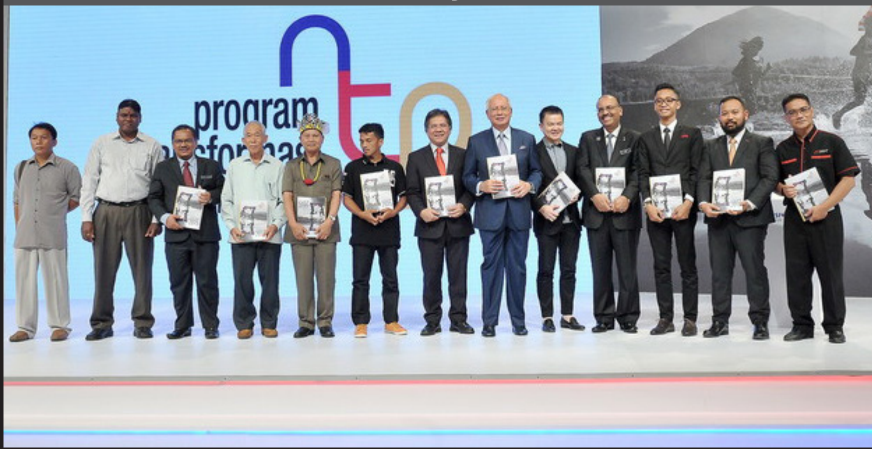
MALAYSIAeBiz
WEEKLY BUSINESS ROUNDUP APRIL 25 - 29 2016

April 29, 2016

This Week's Highlight : Malaysia's Developed Nation Status Achievable - Najib



ONE FOR THE ALBUM...Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak (six, right), in a group photograph after launching the National Transformation Programme and Economic Transformation Programme 2015 Annual Report Tuesday. Pix: Dayana Nabila Shaipul Anuar fotoBERNAMA

KUALA LUMPUR -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has expressed confidence that Malaysia can achieve truly developed nation status by 2020 under the National Transformation Programme (NTP), but it will be an uphill battle that requires dedication and the undivided support of both the public and private sector, as well as, the people. Although NTP through the Government Transformation Programme delivered "big fast results" in public service delivery over the past three years and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) spurred private sector participation in the economy, there were challenges to be overcome, he said in the NTP Annual Report 2015 launched Tuesday.

This Week's Top Stories

MONDAY

MAHB Targets RM7.5 Bln Revenue by 2020

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) aims to handle 115 million passengers a year and achieve a revenue of RM7.5 billion by 2020 in its five-year business plan, Runway to Success 2020 (RtS2020). Managing Director Datuk Badlisham Ghazali said Monday, MAHB also aimed to secure RM3 billion in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) from RM1.6 billion via RtS2020.

TUESDAY

NTP Records Achievements Amid Global Economic Volatility

KUALA LUMPUR -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the National Transformation Programme (NTP), which is in its fifth year of implementation, demonstrated the country's achievements in the face of global economic volatility. The Government Transformation Programme (GTP), from the aspect of the National Key Result Areas (NKRAs), had achieved 99 per cent of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), while the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs) attained 111 per cent of the KPIs, he said at the launch of the National Transformation Programme Report 2015 here Tuesday.

WEDNESDAY

Muhammad Promises To Deliver

KUALA LUMPUR -- Governor-designate Datuk Muhammad Ibrahim has promised to carry out the duties before him to the best of his ability. Muhammad, who is Deputy Governor, was appointed the new Governor for five years, effective May 1, to take over from Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akthar Aziz, 68, who will retire on April 30."I accept the appointment as governor with great humility. I look upon it as an opportunity and call to serve the nation. I will strive to carry out the duties of Governor of BNM to the best of my ability," Muhammad said in a statement here Wednesday.

THURSDAY

BNM Issues Letter Of Administrative Compound To 1MDB

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) Thursday issued a letter of administrative compound to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) for failing to comply with directions issued under the Financial Services Act 2013. This includes the requirement for 1MDB to repatriate monies remitted abroad following the revocations of the three permissions granted by BNM to 1MDB in 2009, 2010 and 2011, it said in a statement.

FRIDAY

Boeing, China Eastern Airlines Finalise Order For 15 Dreamliners

KUALA LUMPUR -- Boeing and China Eastern Airlines have finalised an order for 15 787-9 Dreamliners valued at nearly US$4 billion to strengthen China Eastern's expanding long-haul fleet. "The addition of these next-generation, fuel-efficient airplanes will play a key role in supporting China Eastern's strategy for international expansion, enabling us to realise profits in point-to-point routes across the Pacific Ocean and between China and Europe," said China Eastern Airlines Chairman Liu Shaoyong in a statement.

RADIO 24 BERNAMA RADIO 24

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

SMEbrief

Business Sector Generates Stable Income For Sandakan Entrepreneurs

By Asmah Ali

SANDAKAN -- Starting your own business, even with a small capital, can provide stable income, as proven by three entrepreneurs who have achieved success in their respective fields. Cake maker, Mohd Shahwadi Siarin, 39, said Wednesday, he began his business in 2014 after working as a pastry chef at English Tea House restaurant for three years. "I started my business with a capital of RM100 and used social media such as Facebook and Instagram to promote my cakes.

More SMEs Turn To E-Payment To Save Costs

IPOH -- More small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are turning to e-payment for their transactions as part of efforts to save costs, Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) said. Its Director of Payment Systems Policy Department, Tan Nyat Chuan said Wednesday, this was attested from a decline in the usage of conventional payment methods such as cheques among SMEs.

Celcom Axiata Offers Discounts & Free Plans For SMEs

KUALA LUMPUR -- Celcom Axiata Bhd will offer small to medium entrepreneur (SME) customers free and discounts of up to 70 per cent on their preferred plans and devices during the Celcom SME Open Day, from April 29 to May 1, 2016. "SME customers need to bring along their business cards for verification and be eligible to enjoy the great deals, exclusive activities and privileges when they signed up for any of FIRST Business post-paid plans," it said in a statement Wednesday.

Govt Provides Various Facilities To Help Local Entrepreneurs

PAPAR -- The state and federal governments have provided various facilities to assist local entrepreneurs, including the Bumiputera community, so that they are not left out of national development, said Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman. Towards this end, the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) had played a significant role in economic and entrepreneurial development in Malaysia, he said during the launch of the Sabah Development Corridor SME Road Tour programme themed 'Exploring Rural SMEs Potential' here Thursday.

LIFESTYLE & YOUTH BERNAMA

PropUP — Property *update*

SP Setia To launch RM2 Bln Setia Eco Templer Township

RAWANG -- Property developer SP Setia Bhd Group will launch a new township, Setia Eco Templer next month, with a RM2 billion gross development value (GDV). Located on the former site of the Perangsang Templer Golf Club in Templer Park, here, the 7.69-hectare township will comprise residential and commercial properties, said President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Datuk Khor Chap Jen Monday.

Hektar Reit Injects RM20 Mln To Enhance Landmark Central

KUALA LUMPUR -- Hektar Real Estate Investment (Hektar REIT) will inject RM20 million this year to enhance Landmark Central in Kulim, Kedah, as part of its strategy to increase the overall net lettable area (NLA) of malls within its portfolio. Hektar Asset Management Sdn Bhd Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Datuk Jaafar Abdul Hamid said Monday, the asset management initiative would eventually increase the NLA of the shopping mall by approximately 20,000 square feet.

