



Daily Newswatch

Market Review

The FBM KLCI closed higher on Friday (+1.1%), lifted by positive regional sentiment following Chinese President Xi Jinping's tour of Southeast Asia aiming to counterbalance US tariffs and foster regional alliances. Positive gains were seen across most of the sectors, led by Energy (+1.6%), Financial Services (+1.4%) and Technology (+1.4%). Among key index constituents, PETGAS rose (+2.8%), followed by 99SMART (+2.8%) and IOICORP (+2.0%). Market breadth remained positive, with 543 gainers outpacing 256 losers.

Asian markets ended on a bullish note last week amid improved investor sentiment following the resurface of early signal that both sides may be re-engaging toward a potential trade resolution after US temporarily exempted tariff on Chinese imported consumer electronics and reaffirmation from Chinese government to implement more stimulus to boost domestic demand. Consequently, the HSI rose 1.6% to 21,395.1, while the SHANGHAI CI edged down 0.1% to 3,276.7. China's sovereign wealth fund stepped in to shore up stocks this week as escalating trade tensions with the US rattled investors.

US stocks ended mixed last week, as uncertainty from the Trump administration continued to weigh on rallies despite positive trade headlines. A hawkish speech by Fed Chair, Powell on last Wednesday further dampened hopes for rate cuts, citing persistent inflation in the US. As a result, the Dow Jones fell 1.3%, the Nasdaq slipped 0.1%, while the S&P 500 edged up 0.1%.

European stock markets closed higher last week, underpinned by the renewed investor optimism following a potential de-escalation in trade tension between China and US and ECB's decision to cut interest rates. Consequently, this translated into a 1.9% gain in the EURO STOXX 50.

Macro News

- US:** Jobless claims by federal employees ticked up last week
- US:** Trump says he is reluctant to keep raising tariffs on China
- Japan:** Inflation quickens as rice prices gain most in 50 years
- Malaysia:** Economic growth likely slowed in 1Q, official flash estimates show
- Malaysia:** Exports up in March ahead of US tariffs — official data
- China:** Fiscal revenue falls 1.1% in January-March
- US:** Trump studying if removing Powell is option, Hasset says
- Asia:** Fidelity, Goldman find tariff haven in Asian consumer stocks

Corporate News

- Econpile:** Clinches RM35.8m piling, substructure contract for Jalan Ampang project
- Jaycorp:** Awards RM41m contract to Wasco for biomass expansion project
- YTL Power:** Wins bid to develop fibre optic along rail lines as RAC breaks industry monopoly
- AME Elite:** Issues RM300m Islamic notes under RM1.5bn programme
- EcoWorld:** Ink deal for joint venture to advance N Sembilan's RM3m industrial park with SD Guthrie & NS Corp
- Iris Corp:** Plans internal reorganisation to form new holding company
- Sime Property:** Launches RM2.4bn Vision Business Park in Negeri Sembilan
- HoHup:** Slips into PN17 status after unit defaults on RM113m loan facility

Key Indices	Last Close	Daily chg %	YTD chg %
FBM KLCI	1,499.4	1.1	(8.7)
Dow Jones	39,142.2	(1.3)	(8.0)
Nasdaq CI	16,286.5	(0.1)	(15.7)
S&P 500	5,282.7	0.1	(10.2)
FTSE 100	8,275.7	0.0	1.3
Nikkei 225	34,730.3	1.0	(12.9)
Shanghai CI	3,276.7	(0.1)	(2.2)
HSI	21,395.1	1.6	6.7
STI	3,720.3	1.6	(1.8)
Market Activities		Last Close	% Chg
Vol traded (m shares)		1,693.2	(30.9)
Value traded (RM m)		1,249.7	(22.6)
Gainers		543	
Losers		256	
Unchanged		441	
Top 5 Volume	Last Close	Daily chg %	Vol (m)
INGENIEU	0.040	33.3	127.5
NEXG	0.320	1.6	47.5
TANCO	0.890	3.5	35.9
VELESTO	0.160	3.2	35.7
WIDAD	0.035	16.7	26.8
Top 5 Turnover	Last Close	Daily chg %	Val (RM m)
MAYBANK	10.020	1.5	57.4
AMBANK	5.200	2.8	53.9
TENAGA	13.500	0.1	53.2
CIMB	6.880	1.8	50.0
PBBANK	4.390	1.4	36.6
Currencies		Last Close	% Chg
USD/MYR		4.4137	(0.1)
USD/JPY		142.18	0.2
EUR/USD		1.1393	0.2
USD/CNY		7.2998	(0.0)
US Dollar Index		99.23	(0.1)
Commodities			
Brent (USD/barrel)		68.0	3.2
Gold (USD/troy oz)		3,327	(0.5)
CPO (MYR/metric t)		4,117	(1.6)
Bitcoin (USD/BTC)		84,878	0.4



Macro News

US: Jobless claims by federal employees ticked up last week

New applications for unemployment benefits filed by federal employees increased for a second week, hovering near levels seen in January before the Trump administration started to fire workers across agencies. There were 629 initial claims filed nationwide in the unemployment compensation for federal employees' program for the week ended April 12, up from 542 the previous week, according data posted on the Department of Labor's website on Thursday. *(Bloomberg)*

US: Trump says he is reluctant to keep raising tariffs on China

President Donald Trump said he was reluctant to continue ratcheting up tariffs on China because it could stall trade between the two countries, and insisted Beijing had repeatedly reached out in a bid to broker a deal. Trump, speaking to reporters in the Oval Office on Thursday, said officials he believed represented the Chinese leader Xi Jinping had sought to start talks. But he repeatedly sidestepped direct questions about whether he and Xi had been in direct contact. *(Bloomberg)*

