BERNAMA MALAYSIAeBiz
WEEKLY BUSINESS ROUNDUP 3 - 7 OCTOBER 2016
September 2, 2016

This Week's Highlight : M'sia-Brunei Bilateral Ties At Best Level

ROYAL WELCOME...Sultan of Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah inspecting a guard-of-honour at Dataran Putra, in conjunction with his three-day visit to Malaysia to attend the 20th Malaysia-Brunei Darussalam Annual Leaders' Consultation in Putrajaya Tuesday. Pix: Harry Salzman fotoBERNAMA

PUTRAJAYA -- Malaysia and Brunei leaders at the 20th Malaysia-Brunei Annual Leaders' Consultation here on Tuesday have described the state of their bilateral relations as "at its best level". Wisma Putra in a statement said Wednesday, the consultation between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Sultan of Brunei, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, was held in a warm and constructive atmosphere.

This Week's Top Stories

MONDAY

Astana Expo 2017 To Boost M'sia-Kazakhstan Trade Ties

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Astana EXPO 2017 will provide a platform for both Malaysia and Kazakhstan to further enhance bilateral relations especially in trade, which stood at about US$100 million in 2015. Minister of Energy, Green Technology and Water Datuk Seri Panglima Dr Maximus Ongkili said Monday, the expo would provide big prospects for Malaysian industry players, including small and medium enterprises to discover new export markets for their products especially in Central Asia.

TUESDAY

Malaysia, Brunei To Initiate Discussions On Pan Borneo Highway Network

PUTRAJAYA -- Malaysia and Brunei are set to initiate discussions on the Pan Borneo Highway network to improve connectivity and accelerate economic and social growth between them, a joint statement said Tuesday. The Pan Borneo Highway project with a distance of 2,325km from Telok Melano to Lawas in Sarawak and from Sindumin to Tawal in Sabah is expected to be completed by 2021.

WEDNESDAY

Malaysia's Economic Growth To Rebound 2017 - World Bank

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's economic growth is expected to rebound in 2017 and 2018 on a recovery in oil prices and export goods, the World Bank's Chief Economist for East Asia and Pacific Region Sudhir Shetty said. It is likely to slow to 4.2 per cent in 2016 from 5.0 per cent last year compounded by low crude oil prices and manufactured exports are affected by weaker global demand, he told the Malaysian media via a video conference from Washington DC.

THURSDAY

MITI Maintains 4-4.5 Pct GDP Growth Forecast

PORT KLANG -- The International Trade and Industry Ministry has maintained Gross Domestic Product (GDP) forecast of between 4.0 and 4.5 per cent for the year despite the world GDP forecast downgrade by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Yes, there will be some impact on Malaysia. Last year we recorded 5.0 per cent (GDP growth) and this year we expect a growth of between 4.0 and 4.5 per cent, after taking into account the current global environment," Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said after a woking visit to Port Klang Free Zone and Westports Tower here Thursday.

FRIDAY

Malaysia's Aug Trade Surplus Widens To RM8.51 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's trade surplus in August rose to a whopping RM8.51 billion from RM1.91 billion registered in July 2016 due to a record increase in exports to ASEAN, India, the United States, Mexico, Turkey, Hong Kong and the European Union. Malaysia's exports in August 2016 was at a eight-month record high of RM67.58 billion, up 1.5 per cent, from July's exports of RM59.8 billion, the International Trade and Industry Ministry (MITI) said in a statement Friday.

SMEbrief

SME Bill To Raise SME Contribution To Exports, GDP

KUALA LUMPUR -— The Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development Bill, which is expected to be tabled in Parliament later this year, is seen as being able to help SMEs achieve their targets for exports and contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2020. Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Ahmad Maslan said Tuesday, the ministry is confident the Bill would help the SME sector raise its contribution to total exports to 23 per cent by 2020 from 17.6 per cent in 2015.

Banks Receptive To Making Loans To Businesses - ABM

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian banks are receptive to making loans to businesses as reflected from the total outstanding loans extended to the business sector which stood at RM532.6 billion in the first seven months of 2016. The Association of Banks in Malaysia (ABM) said in a statement Tuesday, there were various types of financing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) based on the size of businesses such as micro-financing and/or the various grants and funds offered by the government.

Commercial Islamic Banks Ensure Continued Financing

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Association of Islamic Banking Institutions Malaysia (AIBIM) Wednesday affirmed that commercial Islamic banking institutions will remain fully supportive of businesses and SMEs by ensuring continued access to various financing schemes offered by banks. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2016-2017 highlighted that Malaysia, despite continuing to lead the region among emerging economies, faced challenges in accessing financing for doing business in the country, it said in a statement.

SME Corp Seeks Cohesive Approach To Spur SME Devt

KUALA LUMPUR -- SME Corporation Malaysia hopes the upcoming 2017 Budget will introduce a more cohesive and structured approach to spur the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), its Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Hafsah Hashim said. SME Corp had already forwarded a proposal seeking the Finance Ministry to look into the policy, as well as fiscal and non-fiscal tax incentives, to accelerate the growth of SMEs, she told reporters after the "Malaysian SMEs: Across Borders" Seminar Thursday.

Draft Amendments To 18 Laws For TPPA Completed - MITI

KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Trade and Industry Ministry (MITI) has done the draft amendments to 18 laws in its effort to implement the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA). "Considering the 2017 Budget is around the corner, it is difficult to send in bills (to Parliament) for consideration but we hope to do all this by the first half of next year," Secretary-General Datuk J. Jayasiri said after the half-day "Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): Across Borders" seminar Thursday.

PropUP

Property*update*

MAPEX II To Offer 3,000 Units Worth RM1.247 Bln

KUANTAN -- The three-day Malaysia Property Exposition Pahang II, (MAPEX II) here, which will start from Oct 14, 2016, will offer over 3,000 units worth RM1.25 billion. Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (REHDA) Pahang branch's Chairman, Chua Say Chai told a media briefing Tuesday, 28 residential and commercial developers from Pahang, Terengganu, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka will participate in the expo.

PropertyGuru Group Makes Strategic Investment In Vietnam

KUALA LUMPUR -- PropertyGuru Group, Asia's leading online property group, has made a strategic investment in Batdongsan.com.vn (Batdongsan), Vietnam's number one property site. Batdongsan is used by over two million people in Vietnam every month, with four times more monthly visits than its nearest competitor, it said in a statement Tuesday.

