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This Week's Highlight : M'sia –Tajikistan To Strengthen Relations

BILATERAL TIES...Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Tajikistan President Emomali Sharipovich Rahmon exchanging documents after the signing of five Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)) and one agreement to strengthen cooperation here Monday. --fotoBERNAMA

PUTRAJAYA -- Malaysia and Tajikistan have agreed to work closely in various key fields to elevate bilateral relations into a qualitatively new stage. Speaking at a joint press conference here Monday along with Tajikistan President Emomali Sharipovich Rahmon in conjunction with the latter's four-day visit to Malaysia, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said both countries recognised the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation and emphasised on cooperation in areas such as education, tourism, sports, economy, and science and technology.

This Week's Top Stories

Monday

M'sian Firms Keen To Venture Into Tajikistan - Najib

PUTRAJAYA -- Malaysian companies with an edge in construction, public housing, power generation, mining as well as halal food and products are keen to explore investment opportunities in Tajikistan, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. Speaking at a joint press conference at Seri Perdana here Monday in conjunction with Tajikistan President Emomali Sharipovich Rahmon's four-day visit to Malaysia, Najib said the companies would do well in the former Soviet republic, adding a Malaysian power generation company plans to venture into the power generation business there, marking the beginning of many collaborations to come.

Tuesday

Tajikistan Offers Potentials For M'sian Businessmen – Mustapa

By Azlee Nor Mahmud and Jason Tan Lin King

KUALA LUMPUR -- Tajikistan offers enormous potentials for Malaysian businessmen as it is endowed with an abundance of natural resources, said Minister of International Trade and Industry, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed. "Tajikistan has oil that has been discovered, there are a lot of gold and even hydro power resources," he told Bernama on the sidelines of Tajikistan Trade and Investment Forum here Tuesday.

Wednesday

Radical Changes In Business Evolution MAS' Only Option - CEO

PETALING JAYA -- Radical and sweeping changes in business evolution are Malaysia Airlines' (MAS) only option for a turnaround and it is firmly on the management's agenda, said group Chief Executive Officer, Ahmad Jauhari Yahya. MAS has four real and tangible world-class assets -- products, services, engineering capabilities and safety track records -- that it could unlock and unleash the full value of, he said at the group's annual general meeting here Wednesday.

Thursday

Najib Wants Felda Settlers To Venture Into Global Market

MERSING -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak wants Felda settlers to explore and venture into the global market and not just depend on the local economy to market their products. Najib said to attain international status, Felda settlers must adopt new technology, innovation and creativity in the process of developing and manufacturing their products. "Felda cannot remain in a limited enclosure like before but rather move forward to grab a share of the global market by mastering the latest technology and innovation," he said when launching the National level 'Sentuhan Kasih' Project at Dewan Sentuhan Kasih Felda, Felda Tenggaroh 3, here.

Friday

Asean Union To Develop Projects At Laos' SEZ

From Nurul Hanis Izmir

VIENTIANE -- Asean Union Inc, one of the leading commercial ambassadors for Asean, plans to develop macro and micro projects at the Savan-Seno Savannakhet Special Economic Zone, said Chairman Faidzan Hassan. "Looking from a micro perspective, Savannakhet has a potential for development, in that area itself, as the east to west highway is already there, and that is where Savan-Seno city, Site A, is located," he told a media conference after the launch and signing ceremony for Savan-Seno Special Economic Zone between Asean Union and Savan City Co Ltd here Friday.

SMEbrief

SMEs Must Increase Contribution To GDP By 2020

KANGAR -- The small and medium enterprises (SME) sector is expected to contribute 41 per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product by 2020, thanks to the many programmes that are being undertaken to push the sector to the forefront. SME Corp Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Coordination and Development Rohana Ramly told reporters that he was confident the target could be achieved over the next six years given the efforts being undertaken by government agencies to promote products from the sector.

Sarawak Gets RM2 Mln Loans For Ramadan Traders

SIBU -- Sarawak has received a federal allocation of RM2 million for interest-free loans for traders of this year's Ramadan bazaars, which will start this month's end. State Second Resource Planning and Environment Minister Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan said here Monday, traders, whose loan applications had been approved, would obtain loans of between RM500 and RM3,000 from Tuesday onwards.

GCIP M'sia Gets Over 50 Applications - MIGHT

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Global Cleantech Innovation Programme GCIP Malaysia (GCIP Malaysia) has received over 50 applications from local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and university projects looking for commercialisation opportunities. In a statement here Monday, GCIP's secretariat, the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT), said the applications received were spread across the four categories -- renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste-to-energy and water efficiency.

Johor SME Entrepreneurs Advised To Patent Products

JOHOR BAHARU -- Small and medium enterprise (SME) entrepreneurs are advised to patent their products with the Intellectual Property Corp of Malaysia (MyIPO) as their intellectual property. Johor Executive Councillor in charge of education, information, entrepreneur development and cooperatives, Md Jais Sarday said here Tuesday, this was because the SMEs were slow to register their intellectual property that could be protected by MyIPO.

RM500,000 To Train Unemployed Graduates In Entrepreneurship

KUALA TERENGGANU -- The Terengganu State Government has announced an allocation of RM500,000 for the Terengganu Entrepreneur Development Foundation (YPU) to train unemployed graduates in entrepreneurship. Menteri Besar Datuk Ahmad Razif Abdul Rahman said here Wednesday, YPU would select the best business proposals from the participants for them to carry out business under its guidance with financing provided by SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp).

PropUP Propertyupdate

Adenan Launches Permodalan Satok Bhd

KUCHING -- Permodalan Satok Bhd (PSB), a real estate investment holding company launched by Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem, is set to boost ownership of prime real estate assets in the Satok area here by Bumiputeras especially Malays. According to a company press release here Monday, PSB was founded after a real estate conference on May 9, 2012 resolved to ensure continuous participation of landowners in urban development.

AmFirst REIT Adds New Properties To Investment Portfolio

KUALA LUMPUR -- AmFirst Real Estate Investment Trust (AmFirst REIT) is looking for new properties to add to its investment portfolio, said Head Investment, Panneer Selvam. One of the largest commercial space real estate investment trusts in Malaysia, AmFirst REIT was currently eyeing two properties, one in the Klang Valley and another elsewhere, he told a media briefing after the company's annual general meeting here Monday.

