

This Week's Highlight : Govt To Study Options On MAS, Says PM



Shutting down the national airline is a serious matter, says Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. -- fotoBERNAMA (Filepix by Shaifuldin Ahmad)

KUALA LUMPUR -- The government will study various options before coming out with a decision on the fate of national carrier Malaysia Airlines Bhd, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. "I think it is a very serious matter to shut down the

national airline. We will nevertheless study the situation whether to shut the airline down, or should we sell it off or refinance it. All these are open for the government to decide," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby here Tuesday.

This Week's Top Stories

MONDAY

IMF: Malaysia's Economic Growth To Stabilise In Medium Term

KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects Malaysia's economic growth to stabilise in 2019 and over the medium term. "Domestic demand will remain the main driver of growth, with private consumption and investment supported by an improved business environment and investor confidence," it said in a statement Monday.

TUESDAY

Singapore Gets RM2.4 Billion Water Subsidy From Malaysia Since 1962

KUALA LUMPUR -- Based on the selling price of water to Singapore under the 1962 agreement, the island city-state

can be said to have so far received at least RM2.4 billion, or RM42 million a year, or about RM100,000 a day, worth of water subsidy from Malaysia, the Dewan Rakyat was told Tuesday. "If we count it as water subsidy we have given to Singapore, it is indeed happening. We sell water (to Singapore) at a very low price, but buy it back at a much higher price," Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah said in reply to Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar (GPS-Santubong) during question time.

WEDNESDAY

Govt Doesn't Determine "Ups And Downs" In Stock Market - Treasury

KUALA LUMPUR -- The government does not control the movements in the stock market but the supply and

demand factor, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said Wednesday. The volatility in the stock markets is a normal situation and depends on the market conditions both domestic as well as global, he said when asked about reports saying Malaysia's stock market is Asia's only loser of 2019.

THURSDAY

SC Expects Up To RM120 Bln Via Capital Market

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) expects between RM110 billion and RM120 billion in funds to be raised this year from initial public offerings (IPOs), the equity market and the issuance of corporate bonds and sukuk. Chairman Datuk Syed Zaid Albar said Thursday, he was optimistic of prospects for the year despite external headwinds and global economic uncertainties, including the ongoing trade negotiations between the United States and China.

FRIDAY

HDC Remains Optimistic Of RM50 Bln Halal Export By 2020

PETALING JAYA — Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) remained optimistic of hitting RM50 billion export target by 2020, despite recording a lower halal export of RM40 billion last year, says vice president Hanisofian Alias. "India is the new market potential, which is expanding its own halal market. On this note it requires palm oil product namely oleochemicals," he told reporters during the soft launch of World Halal Conference 2019 Friday.

LIFESTYLE
& YOUTH
BERNAMA

SMEbrief

Bernama, JW United Ink Pact To Help Local SMEs

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama) has signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with retail group, JW United Group, to introduce a new television (TV) segment and package called "e-USAHA-ONE", aimed at assisting local small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The new 12-minute programme, to be broadcast live over the "Nine11" talk show over Bernama News Channel (BNC) from Monday-Friday, will also be shown through streaming channels such as MyTV, Njoi, Bernama WebTV, Bernama Youtube, Unifi and Iflix.

MTDC Plans Cooperation With 40 SMEs To Achieve I4.0 Standard This Year

By Nur Fatin Mohamad Kadenen

KULAI -- The Malaysian Technology Development Corporation (MTDC) plans to have 40 small medium enterprises (SMEs) cooperate with it to develop and achieve the Industry 4.0 (I4.0) standard

this year. Chief executive officer Datuk Norhalim Yunus said Tuesday, in the initial stage, the agency would identify those SMEs who can adapt and come up with products in line with the fourth industrial revolution.

MED Raises Financing Allocations For Co-Ops, SMEs

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Entrepreneur Development Ministry has instructed Bank Rakyat to raise the financing allocations for cooperatives and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to 30 per cent over the next few years from the current 10 per cent. Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Md Yusof said Thursday, Bank Rakyat, an agency under the ministry, should focus more on assisting cooperatives and SMEs.

PUNB Approves RM134 Mln Funding For Bumi Auto Cos

NILAI -- Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Bhd (PUNB) has assisted 726 automotive companies and businesses involving 845 Bumiputera entrepreneurs, including engine oil distributors, as well as accident and insurance claims centres by approving

RM134.02 million financing as at December 2018. Its chief executive officer, Izwan Zainuddin said Thursday, Selangor was topped the list with RM83.61 million approved to fund 234 companies and businesses, while Negeri Sembilan was ranked eighth after Kedah with a total funding of RM16.56 million involving 34 companies and businesses.