Encorp To Sell Land In Penang For RM25 Million

KUALA LUMPUR -- Encorp Bhd is selling its 2.33-hectare freehold land in Bandar Batu Ferringi, Penang, to Crescent Consortium Sdn Bhd for RM25 million. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia Wednesday, the company said the proposed disposal enabled Encorp to unlock its capital from being tied up in long-term assets.

Sime Darby Unit's Aussie Property Deal Has Lapsed

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sime Darby Bhd announced that the framework agreement signed between its indirect unit, Sime Darby Property Singapore Ltd (SDPSL), Hastings Deering (Australia) Ltd (HDAL) and Japan Residential Assets Manager Ltd (JRAM) on Aug 15, 2016 has lapsed. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia Tuesday, the conglomerate said the announcement was made in view that the definitive agreements for the industrial properties disposal in Australia had not been entered into as of the long-stop date of Sept 30, 2016.

MIPPM'S Inaugural Conference To Elevate Professionalism Among Property Managers

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian Institute of Professional Property Managers (MIPPM) is organising its inaugural conference on Oct 19, 2016, aimed at elevating professionalism among property managers. Its president, Sarkunan Subramaniam, said Thursday, property managers still required a lot of training to overcome third-class mentality to enable them to manage first-class infrastructure and property.

MARKET

BURSA MALAYSIA

Scoreboard

Gainers - 469

Losers - 327

Not Traded - 492

Unchanged - 383

Value - 1532123083

Volume - 14335872

Bursa Malaysia Ends Higher

By Nurunnasihah Ahmad Rashid

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia ended higher Friday helped by strong buying support from local institutional funds in selected heavyweights, dealers said. At 5 pm, the benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) finished 1.24 points higher at 1,671.79 from Thursday's close of 1,670.55. Market breadth was positive with gainers led losers by 469 to 327, 383 counters were unchanged, 492 untraded and 14 others were suspended.

Volume, however, fell to 1.43 billion units worth RM1.53 billion against Thursday's 1.81 billion units worth RM2.03 billion. Affin Hwang Investment Bank Vice-President/Retail Research Head, Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan, said although the market was higher, trading was thin as some investors stayed on the sidelines to await the release of US jobs data later Friday for direction.

"They are adopting a wait-and-see attitude for now until the US' interest rate scenario is much more clear," Nazri told Bernama. He said the FBM KLCI would trade lower next week if the US were to release positive job statistics which will influence the timing of interest rate increase. Main Market turnover fell to 894.39 million shares worth RM1.45 million from Thursday's 1.06 billion shares worth RM1.92 billion.

Exchange Rate
(Ringgit : Foreign Currency)

	Buying	Selling
USD	4.0830	4.0900
EUR	4.5640	4.5734
GBP	5.4161	5.3262
100 YEN	3.9411	3.9498
SGD	3.0018	3.0080

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

FOREX: Ringgit Ends Lower Against US Dollar

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit fell for the fifth consecutive day, dampened by this week's drop in global oil prices and expectation that the US Federal Reserve would raise interest rates, dealers said. At 6 pm, the ringgit was quoted at 4.0830/0900 against the greenback from 4.0740/0790 on Thursday. The dealer said the local note depreciated despite most emerging regional currencies edging up as traders cautiously awaited the release of US jobs data later Friday.

"The local note fell 1.7 per cent this week as global oil prices slipped more than eight per cent, heightening worries over the country's oil and gas revenue," said the dealer. Another dealer said market sentiment remained weak the past few days following expectation that the US Federal Reserve could raise interest rates in coming months. Meanwhile, the local currency was also traded mostly lower against a basket of major currencies. The local note fell against the euro to 4.5640/5734 from 4.5388/5460 on Thursday and decreased against the Singapore dollar to 3.0018/0080 from 2.9879/9918 on Thursday. It fell against the British pound to 5.4161/3262 from 5.3964/3043 on Thursday and declined against the yen to 3.9411/9498 from 3.9324/9384 previously.

Money-Market: Short-Term Rates End Stable On BNM's Intervention

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term interbank rates closed stable Friday on Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) intervention to absorb excess liquidity from the financial system. The liquidity surplus in the conventional system eased to RM20.07 billion from RM28.49 billion earlier, while in the Islamic system, it fell to RM6.38 billion from RM11.02 billion, previously. Earlier, BNM conducted a range maturity auction tender and an Islamic range maturity auction tender. The central bank also conducted a RM20 billion conventional money market tender and a RM6.3 billion Qard tender, both for three-day. The overnight Islamic reference rate stood at 2.95 per cent while the one-, two- and three-week rates stood at 3.01 per cent, 3.06 per cent and 3.10 per cent, respectively.

KLIBOR Futures Contract Closes Untraded

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed untraded Friday. Spot month September 2016, October 2016, November 2016 and December 2016 were all pegged at 96.60, respectively. Open interest was nil. At the 11 am fixing, the underlying three-month KLIBOR stood at 3.40 per cent.

KLCI Futures Close Higher

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed marginally higher on continued buying interest. September 2016 added 4.5 points to 1,667.0, October 2016 gained 5.5 points to 1,663.5 and December 2016 rose three points to 1,658.0. March 2017, however, declined 0.5 of-a-point to 1,646.5. Turnover dropped to 4,927 lots from Thursday's 6,966 lots while open interest dipped to 41,413 contracts from 43,924 contracts on Thursday. The underlying benchmark FBM KLCI finished 1.24 points higher to 1,671.79.

Domestic Financial System Likely Unaffected By US Rate Hike - Kenanga

KUALA LUMPUR -- The local financial system is expected to be cushioned from any adverse impact from large capital outflows resulting from a possible US rate hike, says Kenanga Research. The optimism arises from Malaysia's established domestic bond market, stable sovereign debt ratings and relatively higher yield spread against US assets, it said in a research note here Tuesday.

Malaysia Poised To Benefit From Global Fintech Boom

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia is poised to benefit from the booming global financial technology (fintech) as the government has taken positive steps to boost the sector, said the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). "With the supportive regulatory framework and extremely high digital capacity, Malaysia has the potential to leap to the front of the fintech race alongside its neighbours in Asia Pacific," ACCA Business Insights Head, Faye Chua, said in a statement here Tuesday.

