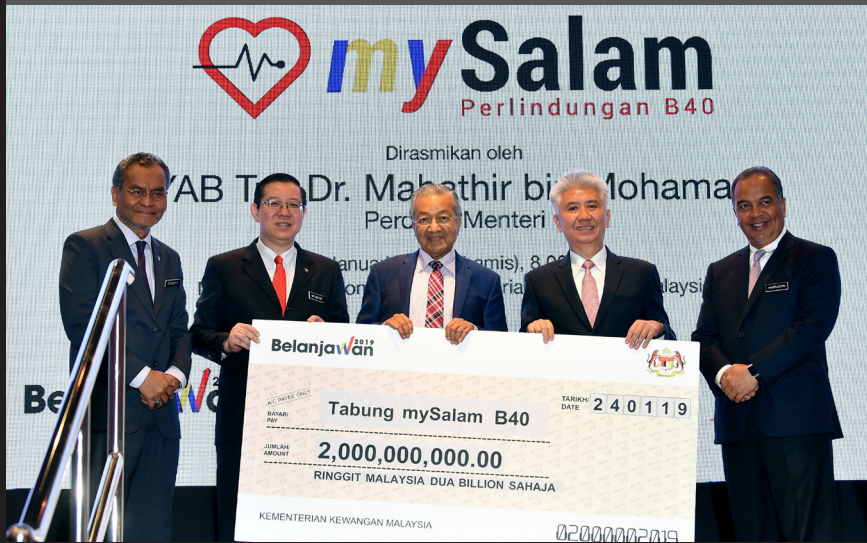


## This Week's Highlight : Mahathir Launches mySalam Scheme



Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (middle) witnessing a RM2 billion cheque presentation for the mySalam B40 fund from Great Eastern Holdings Berhad Group CEO, Khor Hock Seng (2nd, right) to Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng (2nd, left) at the launch of the B40 National Protection Scheme at the Finance Ministry in Putrajaya Thursday. -- fotoBERNAMA by Harry Salzman

PUTRAJAYA -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad Thursday launched the mySalam B40 National Protection Scheme that will provide takaful protection for the bottom 40 per cent household

income group (B40) who received the People's Living Aid (BSHR). Dr Mahathir, when launching the scheme at the Finance Ministry here, said mySalam would benefit 3.69 million Malaysians between the age of 18 and 55.

### WEDNESDAY

#### Malaysia Halal Expo Eyes RM50 Mln Sales

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Ministry of Entrepreneur Development (MED), through SME Corp Malaysia, expects the business matching sessions to be held during the three-day Malaysia Halal Expo 2019 (MHE 2019) to generate RM50 million in potential sales. The ministry said in a statement Wednesday, the sessions also aimed to provide a world-class market access and networking platform for Malaysian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to engage with their international counterparts.

### THURSDAY

#### Matrade Aims RM3.8 Bln Export Revenue By MTC

KUALA LUMPUR — The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) aims to increase the export revenue recorded by 152 mid-tier companies (MTCs) participated in the Mid-Tier Companies Development Programme (MTCDP) to RM3.8 billion by 2020 from RM2.5 billion in 2017. Deputy chief executive officer Sharimahton Mat Saleh said Thursday, the export promotion agency would groom a total of 300 participants to achieve the targeted increase in export revenue.

## This Week's Top Stories

### MONDAY

#### Malaysia Welcomes More FDI from Austria

From Ahmad Shukran Shaharudin

VIENNA -- Malaysia welcomes more foreign direct investment (FDI) from Austria besides strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries, says Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. "We welcome more foreign direct investment from Austria. We know that the trade volume is not very big but substantial," he told a joint press conference with Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz following a bilateral meeting at the Federal Chancellery here Monday.

### TUESDAY

#### BNM International Reserves Rise To US\$101.7 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR – Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) international reserves amounted to US\$101.7 billion as at Jan 15, 2019, slightly higher than US\$101.4 billion recorded as at Dec 31, 2018. "The reserves position is sufficient to finance 7.3 months of retained imports and is 1.0 time the short-term external debt," the central bank said in a statement Tuesday.

### FRIDAY

#### DPM Launches Ranhill's New Water Treatment Plant In Thailand

From Sharifah Hunaini Syed Ismail

BANGKOK -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, who is on her maiden official visit to Thailand, Friday officiated the launch of Ranhill Holdings Bhd's new seven-million litres per day reclamation water treatment plant in Thailand's Amata City Rayong Industrial Estate here. Ranhill president and chief executive Tan Sri Hamdan Mohamad said the build-operate-transfer project with a 20-year concession was signed between Ranhill's subsidiary, AnuRAK Water Treatment Facilities Co Ltd and Amata Water Co Ltd in March last year.