MSAM 2016: PNB Hotels Target RM80,000 From Bookings

TAPAH -- Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB)'s hospitality chain hotels, namely PNB Perdana Hotel & Suites On The Park, Perdana Hotel and PNB Ilham Resort, aim to rake in RM80,000 in hotel room bookings in conjunction with the 2016 Malaysian Unit Trust Week (MSAM). PNB Ilham Resort Port Dickson Resident Manager Raja Azukri Raja Adam said as of Tuesday, the three hotels have earned RM50,000 from the bookings of 100 rooms.

Prasarana To Award RM9 Bln Tenders For LRT 3

KUALA LUMPUR -- Prasarana Malaysia Bhd expects to start awarding tenders for the RM9 billion Light Rail Transit Line 3 (LRT 3) project in the second half of the year (H2). Group Managing Director, Azmi Abdul Aziz, said Tuesday, the number of packages to be awarded was still undecided but the plan was to offer as many as possible to attract significant participation.

Permodalan Kedah To Build Syariah-Compliant Hotel In Langkawi

LANGKAWI -- After building Adya Hotel, the first syariah-compliant hotel in Langkawi, Permodalan Kedah Bhd, a subsidiary of the Kedah state government, plans to build another syariah-compliant hotel on the resort island, the Adya Chenang, which is expected to be operational by year-end. "The 100-room, syariah-compliant Adya Chenang is expected to cater to the growing demand for hotel accommodation," Chairman Nor Saidi Nanyan, who is also Kuah assemblyman said after handing over business zakat and bonus payments to Adya Hotel staff here Thursday.

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

BURSA MALAYSIA

Scoreboard

Gainers - 347

Losers - 438

Not Traded - 580

Unchanged - 359

Value - 2092590885

Volume -14967820

BURSA: KL Shares End Slightly Lower

KUALA LUMPUR - Bursa Malaysia pared earlier losses in the last 10 minutes of the trading session to finish slightly lower on bargain hunting. The benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) slid 2.04 points to close at 1,672.72 from Thursday's close of 1,674.76.It opened 3.24 points weaker at 1,671.52 and moved between 1,660.92 and 1,672.72 throughout the day.Market breadth was negative with losers leading gainers by 438 to 347 with 359 counters unchanged, 580 counters untraded and 36 others suspended. Total volume decreased to 1.50 billion shares worth RM2.09 billion from Thursday's 1.78 billion shares valued at RM2.31 billion.A dealer said the local market tracked its regional peers, which remained subdued with negative sentiment brought about by the Bank of Japan's (BOJ) unexpected decision to hold its monetary policy."The BOJ's inaction surprised investors, dragged risk appetite and weighed on global equity markets," he said. Main Market turnover fell to 1.04 billion units worth RM2.0 billion from Thursday's volume of 1.31 billion units worth RM2.23 billion.The ACE Market turnover rose to 250.75 million shares valued at RM51.91 million, from 242.31 million shares valued at RM48.24 million recorded on Thursday.

Exchange Rate
(Ringgit : Foreign Currency)

	Buying	Selling
USD	3.9000	3.9070
EUR	4.4370	4. 4462
GBP	5.6862	5. 6984
100 YEN	3.6411	3.6487
SGD	2.9024	2.9083

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

FOREX: Ringgit Ends Slightly Lower Against US Dollar

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit retreated from earlier gains to close slightly lower against the US dollar Friday, as some investors booked profit ahead of the long weekend, dealers said.At 5 pm, the local note stood at 3.9000/9070 against the US dollar from 3.8940/9000 on Thursday.Meanwhile, as the US Federal Reserve (Fed) has been maintaining interest rate levels, the greenback continued to struggle to make significant headwayagainst major currencies.With the Bank of Japan having refrained from further stimulus measures at its recent meeting, the yen is set to record its biggest weekly gain since the 2008 financial crisis. The ringgit traded mostly lower against other major currencies. It weakened against the Singapore dollar to 2.9024/9083 from Thursday's 2.8986/9039 and depreciated against the yen to 3.6411/6487 from 3.6012/6078. It slid against the euro to 4.4370/4462 from 4.4220/4304, but advanced against the British pound to 5.6862/6984 from 5.6868/6975 on Wednesday. The market will be closed on Monday for Labour Day.

Money Market: Short-Term Rates Close Stable

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term interbank rates ended stable Friday on Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) intervention to reduce the liquidity surplus in the financial system. The liquidity surplus in the conventional system eased to RM23.01 billion from RM29.60 billion earlier, while in the Islamic system, it fell to RM5.75 billion from RM12.90 billion in the morning. BNM called for two Islamic range maturity auction tenders. The central bank also conducted a late conventional money market tender for RM23 billion and a Qard money market tender for RM5.7 billion, both for four-day money. The overnight Islamic reference rate stood at 3.21 per cent, while the one-, two- and three-week rates were pegged at 3.30 per cent, 3.35 per cent and 3.39 per cent, respectively.

KLIBOR Futures End Untraded

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives were untraded Friday.May 2016 stood at 96.32 while June 2016, July 2016 and September 2016 were pegged at 96.35 each. Open interest was nil. At the 11 am fixing, the underlying three-month KLIBOR stood at 3.70 per cent.

KLCI Futures End Mixed

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contract (FKLI) on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives ended mixed Friday in tandem with the performance of the underlying cash market. Spot contract April 2016 fell 7.5 points to 1,663, May 2016 was unchanged at 1,662.5 while June 2016 and September 2016 added one point each to 1,657.5 and 1,646.5, respectively. Turnover fell to 14,580 lots from 17,007 lots on Thursday while open interest decreased to 68,589 contracts from 70,583 contracts, previously. The benchmark FBM KLCI closed 2.04 points lower at 1,672.72.

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

AmBank Sees Higher Loan Growth Next Year

RAWANG -- AmBank Group expects its loan growth to be stronger next year and potentially surpass the six to seven per cent estimated for this year. Group Chief Executive Officer Datuk Sulaiman Mohd Tahir said the bank has streamlined its products and services and started focusing on areas of growth that it wants to expand into. "We expect higher loan growth next year bolstered by selected housing projects and the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) loan portfolio," he told reporters here Monday.