Usahasama Seri Cemerlang To Build Five-Star Hotel

KOTA BAHARU -- Syarikat Usahasama Seri Cemerlang Sdn Bhd will build a five-star hotel in Kota Baharu at an expected cost of RM300 million. Managing Director Masila Mohamed Ariff said the hotel would incorporate Islamic features and be managed along Islamic lines, she told reporters this after the ground breaking ceremony for the Damai Hotel and Suites, Kota Baharu, here Tuesday.

Tune Hotels To Invest US$25 Mln In Kenyan Hotel

SEPANG -- Tune Hotels Group plans to invest about US$25 million for its new hotel in Kenya, said Group Chief Executive Officer Mark Lankester. "This is a new market for us in Africa and the details of this new venture will be announced in the next two weeks," he told the media after the launch of Tune Hotel by Deputy Minister of Energy, Green Technology and Water, Datuk Mahdzir Khalid at klia2 here Wednesday.

Bina Puri To Undertake RM281.5 Mln Housing Project In Brunei

KUALA LUMPUR -- Bina Puri (B) Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Bina Puri Holdings Bhd, will undertake a housing and infrastructure project in Brunei in 24 months with a contract value of RM281.5 million (B$109.50 million). In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Thursday, Bina Puri said its subsidiary had secured the contract on June 5 and with the latest award, the group's unbuilt book order stands at RM2.09 billion to date.

Matrade Urges SMEs To Explore Untapped Markets

SUBANG JAYA -- The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) is urging local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to explore the untapped potential markets like the African region, central Asia and Latin America, to boost their business growth and network internationally. Speaking after the launch of the SME Recognition Award 2014 here Thursday, its Chief Executive Officer Datuk Dr Wong Lai Sum said this would also help speed up the target contribution by SMEs to the gross domestic product to 41 per cent by 2020 from 32 per cent in 2010.

MARKET

BURSA MALAYSIA

Scoreboard

Scoreboard
Gainers - 371
Losers - 393
Not Traded - 532
Unchanged - 334
Value - 1803786355
Volume - 16441400

BURSA: KL Shares Sharply Lower On Profit-Booking

By Mohd Khairi Idham Amran

KUALA LUMPUR -- Stocks on Bursa Malaysia fell sharply lower Friday as traders booked profits ahead of the weekend amid the absence of major funds, dealers said. At 5 pm, the benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) ended 9.04 points higher at 1,880.93, after hovering between 1,880.25 and 1,889.34.

Inter-Pacific Research Sdn Bhd head of research Pong Teng Siew said the market gave up its gains in the last few days with investors viewing them as unsustainable amid the absence of major funds and unit trust funds. "Major funds and unit trust funds have closed their books for the quarter. Window dressing this quarter ended a little earlier than the same period last year and there is no more window dressing expected until the end of the month," he told Bernama. Meanwhile, he said, foreign investors have remained on the sidelines for the last few days.

"Foreign investors were net sellers for the last five days," he said. Market breadth was negative as decliners outpaced advancers 393 to 371, with 334 counters unchanged, 532 untraded and 39 others suspended. Total volume rose to 1.64 billion units worth RM1.8 billion from Thursday's 1.42 billion shares worth RM1.95 billion. Main Market volume rose to 1.21 billion units worth RM1.7 billion from Thursday's 1.1 billion units worth RM1.89 billion.

Exchange Rate
(Ringgit : Foreign Currency)

	Buying	Selling
USD	3.2115	3.2145
EUR	4.3747	4.3794
GBP	5.4673	5.4733
100 YEN	3.1662	3.1698
SGD	2.5711	2.5737

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

FOREX: Ringgit Ends Higher Against US Dollar

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit ended higher against the US dollar Friday in tandem with most emerging Asian currencies due to the greenback's weakness. At 5pm, the ringgit was quoted at 3.2115/2145 from 3.2170/2200 on Thursday. A dealer said the higher ringgit was mainly driven by corporate demand and expectation of higher interest rate at Bank Negara Malaysia's next meeting in July.

Meanwhile, the ringgit was traded mostly higher against other major currencies. The ringgit appreciated against the Singapore dollar to 2.5711/5737 from Thursday's 2.5748/5774. It fell against the yen to 3.1662/1698 from 3.1610/1649 on Thursday. The local unit increased against the British pound to 5.4673/4733 from 5.4747/4808 and firmed against the euro to 4.3747/3794 from 4.3816/3863.

Short- Term Rates Close Stable On BNM Intervention

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term interbank rates closed stable Friday following Bank Negara Malaysia's intervention to absorb excess liquidity from the financial system. The liquidity surplus in the conventional system fell to RM20.341 billion from the RM28.920 billion estimated in the morning, while in the Islamic system, the excess declined to RM2.206 billion from RM7.424 billion.

In the morning, the central bank called for a range maturity auction, a repo tender and an Islamic range maturity auction. Bank Negara conducted a late conventional money market tender for RM20.3 billion and a RM2.2 billion Al-Wadiah money market tender, both for three-day money. The overnight Islamic reference rate stood at 2.96 per cent, while the one-, two- and three-week rates stood at 3.05 per cent, 3.09 per cent and 3.13 per cent respectively.

KLIBOR Futures Close Untraded

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rate (KLIBOR) futures contracts closed untraded Friday. At the close, July 2014, August 2014, September 2014 and December 2014 remained pegged at 96.41, 96.36, 96.36 and 96.25 respectively. Open interest totalled 2,380 contracts. At the 11am fixing, the underlying three-month KLIBOR stood at 3.54 per cent.

KLCI Futures End Sharply Lower

By Mohd Khairi Idham Amran

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI futures (FKLI) contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed sharply lower Friday following a sharp fall on the cash market. Phillip Futures Sdn Bhd Dealer, Lim Eng Wee, said FBM KLCI fell for the second day in line with the weaker regional markets following unfavourable news from the US. "Asian markets closed lower, halting a seven straight weekly gain as a Federal Reserve's official said the US may raise interest rates by March," he told Bernama.

On the local front, he said the World Bank projected Malaysia's economic growth to expand to 5.4 per cent this year from 4.7 per cent last year. However, the World Bank remained cautious on the country's high levels of household debts. Spot month June 2014 and July 2014 declined 8.5 points each to 1,884 and 1,880.5 respectively, September 2014 fell 9.5 points to 1,886.5 and December 2014 eased 7.5 points to 1,881.5.