## SMEbrief

**MHE 2019 To Help SMEs Enter Japanese Mart**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The upcoming Malaysia Halal Expo 2019 (MHE 2019) is set to become a platform for Malaysian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to penetrate the Japanese market ahead of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics 2020. Themed "Malaysia to Japan for 2020 Olympics", the expo will be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from Jan 24-26, said SME Corp said in a statement Tuesday.

**Tekun To Assist 8,871 Micro Entrepreneurs In Sarawak**

KUCHING -- The National Entrepreneur Group Economic Fund

(Tekun Nasional) aims to assist 1,871 micro entrepreneurs in Sarawak by extending loans amounting to RM25 million this year. Its chairman, Datuk Seri Mohamad Suparadi Md Noor said borrowers with good repayment records would have the opportunity of getting a second loan. "Sarawak is the second best state in the country in terms of financing repayment, with 63 per cent of the borrowers made up of women. "Those with a good repayment commitment, will be given priority by Tekun to get a second loan," he told a press conference after meeting Tekun participants from Sarawak, here Tuesday.

**ASEAN Trade Association, CGC To Coach SMEs**

By Nurul Hanis Izmir

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Asean Traders Association (Perda-Asean) is organising a coaching session on business financing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the quest to extend financial assistance to them.

Scheduled for Jan 25 at Bangunan CGC, Kelana Business Centre, Petaling Jaya, the one-day event, which also entails one-on-one financial advisory session, will be held in collaboration with Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC), said Perda-Asean president Datuk Moehamad Izat Emir Tuesday.

## PropUP

## Property update

**Desaru Coast To Open New Hotel Facilities Within Months**

By Shakir Husain

NEW DELHI -- Desaru Coast, a leisure and business destination in Malaysia, will open its new hotel facilities by July this year. These include phase one of the 275-room Westin resort and the 43-suite One&Only resort. The hotel's opening, over the coming months, will greatly enhance tourist accommodation options, said Roslina Arbak, chief executive officer of Desaru Development Holdings One Sdn Bhd.

**Significant Response To Rumah Selangorku Phase 1**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Phase 1 (sub-phase 1A) of 'Rumah Selangorku' project -- to be built by MK Land Holdings Bhd (MK Land) in Taman Bunga Raya, Bukit Beruntung -- had already sold out on Saturday before its official launch. Group chief executive officer of MK Land, K Mohanachandran, said in a statement Monday, the project was

built following requests from various quarters for affordable housing.

**MYTOWN Occupancy Rate To Hit 95 Pct By May**

By Rosemarie Khoo Mohd Sani

KUALA LUMPUR -- Boustead Ikano Sdn Bhd is confident that MyTOWN Shopping Centre's occupancy rate will grow to 95 per cent by May this year from 92 per cent currently, despite stiff competition with other shopping centres. Boustead Ikano centre manager Mohd Azhan Che Mat said Thursday, the company was in the midst of finalising a few more deals with new tenants, while the existing ones would remain in their respective businesses until the next tenancy renewal in 2020.

**Sunway Property Aims RM1.3 Bln Sales FY19**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sunway Property, the property arm of Sunway Bhd, has set its sales target at RM1.3 billion

for the financial year ending Dec 31, 2019 (FY19), despite achieving RM1.8 billion of sales in previous year. The conservative target was similar as last year's original target, but the company was able to surpass the target and hit last year's figure of RM1.8 billion due to sales in China and Singapore, said Managing director Sarena Cheah after launching the Super 5 Easy Home Ownership Scheme here, Thursday.

**Tropicana Proposes To Buy Real Estate Firms For RM1.85 Bln**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tropicana Corporation Bhd (TCB) has entered into 12 conditional share purchase agreements with Tan Sri Tan Chee Sing (TSDT) and/or persons connected to him for the proposed acquisition of 12 real estate holding companies for RM1.85 billion. In a statement Thursday, TCB said the proposed acquisition will be satisfied via the issuance of new redeemable convertible preference shares (RCPS).

MARKETS



Scoreboard

Gainers -	472
Losers -	356
Not Traded -	716
Unchanged -	368
Value -	2050000000
Volume -	2480000000

**BURSA: Persistent Buying Lifts Bursa Malaysia To Close Higher**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Persistent buying lifted Bursa Malaysia to close higher Friday, driven by positive catalysts on the global and local front and spurred by the uptrend in regional markets, dealers said. The overall market breadth remained bullish as gainers outnumbered losers 472 to 356 while 368 counters were unchanged, 716 untraded and 25 others were suspended. Total volume rose to 2.48 billion shares, worth RM2.05 billion, from Thursday's 2.44 billion shares valued at RM2.12 billion. A dealer said Asian stocks traded mostly higher Friday due to positive developments on the global economic front, including the next round of trade negotiations between the United States and China scheduled next week during Chinese Vice Premier Liu He's visit to the United States. Meanwhile, the British Parliament is scheduled to debate and vote on Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit "plan B" on Jan 29 while the US Federal Reserve is scheduled to hold a two-day policy setting meeting on Jan 30, he said. Main Market volume rose to 1.76 billion shares, valued at RM1.93 billion, against Thursday's 1.71 billion shares worth RM2 billion.