Banks Receptive To Making Loans To Businesses - ABM

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian banks are receptive to making loans to businesses as reflected from the total outstanding loans extended to the business sector which stood at RM532.6 billion in the first seven months of 2016. The Association of Banks in Malaysia (ABM) said in a statement here Tuesday, in 2015, the total loans disbursed by the country's banking system to the business sector amounted to RM787.2 billion, a 2.2 per cent growth from the previous year.

TNB's Unit Establishes US$2.5 Bln Multicurrency Sukuk Issuance Programme

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tenaga Nasional Bhd's (TNB) unit, TNB Global Ventures Capital Bhd, has established a multi-currency sukuk issuance programme of US$2.5 billion (US$1=RM4.12). TNB said the sukuk programme will provide it and its units with flexibility to time its fund-raising exercises as well as have access to a greater diversity of investors, both on and offshore, it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Tuesday.

Equity Marts To Continue To Be Well-Supported - Pacific Mutual

KUALA LUMPUR -- Pacific Mutual Fund Bhd, an investment management company under the OCBC Group, expects the equity markets to continue to be well-supported. Its Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director, Teh Chi-cheun, said in a statement here Wednesday, the search for income has begun post-global financial crisis when interest rates were cut to zero and now, they were still near zero or even negative such as in Europe and Japan.

Financial Sector One Of Most Optimistic In 4Q16 - D&B Study

KUALA LUMPUR -- Business sentiments in Malaysia remain cautiously optimistic in the fourth quarter of the year (4Q16), with the financial sector emerging as one of the most optimistic sectors, mainly driven by buoyant growth in the Islamic financing and life insurance sectors. According to the 15th Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) Malaysia's Business Optimism Index (BOI) quarterly study released here Wednesday, volume of sales and net profits in the financial sector have each rebounded to +11.11 percentage points in 4Q16 from -5.88 percentage points in 3Q16.

CIMB Offers RM440 Mln Banking Facility To Shin Yang Oil Palm

KUALA LUMPUR -- Shin Yang Oil Palm (Sarawak) Sdn Bhd (SYOP) has accepted a banking facility worth RM440 million from CIMB Bank Bhd. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday, Sarawak Oil Palms Bhd (SOP) said the facility consisted of a 10-year term loan, revolving credit facilities, overdraft and multi-option line.

Exim Bank To Assist Local Green Tech Firms' Overseas Ventures

KUALA LUMPUR -- Export-Import Bank of Malaysia Bhd (Exim Bank) hopes to assist more local green technology companies to venture abroad. President/Chief Executive Officer Norzilah Mohammed told reporters here Thursday, the government-owned development financial institution wants to boost renewable energy (green technology), which is somewhat new in Malaysia.

RHB Bank Completes Second Issuance Of US$500 Mln Senior Notes

KUALA LUMPUR -- RHB Bank Bhd has completed its second issuance of US$500 million (US$1 = RM4.14) senior unsecured notes in nominal value under its US$5 billion euro medium-term note programme which was established on Sept 23, 2014. In a statement here Thursday, it said, the senior notes were rated 'A3' by Moody's Investors Service Inc and 'BBB+' by Standard & Poor's Rating Services.

Finance Ministry Approves KER1M As GLC/GLIC Insurance Advisor

KUALA LUMPUR -- The 1Malaysia People's Welfare Association (KER1M) has obtained approval and support from the Finance Ministry (MoF) to provide insurance-related advisory services to government-linked companies (GLCs) and government-linked investment companies (GLICs). In a statement here Thursday, KER1M said its involvement was to ensure the insurance flows between insurance firms and GLCs/GLICs were reported in accordance with the agreement.

IGEM 2016 Expects RM1.5 Bln In Business Leads

KUALA LUMPUR -- The 7th International Greentech & Eco Products Exhibition & Conference Malaysia (IGEM) 2016, beginning Wednesday until this Saturday, is expected to generate RM1.5 billion in business leads. In a statement here Tuesday, the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water said more than 30,000 local and international visitors are anticipated at the event, which is to take place at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre here.

AEON Credit Q2 Pre-Tax Profit Rises To RM73.17 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Aeon Credit Service (M) Bhd posted a higher pre-tax profit of RM73.17 million for the second quarter ended Aug 31, 2016 versus RM64.27 million recorded in the same quarter last year. The group attributed the positive performance to average funding cost having risen marginally on the back of higher funding cost for new long-term funding, it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Tuesday.

Perdana Petroleum Unit Secures RM67 Mln Contract

KUALA LUMPUR -- Perdana Petroleum Bhd's unit, Perdana Nautika Sdn Bhd, has secured a RM67 million three-year contract for the supply of a floating accommodation vessel from Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Tuesday, the company said the contract will run from on-hire date, which is Sept 17, 2016 with an extension option of two years.

Malaysia's Economic Growth To Rebound In 2017 - World Bank

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's economic growth is expected to rebound in 2017 and 2018 on a recovery in oil prices and export goods, World Bank's Chief Economist for East Asia and Pacific Region Sudhir Shetty said. Malaysia's economic growth is likely to slow to 4.2 per cent in 2016 from 5.0 per cent last year as oil and manufactured exports are affected by weaker global demand, Shetty told Malaysian media via a video conference from Washington DC here Wednesday.

Rise Of EEVs In M'sia Fuels Demand For New Talent - IMI

KUALA LUMPUR -- Energy-efficient vehicles (EEVs) are becoming a significant emerging cluster in Malaysia, giving rise to new jobs with better pay in the automotive sector, according to UK-based Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI). IMI South-East Asia Senior Manager Matthew Stuart said in a statement here Wednesday, the rise of EEVs in Malaysia and the various incentives offered for vehicles with EEV status are spurring demand for automotive workers with EEV skills.

Malaysian Firms Rake In RM344.58 Mln Potential Sales In London

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian companies have generated potential sales worth RM344.58 million at the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation's (MATRADE) Source Malaysia Programme in London from Sept 26-27, 2016. A total of 81 Malaysian companies from various sectors, namely building materials; food and beverage; lifestyle, personal care and cosmetics; automotive; packaging and business services took part in the programme, MATRADE said in a statement here Wednesday.

