

KLCI	1,301.94	▼	0.01	Nikkei	10,744.03	▼	102.95
STI	2,914.51	▼	4.79	TSEC	7,886.34	▲	38.50
Hang Seng	21,330.67	▼	53.82	KOSPI	1,675.17	▼	7.69
SCI	3,046.09	▼	4.39	S&P/ASX200	4,863.10	▲	9.90

market summary

MARCH 18, 2010

Prices mixed in cautious trade

SHARE prices on Bursa Malaysia were mixed at close yesterday with investors reluctant to take heavy positions ahead of the US inflation and employment data to be released later yesterday.

At 5pm, the benchmark FBM KLCI dropped 0.01 of a point to 1,301.94 after opening 4.73 points higher at 1,306.68 in the morning.

A dealer said that most investors were on the sidelines, waiting for some key data from the US for further indications on the health of the world's largest economy.

Besides that, investors were also cautious on renewed concern about credit tightening in China after the country's regulators asked banks to control the pace of their lending, he said. — Bernama

INDICES	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	8,758.22 +1.76
FBM-KLCI	1,301.94 -0.01
INDUSTRIAL	2,634.15 -3.92
CONSUMER	392.42 +0.16
INDUSTRIAL	100.58 +0.02
CONSTRUCTION	234.49 +0.72
TRADING SERVICES	162.90 +0.44
FINANCE	11,554.83 -25.65
PROPERTIES	784.88 +0.49
PLANTATIONS	6,390.13 +7.48
MINING	299.91 UNCH
FBMSHA	8,744.28 +4.13
FBMACE	4,179.55 -39.90
TECHNOLOGY	22.23 -0.38

TURNOVER	VALUE
677.371mil	RM1.217bil

Brussels, 19 March 2010

To:
Yang Amat Berhormat
Dato' Seri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Abdul Razak

Prime Minister of Malaysia

Dear Excellency,

Today we write to you as European citizens concerned with the impact of global drug policies, with an urgent request. We believe the death sentence that is applied to drug law offenders in Malaysia is an inappropriate measure, and would like to offer you our collaboration in identifying better solutions to the drug problems in your country.

With certain regularity, reports appear in the Malaysian press on people being sentenced to death for the possession of illegal drugs, including cannabis. The exact number of those who are actually brought to death remains unknown. Human rights organisations estimate that currently some 300 convicted prisoners await execution on death row, most of them for drug-related offences.

These sentences clearly violate international standards for a fair trial. The presumption of guilt and the mandatory death sentence in drug cases places the charge on the accused to prove his or her innocence and leaves a judge with no discretion over the sentence. Competent legal assistance is unavailable to many of those people, leaving them with little capacity to mount a defence at any stage of the proceedings.

UN human rights bodies have concluded that drug offences fail to meet the condition of "most serious crime", under which the death penalty is allowed as an "exceptional measure".

We are aware of the argument that drugs cause problems in Malaysian society. However, we doubt that these problems will be solved by harsh punishments, let alone executions of drug offenders. Malaysia, like any other country in the world, is not and never will be 100% drug-free. As long as people in Malaysia want to consume drugs, other people will continue to supply them.

Because of the fact that drugs are prohibited, drug trafficking is the core business of criminal organizations that in most cases operate internationally. The people who are occasionally caught by authorities with relatively small amounts do not have major responsibilities in this business. Killing them will not scare the drug gangs away. On the contrary: thanks to these harsh punishments, the leaders in the drug business can continue to justify extraordinary high prices for their goods. Thus it maintains a vicious circle of violence and danger.

On the other hand, it is important to make a serious assessment of the problems that drugs may or may not cause. Cannabis for instance is a plant, a natural product, a non-lethal substance. Its consumption has been widespread around the world for thousands of years among many different cultures and people. All these people do not use cannabis because it

endangers their health or wellbeing, but rather because they experience the opposite. According to increasing amounts of scientific evidence, the so-called dangerousness of cannabis has been largely exaggerated and driven by moral instead of rational considerations.

The prohibition of cannabis was installed and promoted worldwide by Western countries, especially the USA, during a period in which they dominated the world. Meanwhile, in most European countries, cannabis possession for personal consumption is not penalised anymore. In a growing number of states in the USA, major law changes are taking place that legally regulate the cultivation and distribution of cannabis to adults for medicinal purposes. It would be extremely sad to see Malaysia continue executing people found in possession of cannabis, while the countries that have installed its prohibition have come to the insight that this is a useful substance whose consumption can be perfectly integrated in society.

In Europe, during the past decades, we have been able to compare the results of different, sometimes opposing drug policies in societies that are similar in demographical, material and socio-cultural development. The conclusion is that drug policies, whether they are repressive or flexible, have a very minor impact on the drug phenomenon itself. In countries where authorities are relatively tolerant, the use of drugs may be lower than in neighboring countries where policies are more repressive.

Another conclusion is that drugs-related harms can only be reduced by effective social and health policies. Innovative strategies for reaching out to the affected population and reducing the harms related to drug use are needed. The harsh implementation of drug law enforcement is an impediment to the introduction of these strategies.

For these reasons, we are convinced that the death penalty is actually counterproductive to efforts to reduce the harm caused by drugs. We call upon your wisdom to apply principles of sound governance and let Malaysia join the majority of nations by declaring a moratorium on executions with a view to total abolition of all death sentences for drug offenses, as called for by the United Nations.

We offer you our kind co-operation in transmitting knowledge and experience of public health policies that have proven effective in addressing drug-related problems.

Sincerely yours,

Marisa Felicissimo, Fredrick Polak,
Jorge Roque and Antonio Escobar

Members of the Steering Committee of the European Coalition for Just and Effective Drug Policies (www.encode.org), a European platform of 170 NGOs.

