The fourth series of Malaysian banknotes was officially launched by YAB Dato’ Seri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, on 21 December 2011. Similar to the third series of Malaysian coins, the latest series of Malaysian banknotes has been inspired by features that are distinctively Malaysia. The banknotes feature traditional expressions in art and craft, natural wonders, flora and fauna, the economy and the nation’s traditions.

On the obverse side, all denominations of the new banknotes retain the portrait of the First Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Abdul Rahman ibni Tuanku Muhammad, the national flower *Rosa-sinensis* hibiscus (known locally as the ‘Bunga Raya’) and patterns of traditional woven fabric, the ‘songket’. The different motifs featured on the reverse side of the banknotes are as follows:

Denomination	Icon
RM100	Kinabalu Park, Sabah and pinnacles rock formations of Gunung Api Valley, Sarawak
RM50	Oil Palm & Biotechnology
RM20	Hawksbill Turtle and Leatherback Turtle
RM10	<i>Rafflesia Azlanii</i> flower
RM5	Rhinoceros Hornbill bird
RM1	Moon Kite



The RM20 banknote has been re-introduced in this new series, after its first appearance in the second series in 1982, to serve as an intermediary denomination between RM10 and RM50 for greater convenience in making payments. The old RM20 was discontinued in the third series of the Malaysian banknotes.

The new security features that have been incorporated in the new banknote series include a pixel watermark portrait with a highlight numeral, micro lens thread and iridescent patch. For familiarity and easy identification, the Bank has also retained the existing security features which have proven to be effective, including the shadow image, clear window, colour-shifting security thread, perfect see-through registration, invisible fluorescent elements, intaglio printing and micro printing. The banknotes are printed in durable substrates to maintain a high level of durability and quality while in circulation. The technical specifications of the new banknotes are as below:

Denomination	Substrate	Size (mm)	Predominant Colour
RM100	Paper	150 x 69	Purple
RM50	Paper	145 x 69	Green-blue
RM20	Paper	145 x 65	Orange
RM10	Paper	140 x 65	Red
RM5	Polymer	135 x 65	Green
RM1	Polymer	120 x 65	Blue

The banknotes retain their existing sizes and predominant colours to facilitate easy handling of the new banknotes by the public. For the visually impaired, Braille features have also been retained.

The fourth series of Malaysian banknotes will be available for circulation in the second half of 2012. The RM50 banknote became the first denomination in the series to be introduced into circulation when it was launched on 21 December 2007, in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of Malaysia's Independence.

Conclusion

Currency usually reflects the identity of a nation, showcasing its unique cultures, natural endowments and historical heritage. In keeping with its responsibility to provide high quality currency and ensure public confidence in the Malaysian currency, Bank Negara Malaysia has incorporated the latest technologies and enhanced the technical specifications of the currency to ensure longevity and higher quality. While counterfeiting has never been a significant issue, newer and better security features have been introduced, from time to time, as a pre-emptive measure to enhance the integrity of Malaysia's currency notes and coins.

The new currency series is legal tender and will co-circulate with the earlier series until the gradual process of phasing out of the older series is completed.