Exchange Rate

(Ringgit : Foreign Currency)

	Buying	Selling
USD	4.1225	4.1257
EUR	4.6704	4.6769
GBP	5.3935	5.4004
100 YEN	3.7542	3.7598
SGD	3.0346	3.0386

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

**FOREX: Ringgit Higher Against US Dollar**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit advanced against the US dollar to close higher buoyed by encouraging crude oil prices which were hovering around US\$61.15 per barrel, said dealers. At 6 pm, the ringgit was pegged at 4.1225/1275 against the greenback from 4.1410/1450 on Thursday. Crude oil strengthened after US President Donald Trump hinted at imposing sanctions on Venezuela, which is also an oil producing country, the dealer said. Meanwhile, Bank Negara Malaysia, as expected, capped the overnight policy rate Thursday at 3.25 per cent at its first Monetary Policy Committee meeting for this year. Meanwhile, the ringgit was traded higher against other major currencies. It strengthened against the Singapore dollar to 3.0346/0685 against 3.0435/0469 on Thursday and increased versus the euro to 4.6704/6769 against 4.6984/6033. The local unit advanced vis-a-vis the Japanese yen to 3.7542/7598 from 3.7728/7775 and appreciated against the British pound to 5.3935/4004 from 5.4019/4080.

**Short-Term Rates Close Stable On BNM's Operations**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term interbank rates closed stable Friday on Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) operations to absorb excess liquidity from the financial system. The surplus in the conventional system decreased to RM23.98 billion from RM28.46 billion Friday morning, while in the Islamic system, it declined to

RM13.50 billion from RM17.28 billion. Earlier, BNM conducted a range maturity auction tender, a Qard tender, a Commodity Murabahah Programme, as well as Bank Negara Interbank Bills and Bank Negara Interbank Islamic Bills. BNM also revised conventional overnight tender from RM22.5 billion to RM23.2 billion and Murabahah overnight tender from RM12.0 billion to RM12.2 billion. At 4 pm, the central bank conducted a RM23.2 billion conventional money market tender and a RM12.20 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 remained untraded Friday. February 2019, March 2019, April 2019 and June 2019 all pegged at 96.24, 96.22, 96.22 and 96.22, 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 Close Higher**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed higher Friday, in sync with the better performance on the underlying cash market. January 2019 added 5.0 points to 1,701, February 2019 improved 6.5 points to 1,702, March 2019 rose 5.5 points to 1,698, while June 2019 gained 7.5 points to 1,691. Turnover increased to 7,677 lots from 5,884 lots on Thursday while open interest widened to 29,134 contracts against 27,908 contracts previously. The underlying benchmark FBM KLCI finished 7.44 points higher at 1,701.03.

### ASFRC Proposes Measures To Preserve Financial Stability In Asia Pacific

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Asian Shadow Financial Regulatory Committee (ASFRC), a group of experts on financial markets and related policy issues in the Asia-Pacific region, has made several recommendations to preserve financial stability and reduce the likelihood of a financial crisis in the near future. Prof Martin Young, the chair of ASFRC and Massey University head of School of Economics and Finance told a media conference Monday, one of them was to strengthen the macro-prudential policies, which were implemented after the global financial crisis (in 2008).

### Stanchart Expects Ringgit To Trade Range-Bound This Year

KUALA LUMPUR -- Standard Chartered Bank (Stanchart) expects the ringgit to trade range-bound against the US dollar at between 4.10 and 4.30 this year. Divya Devesh, head of ASEAN and South Asia foreign exchange research told reporters Tuesday, the ringgit remained undervalued with little catalyst for recovery as the portfolio inflows remained weak amid fiscal concerns and further declines in Malaysia's bond weights.

### CIMB Islamic, TH Become Strategic Partners

KUALA LUMPUR -- Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH) and CIMB Islamic Bank Bhd have become strategic partners, allowing CIMB customers to access TH's services at over 2,900 CIMB self-service terminals nationwide. This partnership benefits some nine million TH depositors. In a joint statement Tuesday, TH and CIMB said via

the partnership, TH depositors are able to conduct transactions related to TH such as cash withdrawals and deposits, transfer of money from a TH account to a CIMB account and vice versa, link a CIMB link card to a TH account, and savings account balance enquiries.

### BSN Resumes Its Banking Operations

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN)'s banking services covering branches, automated teller machines (ATMs) and internet banking have resumed and are now operating as usual. "In fact, customers were able to do their transactions at the ATMs and Cash Deposit Machines (CDMs) starting yesterday, since 9.00 pm, Jan 21, 2019," said Chief Executive Datuk Yunus Abd Ghani in a statement Tuesday. "We would like to again apologise to all our customers for the inconvenience caused and appreciate their patience and cooperation during the difficult period," he said.