Improve Mgmt Of Islamic Inheritance To Avoid Increase In Unclaimed Assets

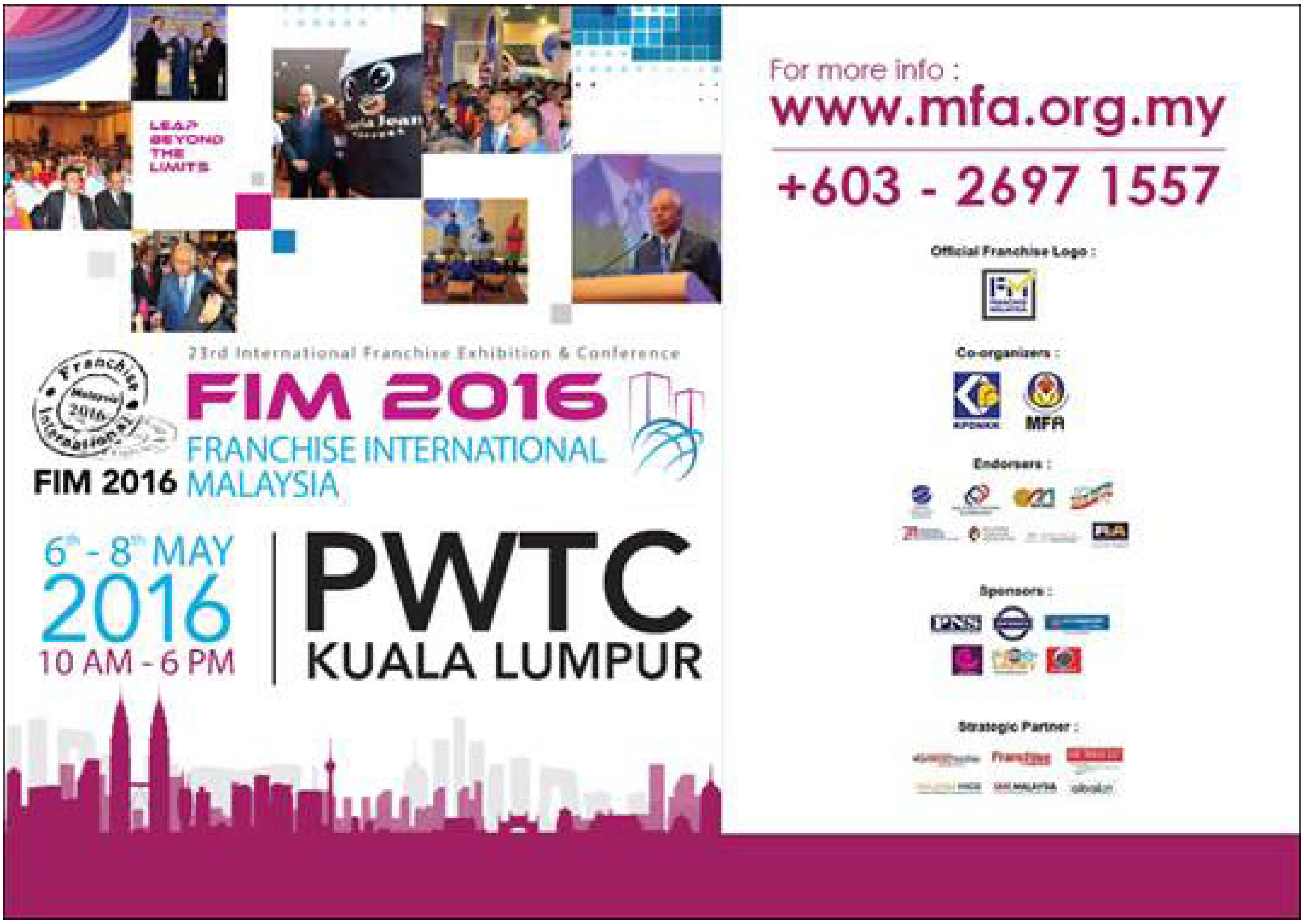
TAPAH -- The management of Islamic inheritance needs to be improved to avoid the increase in unclaimed assets, said Executive Director of International Shari'ah Research Academy for Islamic Finance, Prof Dr Mohamad Akram Laidin. He said here Monday the increase in unclaimed assets was due to lack of awareness and the casual attitude towards applying for the division of the assets when the death occurred. "According to the Archives Division of the Department of Land and Mines of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, unclaimed assets amounted to RM60 billion," he said.

Maybank's Indon Unit Records Higher PATAMI

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malayan Banking Bhd's (MayBank) Indonesian unit, PT Bank Maybank Indonesia Tbk, registered a profit after tax and minority interests (PATAMI) of 444 billion rupiah (Rp)(RM1=Rp3,365.84) for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016, up 73.7 per cent from a year ago. In a statement here Tuesday, Maybank said, the performance was aided by improved net interest income, better growth in fee-based income, continuous cost management efforts and outstanding achievement in syariah banking. "Syariah banking continued to record yet another strong performance in the first three months of 2016 with total financing growing 25.4 per cent from Rp7.4 trillion in March 2015 to Rp9.3 trillion in March 2016," it said.

RHB Expects AUM To Reach RM55 Bln By Year-End

KUALA LUMPUR -- RHB Asset Management Sdn Bhd expects its assets under management (AUM) to reach RM55 billion by year-end, driven by a series of conventional and Islamic fund launches throughout the year. Managing Director/Regional Head Eliza Ong said as at end-March, the group's AUM stood at RM53 billion. "The Islamic business contributes close to nine per cent of our total AUM currently. So, we foresee it growing significantly over the next five years to a double-digit contribution in terms of the total AUM of the group size," she told reporters here Tuesday.



© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

Bursa Malaysia Q1 Pre-Tax Profit Rises To RM70.59 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia Bhd' pre-tax profit for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016 grew to RM70.59 million from RM66.85 million a year ago. Its revenue rose to RM133.93 million from RM127.09 million previously, it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia Monday. Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Seri Tajuddin Atan, said despite challenging market conditions and ongoing global volatility, the growth in the first-quarter results remained positive. "While trading revenue in the securities market fell marginally due to lower trading activities, the derivatives market's trading revenue rose, as did the Islamic capital market's Bursa Suq Al-Sila trading revenue following the adoption of the Murabaha concept and wider acceptance of tenor-based pricing," he said.

Nestle's Q1 Pre-Tax Profit Jumps To RM275.85 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Nestle (M) Bhd's pre-tax profit for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016 rose to RM275.86 million from RM244.25 million a year ago. Revenue improved to RM1.31 billion from RM1.27 billion previously, it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Tuesday. Nestle said the domestic sales continued to show positive growth on the back of the strong marketing and promotional support as well as new successful product launches in 2015 that continued to benefit the group this year. "The exports, which have been growing steadily since the second half of 2015, continue to show solid performance with a double-digit growth in the first quarter of 2016," it said.

TNB'S Q2 Pre-Tax Profit Falls To RM1.50 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tenaga Nasional Bhd's (TNB) pre-tax profit for the second quarter ended Feb 29, 2016 fell to RM1.50 billion from RM2.36 billion in the same quarter last year. Revenue declined to RM10.48 billion from RM10.61 billion previously, it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia Wednesday. "The decline in revenue in the first half of the financial year ending Aug 31, 2016 (FY2016) was due to the recognition of the Imbalance Cost Pass-Through (ICPT) over-recovery amount of RM1.39 billion, resulting from the reduction in generation costs due to lower fuel prices," the company said in a separate statement.

IGB REIT Q1 Pre-Tax Profit Rises To RM72.81 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- IGB Real Estate Investment Trust's (IGB Reit) pre-tax profit for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016 rose to RM72.81 million from RM69.9 million registered in the same period a year ago. Revenue increased to RM131.21 million during the period under review from RM125.44 million registered last year, mainly due to higher total rental income in the current quarter, IGB Reit said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday.