Turnover declined to 13,456 lots from 20,163 lots on Thursday while open interest narrowed to 48,683 contracts from 68,759 contracts previously. The benchmark FBM KLCI ended the day 9.04 points lower at 1,880.93.

250 SMEs Benefit From CGC'S Rebate Mechanism

KUALA LUMPUR -- A total of 250 customers have benefited from Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC)'s rebate incentive, some as high as 38 per cent of the guarantee fees payable. The rebate mechanism, introduced in January 2014, offers a certain percentage reduction on the guarantee fee, and aims to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to lower their financing cost and create awareness on the importance of credit history, said President/Chief Executive Officer Datuk Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad said in a statement here Monday.

Tekun Nasional Joins IDB Finance Body

From Azizul Ahmad

JEDDAH -- TEKUN Nasional has been accepted as a member of the Association of National Development Finance Institutions of the IDB Member Countries (ADFIMI). ADFIMI Chairman Mehmet Emin Ozcan announced the acceptance of TEKUN and five other new members -- Tadamon Islamic Bank, Jordan Islamic Bank, the Kazakhstan Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture JSC, Al Shamal Islamic Bank in Sudan, and Bangladesh Development Bank -- at ADFIMI's 30th General Assembly here Monday.

IDB To Start Innovation Networking Platform

From Azizul Ahmad

JEDDAH -- The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has announced the start of a networking platform to connect the IDB and member countries as well as institutions working in the innovation sector. The announcement was made by its Director of Knowledge Management and Innovation Special Programme, Dr. Osman Mahgoub El Feil, at a forum titled "Fostering Dynamic Innovation Ecosystems in Developing Economies" here Monday.

IDB Approves US$447 Mln For Financing New Devt Projects

From Azizul Ahmad

JEDDAH -- The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has approved US$447.6 million towards financing several new development projects in its member countries as well as three grants under the IDB Waqf fund for educational projects for Muslim communities in Kenya, Lesotho, and Trinidad and Tobago. A major part of the financing, US$304 million, went to the energy sector, the bank said in a statement after its Board of Executive Directors' meeting here on Monday. "US$220 million went for a Power Grid Extension Project in Bangladesh and US$83.75 million for the 132 KV Mirama-Kable Transmission Line and Distribution Project in Uganda," it said.

CIMB Principal Islamic To Grow Assets To US$5 Bln

KUALA LUMPUR -- CIMB Principal Islamic Asset Management Sdn Bhd aims to grow its total assets under management (AUM) to US$5 billion over the next three years by stepping up its efforts on the international front and strengthening global outreach. The company also hopes to achieve US$3.1 billion in AUM this year by offering global and regional sukuk solutions to domestic and foreign institutional clients who want diversification in their portfolios, Chief Executive Ramlie Kamsari told a media briefing here Tuesday.

Bank Muamalat Aims To Boost SMEs' Financing To 40 Pct

SEPANG -- Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd aims to increase total financing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to 40 per cent in two years' time from 20 per cent this year, said Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Mohd Redza Shah Abdul Wahid. Currently the bank, which gave out loans of between RM100 and RM200 million a year, aimed to undertake an aggressive promotion of its financing products, especially among business associations, Mohd Redza said at the opening of the bank's Bureau de Change at klia2 here Wednesday.

Increased Complexity & Risk, CFO Succession Auditors' Key Challenges

KUALA LUMPUR -- It is becoming increasingly difficult, given the audit committee's workload and expertise, to oversee major risks in companies in addition to financial reporting, according to KPMG's 2014 Global Audit Committee Survey. The chief financial officer (CFO) succession and risk oversight are also the key challenges as their companies navigate increasingly complex regulatory and operating environments, said KPMG Malaysia Managing Partner Johan Idris here Wednesday.

Incentives For Investment In Less-Developed Areas

KANGAR -- Investors who are ready to invest in less-developed areas in the country will be offered new and better incentives, said Minister of International Trade and Industry, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed. "The incentives are still being studied by the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) together with the Finance Ministry, and are expected to be announced soon," he told reporters after a dialogue session with entrepreneurs in Perlis and Kedah here Thursday.

SME Bank Aims To Provide RM3 Bln Financing

KUALA LUMPUR -- SME Bank aims to provide RM3 billion in financing to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) this year to nurture their development, said group Managing Director, Datuk Mohd Radzif Mohd Yunus. Mohd Radzif said as of May this year, the bank had given out RM1.2 billion in loans to SMEs to support their business growth. "We provided financing worth RM2.73 billion to 1,737 SMEs in 2013," he said at the announcement of the bank's 2013 financial results here Friday.

Perdana Petroleum Buys Barges For US$84 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Perdana Petroleum Bhd is targetting a 20 per cent increase in revenue over the next two years following the acquisition of new assets, says Managing Director Surya Hidayat Abdul Malik. The company was buying two units of 500-men accommodation work barges (AWB) from Nam Cheong Ltd for US$84 million (US$1.00=RM3.21), with an option for another two more units, Surya said here Monday.

Lafarge Sees Positive Performance From Concrete Segment

PETALING JAYA -- Lafarge (M) Bhd expects positive performance from its concrete segment this year, driven by the opening of its Construction Development Laboratory. The positive outlook was based on its reputation in the concrete segment and innovations introduced by the company through the lab, Its President/Chief Executive Officer, Bradley Mulroney told reporters at the opening of the lab here Monday.

M'sia Mission To Turkey Generates RM99 Mln Sales

KUALA LUMPUR -- A business delegation of 17 companies and organisations, led by Malaysia External Trade Development Corp (Matrade) during the trade mission to Istanbul, Turkey from June 10-14, 2014, has generated sales of RM99 million. "It manages to identify several opportunities, mainly in customised mobile applications, accounting and funds module, secure mobile and security solutions, insurance services solutions, e-Government applications, smart hotel and home automation, information technology services, digital publication and co-production in creative content and animation, among others," Matrade said in a statement here Tuesday.

Melaka Int'l Airport Targets Four Daily Flights

MELAKA -- Melaka is eyeing four daily flights for the state's international airport at Batu Berendam here when all ongoing discussions and deals with related parties including airline companies are concluded about eight months from now, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron. The Melaka International Airport could serve medium and small commercial planes such as Boeing 737-400, and when fully utilised, would be able to operate up to 12 flights daily from 8 am until 12 pm, he told reporters here Tuesday.