Govt To Realign Business Ecosystem Policy To Strengthen Entrepreneurs

KUALA LUMPUR -- The government is realigning the policy governing business ecosystem to strengthen local entrepreneurs in the pursuit to improve their contribution to the economy, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Md Yusof said Thursday. He said after 61 years of independence, Bumiputera small and medium enterprises (SMEs) only contributed less than 10.0 per cent to the gross domestic product (about 8.0 per cent), despite constituting 68 per cent of the population.

PropUP

Propertyupdate

MPCB To Dispose Wisma MPL For RM189 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Pacific Corporation Bhd (MPCB) will dispose Wisma MPL to Asia New Venture Capital Holdings Sdn Bhd for RM189 million. Wisma MPL is a 23-storey office complex comprising a 19-storey office tower over a four-storey retail podium block measuring 11,848 square metres, it said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia Monday.

IKEA's First Store In Northern Peninsula A Hit Among Shoppers

GEORGE TOWN -- IKEA, the Swedish-based furniture brand store, today opened its first outlet in northern Peninsular Malaysia at Batu Kawan, about 40 kilometres from here. Being the second largest IKEA store in the country at approximately 43,678 square metres after their outlet in Johor Bahru, the store is expected to cater for up to 6,000 visitors at a single time, its store

manager A Pathmalingam said. "I believe that we will have around 20,000 visitors coming to the store on our first day," he told reporters after the grand opening here Thursday.

RM850 Mln Central i-City To Open On March 23

SHAH ALAM -- The RM850 million Central i-City shopping centre in Shah Alam is set to transform the shopping experience of Malaysians when it opens its doors on March 23 to the people of Shah Alam, Klang and surrounding areas. With Thai-inspired interior design and anchored by its lively, warm and bold personality with a theme of "Illuminated life, Illustrated vibe", the Central i-City sprawled over 940,000 sq ft net in lettable area, was jointly developed by I-Bhd and Thailand's Central Pattana Public Company Ltd.

Utusan Disposes Of Factories For RM13.5 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd is selling two adjoining semi-detached factories in Taman Shamelin Perkasa here for RM13.5 million. The media group said Thursday, wholly-owned subsidiary Utusan Publications & Distributors Sdn Bhd had inked an agreement to dispose of the buildings to Magna Mahsuri Sdn Bhd.

R&F Mall JB To Open On March 28

KUALA LUMPUR -- The R&F Princess Cove development is set to open its first shopping mall, the R&F Mall Johor Bahru, on March 28, which will be marked by an exciting campaign for shoppers to celebrate the soft opening. The campaign includes free goodie bags and shopping vouchers for shoppers and a two-week lucky draw campaign with prizes such as Petron Miles points, a trip to Finland for two and a flight ticket to Seoul.

MARKET



Scoreboard

Gainers - 484

Losers - 406

Not Traded - 658

Unchanged - 356

Value - 3670000000

Volume - 4670000000

Bursa Malaysia Ends Higher On Interest In Selected Heavyweights

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia ended higher Friday, lifted by the rebound in selected heavyweights amid rotational play in oil and gas stocks. The benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) closed 6.02 points higher at 1,680.54 compared with Thursday's close of 1,674.52. The benchmark index opened 0.07 of-a-point higher at 1,674.59 and moved between 1,672.60 and 1,683.25 throughout the day. Maybank Investment Bank chartist Nik Ihsan Raja Abdullah said oil and gas-related stocks were expected to have a cool-off period Thursday; however, interest in the stocks remained decent since Thursday.

"We can see that their interest in the oil and gas counters, not to mention the second and third liners that were supporting today's trade. "However, we also see that there were some profit-taking starting in these second and third liners," he told Bernama. On the scoreboard, market breadth was slightly positive with gainers outnumbering losers 484 to 406, while 356 counters remained unchanged, 658 were untraded and 44 others were suspended. Volume slipped to 4.67 billion worth RM3.67 billion from 4.77 billion worth RM2.75 billion on Thursday. Main Market volume slipped to 3.81 billion shares worth RM3.46 billion from 3.93 billion shares



Exchange Rate (Ringgit : Foreign Currency)

	Buying	Selling
USD	4.0890	4.0940
EUR	4.6287	4.6360
GBP	5.4220	5.4307
100 YEN	3.6623	3.6671
SGD	3.0197	3.0245

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

worth RM2.56 billion on Thursday.