BAT's Q1 Pre-Tax Profit Declines To RM231.07 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- British American Tobacco (M) Bhd (BAT) recorded a lower pre-tax profit of RM231.07 million for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016, against RM324.68 million achieved in the same quarter last year. Revenue also declined to RM1.02 billion from RM1.27 billion, the company said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia Wednesday. "The group's domestic volumes declined by 34 per cent compared to the same period last year, mainly as a consequence of the overall pressure on the legal industry following the steep excise increase in November 2015 ," it said.

Boeing Reports Two Pct Increase In Q1 Revenue To US$22.6 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Boeing Company reported that first-quarter revenue rose two per cent to US$22.6 billion from US$22.14 billion in the same quarter last year due to the increased delivery of military aircraft and continued solid performance. "Higher year-over-year deliveries of military aircraft and continued solid operating performance on core production programmes drove revenue growth and strong cash flow for Boeing in the first quarter," said Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Dennis Muilenburg. "This performance enabled our ongoing investments in new product innovation and in our people, and the return of significant cash to shareholders through stock repurchases and dividends," he said in a statement issued in Chicago.

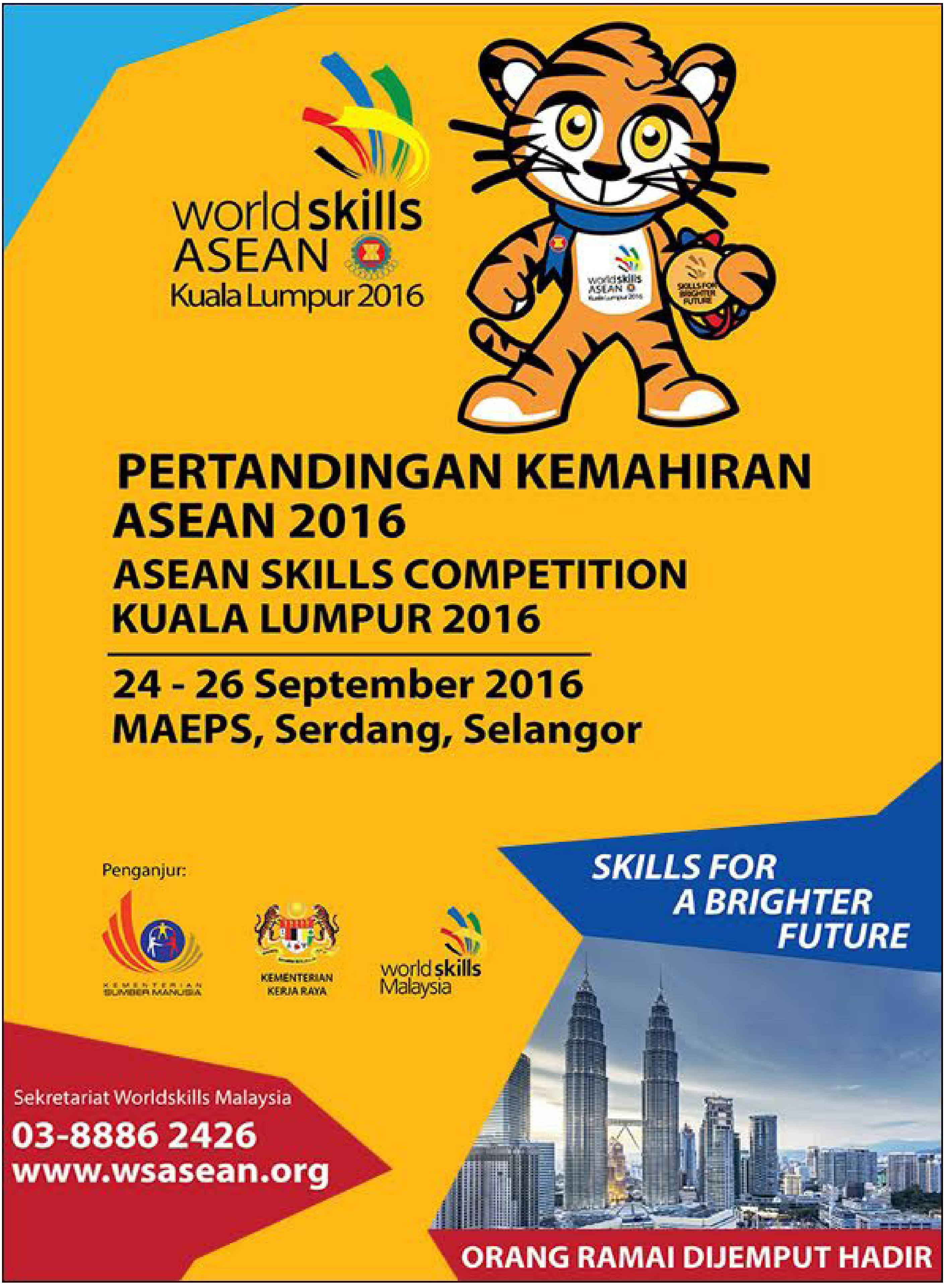
MAHB Q1 Pre-Tax Profit Falls To RM38.2 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd's (MAHB) pre-tax profit for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016 declined to RM38.2 million from RM39.3 million in the same quarter last year. Revenue, however, rose to RM1.02 billion from RM876.18 million previously. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Thursday, MAHB said the higher revenue was driven by stronger commercial performance in Malaysia and its operations in Turkey. In a statement Thursday, MAHB said, the earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) rose 12.2 per cent to RM452.6 million.

Westports Posts Higher Pre-Tax Profit Of RM211 Mln In Q1

KUALA LUMPUR -- Westports Holding Bhd's pre-tax profit for the first quarter ended March 31, 2016 jumped 19 per cent to RM211 million from RM159.6 million in the same period a year ago. The group attributed the growth to the revision in container tariff and lower fuel cost. Revenue for the quarter under review also improved to RM464.71 million from RM398.72 million previously, the port operator said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia Thursday. Going forward, the company sees a positive container throughput growth for the remaining quarters despite a challenging economic outlook.

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.



© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

Sime Darby's New Oil Palm Breed To Produce 16 Pct More Oil

PORT KLANG -- Sime Darby Bhd expects its new oil palm breed, the Genome Select, to produce at least 16 per cent more oil and contribute positively to the group's bottom line by 2023. President and Group Chief Executive Tan Sri Mohd Bakke Salleh said the Genome Select is also expected to produce more oil than the Calix 600 which is currently the best planting material for Sime Darby Plantations. "By 2023, Sime Darby Plantations will have enough genome materials to meet all of Malaysia's replanting requirements," he told reporters here Monday.

EPF To Subscribe For 80 Pct Stake In RJSB's Entity For RM421.52 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Employees Provident Fund (EPF) has indicated its intention to subscribe for an 80 per cent interest in an entity directed by Rukun Juang Sdn Bhd (RJSB) to hold 11.38 hectares in Kuala Lumpur (Exchange Land 1) for RM421.517 million. RJSB, is a 85 per cent-owned unit of MRCB Land Sdn Bhd, which in turn is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd (MRCB). In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Monday, MRCB said, the entity is referred as a company, in which RJSB was directed to hold the Exchange Land 1, of which activities of refurbishment and upgrading of facilities located at the National Sports Complex in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur would be conducted.