M'sia's Jan-June Trade With China's Yunnan Province Hits US$173 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Total trade between Malaysia and China's Yunnan Province hit US$173 million (US$1.00=RM4.13) for the period from January to June this year, International Trade and Industry Deputy Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said after opening the China-Malaysia Trade Fair Conference here Wednesday. He said the trade mainly comprised agriculture-based products and commodities, and Malaysia is keen to increase the trade volume especially in tourism and attract more investments from Yunnan into the country.

Global Air Cargo Demand Climbs 3.9 Pct In August

KUALA LUMPUR -- Global air cargo demand registered positive growth in August 2016, with freight tonne kilometers (FTKs) rose 3.9 per cent year-on-year. The International Air Transport Association (IATA), in a statement here Wednesday, said freight capacity measured in available freight tonne kilometers (AFTKs) also increased 4.1 per cent.

Perak Gets Investments Worth Over RM2 Bln In 1H 2016

IPOH -- Perak received investments worth over RM2.16 billion from January to June this year, behind only Johor, Selangor and Penang among the states in Malaysia. State Industry, Investment and Corridor Development Committee Chairman Datuk Mohd Zahir Abdul Khalid expressed optimism that several upcoming mega projects could not only retain existing investors but also attract foreigners to invest in the state.

Nestle Aims To Grow Revenue Contribution From E-Commerce

KUALA LUMPUR -- Food and beverage manufacturer, Nestle (Malaysia) Bhd, aims to grow its revenue contribution from the e-commerce platform to 10 per cent within five years. Managing Director Alois Hofbauer told reporters here Thursday, currently the e-commerce segment contributed less than one per cent to the company's overall sales.

Mesiniaga Awarded RM10 Mln ICT Maintenance Services Contract By MIDA

KUALA LUMPUR -- Mesiniaga Bhd Thursday announced that it has accepted a Letter of Award, from the Malaysian Investment Development Authority for a RM10.4 million ICT hardware and software maintenance services contract. The three-year contract, which commenced on Oct 1, 2016, would contribute positively to Mesiniaga's earnings over the contract period, the company said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia Thursday.

GreenTech Confident Of Exceeding Business Leads Target Of RM1.5 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian Green Technology Corporation (GreenTech) is optimistic of surpassing its business leads target of RM1.5 billion at the 7th International Greentech and Eco Products Exhibition and Conference Malaysia (IGEM 2016). Group Chief Executive Officer, Ahmad Hadri Haris told reporters here Thursday IGEM 2015 had surpassed the target of RM1.2 billion by generating RM1.98 billion in business leads.

Medical Tourism Revenue May Hit RM4.2 Bln By 2020

KUALA LUMPUR -- The government aims to generate RM4.2 billion in medical tourism revenue by 2020 through improved services, as well as aggressive marketing activities, says Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Lee Chee Leong. He told reporters here Thursday, in order to meet the target, the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) had been tasked with developing more high-end and high-quality services in the country to attract Asian medical travellers, particularly from China.

LPI Capital Posts Higher Revenue, Profit For Q3

KUALA LUMPUR -- LPI Capital Bhd (LPI) posted a higher revenue for its third quarter ended Sept 30, 2016 at RM363.5 million compared with RM349.5 million registered a year ago. In a statement here Thursday, the group said pre-tax profit also increased to RM97.4 million from RM94.8 million recorded previously. "The general insurance industry has been affected by the slowdown in economic activities, particularly in the property and automotive markets," Founder and Chairman Tan Sri Dr Teh Hong Piow said.

E.A Technique Eyes Contracts Worth RM1 Bln Despite Subdued O&G Activities

By Harizah Hanim Mohamed

KUALA LUMPUR -- Shipping company E.A Technique (M) Bhd's long-term prospect remains robust as it is in the midst of tendering for four to five new contracts in the shipping and oil and gas segments worth close to RM1 billion. Its Managing Director, Datuk Abdul Hak Md Amin told Bernama here Thursday, the contracts complemented its current order book of RM1.7 billion, which would help it sustain until 2025.

YYC Harveston Aims 30 Pct Annual Growth, Double Clientele Within 3 Yrs

KUALA LUMPUR -- YYC Harveston Wealth Advisory Sdn Bhd (YYC Harveston) aims to achieve an average annual growth of 30 per cent and double its clientele within three years. Managing Partner Phang Kar Yew said at a press conference here Thursday, YYC Harveston was a joint venture (JV) between YYC Advisors & Co (YCC) which will hold 51 per cent and Harveston Financial Group (Harveston), the remaining 49 per cent.

Malaysia' S Aug Trade Surplus Widens To RM8.51 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's trade surplus in August rose to a whopping RM8.51 billion from RM1.91 billion registered in July 2016 due to a record increase in exports to ASEAN, India, United States, Mexico, Turkey, Hong Kong and the European Union. Malaysia's exports in August 2016 was at a eight-month record high of RM67.58 billion, up 1.5 per cent, from July's exports of RM59.8 billion, the International Trade and Industry Ministry (MITI) said in a statement here Friday.

Brand Support, Halal Segment Boost Malaysian Cocoa's Potential

KUALA LUMPUR -- Brand support for unique Malaysian cocoa and production for the halal export segment can boost the country's reputation as a quality cocoa producer and processor, says the Plantation Industries and Commodities Ministry. Minister Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong said said in his opening speech at Malaysia Cocoa and Chocolate Day (MCCD 2016) here Friday, efforts to boost production of value-added cocoa-based products are being intensified, including making the country Asia's main chocolate producer.

Sarawak's Biomass Resources Can Generate RM4.8 Bln In Additional GNI

KUCHING -- Sarawak's biomass resources can generate RM4.8 billion in additional Gross National Income (GNI) and RM18 billion in potential investment opportunities in the entire biomass value chain. Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem said the state's biomass resources was adequate to support 10 biofuel and biochemical plants for the next five years. "Based on a recent study by the state government, the sector can also create 35,000 environmentally-friendly jobs in addition to the potential RM18 billion in investment opportunities," he said before the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between South Korea's second largest petroleum refinery, GS Caltex, and Biomass Renewable Resources here Friday.