Ringgit Ends Unchanged Against US Dollar

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit ended unchanged against the US dollar Friday as weak sentiment persisted due to bearish external leads. At 6 pm, the local currency remained at 4.0890/0940. Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said investors were looking forward to the outcome of the Federal Open Market Committee meeting, scheduled next week from March 19 to 20. "Based on the interest rate futures contract, the probability of US interest rate cuts has gone up and it is likely to happen at the end of 2019 or early 2020," he told Bernama. On the local front, there is rising expectation that Bank Negara Malaysia might consider reducing the Overnight Policy Rate in the near future as the general consensus was that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) growth may be negative in February. Against other major currencies, the ringgit was traded lower. It declined against the Japanese yen to 3.6623/6671 from 3.6594/6648, slipped versus the euro to 4.6287/6360 from 4.6259/6320 on Thursday. The ringgit also depreciated versus the British pound to 5.4220/4307 from 5.4200/4274 and eased against the Singapore dollar to 3.0197/0245 from 3.0162/3201 Thursday.

Short-Term Rates Close Stable On BNM Operations

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term interbank rates remained stable on Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) operations to absorb

excess liquidity from the financial system. The surplus in the conventional system declined to RM21.43 billion from RM30.29 billion this morning while in the Islamic system, it declined to RM8.97 billion from RM12.17 billion, previously. Earlier, it issued a maturity auction tender, a Commodity Murabahah Programme, a reverse repo tender, three Qard tenders and two Bank Negara Interbank Bills Islamic. At 4 pm, the central bank conducted a RM21.5 billion conventional money market tender and a RM8.9 billion Murabahah money market tender, both for three-day money. The average Islamic overnight interest rate stood at 3.19 per cent while the one-, two- and three-week rates were pegged at 3.26 per cent, 3.30 per cent and 3.35 per cent, respectively.

KLIBOR Futures End Untraded

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives ended untraded Friday. Spot month March 2019 was unchanged at 96.22 while April 2019, May 2019 and June 2019 remained pegged at 96.40, respectively. Both volume and open interest remained nil. At the 11 am fixing, the underlying three-month KLIBOR stood at 3.69 per cent.

KLCI Futures End Higher

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed higher Friday, tracking the performance of the underlying cash market. Spot month March 2019 closed six points better at 1,676.5, April 2019 rose 7.5 points to 1,677.5, June 2019 was eight points higher at 1,672.5 while September 2019 accumulated eight points to 1,668. Turnover declined to 4,336 lots from 5,060 lots Thursday and open interest was slightly stronger at 27,353 contracts from 27,253 contracts. The underlying benchmark FBM KLCI closed 6.02 points higher at 1,680.54.

HBSC Banking On Blockchain Transactions As Next Growth Area

KUALA LUMPUR -- HSBC Bank is banking on blockchain transactions for trade as the next potential growth area, in line with the group's heavy investment to embrace technology. Asia Pacific Group general manager and regional head of commercial banking, Stuart Tait told reporters Tuesday, blockchain would be a great way to make trade transactions more efficient given its positive features -- secure, trusted and a quicker form of transaction -- that would boost trade in the future.

Alliance Bank Plans Up To RM2.5 Bln Sukuk Programme

KUALA LUMPUR -- Alliance Islamic Bank Bhd, a wholly-owned unit of Alliance Bank Malaysia Bhd (Alliance Bank), plans to undertake a perpetual sukuk programme of up to RM2.5 billion in nominal value and a RM300 million Islamic commercial papers (ICP) programme. Alliance Bank said it lodged the two programmes with the Securities Commission Wednesday. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia, the bank said the sukuk programme comprised a Senior Sukuk Murabahah of up to RM1.2 billion in nominal value; an Islamic Tier 2 Sukuk Murabahah of up to RM800 million in nominal value and an Islamic Additional Tier 1 Sukuk Wakalah of up to RM500 million in nominal value.

Bursa Malaysia, Maybank Co-Host Invest Malaysia 2019

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia and Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank) will co-host the 15th edition of Invest Malaysia 2019, which is expected to attract over 1,000 local and foreign fund managers with total estimated asset under management of US\$20.16 trillion. This year's forum will discuss Malaysia's ambition and purpose for the nation. It will also provide clarity on the programmes designed to deliver



on Malaysia's new agenda for growth with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad expected to deliver the keynote address, it said in a statement Wednesday.

Bank Pembangunan To Set Up Fund To Educate Public On Environment

KUALA LUMPUR -- In light of the recent river pollution in Pasir Gudang, Johor, Bank Pembangunan Malaysia Bhd will set up an Industry Sustainable Education Fund to educate the public on environmental crime, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said. He told reporters Wednesday, said the fund would support efforts to educate the public not only to care for the environment but also to have the courage to blow the whistle on any environmental crime.

Bank Negara To Host Financial Carnival In Terengganu

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), in its effort to boost financial awareness, will organise a carnival in Terengganu next month that brings together more than 45 financial institutions and government agencies. Karnival Kewangan Terengganu, to be held from April 4 to 6 at TH Hotel and Convention Centre in Kuala Terengganu, is a one-stop financial edutainment platform themed "Your Financial Needs Matter", it said in a statement Wednesday.