### IILM Conducts US\$500 Mln Sukuk, Its First Auction For 2019

KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation (IILM) has conducted its first auction for this year of US\$500 million short-term sukuk in two different series of 1-month tenor and 2-month tenor. The A-1 rated IILM sukuk by Standard & Poor's Rating Services is for US\$200 million with 1-month tenor at 2.75 per cent profit rate and US\$300 million with 2-month tenor at 2.83 per cent profit rate. "This is the first issuance of 1-month tenor since the IILM commenced its issuances in August 2013 and it was well supported with demand for both series with a bid to cover a ratio of

277 per cent and 369 per cent for the 1-month and 2-month tenors, respectively," it said in a statement Wednesday.

### Bank Rakyat MD To Leave In April, MED Looking For Replacement

PUTRAJAYA -- Bank Rakyat president/managing director Datuk Zulkiflee Abbas will end his services on April 2 this year, as well as other positions he has held since joining the bank on April 3, 2017. Following this, the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development (MED) is currently looking at the process of appointing a new president/managing director for the bank with the party involved, including Bank Negara, the ministry said in a statement Wednesday. "The development shows a positive direction for Bank Rakyat, in line with its commitment in fostering transparency in its operations, in accordance with current regulatory compliance and global best practices in the banking industry," said MED.

### Maybank Kim Eng Remodels Hong Kong Brokerage Business

KUALA LUMPUR -- Maybank Kim Eng Holdings Ltd (MKE) says the closure of its Hong Kong and China institutional equity research business was remodelling exercise of its institutional brokerage business to focus on its core ASEAN capabilities and coverage. As part of the remodelling exercise, MKE will focus its Hong Kong/China institutional Brokerage business on execution and trading services," said a spokesperson when contacted for verification Friday. MKE is the investment banking arm of Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank).



## FINANCING YOUR BUSINESS ACROSS THE WORLD



## Chatime Malaysia Aims To Be World's Biggest Chatime Operator By End-2019

By Zairina Zainudin

KUALA LUMPUR -- After recording an impressive business growth within one year of a 'comeback', food and beverage provider Chatime Malaysia Sdn Bhd aims to be the world's biggest Chatime operator by year-end. Group managing director Aliza Ali told Bernama Monday, under a five-year expansion plan, the company intended to aggressively expand its footprint into the overseas market, looking at India and the United States (US), alongside Singapore and Saudi Arabia, as announced previously. She believes that a strong targeted revenue of RM250 million per annum, as well as, solid brand awareness and loyalty, will put Chatime Malaysia in good stead to achieve the mission.

## Tax Refund To Boost GDP Growth This Year - Economist

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) was forecast to grow at 4.9 per cent this year, boosted by a tax refund programme and continuous support from consumer demand, said an economist. Standard Chartered Bank chief economist (ASEAN and South Asia) Edward Lee Wee Kok told reporters Tuesday, the GDP growth would be higher than the 4.7 per cent estimated for 2018. He said the tax refund was worth 2.5 per cent of the GDP and could provide a massive fiscal boost even in an economically cautious environment.

## Axis Reit's FY18 Net Profit Rises To RM154.98 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Axis Real Estate Investment Trust's (Axis Reit) net profit rose to RM154.98 million in the financial year ended Dec 31, 2018, from RM122.56 million recorded in 2017. Revenue increased to RM204.36 million from RM168.75 million previously. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Tuesday, Axis Reit said realised net income from operations amounted to RM113.44 million after deducting total expenditure of RM90.92 million, of which RM27.83 million were attributable to property expenses.

## Kelington Bags RM64 Mln Contracts In Q4 FY18

KUALA LUMPUR -- Integrated engineering solutions provider, Kelington Group Bhd has secured new orders totalling RM64 million during the fourth quarter (Q4) of its financial year ended Dec 31, 2018 (FY18). Group chief executive officer Raymond Gan said in a statement Tuesday, the new orders lifted the total value of new orders secured in FY18, which was 13 per cent higher as compared to the previous year.

## Heitech Padu Secures RM33.179 Mln Contract From Health Ministry

KUALA LUMPUR -- Heitech Padu Bhd has secured a contract valued at RM33.179 million to supply and install a Critical Care Information System in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of 11 hospitals under the Ministry of Health. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Tuesday, the company said the company accepted the letter of award dated Jan 9 on Jan 22. The contract, which entails supplying,

transmitting, installing, configuring, testing and commissioning of the Critical Care Information System in the ICU, is for a duration of 36 months commencing Feb 1, 2019 until Jan 31, 2022.