Employers Positive Recruitment Will Pick Up Despite Weak Ringgit

KUALA LUMPUR -- Local employers are hopeful and remain positive that recruitment will pick up in the months ahead despite the weak ringgit and global economic climate being uncertain. "According to the World Bank, Malaysia's economy is growing at an above average rate, and is likely to stay strong in spite of the regional economic setbacks," said Sanjay Modi, Managing Director for Monster.com – Asia Pacific and Middle East, in a statement here Monday.

Govt Will Not Cut Public Sector Emoluments - Johari

KUALA LUMPUR -- The government will not cut operating expenditure in terms of government emoluments following declining revenue, but will instead focus on improving public service productivity, Second Finance Minister Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani told reporters after delivering a keynote address at the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia roundtable session here Tuesday. He said improving productivity would help mitigate growing government emoluments such as salaries and bonuses as well as pension.

FMM Seeks More Business Incentives In Budget 2017

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) expects the government will introduce more incentives in the 2017 Budget to mitigate the rising cost of doing business. Chief Executive Officer Yeoh Oon Tean told reporters here Tuesday, in the long run, Malaysia needed to reduce the cost of doing business in order to remain competitive.

Spiking Energy Consumption By Data Centres A Worrying Trend - AIMS

KUALA LUMPUR -- Data centres will consume three times as much energy over the next decade and this rate of increase is a worrying trend for the local data centre industry. AIMS Group (AIMS) said in a statement here Tuesday, a carrier-neutral data services provider, said despite the advancements in server storage capacity and data centre cooling technologies, the amount of energy consumed by data centres accounted for about two percent of total greenhouse gas emissions which matched that of the airline industry.

Nokia Provides Communication Network Support For Kelana Jaya LRT Extension Line

KUALA LUMPUR -- Nokia has provided communication network support for both operational and passenger on one of the world's largest driverless train systems operating in Kuala Lumpur. In a statement here Wednesday, Nokia said the mission-critical railway network provides a range of services for the Kelana Jaya Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line Extension including 13 new stations, used by 350,000 passengers daily.

Internet Access To Rise To 50 Pct In Emerging Nations In 2025 - Euromonitor

KUALA LUMPUR -- The percentage of the population with internet access in emerging and developing countries is projected to increase to 50 per cent in 2025 from 34 per cent in 2015, according to global market research company Euromonitor International. In its report research titled 'Strategies for Expanding into Emerging Markets with E-commerce', the global research house said mobile internet subscriptions in the emerging countries surged to two billion in 2015 from 299 million recorded in 2010.

UEM Group Invests RM150 Mln For ERP Cloud Solution

KUALA LUMPUR -- Engineering-based infrastructure and services group, UEM Group Bhd, is investing RM150 million on an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Cloud Solution for the company and its subsidiaries. The group said in a statement here Wednesday, an ERP platform would allow the company to better manage all of its information through total systems integration and incorporate as well as manage it processes.

M'sia Aims To Be World's 2nd Largest Producer Of Solar PV By 2020

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia aims to be the second largest producer of solar photovoltaics (PV) by 2020, said Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water Secretary-General, Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang. The current output was 12 per cent and the aim was to reach 20 per cent by then, he told reporters here Wednesday.

Kossan Partners With MRB To Produce Rubber Products

KUALA LUMPUR -- Kossan Rubber Industries Bhd's unit, Doshin Rubber Products (M) Sdn Bhd, has partnered with the Malaysian Rubber Board to develop rubber products for the civil engineering and construction industries. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday, the company said a collaboration agreement between both parties was inked on Sept 27, 2016 for a term of three years.

Tien Wah To Buy PT Bintang Pesona Jagat For RM96.6 Mln
KUALA LUMPUR -- Tien Wah Press Holdings Bhd plans to buy British American Tobacco Indonesia's printing business, PT Bintang Pesona Jagat for RM96.6 million. The acquisition comes together with a six-year manufacturing and supply of packaging materials agreement, the company said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday.

Malaysia To Implement Net Energy Metering Next Year
KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia is expected to implement net energy metering (NEM) next year, which allows self-consumption of electricity generated by solar photovoltaic system while selling the excess energy to utility companies. "If the users are producing more than what they are consuming, they get paid by utility companies such as Tenaga Nasional Bhd and Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd. "This will be the first (of its kind) in the region," Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili told reporters here Wednesday.

Emerging Marts Remain Attractive For Global Investors - UOB Asset Mgmt
KUALA LUMPUR -- Emerging markets remain attractive to global investors on the back of an imminent US interest rate hike by year-end and the impending Brexit, says UOB Asset Management (Malaysia) Bhd Thursday. Its Senior Director and Chief Investment Officer Francis Eng said assets in the emerging markets offer a superior growth profile compared to those in some of the developed countries as investors are looking for better returns.

Draft Amendments To 18 Laws For TPPA Completed – MITI
KUALA LUMPUR -- The International Trade and Industry Ministry has done the draft amendments to 18 laws in its effort to implement the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA). Secretary-General Datuk J. Jayasiri said at a press conference here Thursday, the amendment process would be done in stages as some laws were easier and some were more complex.

Excavated Material Being Removed From Battersea Power Station's Energy Centre
KUALA LUMPUR -- Excavated material from Battersea Power Station's main Energy Centre is being removed by barge from Thursday until Summer 2017. In a statement here Thursday, Development Manager Battersea Power Station Development Co (BPSDC) and Phase 2 Lead Contractor Skanska said an estimated 180,000 tonnes of material will be removed during the period.

Mission Foods Unveils New RM230 Mln Facility In Sepang
KUALA LUMPUR -- Mission Foods, a subsidiary of Gruma, a Mexican multinational corn flour milling and tortilla producer, has unveiled its new RM230 million state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Sepang. The new factory will produce flatbreads such as wraps, tortillas, pizzas, naan and pita for the local and export markets, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gruma & Mission Foods, Juan Gonzalez Moreno, said in a statement here Thursday.