BIMB Invest Aims To Increase Global Shariah Equity Fund To RM1 Bln This Year

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd's unit, BIMB Investment Management Bhd (BIMB Invest) aims to increase the size of its global shariah-environmental, social and governance (ESG) equity fund, BIMB-Arabesque i Global Dividend Fund 1 (BigDF1), to RM1

billion this year from RM800 million at present. BIMB Invest Chief executive officer Najmuddin Mohd Lutfi told reporters Wednesday, having accessed Singapore early this year, BigDF1 is poised for further market expansion in the region.

Stable Outlook For Insurance Sector In 2019 - RAM Ratings

KUALA LUMPUR -- RAM Rating Services Bhd (RAM Ratings) is maintaining a stable outlook on the local insurance industry for this year with general insurance premiums expected to stay stagnant in view of the progressive impact of tariff liberalisation and as the country's economic growth moderates. It said in a statement Thursday, life insurance new business premiums were only expected to chart a modest one to two per cent increase due to weaker consumer sentiment and rising cost of living concerns.

AmlInvestment Clinches Six Regional Awards

KUALA LUMPUR -- AmlInvestment Bank Bhd has won six regional awards year to date. In a statement Thursday, chief executive officer Seohan Soo said the accolades reaffirmed its position as a top player in the investment banking sector. "This further underscores our commitment to providing the best debt capital market solutions to our esteemed clients," he said. Among others, AmlInvestment has been named the Best Loan Adviser for the second consecutive year at the Asset Triple A Country Awards 2018.

Alam Maritim Bags RM40 Mln Contract From Carigali HESS

KUALA LUMPUR -- Alam Maritim Resources Bhd's (Alam) wholly-owned subsidiary, Alam Maritim Sdn Bhd, has been awarded a RM40 million underwater inspection services contract by Carigali Hess Operating Company Sdn Bhd. The contract required the company to perform a confirmed base scope of work and "call-out" or unscheduled work for the inspection of Carigali Hess' jackets, pipelines and, floating, storage and offloading (FSO), it said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia Monday.

MAHB Passenger Movement Up 5.1 Pct In February

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd's (MAHB) network of airports, including Turkey's Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen international Airport (SGIA), reported a 5.1 per cent growth in traffic to 10.6 million passenger movements in February 2019 compared with 10.1 million passenger movements in the previous corresponding period. The growth comprised 8.14 million and 2.49 million passenger movements in domestic airports and Istanbul SGIA, respectively. MAHB said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia Monday, the domestic passenger movement growth was mainly attributed to the Chinese New Year festival which coincided with the one-week school holidays.

AmGeneral Insurance Eyes Higher Gross Written Premium In FY19

KUALA LUMPUR -- AmGeneral Insurance Bhd aims to achieve a higher gross written premium for this financial year ending March 31, 2019, compared with the RM1.5 billion recorded in the preceding year. Chief executive officer Derek Roberts said Monday, the company had introduced three additional auto insurance to the market during the year.

Proton Expects Sales Of Persona, Iriz Models To Increase 30 Pct

KUALA LUMPUR -- National carmaker

Proton expects sales of the Iriz and Persona to increase by at least 30 per cent with the launch of facelift models this month. Currently, sales of the Iriz and Persona, stand at between 1,000 and 2,000 units monthly. Proton Holdings Bhd chief executive officer Dr Li Chunrong told reporters Monday, the new Iriz and Persona, along with the sports utility vehicle (SUV), the Proton X70, would be main contributors to the company's target of breaking even this year and turning into profitability in 2020.

Airbnb Women Hosts Earn RM159 Mln In 2018

KUALA LUMPUR, -- Women hosts on Airbnb nationwide earned a combined RM159 million in 2018, an increase of 50 per cent compared with 2017. Airbnb head of public policy for Southeast Asia Mich Goh said on Tuesday, the women hosts on Airbnb, who made up almost 50 per cent of all hosts in the country, earned a typical annual income of RM5,793.94. The Malaysian female Airbnb hosts welcomed over 912,000 guests in 2018, she said.

MIDA Eyes More Investments In Advanced Tech From South Korea

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) is hoping to attract more investments from South Korea, especially in the advanced technology industry. Chief executive officer Datuk Azman Mahmud said the target would likely be realised with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MIDA and the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) here Tuesday.

SAE Eyeing 700th Aircraft Scheduled Maintenance This Year

SEPANG -- Aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) service provider, Sepang Aircraft Engineering Sdn Bhd (SAE), aims to reach its 700th scheduled maintenance by year-end, driven by a strong demand for the MRO service in the Asia-Pacific region. As at

end-2018, the company had performed 570 scheduled maintenance since its inception in 2007. Chief executive officer Raymond Lim told reporters Tuesday, the company was leveraging on its close affiliation with its parent company, Airbus, to adopt digitalisation or better known as smart hangar technology to enhance its efficiency.