## Pahang Records Deficit Budget From 2014 To 2017 - Lim Guan Eng

KUALA LUMPUR -- Pahang has recorded a deficit budget from 2014 to 2017, said Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng. The continuous deficit showed an imprudent financial management with the accumulated Pahang State Government's Consolidated Account on December 31, 2017 was at negative RM228 million, he said in a statement Tuesday. "Because of the state's weak financial management, Pahang is unable to fulfill its debt obligations to the Federal Government, which is the highest among all states in Malaysia. As at December 31, 2018 the state government's debt to the Federal Government was RM3.178 billion," he said.

## IGB REIT Net Profit Slides To RM333.75 Mln In FY18

KUALA LUMPUR -- IGB Real Estate Investment Trust's (IGB REIT) net profit slid to RM333.75 million for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2018 (FY18) from RM343.37 million in the previous year. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Wednesday, IGB REIT said the lower net profit was mainly due to lower revaluation surplus on investment properties in FY18, and a one-time write back of step-up interest in FY17. Revenue, however, improved to RM535.69 million from RM524.92 million previously, mainly due to higher rental income in the current period-to-date.

## KNM Unit Bags RM28 Mln Contract

KUALA LUMPUR -- KNM Group Bhd's subsidiary KNM Process Systems Sdn Bhd has secured a RM28.17 million (US\$6.828 million) contract from TTSJV WLL to supply large carbon steel pressure vessels. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia Wednesday, it said the supply and delivery of the vessels is for a period of 13 months. "Having considered all aspects of the award, the board of director is of the opinion that the award is in the best interests of the company," it said. Overall, the contract is expected to contribute positively to KNM Group's earnings for the financial years ending Dec 31, 2019 and Dec 31, 2020.

## Boon Siew Honda To Emerge As Leading Brand In Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR -- Boon Siew Honda aims to emerge as the leading brand in Malaysia's motorcycle industry this year while setting the benchmark in each motorcycle segment through its product offerings and strong brand positioning. The company would ride on the momentum generated by its impressive sales performance in 2018, managing director and chief executive officer Keiichi Yasuda said. Boon Siew Honda recorded an outstanding sales performance with about 156,000 units sold last year, it said in a statement Thursday.

## Car-Sharing App SOCAR Expands Into Penang

KUALA LUMPUR -- Car-sharing application SOCAR is expanding its service to the northern region starting Feb 1. Upon launching, SOCAR would have 50 cars available

in Penang, located in 21 zones throughout the island and mainland, it said in a statement Thursday. SOCAR Malaysia is a car-sharing platform that allows customers to book a car that suits their needs by the hour, day or week all through using its mobile application.

## Takaful Malaysia's FY18 Net Profit Rises To RM294.92 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Keluarga Bhd's (Takaful Malaysia) net profit for the financial ended Dec 31, 2018 (FY18) rose to RM294.92 million from RM206.70 million in 2017. Revenue increased 23 per cent to RM2.64 billion compared with RM2.14 billion previously, mainly attributable to higher sales generated by the family takaful and general takaful businesses. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia Thursday, Takaful Malaysia said the family takaful business generated gross earned contributions of RM1.61 billion for FY18, a 27 per cent increase against the RM1.26 billion in the previous corresponding period, which was mainly attributable to higher sales from credit-related products.

## Muhibbah Engineering Bags RM165 Mln Contracts From Turnpike

KUALA LUMPUR -- Muhibbah Engineering (M) Bhd has secured contracts for the design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of noise barriers worth RM165 million from Turnpike Synergy Sdn Bhd. The contracts are for the Sungai Besi – Ulu Kelang Elevated Expressway and Damansara – Shah Alam Elevated Expressway projects. "The contracts are expected to contribute positively

to the earnings and net assets of the Muhibbah Group for the current and future financial years," the group said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia Thursday.

## Aturmaju Seals RM20 Million Contract From YESS

KUALA LUMPUR -- Aturmaju Resources Bhd's (ARB) wholly-owned subsidiary, ARB Development Sdn Bhd (ARBD), Thursday finalised a contract with Yes's Comm Enterprise Sdn Bhd (YESS) with an estimated gross merchandise value of RM20 million. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia, ARB said the contract, valid on a yearly recurring basis, entailed ARB to provide a marketplace platform to YESS to sell and market their products efficiently.

## Perodua Aims To Sell 231,000 Cars This Year

KUALA LUMPUR -- Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd (Perodua) sold over 227,243 vehicles in 2018, its highest ever sales record, and now aims to improve on that figure by four per cent to 231,000 units by end-2019. The achievement would be underpinned by its best-selling model, the Myvi, and its latest sport utility vehicle, the Aruz, the car maker said in a statement Thursday. The Myvi was Perodua's best-selling model in 2018, with 82,122 units registered out of 117,844 units booked in that year alone. From its November 2017 launch to date, registration of Myvi vehicles exceeded 91,500 while bookings amounted to 147,000.