AirAsia Cargo Bags Low Cost Carrier Of The Year Titles At Payload Asia Awards
KUALA LUMPUR -- AirAsia Cargo has been named "Low Cost Carrier of the Year" for both "Industry Choice" and "Customer Choice" categories at the Payload Asia Awards 2016 held in Hong Kong recently. The Cargo division emerged as the winner for the dual-track awards programme through an independently audited voting process that represents the views and decisions of customers, business partners and Payload Asia readers, while also selected by an international panel of industry-wide experts who analyse and score the nominations received, the company said in a statement here Thursday.

Local ICT Companies Need To Make Forays Into ASEAN ICT Market - MDEC
KUALA LUMPUR -- Local information and communications technology (ICT) companies need to make forays into the growing ASEAN ICT market which is set to worth US$48 billion by 2019. Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) Vice-President for Infotech Industry Development Norhizam Abdul Kadir told reporters here Thursday, the industry held huge potentials for expansion within the ASEAN market, particularly in Indonesia.

Private Pension Administrator Appoints New CEO
KUALA LUMPUR -- Private Pension Administrator Malaysia (PPA) has appointed Husaini Hussin as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective Oct 1, 2016. In a statement here Thursday, it said Husaini was replacing Datuk Steve Ong, whose tenure had ended. Prior to his appointment, Husaini was PPA Chief Operating Officer, a post he held since the institution's inception in October 2012.

Budget 2017: Emphasis On Digital Economy To Help B40 Group
PUTRAJAYA -- The government will continue to ease the plight of the rakyat, especially the Bottom 40 per cent (B40) income group, by creating a high-income economy platform based on digital technology in the 2017 Budget. Treasury Secretary-General, Tan Sri Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah, said here Thursday, the initiative was among the government's efforts to standardise the digital economy agenda so that it would be shared equally by all levels of society in the country.

GMCI Signs MoUs And MoAs With 3 M'sian, 2 Chinese Firms

KUALA LUMPUR -- GMCI Corporation, an investment holding group incorporated in the United States with 10-15 per cent local shareholders, will be investing in and forming project partnerships with three Malaysian and two Chinese companies. GMCI said it will be signing memorandums of agreement to partially acquire YCL Precision Engineering Sdn Bhd, to joint-venture with Era Estetika Sdn Bhd, and to invest in a Heng Yue Group hotel project in Dongguan, China, it said in a statement here Tuesday.

HDC Bags Halal Industry Devt Award At GIFA 2016

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) bagged the "Halal Industry Development Award" at the Global Islamic Finance Awards Gala (GIFA) 2016, for its work in developing Malaysia's Halal industry. Chief Executive Officer Datuk Seri Jamil Bidin said in a statement here Tuesday, the award, received on Sept 29 this year at the GIFA held in Jakarta, was international recognition of the HDC.

FinalCode Appoints Pacific Tech Distributor For SEA

KUALA LUMPUR -- FinalCode Inc, the innovator in persistent file security, has appointed Pacific Tech Pte Ltd as its distributor for South-East Asia. The partnership will allow both companies to address the growing demand for information rights management security, with FinalCode looking to expand its foothold in Singapore and deepen market penetration through Pacific Tech's extensive experience and broad reseller network across the region, it said in a statement here Tuesday.

Lafarge, IKRAM To Promote Innovations For Road Construction, Soil Testing Projects

KUALA LUMPUR -- Building materials expert, Lafarge Malaysia Bhd, and soil preparation services provider, Kumpulan IKRAM Sdn Bhd, have signed a memorandum of collaboration to promote innovations and best practices for road construction and soil-testing projects in the country. In a statement here Tuesday, Lafarge said, through the partnership, IKRAM would provide expertise in geotechnical, pavement, structure and management consultancy services.

Shah Alam To Have 3rd Mydin Mart By Year-End

SHAH ALAM -- Shah Alam is set to have its third Mydin Mart outlet at Suria Jaya in Section 16 here by year-end. Executive Director of Tri Shaas Sdn Bhd, Shaakir Siraj told reporters here Tuesday, the outlet, which will be operated by his company, will benefit 500,000 people, including those in the surrounding areas.

Reviv IV Therapy Now Available In KL

KUALA LUMPUR -- Reviv Wellness, a leading global wellness provider of intravenous (IV) therapy nutrient infusions, is now available in Kuala Lumpur (KL). Reviv KL partner Dr Alice Prethima Michael said at the product launching ceremony here Tuesday, the IV treatments targeted various wellness needs by restoring vitamins and nutrient levels to revitalise a person's overall wellbeing.

Isetan The Japan Store Opens On Oct 27

KUALA LUMPUR -- Japanese retail giant Isetan is set to open its newly introduced specialty concept store, The Japan Store, to the public on Oct 27. This brand new concept store, the first in the world, will be making its global debut in the heart of the city's Golden Triangle at Lot 10 Bukit Bintang, the company said in a statement here Wednesday.

IFCTF 2016 Attracts 400 Delegates

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Eighth International Conference on Financial Crime and Terrorism Financing (IFCTF) 2016 which kicked off Wednesday has attracted nearly 400 delegates, says Organising Chairman Wan Mazlan Wan Johari. IFCTF is jointly hosted by the Asian Institute of Finance (AIF) and the Compliance Officers' Networking Group (CONG), and supported by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) and the Securities Commission Malaysia.

AirAsia X's Inaugural Flight To Mauritius Takes Off

KUALA LUMPUR -- KUALA LUMPUR -- AirAsia X's inaugural flight to Mauritius has taken off and landed at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport Tuesday with a full flight, marking the airline group's strong presence in the African continent. To celebrate the event, the airline is offering special all-in-fares from as low as RM199 one-way on standard seats and from RM1,599 one-way for the premium flatbeds to further stimulate demand to the paradise island, the company said in a statement here Wednesday.

Zilzar Bags Best Halal Industry Tech Platform Award

KUALA LUMPUR -- Zilzar Tech Sdn Bhd, the first global Business-to-Business (B2B) Halal e-Commerce platform, has bagged the Best Halal Industry Technology Platform Award at the Global Islamic Finance Awards (GIFA) 2016. In a statement here Wednesday, Zilzar Co-Founder and Chairman Datuk Dr Vaseehar Hassan said the award was a testament to the skill, ingenuity and vision of the company, as well as, the team's extreme commitment.

