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Headline: KLCI Gains On Expectations Of Dovish Fed Announcements




KLCI gains on expectations of dovish Fed announcements

KUALA LUMPUR: The FBM KLCI picked up points in Monday morning trade as expectations grew that the US Federal Reserve would extend its dovish stance this week.

At 12.30pm, the local benchmark index rose 6.48 points to 1,687.02. There were 2.01 billion shares traded valued at RM884.37mil. Market breadth was evenly distributed between 361 advancers, 373 decliners and 353 counters unchanged.

Of the KLCI heavyweights, Tenaga Nasional put on 26 sen to RM12.94 to lead the advance while Maxis rose 10 sen to RM5.34 and Digi added five sen to RM4.67.

Taking a step back, Hong Leong Bank dropped 50 sen to RM20.78.

The most active counters in the morning were [Sapura Energy](#)  slipping one sen to 35.5 sen, Iris sliding one sen to 20.5 sen and PUC unchanged at 11 sen.

Looking towards the US Fed meeting to be held on March 19 and 20, investors are expecting the central bank to lower its forecasts on interest rates while halting a plan to cut its bond holdings of US\$3.8bil.

The Shanghai Composite Index grew 1.3% while the CSI300 Index jumped 1.6%.

Japan's Nikkei rose 0.6% and Hong Kong's Hang climbed 0.7% while South Korea's Kospi stayed flattish.

In Southeast Asia, Thailand's SET Index was the sole laggard among key markets while Singapore's Straits Times Index rose 0.4%.

Concerns over slowing fuel consumption pressured oil prices on Monday as countries' showed slowing trade data. US crude fell 23 cents to US\$58.29 a barrel and Brent crude dropped 15 cents to US\$67.01 a barrel.

In currencies the ringgit rose 0.2% against the US dollar at 4.8200. It was flat against the Singapore dollar at 3.0192 and fell 0.2% against the pound sterling at 5.4246.