Eng Kah Eyeing Positive Growth For 2014

By Kenny Teng Khoon Hock

GEORGE TOWN -- Eng Kah Corporation Bhd, a contract manufacturer of personal care products, is eyeing better growth for 2014, supported by potential new orders from multinational corporations (MNCs). The group is currently in talks with various MNCs which are based in the United Kingdom and the United States, Group chairman and managing director Ewe Eng Kah told Bernama after the group's Annual General Meeting here Wednesday.

SapuraKencana On Track To Hit RM10 Bln Target

KUALA LUMPUR -- Oil and gas services firm SapuraKencana Petroleum Bhd is optimistic of securing replenishment contracts worth RM10 billion this year to sustain the group's visibility in the next three to four years. In separate announcements to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday, the company said it has so far secured four contracts worth about RM4.948 billion from its activities namely assisting in drilling rigs, oil exploration, drilling and offshore construction, fabrication, hook-up and commissioning.

6.90 Sen Per Unit Income Distribution for ASN2 - PNB

KUALA LUMPUR -- Amanah Saham Nasional Bhd, a subsidiary of Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB), has declared an income distribution of 6.90 sen for Amanah Saham Nasional 2 (ASN2) for the financial year ending June 30, 2014. It is 0.2 sen lower than the 7.10 sen declared last year. PNB chairman Tun Ahmad Sarji Abd Hamid said here Wednesday, the income distribution would involve a payment of RM18.77 million, an increase of 48.9 per cent compared with RM12.61 million last year.

M'sia's Productivity Grew 2.3 Pct Last Year - Mustapa

SHAH ALAM -- Malaysia registered a productivity growth of 2.3 per cent last year to a productivity level of RM60,437 from RM59,064 in 2012. Based on the Productivity Report 2013/2014 which was launched here Wednesday by the Minister of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, the growth has helped Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to expand 4.7 per cent to RM786.69 billion in 2013, supported by a growth in employment of 2.3 per cent.

Berjaya Land Pre-Tax Profit Rises To RM518.02 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Berjaya Land Bhd's pre-tax profit for the financial year ended April 30, 2014 rose to RM518.02 million compared to RM461.39 million in the same period last year. The performance was driven by higher profit contribution from the hotels and resorts as well as property development and investment businesses. In an announcement to Bursa Malaysia here Wednesday, the company said revenue increased 18 per cent to RM5.01 billion from RM4.25 billion previously.

Snogurt Eyes 100 Branches In Jakarta By 2015

KUALA LUMPUR -- Frozen yogurt maker Snogurt Sdn Bhd targets to open 50 outlets and 50 mobile kiosks in Jakarta by 2015, says Chief Operating Officer Yen Chee Yung. On June 21, it signed a memorandum of understanding with master franchisee PT Edugreen Khatulistiwa at the Malaysia-Indonesia Business Expo (MIBEX) 2014 in the Indonesian capital. Snogurt is also eyeing opportunities in Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei, Cambodia and Vietnam following widening acceptance of its yogurt, Yen said in a statement here Wednesday.

M'sian Companies Record Sales Of RM127,000 At Dutch Fair

By Chandravathani Sathasivam

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian companies recorded sales of RM127,000 in agricultural products at the recent Tong Tong Consumerism Fair 2014 at The Hague, Holland. The figure is based on the sales value and business contracts generated by four companies, including two government agencies, which participated in the 56th edition of the fair to promote Malaysian agricultural products to the global market, Agricultural Counsellor at the Malaysian Agricultural Representative Office at The Hague, Ahmadul Mokhtar Mohd Hayani told Bernama here Thursday.

Reach Energy Eyes Asia Pacific O&G Assets

KUALA LUMPUR -- Oil and gas special purpose acquisition company (SPAC) Reach Energy Bhd, en route for listing on the Main Market of Bursa Malaysia by mid-August, says it will only invest in Asia Pacific brownfield assets that are ready for development or already producing. There are tremendous opportunities for the company to have management or strategic control of assets and not just be a pure investor, its Managing Director Shahul Hamid Mohd Ismail said here after signing an underwriting agreement with Hong Leong Investment Bank Bhd here Thursday.

Masteel's New Rolling Mill To Generate RM400 Mln Revenue

KUALA LUMPUR -- Steel maker, Malaysia Steel Works (KL) Bhd (Masteel) expects its new rolling mill in Selangor to generate an additional RM400 million in revenue. The new 200,000-metric tonne (MT) rolling mill in Bukit Raja, Klang, would be ready in 2015, its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Datuk Seri Tai Hean Leng said in a statement here Thursday.

Perangsang Selangor Expects Higher Contribution From Four Businesses

SHAH ALAM -- Kumpulan Perangsang Selangor Bhd (KPS) expects contributions from four sectors -- oil and gas, telecommunications, hospitality and facility management services -- to increase in years to come. Speaking at a media briefing after the company's annual general meeting here Thursday, its chairman, Raja Idris Raja Kamarudin, said Perangsang Oil and Gas Sdn Bhd, which has 40 per cent stake in NGC Energy Sdn Bhd, has started to contribute positively to the group's financial performance with a RM1.9 million profit.

Healthcare Records Strong Growth Over Last Decade

KUALA LUMPUR -- The healthcare industry recorded strong growth over the last decade, driven primarily by local consumption of healthcare products and services. In a statement here Thursday, the Health Ministry said the potential of this sector to generate significant contributions to Malaysia's economy in 2020 was the reason for it being selected as one of the National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs) highlighted under Malaysia's Economic Transformation Programme.

KLIA Records 20.3 Mln Passengers In First Five Months

SEPANG -- The Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) handled a record 20.3 million passengers in the first five months, an increase of 12 per cent compared with 18.2 million passengers recorded over the same period last year. Between January and May, the KLIA-Main Terminal Building (MTB) also registered passenger movement of 26.7 million, Malaysia Airports Holding Bhd (MAHB) Managing Director Datuk Badlisham Ghazali said in his speech at KLIA's 16th anniversary here Friday.

Alam Maritim Eyes RM2 Bln Deals

KUALA LUMPUR -- Alam Maritim Resources Bhd is bidding for contracts worth RM2 billion as it seeks to increase its order book by 20 per cent from RM1.3 billion currently. Group Managing Director, Datuk Azmi Ahmad told a media briefing here Firday, the integrated oil and gas (O&G) services provider was in the midst of tendering for projects and would announce them in the next quarter.