## **Al-Ikhsan Investing RM2 Mln Open 4 Football Republic Outlets**

KUANTAN -- Sports goods retailer Al-Ikhsan Sports Sdn Bhd is allocating RM2 million to open four Football Republic outlets this year. The fourth premium football concept shop was opened here Monday before being expanded to Kuala Terengganu, Kota Bharu and Johor Bahru. Al-Ikhsan marketing general manager Mizal Ghazali told reporters Monday, about RM300,000 would be spent to open each Football Republic outlet, but the allocation would be increased to meet rising demand from customers.

## **Collection Of Direct Tax Based On 2018 Year Of Assessment, Says MOF**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The increase in direct tax collection last year by the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (IRB) was based on the economic growth recorded in the year of assessment 2018, said the Minister of Finance Lim Guan Eng. He was commenting on claims made by several quarters that the encouraging tax collection was actually based on 2017's economic performance, did not reflect the current state of the economy nor was it the outcome of effective tax-related strategies set by the Pakatan Harapan government that came into power after the election. "In fact, it is reflective of a resilient economy coupled with the effectiveness of a clean leadership and an administration based on the principles of competency, accountability and transparency," he said Monday.

## **Sapura Energy Raises RM4 Bln From Rights Issue**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sapura Energy Bhd (Sapura Energy) has raised about RM4.0 billion from its rights issue exercise which closed on Jan 16, 2019. The group received 8.138 billion of valid acceptances and excess applications for its rights shares with warrants, representing a subscription rate of 81.5 per cent, the group said in a statement Tuesday. For its Islamic redeemable convertible preference shares (RCPS-i), the group saw just above 100 per cent of valid acceptances and excess applications.

## **MAHB, Airline Companies Join Hands To Promote M'sian Palm Oil**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Three major airline companies and Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) have agreed to join hands with the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to promote Malaysian palm oil and further boost the ministry-initiated 'Love MY Palm Oil' campaign. In a statement Tuesday, the ministry said the airline companies – Malaysia Airlines Bhd, Malindo Airways Sdn Bhd and AirAsia Bhd, had expressed interest during meetings with MPI Minister Teresa Kok Suh Sim to inform about her aspirations and plans to promote palm oil.

## **Germany's Muehlbauer Gives Automation Equipment To Higher Learning Institutions**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Muehlbauer Technologies Sdn Bhd, a unit under Germany-based Muehlbauer Group, is

contributing four automation integrated systems totalling RM200,000 to four higher learning institutions in Malaysia. The recipients of the systems, known as Beckoff mock-up units, are Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) and the German Malaysian Institute (GMI). Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) chief executive officer Datuk Azman Mahmud (CEO) said Tuesday, the move showed large multinational corporations like Muehlbauer Technologies had responded positively to the authority's call to narrow the skill gap between the latest industry know-how and university syllabuses.

## **Central Spectrum Asks For Bridge To Support Pulau Indah Project**

PULAU INDAH -- Central Spectrum (M) Sdn Bhd urges the Selangor state government to build a two-level bridge between Pulau Indah and Westport to provide a boost for its Selangor Bio Bay (SBB) mixed development project on the island. The property development firm's outgoing managing director Datuk Mahmud Abbas told Bernama Wednesday, he hoped the federal and state governments would continue to support the 20-year, 433-hectare mixed development project here.

## **AirAsia Files RM400 Mln Counter-Claim Against MAHB**

SEPANG -- AirAsia Bhd is seeking more than RM400 million in counter-claims against Malaysia

Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) in response to a suit filed by the airport operator last month over airport taxes. The airline said Wednesday, the counter-claims were for losses and damages experienced by AirAsia and its long-haul sister airline AirAsia X Bhd due to operational disruptions at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia2).

### **Business Leaders Socially Aware, New YPO Survey Shows**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The YPO 2019 Global Leadership Survey held from Dec 23, 2018 – Jan 4, 2019 with the participation of over 2,200 chief executives and over 1,800 future business leaders showed that a vast majority believe that the purpose of business is to have an impact on society beyond profits and wealth. Key findings available at [YPO.org/Davos](http://YPO.org/Davos) found that 93 per cent of the C-Suite from 110 countries and 92 per cent of the younger generation aged between 18 and 31 agree on this.

### **Take A Serious Look At Southeast Asia, HSBC Urges International Businesses**

KUALA LUMPUR -- International businesses should take a serious look at the fast-growing Southeast Asian region as a location to manufacture in, source from and sell to, despite the downturn in global emerging markets over the past few months, says HSBC Malaysia Sdn Bhd. In a statement Wednesday, HSBC Malaysia said the region's manufacturing capabilities play an integral role in global trade and supply chains with local businesses going high-tech, producing anything from

high-end fabrics to hard drives and semiconductors.