PDB, Greentech Sign MoU To Provide 66 EV Charging Machines

KUALA LUMPUR -- Petronas Dagangan Bhd and GreenTech Malaysia Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide 66 electric vehicle charging machines on major highways in Peninsular Malaysia with an allocation of RM2.2 million. Petronas Dagangan Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Mohd Ibrahimudin Mohd Yunos said all the 66 machines will be completely installed by next year.

Malaysia: Building A Resilient Nation

By Christine Lim

KUALA LUMPUR -- After experiencing six consecutive quarters of slow growth, Malaysia will be aggressively pursuing its capital development projects and growth agenda, in shifting the economic trajectory to a higher gear.

There is no doubt that 2016 will be a challenging year for the country amid the fragile global economic environment. But, it has to remain resolute and stride towards the finish line to achieve the goal of becoming a high income and resilient nation by 2020. Even in these challenging times, Malaysia has to hold its head high and stay focused on building its pillars of strength. This is, even while, raising governance standards, competitiveness, to ensure the country's growth story of confidence and resilience remains intact.

Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 4.0 per cent for the second quarter (Q2) of 2016 as compared to 4.9 per cent in Q2 last year, reflects the increasingly challenging global economic conditions with higher downside risks.

PATRIOTIC SPIRIT...Guests waving the Jalur Gemilang during the National Day Message by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at the Putra World Trade Centre Tuesday night. Pix Faisal Jaafar. fotoBERNAMA

STRONG GROWTH

Still, Fitch Ratings stated that Malaysia's "A-" rating reflected its strong net external creditor position with GDP growth that remained stronger than the median of "A" rated peers, and a current account that is still in surplus, though narrowing. The rating house forecasts Malaysia's real GDP to increase 4.0 per cent in 2016 from a 5.0 per cent growth last year. Fitch stated that private consumption demand and continued spending on strategic projects by the government and state-owned enterprises is likely to support growth to counter some of the downside pressure from weak external demand. However, it has been reported that Malaysia's structural indicators, especially income levels and standards of governance, are still a concern, in garnering a lot of negative attention. Other pressing issues include concerns of rising household debts and cost of living and expenses that are pressuring the people. Many, have to incur high level of debts to cover and sustain assets and expenses, such as housing and other living expenses.

REDUCE OIL DEPENDENCE

To gain its status as a fully developed and high-income nation, Malaysia has to embrace innovation and boost competitiveness. It is especially crucial to seek other sources of income and effectively reduce the dependence on oil-based resources. This is to enable the economy to move in a sustainable pace, in view of the downside risks of falling crude oil prices. International rating agencies acknowledged that Malaysia would maintain a steady growth path, underpinned by exports of manufactured products and private consumption and investment.

Thus, it is now crucial for structural policies to be adopted that can spur Malaysia's growth story. Malaysia needs to have the mettle to accomplish this. For the 59th Merdeka Day celebration, let's wave the flag high for a resilient and prosperous nation. Let's keep our hopes high for a successful nation!

-- BERNAMA

LIST OF MARKET REPORTS :

Bursa Malaysia To See Cautious Trading Next Week

By Rosemarie Khoo Mohd Sani

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bursa Malaysia is likely to see cautious trading next week ahead of the 2017 Budget announcement on Oct 21, dealers said.
Affin Hwang Investment Bank Vice-President/ Head of Retail Research, Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan, said stocks in the technology, telecommunications and construction sectors would likely benefit from the 2017 Budget. "Investors are likely to take a 'wait and see' approach, but in my view, we expect the government to focus on the digital economy, in order to boost the economic contribution from the Internet and e-commerce marketplace.

"This includes stocks like MY E.G. Services Bhd, Inari Amertron Bhd and Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM)," he told Bernama. AllianceDBS Research in its note said that the 2017 Budget would entail business- and consumer-friendly initiatives although the federal government is constrained in its fiscal spending. "Whilst we see no single large component in operating expenditure targeted for cuts, we believe that the 2017 Budget's cost-prudent measures could be similar to the 2016 Budget recalibration approach, which was by delaying non-urgent projects and trimming excesses," he said. On the external front, Inter-Pacific Research Sdn Bhd Head of Research Pong Teng Siew said a US interest rate hike was unlikely to be announced by the US Federal Reserve in its next policy meeting in December. "In my view, the weaker US jobs data growth won't favour an interest rate increase by the US Federal Reserve," said Pong.

On Friday, it was reported that the US non-farm payrolls in September increased to 156,000, down from a revised gain of 167,000 jobs in August. Employment growth slowed for the third straight month in September. For the holiday-shortened week just ended, the benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI rose 12.83 points to 1,665.38 compared with 1,652.55 last Friday. Weekly turnover eased to 6.27 billion units worth RM7.39 billion from 8.3 billion units worth RM9.4 billion last Friday. Main market volume dipped to 4.07 billion units worth RM7.05 billion against 5.54 billion units worth RM8.91 billion last week. The market was closed on Monday for Awal Muharram, which fell on Sunday.

Ringgit To Trade Around 4.10 Versus US Dollar

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit is likely to trade around the 4.10 level versus the US dollar next week, driven by favourable external factors amid a recovery in crude oil prices. A dealer said the US non-farm payroll data which fell below expectation would make the Federal

Reserve more cautious about increasing interest rates. The non-farm payrolls data released by the US Labour Department on Friday showed 156,000 jobs were created in September, down from 167,000 jobs in August. “It has missed the market expectation of 175,000 jobs. The data shows job growth has slowed, and if the Federal Reserve does not hike the rates in the short term, it will benefit our ringgit and other Asian currencies,” the dealer said. On a Tuesday-to-Friday basis, the local note weakened against the greenback to 4.1535/1585 from 4.1320/1390 last week.

The ringgit also ended mixed against a basket of currencies. It appreciated against the Singapore dollar to 3.0214/0252 from 3.0269/0325 last Friday but declined against the euro to 4.6199/6267 from 4.6159/6253. The ringgit appreciated against the yen to 3.9999/9066 from 4.0862/0944 last week and rose against the British pound to 5.1142/1220 against 5.3596/3704. The market was closed on Monday in lieu of the Awal Muharram Muslim New Year public holiday on Sunday

Money Market To Stay Stable Next Week

KUALA LUMPUR -- The money market is likely to remain stable next week on Bank Negara Malaysia’s (BNM) intervention to absorb excess liquidity from the financial system. 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, including conventional money market, range maturity auction (RMA), Qard Islamic RMA and repo tenders. On Friday, the central bank’s action helped reduce the market’s total liquidity surplus to RM25.90 billion in the conventional system and RM7.82 billion in Islamic funds. The overnight Islamic reference rate remained unchanged at 2.95 per cent, while the one-, two- and three-week rates stood at 3.01 per cent, 3.06 per cent and 3.10 per cent respectively. The benchmark three-month interbank rate also remained unchanged at 3.40 per cent.