BERNAMA IMAGES
Capturing Headlines, Milestones and History.
BERNAMA

MAHB May Increase Airport Tax In Next Review

KUALA LUMPUR -- There is a possibility of an increase in the passenger service charge (PSC), or airport tax, in the next review, said Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd's (MAHB) Managing Director, Datuk Badlisham Ghazali. He said the increase was in line with the earlier announcement by the Department of Civil Aviation Malaysia that airlines operating out of Malaysia will be expected to pay up to ten times more in fees charged. "The government is the one who will decide on the rate increase," he told reporters here Monday.

BMW Group To Increase Capacity In Malaysia

CYBERJAYA -- BMW Group Malaysia plans to increase its annual production capacity by 2,000 to 3,000 units by 2018 from the existing 8,000 units. BMW Head of Corporate Communications, Sashi Ambi, said the move was designed to cater to the group's export expansion to Vietnam and the Philippines via Malaysia in the next two years. "This is still very early. It will depend on market conditions but we will definitely have to increase our production if we want to export," he told reporters here Monday.

Prasarana To Award Tenders For RM9 Bln LRT 3 Project In H2

KUALA LUMPUR -- Prasarana Malaysia Bhd expects to start awarding tenders for the RM9 billion Light Rail Transit Line 3 (LRT 3) project in the second half of the year (H2). Group Managing Director, Azmi Abdul Aziz, said the number of packages to be awarded was still undecided but the plan was to offer as many as possible to attract significant participation. "We will work hard to complete the civil engineering design and the systems so that we can open for tender. We expect the tenders to be awarded either in the third or fourth quarter," he told reporters here Tuesday.

Venture Into New Frontiers Of Islamic Banking & Finance - Sultan Nazrin

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sultan Nazrin Shah of Perak said Tuesday the way forward for Malaysia, after having established a solid reputation for Islamic banking and finance, is to venture into new frontiers and establish more meaningful footprints globally. "Those who aspire to embark on the same path will need to be armed with ingenuity, industriousness, foresight and diligence, apart from classical knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence as well as the technical workings of banking and finance," he said in a keynote address at the International Conference on Islamic Banking and Finance Law here Tuesday.

Boeing, Xiamen Airlines Announce Order For 10 Next-Gen 737s

KUALA LUMPUR -- Boeing and Xiamen Airlines, China's only all Boeing carrier, have finalised an order for 10 Next-Generation 737-800s valued at US$960 million at list prices. The aircraft maker said the order would be posted on Boeing's Orders and Deliveries website once all contingencies are cleared. In a statement from Seattle here Wednesday, Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Northeast Asia Sales, senior vice president, Ihssane Mounir said the 737-800 was the best selling version of the highly successful Next-Generation 737

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

family. "We are pleased to see the 737-800 continues to play an important role in Xiamen Airlines' fleet expansion," he added.

MAHB Aims 86 Mln Passenger Traffic For M'sia Operations This Year

SEPANG -- Airport operator Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) expects passenger traffic for its Malaysia operations to record 86 million movements this year, 2.5 per cent above 2015 passenger numbers. Managing Director Datuk Badlisham Ghazali said here Wednesday, MAHB ended 2015 with a 0.5 per cent growth, so the projection of 2.5 per cent also took into account what is happening with national carrier Malaysia Airlines. "The impact of Malaysia Airlines' restructuring on MAHB at KLIA is about 10.9 per cent reduction in total passengers, but (MAHB) has also been buffered by new airlines that we brought in," he said.

Explore Latin American Mart, MATRADE Tells Enterprises
By Niam Seet Wei

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) wants local enterprises to spread their wings and tap the vast unexplored markets of Mexico, Peru and Chile. Market Access And International Partnership Division Senior Director Aureen Jean Nonis said with a combined population of 166.3 million and the soon-to-be enforced Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), the three countries can become a gold mine for Malaysian investors. "Last year, the bilateral trade between Malaysia and Chile surged 36 per cent, year-on-year, to RM1.6 billion while with Mexico it increased 17.5 per cent to RM7.7 billion and with Peru it was valued at RM508 million, up 14.2 per cent, from 2014," she told Bernama here Wednesday.

Ekuinas Eyes Maiden Investment In Retail Sector

KUALA LUMPUR -- Ekuiti Nasional Bhd (Ekuinas) plans to make its maiden foray into the retail sector in three months, said Chief Executive Officer Syed Yasir Arafat Syed Abd Kadir. "We are going to make it via a market leader in the country. "Going forward, we are also keen to develop new industries and sectors, whereby there will be more investments in technology and healthcare," he told reporters here Thursday. Considering the challenging economic climate, Ekuinas planned to be extra prudent with investments this year, said Syed Yasir Arafat.

TM's Foreign Borrowings Still Manageable

KUALA LUMPUR -- The exposure to foreign exchange (forex) losses is manageable and Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM) would only hedge its foreign currency borrowings only if there is an opportunity. Group Chief Financial Officer, Datuk Bazlan Osman, said this was because the amount of the unhedged foreign borrowings was relatively small, at 13 per cent. "The borrowings are related to the long-term bonds which are due in 2025, of which US$200 million are not hedged. "We will look into any possibility on hedging because there is a cost to it which bank charges," he told reporters here Thursday.

DagangHalal Set To Be World's Largest Digital Halal Marketplace With London Listing

KUALA LUMPUR -- DagangHalal Plc is poised to become the world's largest digital Halal marketplace and a focal centre for the global halal industry following a successful listing in London, says Chairman Datuk Muhadzir Mohd Isa. With the listing, DagangHalal is now well-positioned to capitalise on the growth in global e-commerce sales, which are expected to reach US$4.9 trillion in 2020 (US$1=RM3.89). "We believe we are in the right industry, and that we have the right business model and the right footing to benefit from the rising spending power of Muslim consumers which is projected to increase to US$5.3 trillion by 2020," he told reporters here Thursday.

Nestle Not Increasing Product Prices For Now - Chairman

KUALA LUMPUR -- Nestle (Malaysia) Bhd is not increasing its product prices for now although commodity and raw material prices are expected to rise this year due to the weaker ringgit. "Nestle has not increased its product prices since last year. If possible, we will maintain the current prices," Chairman Tan Sri Syed Anwar Jamalullail told reporters here, Thursday.

21 Public & Private Bodies Save RM8.7 Mln Through 'LEAN' System

KUALA LUMPUR -- The implementation of the LEAN development system to boost national productivity and innovation has seen savings of RM8.7 million by 21 public and private organisations, Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) director-general Datuk Mohd Razali Hussain said here Thursday. He said the MPC managed to gather 24 projects from 21 public and private bodies that demonstrated a positive impact in terms of effective process and time saving, as well as products that failed to meet specifications.

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

RHB Research Ranks Protasco Among Top 5 Small Cap Companies

KUALA LUMPUR -- Protasco Bhd has been ranked by RHB Research as among the top five small cap stocks in its 2016 edition of Top Malaysia Small Cap Companies. In a statement here Monday, Protasco said the recognition was based on its growing businesses, especially road maintenance, which has accumulated a RM769 million orderbook.