Thunder Match Technology Eyes Improved Turnover

By Kenny Teng Khoon Hock

GEORGE TOWN -- Thunder Match Technology Sdn Bhd, a leading local computer and information technology (IT) services provider, expects a 15 to 20 per cent increase in turnover this year. Business development and marketing director John Chin told Bernama here Friday, last year the group achieved a turnover of about RM270 million, supported by continuous business expansion nationwide.

Niche Capital To Expand M'sian Operation

GEORGE TOWN -- Niche Capital Emas Holdings Bhd, an investment holding company involved in the manufacture and sale of gold jewellery and ornaments, plans to expand its Malaysia operations and refocus on the domestic market. Its Managing Director Mah Weng Kee told reporters here Monday said this was because its current overseas operation in China was constrained by excessive competition and fluctuations in foreign exchange market.

M'sia's Economy Heading Into Safe Zone – Idris Jala

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's economy is doing quite well as the current debt service ratio continues to be moderate and sustainable at 10.7 per cent and it is also heading into a safe zone, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Idris Jala said. "Over the last four years, with our public debt as a percentage of the GDP maintained below the legislated debt ceiling of 55 per cent and having met with fiscal deficit reduction targets, in 2013 Malaysia took its first step into the Safe Zone," he said here Monday.

Human Capital, Sustainability CEOs' Top Challenges - Report

KUALA LUMPUR -- Human capital and sustainability were ranked the top challenges faced by the chief executive officers (CEOs) in the country, based on the Conference Board's CEO Challenge 2014 survey report. Its Executive Vice-President/ Chief Economist, Bart van Ark said here Monday strategies such as investment in people and changing the culture of organisations had to be included in order to make people more effective in doing their jobs.

Explore Tajikistan, The Land Of Opportunities - CAG

By Samantha Tan

GEORGE TOWN -- Business consultant, Cottage Alliance Group (CAG), is providing a platform for Malaysian firms to capture rising economic and business opportunities in Central Asia, especially Tajikistan. CAG believed the official visit of Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon to Malaysia would open up more business opportunities and partnerships, Cottage Alliance Sdn Bhd Director Tan Lin Chung told Bernama here Tuesday.

Kulim To Tap Into Indonesia's O&G Sector

JOHOR BAHARU -- Kulim (Malaysia) Bhd is looking to tap Indonesia's oil and gas (O&G) sector as part of the strategy to diversify its operations. Together with its Indonesian business partner, PT Graha Sumber Berkah, the group will explore strategies to take advantage of the sector, especially with the Indonesian government's decision to offer blocks to foreign investors, Managing Director Ahamad Mohamad said in a statement here Tuesday.

M'sia On Track To Meet UNCTAD Goals

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia is on track to meeting the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (Unctad) sustainable development goals (SDGs) with the incentives given by the government to the public and private sectors. Malaysian Investment Development Authority's (MIDA) Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Azman Mahmud told a media briefing here Wednesday, Malaysia's foreign direct investments (FDIs) rose by 22 per cent to US$12 billion in 2013.

US Biotech Companies Urged To Make M'sia Hub

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia's East Coast Economic Region (ECER), is rapidly gaining recognition among global biotechnology players as the investment gateway of bio-based industries targeting the Asean and Asia Pacific markets. In this regard, biotechnology companies from the United States have been urged to consider making Malaysia the hub to enter the Asia Pacific market, especially those involved in the biochemical, medical devices and biopharmaceutical segments, East Coast Economic Region Development Council (ECERDC) Chief Executive Officer Datuk Jebasingam Issace John said in a statement here Wednesday.

M'sian Manufacturers Upbeat On Business Conditions - FMM

KUALA LUMPUR -- Manufacturers in Malaysia are more upbeat about business conditions for the second half of 2014, with sales expected to gain more ground and cost of production seen dropping compared with the first half period, the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) said. Its president Datuk Saw Choo Boon said the business environment would likely gather momentum over the next six months as reflected by the Business Conditions Index, which rose to 117 from 106 in the second half of 2013.

Bidding For NBPOL Starts Early July - FGV

KUALA LUMPUR -- Plantation giant Felda Global Ventures (FGV) said the bidding process for its proposed acquisition of New Britain Palm Oil Ltd (NBPOL) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) will commence in the first week of July. The group is still in discussions on the acquisition with the appointed advisors. "They have their own schedule in terms of the process of this acquisition, FGV President and Chief Executive Officer Mohd Emir Mavani Abdullah told reporters after the company's annual general meeting here Wednesday.

Proton Might Export Cars To Tajikistan - CEO
KUALA LUMPUR -- Proton Holdings Bhd is not discounting the possibility of exporting its cars to the Tajikistan soon, said its Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Abdul Harith Abdullah. Proton, as well as the business community that came with the President Emomali Sharipovich Rahmon on his four-day visit to Malaysia starting June 22, 2014, was studying the market feasibility, Abdul Harith told reporters on the sidelines of the visit of the president to Proton's Centre of Excellence Complex and manufacturing facilities here Wednesday.

Iris Optimistic Of Completing Bangladesh Project In 18 Months
From Farhana Poniman
DUBAI -- Iris Corporation Bhd, which has secured a RM33.52 million contract to provide machine readable passport (MRP) enrolment data from the Bangladeshi government, is optimistic of completing the project within 18 months. Under the contract, the company must distribute these passports among the Bangladeshi expatriates in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iris Trusted Identification Division Chief Executive Officer Datuk Hamdan Mohd Hassan told Bernama.

Gabungan AQRS Tenders For Projects Worth RM1 Bln
KUALA LUMPUR -- Gabungan AQRS Bhd (Gabungan AQRS), a construction services provider and property developer, is currently tendering for construction projects worth more than RM1 billion. Chief Executive Officer Ng Chun Kooi said in a statement here Thursday, the group hopes to strengthen its current orderbook of RM1.9 billion further, by actively participating in the tender of numerous high-impact construction projects nationwide.

M'sia, India Private Sectors Urged To Form Alliances
From Zarul Effendi Razali
MUMBAI -- The Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas has urged the private sectors in Malaysia and India to redefine the business approaches to form partnership strategic alliances to discover new avenues to expand the edible oil and palm oil business. He said there were plenty of investment opportunities in downstream, higher value-added palm derivatives, such as oleochemicals, pharmaceuticals, processed foods, specialty products and consumer brands.