UPS Optimistic Of Export Growth In Southeast Asia

KUALA LUMPUR -- United Parcel Service (UPS), a global leader in logistics, is optimistic of the export growth in Malaysia and Southeast Asia on the back of a robust economic and trading environment within ASEAN, says its president for South Asia District Michelle Ho. In the last quarter of 2018, the company saw an average export growth of 10 per cent, year-on-year, across Southeast Asia. "We have made considerable progress in improving the transit time for shipments in and out of Asia, with many intra-Asia shipments being delivered the next day," she told a press conference Tuesday.

Astrazeneca To Invest RM500 Mln In Malaysia

PETALING JAYA -- British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company, AstraZeneca, has signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with Invest Kuala Lumpur Corporation (InvestKL) to invest more than RM500 million in Malaysia over the next five years. Speaking to reporters after the signing ceremony Tuesday, InvestKL chief executive officer Datuk Zainal Amanshah said the corporation wanted to ensure for the period 2019-2023, the RM500 million investment would be realised.

Bermaz Auto's 3Q19 Net Profit Doubles To RM81.01 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bermaz Auto Bhd's net profit more than doubled to RM81.01 million in the third quarter ended Jan 31, 2019 (3Q19) compared with RM40.47 million in the previous corresponding period. Revenue

surged 39.1 per cent to a record RM778.13 million from RM559.39 million previously. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Wednesday, Bermaz said the strong results were mainly due to higher vehicle sales, driven by strong domestic demand for Mazda vehicles, particularly for SUV models.

PPES Works CCCC JV Accepts RM466.68 Mln Contract

KUALA LUMPUR -- PPES Works (Sarawak) Sdn Bhd (PPES Works) and China Communications Construction Company Company (M) Sdn Bhd's joint venture, PPES Works CCCC JV Sdn Bhd, has accepted a RM466.68 million contract from the Sarawak government. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Wednesday, parent company, Cahaya Mata Sarawak Bhd, said the contract was for the construction and completion of the proposed 1,048 metres long Bintulu-Jepak Bridge Crossing Kuala Kemena, Bintulu.

Primary Industries Ministry Targets 10 Pct Increase In Local Palm Oil Use

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Primary Industries Ministry targets a 10 percent increase in the use of palm oil and its products through the "Sayangi Sawitku" campaign. Its minister Teresa Kok Suh Sim said Wednesday, local use of palm oil products currently stood at 20 per cent while about 80 per cent was for export markets.

UOBAM Targets RM100 Mln AUM For United-i Global Balanced Fund In Two Months

KUALA LUMPUR -- UOB Asset Management (Malaysia) Bhd (UOBAM) is targeting RM100 million in asset under management (AUM) for its newly launched United-i Global Balanced Fund in two months' time. Executive director/ chief executive officer Lim Suet Ling told the media Wednesday, as at Jan 31, 2019, UOBAM has RM6.86 billion AUM and hoped to achieve its RM7 billion mark this year.



QWIK PAY

TICKETLESS, CASHLESS
ONE-STOP PAYMENT SOLUTIONS

Download now at:

Available on the App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

www.myqpsolutions.com.my
for more info

Sponsored by:

SERBA DINAMIK
SERBA DINAMIK GROUP BERHAD
An innovative app by Serba Dinamik IT Solutions Sdn Bhd

Agrobank Eyes Loan Growth Of RM1.2 Bln For FY19

KUALA LUMPUR -- Agrobank, formerly known as Bank Pertanian Malaysia Bhd, targets loan growth of RM1.2 billion for the financial year ending Dec 31, 2019 (FY19). President/chief executive officer Syed Alwi Mohamed Sultan said at a press conference Thursday, for FY19, the loan balance totalled RM10.7 billion with loan growth of 12 per cent or RM1.2 billion, surpassing the earlier target of RM1 billion.

Manufacturing Sales Up 7 Pct To RM72.5 Bln In January 2019

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's manufacturing sales in January 2019 rose seven per cent to RM72.5 billion from RM67.8 billion reported a year ago, said the Department of Statistics. "The growth was supported by increase in petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (9.2 per cent), transport equipment and other manufactures products (7.7 per cent) and electrical

and electronics products (6.3 per cent)," said Chief Statistician Datuk Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin in a statement Thursday.

Utusan Disposes Of Factories For RM13.5 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd is selling two adjoining semi-detached factories in Taman Shamelin Perkasa here for RM13.5 million. The media group said wholly-owned subsidiary Utusan Publications & Distributors Sdn Bhd had inked an agreement to dispose of the buildings to Magna Mahsuri Sdn Bhd. The proposed disposal provided an opportunity to unlock the immediate value of the properties and enabled the group to raise funds for its working capital requirements, Utusan said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia Thursday.