MDEC Appoints Sidek As New Chairman

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) has appointed Tan Sri Sidek Hassan as its new Chairman, effective May 1. "He succeeds Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, who served MDEC as Chairman for 13 years," the company said in a statement here Monday. Sidek was the Chief Secretary to the government from 2006 to 2012 and is currently Chairman of Petroliam Nasional Bhd (Petronas). MDEC recently underwent a name change from Multimedia Development Corporation to MDEC, to reflect the company's mandate and goals for Digital Malaysia, and driving the nation's digital economy in a holistic manner.

Texchem Plans To Open 35 More Restaurants Nationwide In 2016

GEORGE TOWN -- Texchem Resources Bhd plans to open 35 more restaurants, including Doutor Coffee, its biggest Japanese coffee shop chain, nationwide this year. Of them, 11 will be Sushi King restaurants, 10 each of Yoshinoya and Hanamaru Udon restaurants, and four Doutor Coffee outlets, Texchem founder and executive chairman Tan Sri Fumihiko Konishi said here Monday.

Sitec To Host StartupQuest Selangor In May, Aug

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Selangor Information Technology and E-Commerce Council (Sitec) will be hosting StartupQuest Selangor (SQSel), a biannual event in search of startups, solutions or ideas that could contribute towards Selangor becoming a Smart City state. Chief Executive Yong Kai Ping said here Tuesday, the event, to be held in May and August, is to encourage the public, especially students, to be involved in the startup scene and participate in the growth of the state.

AirAsia Offers Promotional Fares For Routes To Sarawak

KUALA LUMPUR -- AirAsia Bhd is offering promotional all-in-fares from as low as RM49 for flights to Sarawak. In a statement here Tuesday, AirAsia said, the routes included Kuala Lumpur to Kuching, Kota Kinabalu to Kuching and from Kuching to Miri, Bintulu and Sibu. "The bookings can be made online at airasia.com website or via AirAsia's mobile application from now until May 8, 2016," it said, adding to guests will be able to travel immediately.

Samsung Partners AirAsia To Fly Galaxy Users To Bangkok In May

KUALA LUMPUR -- Samsung Malaysia Electronics (SME) Sdn Bhd has partnered AirAsia Bhd to fly Samsung's Galaxy Life users to Bangkok, Thailand, in May. In a statement here Wednesday, Samsung said that Galaxy device users would need to download the Galaxy Life application (app) through Samsung's Galaxy Apps or Google Play Store to redeem the free return flights in the app. Mobile and IT Business Unit Vice-President Lee Jui Siang said the collaboration with AirAsia was an effort taken to reward customers for their continuous support.

Sarawak Energy Signs LOI With North Kalimantan

KUCHING -- State-owned Sarawak Energy Bhd Wednesday signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) with North Kalimantan to provide consultancy and technical expertise to the Indonesian province. The LOI formalised an agreement to explore partnership opportunities in power generation projects and strategy formulation to improve the power supply infrastructure in North Kalimantan. Signing on behalf of Sarawak Energy was its Group Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Torstein Dale Sjøtviet, while Governor of North Kalimantan Dr H. Irianto Lambrie represented North Kalimantan. Speaking after the signing ceremony, Sjøtviet said the LOI laid the groundwork for Sarawak Energy to expand internationally.

Ismee To Hand Over Duties As TH Group MD/CEO Effective July 1

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tan Sri Ismee Ismail will be handing over his duties as Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH) to Datuk Johan Abdullah, effective July 1. TH in a statement here Thursday said Johan, who joined it on Jan 15 last year as Deputy Group Managing Director and Deputy CEO, will be assuming the duties of acting CEO from May 16. Chairman Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim said the handing over was in line with TH's succession plan put in place in January 2015. He said Ismee's extraordinary vision and leadership had significantly contributed towards the pilgrims fund board's many successes, earning recognition and respect worldwide.

MAS' Brand New Look For Golden Lounges

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Airlines Bhd (MAS) has extensively redesigned its Golden Lounges to offer guests an exciting new pre-flight experience, Chief Commercial Officer Paul Simmons says. "We are extremely excited about the project which marks the next phase of an exciting products and services roll-out to provide our customers with an enhanced travel experience," he said in a statement Friday.

Celcom Axiata's XPAX Unveils New Magic Reload

KUALA LUMPUR -- Celcom Axiata Bhd's main prepaid brand Xpax Thursday unveiled its New Magic Reload that offers greater Internet connectivity and provide better mobile experience for its customers. "Until December 2015, out of the 12.25 million loyal Celcom customers, 9.45 million or 77 per cent are Xpax users. "We realise customers want the freedom of not worrying about cost. That is why we introduced this new Xpax plan that will perfectly suit their respective lifestyles," said Celcom Axiata's Chief Marketing and Sales Officer Zalman Aefendy Zainal Abidin after the launching of the New Magic Reload plan here, Thursday. The New Magic Reload consists of five reload plans, RM8 for 1GB (daily), RM18 for 1GB (weekly) and three monthly plans -- RM38 for 4GB, RM48 for 5GB and RM68 for 7GB.

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

BNM Team Remains Intact With Muhammad At The Helm

Commentary by Siti Hawa Othman

AT THE HELM...Datuk Muhammad Ibrahim takes over from Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz as Bank Negara Governor. fotoBERNAMA

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- Outgoing Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) governor Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz must be happy now, that her successor is no other than her immediate deputy Datuk Muhammad Ibrahim.

She had said before, that due to a very challenging environment currently, the person who is chosen as governor must be able to manage all these and also be able to keep the central bank team intact. Well, she got what she had wished for.

Zeti, who had been 16 years at the helm, has high regards for the BNM team for their commitment and dedication in delivering the mandates of the bank.

Hence, she assured senior editors at a briefing last year, that when she completes her term, "this institution would remain solid and resilient and would continue to do the good job." And she got Muhammad, aged 56, to do all that now.

SEARCH OVER

The search for the new governor is now over after a lot of speculations over potential candidates, with several names bandied about, including Muhammad himself.

The others were former Malaysian Ambassador to the US Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin, Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah, deputy BNM governor Datuk Nor Shamsiah Mohd Yunus, and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar.

The long-awaited announcement came at about 2.30 pm Wednesday as Muhammad was supposed to attend a Terengganu-themed oil painting exhibition at the BNM Museum and Art Gallery at Sasana Kijang at 3 pm.

The press was there and their presence was exceptionally large. They waited until he had toured the exhibition before swarming him for comments.

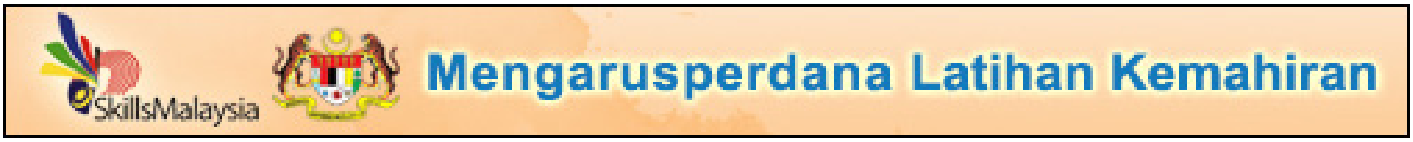
IMPRESSIVE TRACK RECORD

The financial industry too is jubilant as Muhammad, who has extensive experience and impressive leadership track record, was hailed by many as the right man for the job.