Puncak Niaga To Go Big Into Plantation
SHAH ALAM -- Puncak Niaga Holdings Bhd is going big into the plantation business in a move to diversify its non-water revenue stream, said executive chairman, Tan Sri Rozali Ismail. Speaking to reporters after the group's annual general meeting here Thursday, he said the group has identified a few potential pieces of land and the estates to acquire. Rozali said part of the proceeds from the stake disposals of its units, Puncak Niaga (M) Sdn Bhd (PNSB) and Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Syabas), may be used for the acquisitions.

Hibiscus Petroleum Eyes Partnership Ahead Of Drilling Plan
KUALA LUMPUR -- Hibiscus Petroleum Bhd is currently looking for partners prior to the commencement of its drilling programme in Sharjah offshore block in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Speaking to reporters after the company's annual general meeting here Thursday, Hibiscus Petroleum Managing Director Kenneth Pereira said three partners from foreign companies had shown interest and the group was looking at it and would work with them in the next few months.

M'sia To Record GDP Growth Of 5.2 Pct - HSBC
KUALA LUMPUR -- HSBC Bank (M) Bhd expects Malaysia to record a better gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5.2 per cent versus 4.7 per cent achieved last year. "Malaysia is a good example whereby its Economic Transformation Programme does help shape the composed nation's growth as this prove to be vital in the next three to five years. I am confident with the outlook, assuming that policymakers step up and do the right things," its Asean Economist Su Sian Lim told reporters at a briefing here Thursday.

Petronas, SESB Join Efforts To Stabilise Power Generation
KOTA KINABALU -- Petronas will cooperate with Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB) in efforts to stabilise power generation in the state. In a statement issued here Thursday, Petronas said it would implement efforts to restore the supply of gas from the Sabah Oil and Gas Terminal (SOGT) to two independent power plants (IPP) - Kimanis Power Plant (KPP) and SPR Energy power plant.

Investors Urged To Invest In Savan –Seno Savannakhet SEZ
From Nurul Hanis Izmir
VIENTIANE -- Malaysian-based Asean Union Inc is encouraging individual and corporate investors to take a small amount of risk to invest in the Savan-Seno Savannakhet Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Laos. The economic zone, comprising five sites, would be the next most anticipated and sought after development in Asean, its Chairman Faidzan Hassan said in his speech at the signing ceremony between Asean Union Inc and Savan City Co Ltd here Friday.

DuPont Earns Recognition For Core Values

KUALA LUMPUR -- US-based DuPont, a global research and technology-based science company, Monday received recognition from the Malaysian Institute of Integrity, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission and business associates for its core values and culture. A company statement issued here Monday said, its core values were safety and health, environmental stewardship, respect for people and embracing highest ethical behaviour.

AmBank Opens klia2 Branch

SEPANG -- AmBank Bhd Monday opened its first airport branch and Bureau de Change (BDC) to provide ease and convenience for travelers and shoppers at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia2). AmBank Group chairman, Tan Sri Azman Hashim told reporters here Monday, Gateway@klia2, the first Ambank airport branch, and BDC, were planned to enhance efficiency and provide superior customer experience.

Cuscapi Bags Contracts Worth RM8 Mln

KUALA LUMPUR -- Cuscapi Bhd, one of Asia's leading food and beverage (F&B) solution system and managed service provider, has secured two new F&B clients, Old Town White Coffee and Starbucks Malaysia. Together with a new service contract from an existing client, McDonald's, to upgrade its existing point-of-sale system, the total value of these three contracts was estimated at around RM8 million, the company said in a statement here Monday.

Sentoria Secures RM80 Mln Prima Contract

KUALA LUMPUR -- Sentoria Group Bhd has received a contract for the main building and infrastructure works on the proposed Pembangunan Perumahan Rakyat 1 Malaysia (PR1MA) project on government land in Kuantan, worth RM80 million. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Monday, Sentoria said the contract was secured by its wholly-owned unit, Sentoria Bina Sdn Bhd, from Grinterra Sdn Bhd. "The proposed project consists of 612 units of single-storey semi-detached houses, one unit of single-storey bungalow and 16 units of single-storey shop lots," it said.

SC Appoints Siti Hadzar As New Chairman Of FIMM

KUALA LUMPUR -- The Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) has appointed Datuk Siti Hadzar Mohd Ismail as the Chairman of Federation of Investment Managers Malaysia (FIMM). The appointment, effective June 24, 2014, is for a period of two years, it said in a statement here Tuesday. Siti Hadzar, who is a public interest director of FIMM since 2011, takes over as chairman from Abdul Kadir Kassim.

Proton Holds Car Design Contest For Young M'sians

SUBANG JAYA -- Malaysians aged between 13 to 25 with a valid Malaysian identity card are invited to enter the Proton Design Competition 2014 themed Proton City Car 2020 which runs from Tuesday until Aug 4. "We believe there are a lot of talented young Malaysians, so we are providing a channel for them to show their ability in car design, and we hope to encourage aspiring future car designers," Proton Holdings Bhd Chief Executive Officer Datuk Abdul Harith Abdullah said in a statement here Tuesday. Prizes include cash, MacBooks an internship at Proton's R&D Creative Design Centre.

Seacera, IFSB Teams Up To Bid For Border Fence Project

KUALA LUMPUR -- Seacera Group Bhd has signed a memorandum of understanding with Intelligent Fence (M) Sdn Bhd (IFSB) to tender for a project to build and operate an electricity security fence along Malaysia-Thai border. In a filing to Bursa Malaysia here Tuesday, Seacera said the tender came under a public-private partnership programme under the Home Ministry. "The project is to build, operate and transfer an electric security fence along the national border of Malaysia and Thailand, which is approximately 506 km," it said.

EON Appointed Distributor For Chrysler Jeeps

SHAH ALAM -- Edaran Otomobil Nasional Bhd (EON Bhd), a subsidiary of DRB-Hicom Bhd has been appointed exclusive distributor for Chrysler Jeeps in Malaysia by Chrysler International Group (Chrysler). This is Chrysler's latest effort to extend the brand reach in Malaysia, said DRB HICOM in a statement here Tuesday. The parties have entered into an importation agreement and a distribution agreement which would see four Chrysler models on showcase at EON showrooms by end-October.