MASkargo Acquires Tracking Solutions For Containers, Pallets

KUALA LUMPUR -- MAB Kargo Sdn Bhd (MASkargo) has partnered with TW Control Sdn Bhd (TWC), CORE Transport Technologies (CORE) and Nordisk Aviation Products (Nordisk) to implement a tracking solution which will allow it to monitor its containers and pallets. In a statement Monday, it said the integration of the COREInsight unit load devices (ULD) tracking solution would allow MASkargo to increase its efficiency through inventory management improvements on the ground.

Eight Out Of 10 Malaysia-Based Employees Expect A Yearly Bonus

KUALA LUMPUR -- Eight out of 10 Malaysia-based employees or 83 per cent are expecting a yearly bonus, averaging between one to two months salary, said Randstad Malaysia Country Director Ryan Carroll. He said in a statement Monday, employees were looking forward to be rewarded for their contributions and loyalty to the organisations, especially if they had stayed with their employers amid major political changes and business transformation projects.

Malaysia Suspends Boeing 737 Max 8 Operations With Immediate Effect

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) has suspended the operations of the Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft flying into and out, as well as transiting in Malaysia effective immediately until further notice. This is in the wake of two fatal crashes involving the

aircraft in less than five months, its chief executive officer, Ahmad Nizar Zolfakar said in a statement Tuesday. CAAM also clarified that none of Malaysian carriers were operating the Boeing 737 MAX 8.

Govt Has Option To Close Down Malaysia Airlines - Former Khazanah MD

PETALING JAYA -- The government has an option whether to close down Malaysia Airlines Bhd, said former Khazanah Nasional Bhd managing director Tan Sri Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim. "It is very difficult (to say). We don't have such a big market like Singapore and Thailand. "Some are saying, 'Why don't we close it (Malaysia Airlines) down?' Maybe that's an option for the government to consider," he told reporters Tuesday.

Malindo Does Not Operate Boeing 737 MAX

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malindo Air does not operate the Boeing 737 MAX, which has been grounded by some airlines following two deadly crashes involving the aircraft in less than six months. In a statement Tuesday, the airline said it was now operating 42 aircraft, consisting of 29 Boeing 737NG jets and 13 ATR72-600 jets. Chief executive officer Chandram Rama Muthy said Malindo Air would be more diligent in any future plan of aircraft delivery from the MAX family.

US-China Trade War To Benefit Selangor Bio Bay Project - Teng

PORT KLANG -- The ongoing trade war between China and the United States will likely

benefit Central Spectrum (M) Sdn Bhd (CSSB) in terms of attracting investments for its Selangor Bio Bay (SBB) project, one of the company's flagship developments. Selangor senior executive councillor in charge of investments, Datuk Teng Chang Kim told reporters Tuesday, he foresaw more industrialists from the biotechnology sector of China, India and the European continent investing in SBB as a result of the trade dispute.

New CEO Of Central Spectrum Aims To Bring Quality Investments To S'gor Bio Bay

PORT KLANG -- The newly appointed chief executive officer of Central Spectrum (M) Sdn Bhd, Mohamad Razif Abdul Wahab, will intensify efforts to bring in more quality investments to spur growth in the Selangor Bio Bay (SBB) project, one of the company's flagship developments. Mohamad Razif, who assumed office in February this year, told reporters Tuesday, he expects the first phase of the SBB development, situated in Precinct 1A in Pulau Indah here, to attract some RM500 million worth of investments in years to come.

No Limit To Number Of Approved Permits To Be Issued - MITI

KUALA LUMPUR -- There is no limit to the number of approved permits (AP) to be released throughout the year under the new open AP policy implemented from Jan 1, 2019, said the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). In a statement Wednesday, the ministry said companies might apply for

additional AP based on their sales performance. "At the moment, most of the new companies are still not fully in operation as they need to fulfil some technical requirements and be prepared for business operational matters," it said.

Price Of 568 Consumer Goods Decrease During May-Dec 2018

KUALA LUMPUR -- A total of 568 goods or 63.2 per cent of 900 consumer goods saw a price reduction between May-December 2018, says the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry. Deputy Minister Ching Chieng Jen said Thursday, 317 goods (35.3 per cent) recorded price increases while the price of eight other goods (0.9 per cent) remained unchanged. He said the 900 goods were selected based on findings of the 'Malaysia's Household Expenditure Survey 2016' conducted by the Department of Statistics Malaysia.

TNB Will Make Leadership Change Announcement At Appropriate Time

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) will make an official announcement on changes to its leadership when the time is appropriate. "In accordance with the company's practice, any material statement on changes of TNB's leadership or matters that can/will affect the company will be issued officially at the appropriate time," the utility company said in a statement Thursday.