Home-grown, having joined BNM in 1984 before becoming deputy governor in June 2010, Muhammad, who is from Selangor, will serve as BNM governor for five years from May 1.

Accepting the post with great humility, he said, "It is important for the central bank to maintain monetary and financial stability, remain focused on its strategic agenda and work towards contributing to a better future for all Malaysians."

He thanked Zeti for her exemplary leadership and enormous contributions to the central bank and to the nation.
-- BERNAMA



© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

LIST OF MARKET REPORTS :

BURSA MALAYSIA

BURSA: KL Shares Dampened By Falling Regional Markets

By Sharifah Pirdaus Syed Ali

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia is expected to trend lower next week driven by falling regional markets on the absence of a stimulus move by the Bank of Japan and relatively hawkish minutes of the US Federal Reserve meeting. However, Affin Hwang Investment Bank Vice-President and Retail Research Head Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan said positive local sentiments would likely support the market.

“These include the appointment of a new Bank Negara Governor which augurs well for the confidence of foreign investors that would lift the ringgit, and the National Transformation Programme (NTP), which has exceeded expectations across the board.

“This (NTP) is reflected in the Gross Domestic Product, which grew an average 5.6 per cent annually from 2010 to 2015 despite the challenging external environment,” said Nazri.

On a weekly basis, the benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) fell by 45.24 points to 1,672.72 from 1,717.96 last week.

Weekly turnover leaped to 9.77 billion units valued at RM10.24 billion from 8.6 billion units valued at RM9.25 billion last week. Main market volume rose to 7.20 billion shares valued at RM9.79 billion from 6.37 billion shares valued at RM8.89 billion previously.

FOREX: Ringgit On Upward Trend Over Positive News

By Zarul Effendi Razali

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit is expected to trend higher next week, supported by positive catalysts including the appointment of a new Bank Negara Malaysia Governor and good Economic Transformation Programme highlights.

Affin Hwang Investment Bank vice-president/head of retail research Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan said the local note gained significantly upon the new governor’s announcement which augured well for the confidence of foreign investors.

“The ringgit’s performance puts it at a fraction above its lowest level since last July 2015 as investors infer a more dovish stance of late from the US Federal Reserve, leaving rates unchanged as the Fed signalled less concern about global economic risks,” he told Bernama.

The dollar index, which measures the US currency against a basket of its peers, traded down 0.7 per cent to 93.76 while the ringgit zoomed 1.8 per cent higher to an almost nine-month high of 3.8868.

Nazri said the market sentiment should also be empowered by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak’s announcement that social and economic measures under the National Transformation Programme (NTP) have exceeded expectations across the board.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the local note ended lower against the greenback at 3.9000/9070 compared with 3.8940/8000 last week.

The ringgit also fell against the Singapore dollar to 2.9024/9083 from last Friday’s 2.8838/8904 and weakened against the yen to 3.6411/6487 from

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

3.5281/5342 previously.

It fell against the British pound to 5.6862/6984 from last Friday's 5.5852/5957 and decreased against the euro to 4.4370/4462 from 4.3893/3969 previously.

The market will be closed on Monday for Labour Day.

It fell against the British pound to 5.5232/5381 from 5.5012/5074 on Thursday and was lower against the euro at 4.3930/4046 from 4.3825/3866 Thursday.

Money Market Stable On BNM Intervention

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian money market is likely to remain stable next week with Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) continuing to intervene to manage surplus liquidity. The central bank is expected to conduct daily tenders to reduce excess liquidity from the financial market.

For the week just ended, BNM intervened on a daily basis to absorb excess funds by conducting several tenders -- conventional money market, Qard, repo, range maturity auction, Islamic range maturity auction and Commodity Murabahah Programmes.

On Friday, the central bank's action helped reduce the market's liquidity surplus in the conventional system to RM23.01 billion from RM29.60 billion earlier.

The market liquidity in the Islamic system fell to RM5.75 billion from RM12.90 billion previously.

The overnight rate remained at 3.21 per cent while the one-, two- and three-week rates were at 3.30 per cent, 3.35 per cent and 3.39 per cent respectively throughout the week.

Meanwhile, the benchmark three-month interbank rate remained unchanged from last Friday's 3.70 per cent.

KLCI Futures Lower On Weak Cash Market

By Sharifah Pirdaus Syed Ali

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contracts (FKLI) on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to be lower next week, in line with the weak outlook for the cash market.

Affin Hwang Investment Bank Vice-President and Retail Research Head Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan said the FBM KLCI might continue to trend further downward on persistent selling pressure.

He said on technical analysis, the recent sell-down could look to ease further in the near term given the deep oversold situation.

"We reckon that the key index could possibly find some buying support at the 1,660 level followed by the 1650 level. Overhead resistance is still set at 1,700 and 1,730 respectively," he told Bernama.

For the week just ended, the benchmark FBM KLCI was mostly on a downtrend except for Wednesday trading, taking the cue mainly from the performance of regional bourses amid uncertainties over the US Federal Reserve and Bank of Japan's monetary policy decisions.

Comparing Friday to Friday, spot month April 2016 fell 56.5 points to 1,663, May 2016 was 48 points lower at 1,662.5, June 2016 lost 47.5 points to 1,657.5 and September 2016 shed 47 points to 1,646.5.

Weekly turnover surged to 106,101 lots from 33,277 lots last week while open interest rose to 68,589 contracts from 42,496 contracts previously. The benchmark FBM KLCI settled at 1,672.72, down 2.04 points, from 1,717.96 last Friday.

CPO Futures On Technical Correction

By Nurul Hanis Izmir

KUALA LUMPUR -- The crude palm oil (CPO) futures market is expected to see a technical correction next week with prices ranging between RM2,500 and RM2,520 a tonne, a dealer said.
Interband Group of Companies Senior Palm Oil Trader, Jim Teh, said demand is expected to slow down as the weather conditions will soon recover.

"Next week will also be a short trading week as Monday

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

will be a Labour Day public holiday, but the good news is El Nino will end at the end of May.
"This is good news for the planter and plantations," he told Bernama. A meteorologist at the Malaysian Meteorological Department's National Geophysics and Weather Operations Centre recently reported that the hot weather due to the El Nino phenomenon which is currently sweeping the country is expected to return to normal by the end of May.

This will likely benefit the markets for CPO and other commodities including rubber, he said. According to Teh, the local palm oil market will also be on the uptrend, supported by buying demand for the commodity during the Muslim fasting month and other festive seasons in the second half of 2016.

For the week just ended, palm oil was trading mostly lower on the higher ringgit. Early this week, rating agency Fitch Ratings said that CPO prices are set to rebound this year after prices rose in February and March 2016, snapping straight months of decline.

"The rebound will come as global demand stabilises for the cheapest, most versatile vegetable oil, and a sustained El Nino effect lowers output in Indonesia and Malaysia, which account for a combined 86 per cent of total global production," it said.

May 2016 fell RM105 to RM2,572 a tonne, June 2016 went down RM100 to RM2,593, July 2016 dropped RM97 to RM2,593 while August 2016 was RM87 lower at RM2,582 a tonne.