Petron Launches Art & Photography Contest

KUALA LUMPUR -- In its strong belief that youths play an essential role in nation-building, Petron Malaysia has launched Vision Petron, its annual national student art and photography competition. Now in its second year, this year's Vision Petron with the theme 'Journey To Fulfill My Promise' encourages participants to share their artwork that depict their promise as they journey toward achieving goals in life, for the families, communities, environment or the country, Petron Malaysia head of retail business Faridah Ali said in a statement here Wednesday.

Dubai Will Host 10th WIEF

KUALA LUMPUR -- Dubai will host the 10th World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) from Oct 28 to 30 themed "Innovative Partnerships for Economic Growth" to reflect the emirate's pursuit to play a key role in shaping the Islamic economy, WIEF said in a statement here Wednesday. It said that the Islamic economy comprised the fastest growing markets in the world with estimated investments of 30 million dirham (US$8 trillion). In announcing the forum, Dubai Chamber Chairman Abdul Rahman Saif Al Ghurair stressed that in order to build on the strong fundamentals of Islamic economies as the basis for sustainable economic development, it was important to enhance cooperation among all parties.

TM, Hotel Grand Alora Sign Service Pact, HES MOU

ALOR SETAR -- Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM) here Thursday signed a service agreement and memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Hotel Grand Alora on the provision of high-speed broadband services and the Hospitality Entertainment Solution (HES). HES subscribers are offered up to 65 HyppTV channels to choose from HyppTV's library for their guests, which include nines free-to-air channels and 56 premium channels.

MAS Facing The Challenges of Staying Afloat

By Salbiah Said

Malaysia Airlines (MAS) weighing all options to turn around the company.--fotoBERNAMA

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysia Airlines (MAS), which has been plagued with the mystery of missing flight MH370, is now facing the challenges of staying afloat. The national carrier incurred net losses of RM443 million for the first quarter of the year ended March 31, 2014 compared with RM279 million in the same period last year. Its Chief Executive Officer Ahmad Jauhari Yahya says, MAS is considering all options for radical changes to turn around the company and ruled out drastic measures such as filing for bankruptcy or selling off some of its divisions. MAS has four real and tangible world-class assets -- products, services, engineering capabilities and safety track records -- that it could unlock and unleash the full value of, he added. Radical changes were already on the agenda before the tragic MH370 disappearance, he said at the group's annual general meeting Wednesday.

Govt Not Closing Down MAS - Najib

During the five-hour AGM, MAS shareholders approved all resolutions including the directors' fees, but all nine non-executive directors decided to return the total fees of RM396,000. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said last week, MAS will not be closed down for now. He said although MAS was incurring losses, the direction of the company is still being reconsidered and any financial implication to the government would depend on the outcome of the due diligence being undertaken by the main shareholder, Khazanah Nasional Bhd. "Khazanah, as the biggest shareholder of MAS, has also undertaken studies to evaluate the airline company's past performances and its current status. "The findings of the study will be presented to the Khazanah board as soon as it is finalised in order to decide on the future direction of the company," he said in a written reply to Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Bagan) in Parliament.

Calls For Govt To Decide MAS' fate

Earlier, there have been calls for the government to decide whether it is going to help ailing MAS or let it go. Public Accounts Committee Chairman (PAC) Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed said, Putrajaya has been helping MAS out for far too long even before the "open sky" policy, which has since resulted in increased competition due to the emergence of low-cost carriers. "So it is time the government makes a decision whether or not to let MAS fly on its own," the Pulai MP said recently in reference to state investment agency Khazanah Nasional Bhd. Khazanah managing director Tan Sri Azman Mokhtar was quoted as saying earlier that the company would be coming up with a restructuring plan to revive MAS within a year. "The final decision will be made by the government, our job is to give advice on what needs to be done," Azman said.

MAS Not Filing For Bankruptcy

MAS Chairman Tan Sri Md Nor Yusof says, the airline is not in the stage to file for bankruptcy. "You will consider bankruptcy if you are insolvent. We are not. You will consider bankruptcy if you cannot make the obligations, we are not in that stage," he said, noting that the group had RM3.8 billion cash flow. MAS should exploit and leverage its good assets such as maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) capability to have a significant impact on recovery rather than trying to earn cash, he added.

Meanwhile, MAS' share price has reached the bottom and currently trades at its cheapest valuation for the past 12 years, making it attractive for privatisation, Maybank Investment Bank Research says. "We think its share price has reached the bottom and now is an opportune level to take it private," Maybank analyst Mohshin Aziz added in a report. At Friday's close, MAS gained half a sen to 21.5 sen.

LIST OF MARKET REPORTS :

BURSA : KL Shares Likely To Remain Lower

By Mohd Khairi Idham Amran

KUALA LUMPUR -- Shares on Bursa Malaysia are likely to remain lower next week in the absence of the major funds, a dealer said. Inter-Pacific Research Sdn Bhd head of research, Pong Teng Siew, said the major funds and unit trust funds had closed their books for the quarter, prompting an earlier-than-expected ending of window-dressing towards the end of the second quarter.

He said entering the third quarter, the market was expected to see profit-taking from investors who took advantage of the easier market and the absence of major funds. “The market could pull back after the end of this quarter. Furthermore, the market seems a bit tired after a few weeks of uptrend,” he told Bernama.

For the week just-ended, the FBM KLCI declined to 1,880.93 from 1,885.72 last week. Weekly turnover declined to 8.49 billion shares valued at RM9.99 billion from 8.58 billion shares valued at RM28.27 billion last week. Main market volume decreased to 6.63 billion units worth RM9.64 billion from 6.72 billion units worth RM25.19 billion previously.

FOREX : Ringgit To Trade Between 3.20 & 3.21 Against US Dollar

By Siti Radziah Hamzah

KUALA LUMPUR -- The ringgit is likely to trade at the current level of between 3.20 and 3.21 against the US dollar next week with external factors continuing to influence its movements. Hong Leong Bank senior manager for bond and economic research, Choong Yin Pheng, said the sentiment for US dollar was affected and weighed down by factors, including weak US economic data in the first quarter.

“Locally, we do not see any fresh direction for the ringgit-greenback movement,” she told Bernama. The greenback fell to more than one month low following a sharp pullback of the US economy to an adjusted annual rate of 2.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2014. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the ringgit was traded higher against the US dollar at 3.2115/2145 from 3.2225/2245 and firmed against the Singapore dollar to 2.5711/5737 from 2.5776/5794.

It strengthened against the British pound at 5.4673/4733 from 5.4966/5013 last week and rose against the euro to 4.3747/3794 from 4.3855/3892. The local unit, however, fell against the yen to 3.1662/1698 from 3.1593/1619.