### **Organisations Must Embrace Digital Technology To Stay Relevant - MYNIC**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Organisations in Malaysia must embrace digital processes in their business innovation to expand and stay relevant in the industry. MYNIC Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Hasnul Fadhly Hasan said Thursday, organisations especially businesses would not survive if they do not evolve and adopt digital technology to keep abreast of disruptive competitors. "Rather than being adversely impacted by this, the business landscape should creatively capitalise on the technologies brought by digital revolution to maximise earnings and, ultimately, spur today's digital economy and economic growth at large," he said.

### **Sabah Poised For More Investments In Wood, Wood-Based Industry - MIDA**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sabah is poised for more investments in the wood and wood-based industry, given the state's abundant natural resources, says the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA). MIDA deputy chief executive officer Datuk N. Rajendran said, it acknowledged the importance of the furniture and woodbased industry as one of the key industries to be developed in the state. "The recent announcement made by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal to make Sandakan a furniture centre in Sabah is certainly a step in the right direction for the state," Rajendran said in a statement Friday.

### **Petrol Prices Unchanged, Diesel Up 1 Sen**

KUALA LUMPUR -- The retail prices of RON95 and RON97 petrol will remain at RM1.98/litre and RM2.28/litre from midnight tonight till Feb 1, 2019. However, the retail price of diesel will go up by one sen to RM2.18/litre, the Finance Ministry said in a statement here Friday. "The prices of refined petroleum products in the world market now stands at USD73 a barrel for diesel as compared to RON95 at USD62/barrel. "The difference in cost is because of higher demand for diesel products especially from China while there has also been an increase in production of petrol products in the global market," the statement said.

### **Malaysia To Grab Halal Market Share At Tokyo Olympics 2020**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia targets to secure a portion of the US\$300 million (US\$1= RM4.12) halal market during the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, especially in the food and beverage (F&B) sector. Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Md Yusof said Japanese companies have expressed deep interest in Malaysia's F&B, as well as health and beauty sectors. "The Japanese have open their doors to the halal market compared to 10 years ago, and if Malaysia's small medium enterprises (SMEs) do not take this chance, it is a huge miss," he said Friday.

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## **PRefChem Refinery To Start Commercial Operations By Q4 2019**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Pengerang Refining and Petrochemical (PRefChem) expects its refinery to be ready for commercial operations by the fourth quarter of this year, after starting its refinery with the firing up of the Complex's Crude Distillation Unit (CDU) Tuesday. In a statement, it said the refinery would provide feedstock for the integrated petrochemicals complex which has the capacity to produce 3.3 million tonnes per annum.

## **TnG Launches e-Wallet Service At Kg Kerinchi Mosque**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Touch and Go (TnG) Digital Sdn Bhd is collaborating with the Ar-Rahah Mosque in Kampung Kerinchi to enable the public to make donations using TnG's e-wallet application. TnG Digital chief executive officer Syahrudin Samsudin said Tuesday, the public may now make donations or contributions using the Quick Response (QR) code on their smartphone. "TnG Digital wants to make technology more inclusive and to help the Kampung Kerinchi community via a platform that is easy and safe," he said.

## **AmMetLife Takaful, Tabung Waqaf Rakyat Johor Ink MoU On Waqf**

KUALA LUMPUR -- AmMetLife Takaful Bhd and Tabung Waqaf Rakyat Johor (TWRJ) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on waqf. AmMetLife Takaful said in a statement Wednesday, through this collaboration, death claims arising from the waqf (Islamic endowment) benefit offered by AmMetLife Takaful would be channelled to TWRJ for waqf activities on behalf of the participant.

## **FGV Appoints Haris Fadzilah Hassan As Group CEO**

KUALA LUMPUR -- FGV Holdings Bhd has appointed Datuk Haris Fadzilah Hassan as its group chief executive

officer, effective Wednesday, replacing Datuk Zakaria Arshad who resigned in September last year. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia, FGV said Haris comes with 28 years of experience in the corporate sector, especially in strategy and change management. "Most recently, he was director, commercial and land management in Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) and a key member of the team that successfully completed MRT Corp's phase 1, under budget and ahead of schedule," it said.

## **MASwings Operates Three New Rural Routes In Sarawak, Sabah**

KUCHING -- Regional community airline, MASwings will continue to operate 39 routes in Sabah, Sarawak and Labuan, including three new ones under new Public Service Obligation (PSO) Agreement for Rural Air Services (RAS). MASwings in a statement Wednesday, said its operations included the three newly introduced routes, namely Kuching to Limbang; Bario to Long Lellang and Bario to Long Seridan, Sabah effective from this month.

## **Rolls-Royce Cullinan Makes Its Debut In Malaysia**

KUALA LUMPUR -- After making its global debut in May last year, Rolls-Royce's first sport utility vehicle (SUV) – the Cullinan – has finally arrived on the Malaysian shores. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the BMW Group, launched the SUV here Thursday, with a starting price of RM1.8 million per unit, depending on customer specification.