KLCI Futures To Trade Sideways Next Week

By Rosemarie Khoo Mohd Sani

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to trade sideways next week, tracking the performance of its underlying cash market ahead of the 2017 Budget announcement. Affin Hwang Investment Bank Vice-President/Head of Retail Research, Datuk Dr Nazri Khan Adam Khan, said investors were likely to take a ‘wait and see’ approach. “We expect the technology, telecommunications and construction sectors to benefit under the 2017 Budget, as the government wants to boost more economic contribution from the digital-related economy,” he told Bernama.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, October 2016 rose 9.5 points to 1,66.50, new spot month November 2016 stood at 1,666.50, December 2016 added 12 points to 1,665.00 and March 2017 increased 11.5 points 1,653.50. Turnover decreased to 21,649 lots from 96,407 lots last week while open interest eased to 37,513 contracts versus 53,592 contracts previously. The benchmark FBM KLCI ended the week

12.83 points higher at 1,665.38. The market was closed on Monday for Awal Muharram, which fell on Sunday.

CPO Futures To Continue Downtrend Next Week

By Zarul Effendi Razali

KUALA LUMPUR -- Crude palm oil (CPO) futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to continue their downtrend next week on further technical correction, an analyst said. Interband Group of Companies Senior Palm Oil Trader Jim Teh said investors were also cautious on expectations that the CPO inventory data for September would increase due to good weather. However, he said, the meeting between energy ministers from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq, representing key Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) producers, with Russia for informal talks expected next week may provide some support for the price. “The outcome from the talks is expected to give market players a clearer picture of the market’s direction.

“Moving forward, demand is expected to come from Europe due to the upcoming Christmas,” he told Bernama. Teh said CPO prices are expected to hover between RM2,400 and RM2,500 a tonne next week. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, spot month October 2016 fell RM125 to RM2,650 a tonne, November 2016 decreased RM110 to RM2,570 a tonne, December 2016 declined RM75 to RM2,561 a tonne and January 2017 went down RM52 to RM2,570 a tonne. Weekly turnover was lower at 243,203 lots from 243,569 lots last Friday while open interest rose to 243,029 contracts from 225,328 contracts previously. On the physical market, October South fell RM80 to RM2,700 a tonne from the previous week.

Rubber Market To Continue Uptrend Next Week

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Malaysian rubber market is likely to continue its uptrend next week driven by the bullish outlook on the regional and global markets, dealers said. A dealer said that the Kuala Lumpur rubber market would also likely be supported by expectations of a further weakening of the local currency against the US dollar. “Prices on Tokyo rubber futures market are also expected to rise further due to a recovery in crude oil prices.

“There was news that energy ministers from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq will be among representatives of key Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) producers to meet with Russia for informal talks next week on the sidelines of an energy conference in Istanbul,” he said. For the week just ended, the local market was traded higher, supported by the strong regional rubber markets as well as the weakening ringgit against the US dollar. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the Malaysian Rubber Board’s noon price for tyre-grade SMR 20 advanced to 599.5 sen a kg from 559 sen a kg last Friday, while latex-in-bulk rose to 469 sen a kg from 465.5 sen a kg previously. The 5 pm unofficial closing price for SMR 20 improved to 600.5 sen a kg from 556 sen a kg last week, while latex-in-bulk added 6.0 sen to 471 sen a kg from 465 sen a kg previously.

KLIBOR Futures To Remain Quiet Next Week

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia

Derivatives are expected to continue their lacklustre trading next week. The KLIBOR futures contracts were untraded for the week just ended, with open interest remaining at 20 contracts. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, October 2016, November 2016, December 2016 and March 2017 were all pegged at 96.65. The underlying three-month KLIBOR on the cash market stood at 3.40 per cent.

KLTM Expected To Strengthen Next Week

By Sharifah Pirdaus Syed Ali

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Kuala Lumpur Tin Market (KLTM) is expected to strenghten next week on higher demand and ongoing tight supply in the market, a dealer said. He said the local tin price is expected to move between US$19,300 and US$19,700 a tonne. “A few technical corrections are expected to take place but the tin prices on the KLTM would remain firm in line with the uptrend on the London Metal Exchange (LME).

“Upward momentum would continue due to higher demand for the metal, following ongoing tight supply as a result of slower production in China and Indonesia,” he told Bernama. Lower inventories at the LME’s warehouses are also expected to affect sentiment on the KLTM, he added. For the week just ended, tin finished US$60 lower at US$20,020 a tonne compared with US$20,080 a tonne last Friday.

Weekly turnover slipped to 158 lots from 241 lots last week due to the shortened trading week. The market was closed on Monday for Awal Muharram. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the differential between the KLTM and the LME was at a discount of US$80 a tonne against a premium of US$30 a tonne.

Gold Futures To See Cautious Trading Next Week

KUALA LUMPUR -- Gold futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to see cautious trading next week, tracking the US COMEX gold market and the US Federal Reserve’s decision on interest rates, a dealer said. She said the slow US non-farm payrolls data released on Friday is believed to hold gold steady and gold prices next week may react based on global sentiment on bullion.

“The slow data from the US would probably have an effect on the US dollar and this could boost gold prices,” she said. On a Tuesday-to-Friday basis, October 2016 declined 184 ticks to RM168.35 a gramme, November 2016 and January 2017 slid 169 ticks each to RM168.75 and RM169.25 a gramme respectively while December 2016 declined 172 ticks to RM169.10 a gramme.

Weekly turnover increased to 105 lots worth RM1.78 million from 72 lots worth RM1.28 million last week. Open interest was lower at 284 contracts on Friday versus 303 contracts previously. The market was closed on Monday in lieu of the Awal Muharram Muslim New Year public holiday on Sunday.