January Wholesale, Retail Trade Sales Value Hits RM108.9 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's wholesale and retail trade sales value increased 7.8 per cent to RM108.9 billion in January 2019 compared to the corresponding period in 2018, says the Department of Statistics Malaysia. In a statement Thursday, chief statistician Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the increase was mainly contributed by retail trade which grew 10.6 per cent year-on-year. "For the wholesale trade, sales value recorded an annual growth of 6.2 per cent while motor vehicles sub-sector also expanded by 4.8 per cent," he said.

Retail Segment Growth Mirrors Investors Continued Confidence Of Malaysia - Lim

GEORGE TOWN -- The growth of the retail segment in the country's economy is a recognition of the business community's confidence of its potentials, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said Thursday. He said the healthy growth of approved foreign direct investments (FDIs) showed the continued confidence of investors in Malaysia. The bullish outlook has also led to growth in the retail segment and stronger private consumption.

IPI Up 3.2 Pct In January 2019

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's industrial production index (IPI) grew 3.2 per cent in January 2019 as compared with the same month in 2018, thanks to the increase in the index of electricity and manufacturing of

7.8 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively. The mining index, however, posted a downtrend of 0.9 per cent, said the Department of Statistics. In a statement Thursday, Chief Statistician Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the manufacturing sector output increased 4.2 per cent in January 2019 after registering a growth of 4.4 per cent in December 2018.

INCEIF Constantly Engages Stakeholders To Promote SDG

KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Centre for Education in Islamic Finance (INCEIF) has constantly engaged stakeholders to promote the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, said its president and chief executive officer, Prof Datuk Dr Azmi Omar in a statement Friday. INCEIF according to him, has worked with CIMB Islamic Bank Bhd, a strong key player in the financial services industry, to develop a sustainability strategy, financing and valuation framework for the bank.

Malaysian REITs Yields Remain At 4-5 Pct This Year

PETALING JAYA -- The average yields that will be generated from Malaysian real estate investment trusts (REITs) this year is likely to remain at between four per cent and five per cent, given the property overhang in the country. Manulife Asset Management Services Bhd chief executive officer Jason SM Chong said, however, considered the yield growth as "decent" as it was still better than current fixed-deposit rates, which stood around three to four per cent per annum (p.a).

RHB Opens 20th Branch In Perak

KUALA LUMPUR -- RHB Bank Bhd, Malaysia's fourth largest fully integrated financial services group, Monday opened its 20th branch in Perak, located at SOHO Ipoh and Premier Centre. In a statement Monday, it said the SOHO Ipoh outlet would enhance customers' banking experience and provide one-stop banking services in a more vibrant and customer-friendly setting.

Malaysia Airlines Wins 'Best Airline In Asia' Award At ITB Berlin

KUALA LUMPUR -- National airline Malaysia Airlines has scooped the Best Airline in Asia Award at this year's International Council of Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA) International Travel Awards at ITB Berlin. Malaysia Airlines group chief executive officer Izhah Ismail said in a statement Monday, the award is dedicated to its employees who focus on delivering a world-class travel experience for its passengers every day.

Health4U, UMS Inks MoU In Move Towards Digital Healthcare In Sabah

KOTA KINABALU -- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Health4U Solution Sdn Bhd (Health4U), a developer of BookDoc application, and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) was signed Tuesday, marking a milestone in digital healthcare in Sabah. The MoU will see the two parties solidifying a collaborative relationship in the areas of teaching and research, besides signifying BookDoc's commitment in contributing to the development of digital healthcare landscape in the country; while working with UMS to pave the way in realising UMS's dream of establishing the first smart teaching hospital in East Malaysia.

Hisham Hamdan Appointed As UDA Holdings New Chairman

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Ministry of Entrepreneur Development (MED) has appointed Datuk Hisham Hamdan as UDA Holdings Bhd new chairman, effective Feb 28, 2019. The ministry has also appointed three new UDA board members, namely Datuk Mohd Rafee Mohamed, Datuk Rosli Dahlan and Mohamad Subki Ahmad, who replaced three members whose term of office expired on the same day, it said in a statement Tuesday.

CENTEXS, Huawei Collaborate On Smart Agriculture Technologies

BETONG -- The Centre of Technical Excellence Sarawak (CENTEXS) is collaborating with Chinese telecommunication and digital technology giant Huawei to develop technologies to be used for smart agriculture in Sarawak. Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg said Tuesday, although certain countries had issues buying Huawei's its products over national security concerns, the centre was looking forward to the sharing of technologies developed.