## **Dagang Net Launches New e-Service For Air Cargo Clearance**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Dagang NeXchange Bhd's (DNeX) wholly-owned subsidiary, Dagang Net Technologies Sdn Bhd, has launched a new e-Service for cargo clearance via air mode called Pre-Alert Manifest. The e-Service could facilitate efficient trade documentation

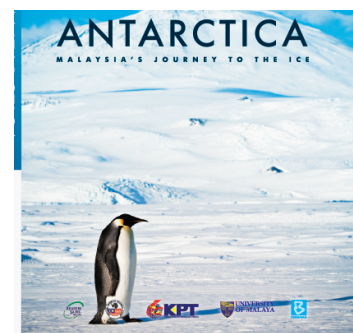
processing and cargo movement into the country. This is meant for small imported goods comprising parcels, documents and letters with a total cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value not exceeding RM500 per consignment, said DNeX in a statement Thursday.

## **Mary Kay Announces Executive Appointments**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Mary Kay Inc announced the appointments of Chaun Harper as senior vice president-chief manufacturing officer and Dr Lucy Gildea as senior vice president-chief scientific officer. "We are proud to appoint Chaun and Lucy to these executive positions knowing their leadership and expertise will be invaluable as we build on our efforts to enrich women's lives worldwide," said Mary Kay chief operating officer, Deborah Gibbins, in a statement Friday.

## **MRCB-George Kent JV Inks Agreement For LRT3 With Prasarana**

KUALA LUMPUR -- MRCB George Kent Sdn Bhd, a joint-venture (JV) company between Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd (MRCB) and George Kent (Malaysia) Bhd, has entered into a contract agreement with Prasarana Malaysia Bhd. In a joint filing to Bursa Malaysia Friday, MRCB and George Kent said the contract agreement was for the Light Rail Transit Line 3 (LRT 3) project. In November last year, the JV company bagged an RM11.86 billion contract to build the LRT 3 project from Bandar Utama in Petaling Jaya to Johan Setia in Klang. The contract sum includes a contingency or provisional sum of RM400 million, which, if not utilised, will reduce the contract sum.



## TNB's Handsome Returns To The Rakyat

By Yong Soo Heong



KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- By history and tradition, Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) is dear to the hearts of many Malaysians because for nearly 70 years of 'powering the nation', it has somewhat imbued their lives with some awesome influence and power.

TNB helps to brighten up homes and workplaces, powers factories and industries, transmits progress, and distributes opportunities and wealth. In a nutshell, for nearly seven decades TNB has been powering the rakyat and transforming the nation.

While many may have taken TNB for granted, it has been steadily doing its national duty besides sharing part of its success and profits with the rakyat through various corporate social responsibilities and dividends.

TNB has been giving back to the country through its generous support for communities, investments in education like providing scholarships and financial assistance to students, among others.

Its high dividend pay-out had reached not only institutional investors and the rich but also ordinary people who have contributed some of their hard earned incomes to the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) or Tabung Haji depositors, who are mostly rural folks.

### RM4.7 BILLION DISBURSED

Tracing back TNB's dividend for the 16 months ended Dec 31, 2017, the company has disbursed RM4.7 billion to shareholders, which stands out as among the highest dividend payments by one of Malaysia's top-ranked listed companies. Besides benefiting direct shareholders, this enormous dividend pay-out also created multiplier effects to institutional investors

such as the EPF, Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB), Kumpulan Wang Persaraan (KWAP), Lembaga Tabung Haji (LTH) and other unit trust companies that passed on the high returns to their account holders.

TNB's high dividend payment pay-out had enabled EPF or the country's employees retirement fund to benefit its almost 14 million account holders while it also helped PNB, the nation's largest unit trust fund manager, to provide handsome returns to its estimated 13.2 million accounts. KWAP, with an estimated 660,000 pensioners on its list and Tabung Haji, with more than nine million depositors, also profited from TNB's dividend policy.

In the final analysis, the rakyat or people had gained much from this largesse from TNB.

### HUGE DIVIDEND PAY-OUT

Its ability to allocate such a huge dividend pay-out was not solely based on its position as Malaysia's leading electricity provider for almost 70 years, but also through the toil of its diligent workforce and foresight of its management to sustain TNB's strong growth, operationally and financially.

The past few years have seen the national utility corporation reinventing itself to remain on a growth trajectory in the regulated business of electricity transmission and distribution, which had contributed to a stable and recurring income stream under the Incentive Based Regulation (IBR).

Over the longer-term, TNB will not be wholly dependent on its regulated business for survival but must anchor itself to new sources of growth, both in terms of products and markets.

Analysts from a number of research houses have maintained a positive outlook for TNB despite its migration to new spheres of businesses.

"Through our non-regulated business, we continue to explore avenues to unlock greater value, which can sustain the company in the years to come," TNB president/chief executive officer had informed its shareholders in one of the company's previous annual reports.

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