Money Market : Short- Term Rates Likely To Remain Intact

KUALA LUMPUR -- Short-term rates are expected to remain intact next week as Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) is expected to continue to intervene in the market to siphon off excess funds from the interbank system, a dealer said. The overnight rate stood at 2.96 per cent while the one-, two- and three-week rates stood at 3.05 per cent, 3.09 per cent and 3.13 per cent respectively. BNM is expected to call for money market tenders in the conventional, Islamic and repo systems on a daily basis based on the amount of liquidity surplus in the market.

For the week just-ended, the central bank entered the money market daily with various instruments, as the system was flushed with funds from the market and repo maturities. The closing liquidity surplus in the conventional system amounted to RM20.34 billion, while in the Islamic system it totalled RM2.21 billion.

KLCI Futures Likely To Trend Lower

KUALA LUMPUR -- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) futures (FKLI) contracts are likely to trend lower next week, tracking the negative outlook on the cash market. A dealer said the FBM KLCI was expected to remain lower next week in the absence of major funds and unit trusts after ending their window-dressing earlier this week.

For the week just-ended, the FBM KLCI jumped 8.98 points to 1,885.72 on buying momentum despite investors turning their attention to the 2014 FIFA World Cup. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, June 2014 and July 2014 added 1.5 points each to 1,884 and 1,886.5 respectively, September increased 0.5 point to 1,880.5 and December 2014 went up 3.5 points to 1,881.5.

Turnover for the week surged to 78,457 lots from last week's 16,774 lots while open interest increased to 48,683 contracts from 36,226 contracts last Friday.

Physical Buyers To Dominate Trading In CPO Futures

By Zairina Zainudin

KUALA LUMPUR -- Physical buyers are expected to dominate trading in crude palm oil (CPO) futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives next week, with the prices to move between RM2,400 and RM2,550 per tonne. Interband Group of Companies Senior Palm Oil Trader, Jim Teh, said demand would likely be lower next week amid high inventories in the two biggest producing countries -- Indonesia and Malaysia. "High future prices will attract physical buyers as they tend to look for cheaper CPO prices," he told Bernama, citing stocks in Indonesia currently stood at more than three million tonnes while Malaysia hold about 1.8 million tonnes. Meanwhile, Phillip Futures Sdn Bhd Derivative Product Specialist, David Ng said a stronger ringgit against the US dollar was also likely to put pressure on prices next week.

"However, the overall strength in crude oil futures and improved export demand may limit the downside," he said. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, July 2014 gained RM8 to RM2,468 per tonne, August 2014 rose RM11 to RM2,462 per tonne, September 2014 added RM3 to RM2,445 per tonne while October 2014 was up RM6 to RM2,445 per tonne.

Weekly turnover decreased to 182,597 lots from 214,546 lots last week while open interest widened to 227,681 contracts from 221,583 contracts last Friday. On the physical market, July South shed RM5 to RM2,495 per tonne.

Rubber Prices To Trade Within Tight Range

By Zairina Zainudin

KUALA LUMPUR -- Malaysian rubber prices are likely to trade within a tight range of between RM5.50 and RM5.70 a kg next week, in anticipation of the absence in demand from China, a dealer said. China, the largest natural rubber consumer, was expected to see low demand amid unstable financial facilities in the country as the banks tightened their lending, he said.

"Although the local market is currently facing a tight supply, weak demand overweighed the prices," the dealer told Bernama. She also said movements in rubber prices on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM), Singapore Commodity Exchange and Shanghai Future Exchange would continue to influence the local rubber market as these markets were the biggest players in the rubber industry. For the week just-ended, rubber prices were traded higher, mostly influenced by the movement of the ringgit and the performance on TOCOM.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the Malaysian Rubber Board's official physical price for tyre-grade SMR 20 at noon rose 15.5 sen to 567 sen a kg while latex-in-bulk added 4.5 sen to 469 sen a kg. The 5pm closing price for tyre-grade SMR 20 increased 8.5 sen to 564 sen a kg while latex-in-bulk gained 4.5 sen to 469.5 sen a kg.

KLIBOR Futures Likely To Remain Quiet

KUALA LUMPUR -- The three-month Kuala Lumpur Interbank Offered Rates (KLIBOR) futures on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives are expected to remain quiet next week on lack of interest. For the week just-ended, the market only saw trading on Wednesday with a turnover of 100 lots.

Open interest was slightly higher at 2,380 contracts from 2,350 contracts last week. On a week-to-week basis, June 2014, July 2014, August 2014 and September 2014 stood at 96.41, 96.36, 96.36 and 96.25, respectively. The underlying three-month KLIBOR increased to 3.54 per cent from last week's 3.52 per cent.

Tin Prices To Move Around US$22,500 A Tonne

KUALA LUMPUR -- The tin prices on the Kuala Lumpur Tin Market (KLTM) are expected to move around US$22,500 a tonne next week due to weak demand, said a dealer. He said interests from Japan and Europe were likely to sustain the price, which was at a four-month low since February, as sellers were reluctant to sell below US$22,500 a tonne, he said. For the week just-ended, local tin moved between US$22,550 and US$22,660 a tonne, mostly influenced by the trend on the London Metal Exchange.

Turnover fell to 189 lots from 192 lots last week with European, Japanese and local buyers dominating trade. The price differential between the KLTM and LME widened to a premium of US$465 a tonne from US$415 a tonne last Friday.

Gold Futures Likely To Trade Higher

By Azlee Nor Mahmud

KUALA LUMPUR -- The uncertain global development, specifically weaker dollar pressured by mixed US economic data and unresolved geopolitical tensions in Iraq, are expected to drive gold futures contracts on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives higher next week. Phillip Futures Sdn Bhd Dealer, Azim Faris Ab Rahim, told Bernama, most of gold traders were bullish on speculation that the uncertainties would spur demand for gold.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, June 2014 rose six ticks to RM135.85 a gramme, July 2014 advanced seven ticks to RM136.10 a gramme, August 2014 added 12 ticks to RM136.65 a gramme and September 2014 increased 15 ticks to RM136.80 a gramme. Volume declined to 3,115 lots worth RM42.56 million, from 3,179 lots worth RM42.23 million recorded last week.

Open interest on Friday stood at 7,215 contracts compared with last week's 6,789 contracts.