Turnover rose to 265,786 lots from 239,608 lots last Friday while open interest increased to 307,609 contracts versus 294,837 contracts previously.

On the physical market, April South depreciated RM90 to RM2,600 a tonne.

Rubber Market Seen Lower Next Week

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian rubber market is likely to trade lower next week tracking the performance of regional futures markets and the strengthening of the ringgit, dealers said.

"News that the oil prices edged to new 2016 highs on Friday has boosted the prices of commodities, including rubber. "However, the local note is expected to increase, influenced by the higher oil prices, which will likely cause the gains in the commodity to be capped next week," the dealer said.

For the week just ended, the local rubber market was trading mixed in tandem with regional futures markets.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the Malaysian Rubber Board's official physical price for tyre-grade SMR 20 declined 36.5 sen to 574.5 sen a kg while latex-in-bulk gained 18.5 sen to 509 sen a kg. The 5 pm unofficial closing price for SMR 20 depreciated 29 sen to 574 sen a kg while latex-in-bulk expanded 17.5 sen to 506.5 sen a kg.

KLIBOR Futures To Remain Subdued

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to remain quiet next week on lack of catalysts.

For the week just ended, no contract was traded throughout the week and open interest remained nil. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, spot month May 2016 remained at 96.32 while June 2016, July 2016 and September 2016 all remained at 96.35.

The underlying three-month KLIBOR was unchanged from last Friday's 3.70 per cent.

KLTM: Buying Rush To Push Prices Higher

KUALA LUMPUR -- A buying rush is expected to push the Kuala Lumpur Tin Market (KLTM) price to trade upwards next week, moving between US$17,200 and US$17,600 a tonne.

A trader said speculation over the potential increase in the KLTM's price in the market has driven the buyers to buy as much as they could before the price hits US$17,600 per tonne.

"The price level of US$17,200 is considered high for the

© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.

buyers," he added.

For the week just ended, tin finished US$25 higher at US$17,250 per tonne compared with US$17,225 per tonne last Friday.

Weekly turnover fell to 256 lots from 301 lots last week. Meanwhile, the differential between the KLTM and the LME narrowed to a premium of US$160 per tonne from a discount of US$250 per tonne.

Investor Sentiment To Drive Gold Futures Higher

KUALA LUMPUR -- Gold futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are likely to trend upward next week, lifted by the weaker ringgit and changes in investor risk tolerance.

Phillip Futures Sdn Bhd dealer Chua Zheng Liang said the weaker ringgit would push up the ringgit-denominated gold, making it more attractive.

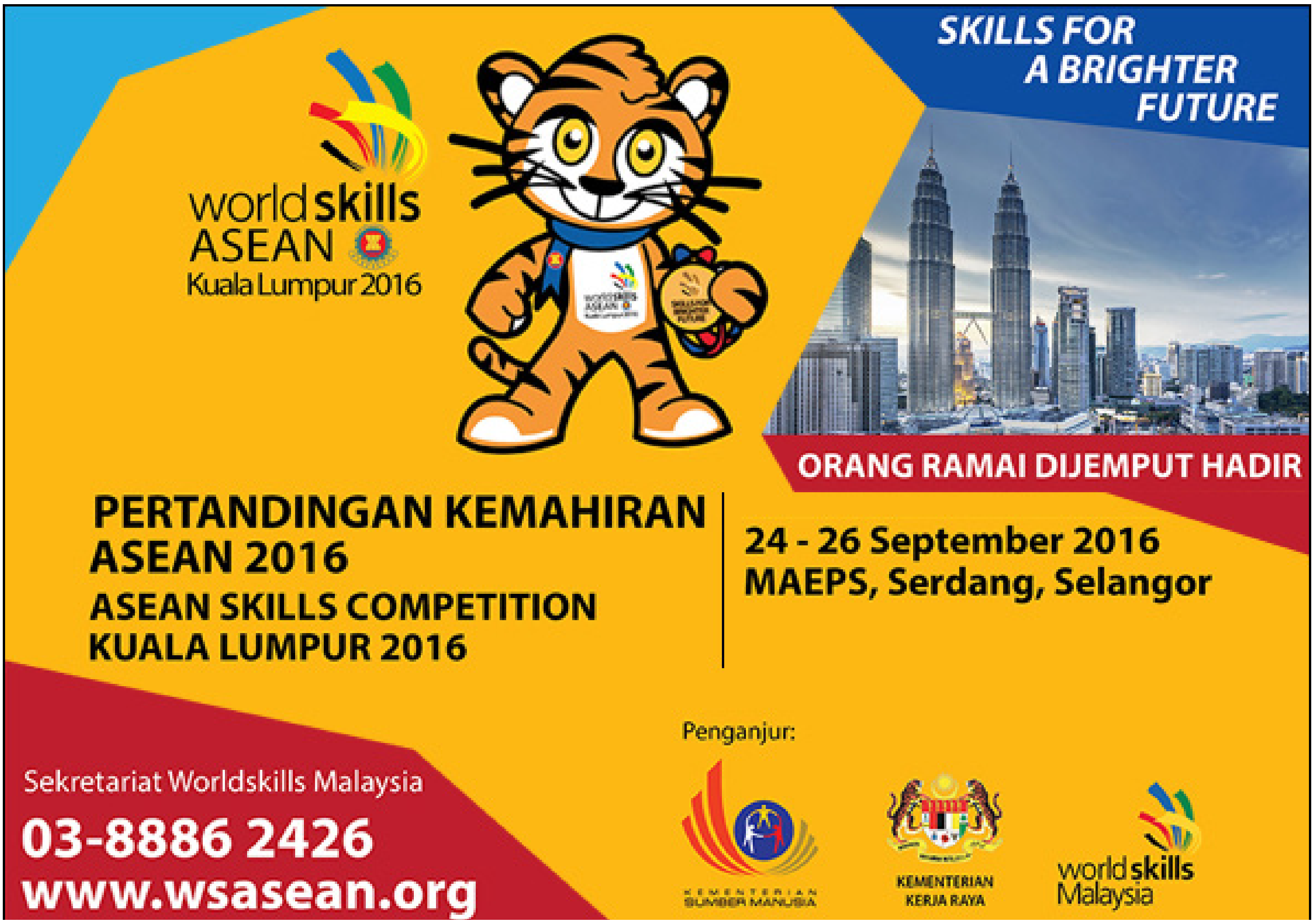
The local note was traded mostly lower for the week just ended. "Meanwhile, the US Federal Reserve's decision to maintain interest rates has supported bullion while the Bank of Japan's hold on its monetary stimulus has influenced market sentiment," he added.

The moves have shaken investors' confidence in the recovery of the global economic pattern, making them gravitate towards gold as a lower-risk investment.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, April 2016 added 71 ticks to RM159.95 per gramme, May 2016 increased 67 ticks to RM160.65, June 2016 rose 60 ticks to RM160.50 while July 2016 advanced 66 ticks to RM160.60 per gramme.

Weekly turnover jumped to 130 lots worth RM1.06 million from 34 lots worth RM532,520 last Friday.

Open interest on Friday went up to 569 contracts from 531 contracts previously.



© 2016 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form except with the prior written permission of BERNAMA.