On 4 March 2010, this statement was presented during manifestations before the Malaysian Embassies and consulates in Paris, London, Kathmandu, New York, Los Angeles and Vienna.

TM invests RM1.9b so far on rolling out HSBB

KUALA LUMPUR: Telekom Malaysia Bhd (TM) has spent about RM1.9 billion and the government some RM990 million to date in rolling out the high-speed broadband (HSBB), group chief executive officer Datuk Zamzamzairani Mohd Isa said yesterday.

The RM11.3 billion project, signed in September 2008, is a public-private partnership initiative between TM and the government to develop next generation HSBB infrastructure and services for the nation.

TM is putting up RM8.9 billion while the government is contributing RM2.4 billion on an incurred claims basis based on project milestones reached by TM.

Zamzamzairani said TM would continue to assume a role not only in providing HSBB to high-impact economic areas but also other services like Streamyx outside the focused area.

"We are expecting to get about 750,000 premises passed by end of this year," he said, adding that physical work for the 44 exchanges, out of 95 exchanges nationwide, would be completed by year-end.

The initial four areas that will be covered by TM HSBB services, at the time of service launch, are Shah Alam, Subang Jaya, Taman Tun Dr Ismail and Bangsar.

Zamzamzairani said the roll-out of HSBB would enable the government to achieve 50% household penetration rate which could contribute about 1% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). — Bernama

Company	Price (RM)	Change (RM)	KLCI Points
ASTRO	4.23	+0.67	+1.66
AMMB	4.86	-0.11	-0.80
CIMB	13.52	-0.06	-0.69
GENTING	6.60	-0.06	-0.53
IOICORP	5.42	+0.02	+0.32
MMCCORP	2.37	-0.06	-0.23
BJTOTO	4.34	-0.06	-0.20
GENM	2.84	+0.02	+0.19
TANJONG	17.80	+0.28	+0.18
YTLPOWER	2.20	+0.02	+0.17
Others			+0.07
FBM KLCI	1301.94		-0.08
			-0.01

EXCHANGE RATES

March 18, 2010

Foreign currency	Bank sell Bank buy Bank buy		
	TT/OD	TT	OD
1 US DOLLAR	3.3330	3.2680	3.2580
1 AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR	3.0910	3.0030	2.9870
1 BRUNEI DOLLAR	2.3990	2.3390	2.3310
1 CANADIAN DOLLAR	3.3060	3.2250	3.2130
1 EURO	4.5760	4.4900	4.4700
1 NEW ZEALAND DOLLAR	2.4030	2.3110	2.2950
1 PAPUA N GUINEA KINA	1.3530	1.1040	1.0880
1 SINGAPORE DOLLAR	2.3985	2.3390	2.3310
1 STERLING POUND	5.1040	5.0100	4.9900
1 SWISS FRANC	3.1700	3.0920	3.0770
100 ARAB EMIRATES DIRHAM	92.3400	87.4100	87.2100
100 BANGLADESH TAKA	5.1500	4.5650	4.3650
100 CHINESE RENMINBI	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 DANISH KRONE	63.5300	58.3200	58.1200
100 HONGKONG DOLLAR	43.6900	41.3700	41.1700
100 INDIAN RUPEE	7.6000	6.9800	6.7800
100 INDONESIAN RUPIAH	0.0378	0.0341	0.0291
100 JAPANESE YEN	3.6980	3.6060	3.5960
100 NEW TAIWAN DOLLAR	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 NORWEGIAN KRONE	59.0900	54.1900	53.9900
100 PAKISTAN RUPEE	4.0500	3.7900	3.5900
100 PHILIPPINE PESO	7.4700	7.0400	6.8400
100 QATAR RIYAL	92.9500	88.4100	88.2100
100 SAUDI RIYAL	90.3000	85.7300	85.5300
100 SOUTH AFRICAN RAND	47.1300	43.3600	43.1600
100 SRI LANKA RUPEE	3.0200	2.7700	2.5700
100 SWEDISH KRONA	48.8500	44.4200	44.2200
100 THAI BAHT	11.0600	9.3700	8.9700

Source: Malayan Banking Berhad/Bernama

Proton sees sales boost for Persona

SHAH ALAM: Proton Holdings Bhd expects the launch of the Persona Elegance to boost the sales of the Persona series to 4,000 units per month.

Its managing director Datuk Syed Zainal Abidin Syed Mohamed Tahir said the Persona, the second best selling model after the Saga, had maintained a monthly sales average of 3,600 units.

He said since its launch in August 2007, a total of 102,914 units of the Persona had already been registered with another 6,898 bookings as at February this year.

"The Persona also boasts of a 35% share of the local market for cars in the same class.

"We have done some changes to the car like

introducing a number of subtle refinements, enhancements and upgrades," he told reporters after the launch of the Persona Elegance yesterday.

Syed Zainal Abidin said the features included re-designed headlights and light-emitting diode combi lights, a more pronounced front grille fascia, new upholstery, meter combi fascia, door mirrors with built-in turn indicators, twin front airbags and fullbody-kit for the medium and high line variants.

He said the model would be available in base, medium and high line variants with prices ranging from RM46,499 to RM59,499 on the road. — Bernama

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Seminar on PILOT TRAINING

FREE ADMISSION

Date	Time	Venue
20.3.10 (Sat)	1.00 - 5.00pm	Syuen Hotel, Ipoh
21.3.10 (Sun)	1.00 - 5.00pm	Bayview Hotel, Penang
27.3.10 (Sat)	1.00 - 5.00pm	Grand Bluewave, J.Baru
28.3.10 (Sun)	1.00 - 5.00pm	CitiTel Midvalley, KL

For further information Please contact our SOLE REPRESENTATIVE IN MALAYSIA

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