Kuching International Airport To Have New Cargo Complex

KUCHING -- Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd plans to build a new cargo complex at the Kuching International Airport (KIA). Malaysia Airports Sdn Bhd (MAB) senior airport manager Jun Iskandar Murshidi told reporters Tuesday, tender for the

project consultant had been called and the appointment was expected to be made by July.

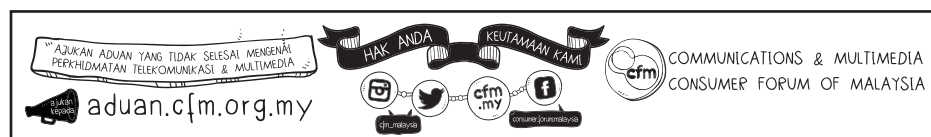
IATA Launches Certification For Handling Of Perishable Goods

KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched a new industry certification, the Centre for Excellence for Independent Validators in Perishable Logistics (CEIV Fresh), to improve the handling and transport of perishable products by air. IATA said Tuesday although perishable goods is a growing market for air cargo, specific time and temperature requirements for food and plant products makes its handling and transportation challenging.

HDC Signs MoU With Korean Agency To Enhance Halal Bilateral Trade, Investment

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) with the strategic aim of enhancing halal bilateral trade and investment exchanges, as well as market access for halal products and services, between both countries. HDC industry development vice-president Hanisofian Alias said Wednesday, the export performance of the halal sector to South Korea has increased in tandem with the growing demand for halal products, coupled with rising halal awareness.

LIFESTYLE & YOUTH BERNAMA



HWGG Capital Unveils Cash Token For Blockchain Transactions



(From left) HWGG Capital PLC Marketing Manager Goh Ing Chien; HWGG Chief Executive Officer Gavin Lim; HWGG Capital PLC General Manager Mavis Mok and HWGG Capital PLC IT Manager Lee Zhern Je introducing HWG Cash, the first and only stable and secure cash token in Asia, and its new payment app, HwGPay.

KUALA LUMPUR -- Labuan-based HWGG Capital PLC, a member of Ho Wah Genting Group, has unveiled HWG Cash, its first fiat-pegged cash token, which can be used to make fast, safe and secure transactions on blockchain. In a statement Thursday, it said HWG Cash, which has been approved and supervised under the Labuan Financial Services Authority, was the first licensed cash token in Asia and was said to be the only stable and secure token among cryptocurrencies.

The company, which is one of the leading blockchain payment solutions providers in the region, said each HWC Cash token issued in circulation was pegged to the US dollar to safeguard its stability, thus eliminating any risk of volatile price fluctuations seen in several other digital tokens in the market. HWG Cash can be used by consumers and businesses via the company's new payment app HwGPay, now available for download from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store for Android and iOS devices,

respectively. Leveraging on blockchain technology, HwGPay is a digital asset wallet that can be used to store, send, receive and make payment using digital assets and cash tokens such as Bitcoin, Ethereum and HWG Cash.

SEAMLESS USER EXPERIENCE

HwGPay, which complements HWG Cash, offers a seamless user experience for consumers to make online digital asset transactions in a secure and compliant manner. HWGG Capital chief executive officer Gavin Lim said: "Digital assets have been rapidly gaining traction and many countries are recognising its potential and value as the future of online payment solutions.

"HWG Cash represents an exciting opportunity for the mass market to experience Asia's first and only fiat-pegged cash token. We are committed to deliver the next-gen digital asset that is not only intuitive and easy to use but also regulated and supervised under a recognised authority." HWGG

Capital said converting fiat currency to HWG Cash Tokens was a simple and straightforward process. Users first need to deposit their fiat currency to a designated HWGG Capital PLC account to be converted to HWG Cash Tokens. This allows them to utilise the tokens to make digital asset payments and transactions via the HwGPay app. Similarly, whenever the user wants to make a withdrawal, they can redeem the HWG Cash Tokens to fiat currency from the company through their platforms. The latter will be credited to the withdrawers' bank accounts.

AUDITED EVERY QUARTER

The designated HWGG Capital PLC's account is audited every quarter and reported to the authority for monetary purposes, thus ensuring both user and merchant assets are protected. Other benefits of HWG Cash include no withdrawal fees for users and instant liquidation of digital assets to cash.

HWGG Capital chief technical officer Yoshikazu Nishimura said: "Digital tokens have been around for quite some time but it is currently underutilised in the market due to the lack of understanding, trust and belief among consumers, volatile fluctuation in pricing, and other concerns related to blockchain technology. "HWG Cash tokens use everiToken public chain technology as its core due to its security, speed, and ease of use. Consumers and merchants are able to make digital asset transactions without any fear of price fluctuations, security risk, excess fees or third-party interference."

For more information about HWGG Capital PLC and HWG Cash, please visit www.hwggcapital.com / www.hwgcash.com

-- BERNAMA