Japan: Inflation quickens as rice prices gain most in 50 years

Japan's consumer inflation picked up last month, bolstered in part by surging rice prices, supporting the central bank's stance on a gradual rate hike path before US tariff measures clouded the economic outlook. Consumer prices excluding fresh food rose 3.2% from a year ago in March, accelerating from a 3% increase in the previous month, the ministry of internal affairs said Friday. Friday's data are likely to keep Bank of Japan officials confident in their rate-hike posture as overall inflation has stayed above their 2% target for almost three years. *(Bloomberg)*

Malaysia: Economic growth likely slowed in 1Q, official flash estimates show

Malaysia's economic growth may have decelerated in the first quarter of 2025 as manufacturing production and services activities cushioned a sharper contraction in mining output, official flash estimates showed. GDP likely rose 4.4% in the January-March quarter from a year earlier, the Department of Statistics Malaysia said on Friday. That compares with the median 4.8% rise predicted in a Bloomberg survey and the fourth quarter's 5% year-on-year growth. "Malaysia's GDP growth held firm amid persistent global headwinds, underpinned by resilient domestic fundamentals," said chief statistician Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin. *(The Edge)*

Malaysia: Exports up in March ahead of US tariffs — official data

Malaysia's exports accelerated and grew at a much faster than expected pace in March, thanks to strong shipments of electronics, while deliveries to the US surged ahead of a slew of upcoming tariffs. Exports in March totalled RM137.31 billion, a 6.8% increase when compared to the same month in 2024, the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (Miti) said in a statement on Friday. The rate was higher than the median 2.6% predicted in a Bloomberg survey and February's 6.2% pace. *(The Edge)*

China: Fiscal revenue falls 1.1% in January-March

China's fiscal revenue decline slowed in the first three months this year as Beijing works to shore up its economy while weathering the storm from mounting US tariffs. Fiscal revenue in the January-March period totalled 6tn yuan (US\$821.5bn or RM3.6tn), down 1.1% yoy, data from the finance ministry showed on Friday, a deceleration from a 1.6% decline in the first two months of 2025. China's tax revenue fell 3.5% in the first quarter from the previous year, while non-tax revenue surged 8.8%, the ministry said. Fiscal expenditure rose 4.2% on year in the January to March period. *(Reuters)*

US: Trump studying if removing Powell is option, Hassett says

President Donald Trump is considering whether he can remove Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, expressing frustration over Powell's reluctance to cut interest rates. Trump and his top economist, Kevin Hassett, accused the Fed of acting politically to favor Democrats by raising rates after Trump's 2016 election and lowering them before the 2024 election. Despite repeated criticism, Trump has not confirmed whether he will pursue Powell's dismissal but insists he has the authority to do so. *(Bloomberg)*

Asia: Fidelity, Goldman find tariff haven in Asian consumer stocks

Amid escalating global trade tensions, investors are shifting focus to Asian consumer staples, which have shown resilience due to strong local demand and government stimulus efforts. The MSCI Asia Pacific Consumer Staples Index has outperformed other sectors, buoyed by gains in companies like Yonghui Superstores and Kobe Bussan, as strategists from firms like Goldman Sachs and Fidelity advocate for a defensive investment approach. This rotation reflects a broader move away from growth stocks, with staples expected to offer stronger earnings growth and greater stability unless trade tensions ease and risk appetite returns. *(Bloomberg)*



Corporate News

Econpile: Clinches RM35.8m piling, substructure contract for Jalan Ampang project

Econpile Holdings Bhd has secured a RM35.8m subcontract for piling and substructure works for a proposed commercial development project located along Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur. The contract was awarded to its wholly-owned subsidiary, Econpile (M) Sdn Bhd by R&C Cergas Teguh Sdn Bhd, according to its group filing with Bursa Malaysia on Friday. *(The Edge)*

Jaycorp: Awards RM41m contract to Wasco for biomass expansion project

Jaycorp Bhd said its 60%-owned subsidiary, Jaycorp Green Energy Sdn Bhd (JGE), has awarded a RM40.6m contract to a unit of Wasco Bhd for the development of a new biomass boiler facility in Pasir Gudang, Johor. The engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning contract involves the construction of a biomass boiler with a steam generation capacity of 70 tonnes per hour, which is expected to raise JGE's total rated biomass steam production capacity up to a maximum of 95 tonnes per hour upon completion. *(The Edge)*

YTLPOWER: Wins bid to develop fibre optic along rail lines as RAC breaks industry monopoly

YTL Communications Sdn Bhd, a 60%-owned unit of YTL Power International Bhd, has been appointed by Railway Assets Corp (RAC) to develop fibre optic infrastructure along 1,600km of railway track from Perlis to Johor and Kelantan. YTL Communications was selected following RAC's request for proposal (RFP) in 2023, the latter said in a statement. *(The Edge)*

AME: Issues RM300m Islamic notes under RM1.5bn programme

AME Elite Consortium Bhd's wholly-owned subsidiary, AME Capital Sdn Bhd, has issued RM300m in Islamic medium-term notes (IMTN) under its RM1.5bn IMTN programme. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia on Friday, AME Elite said the notes have a three-year tenure and will mature on April 18, 2028, with a periodic distribution rate of 4% per annum. *(The Edge)*

Ecoworld: Ink deal for joint venture to advance N Sembilan's RM3bn industrial park with SD Guthrie & NS Corp

A planned RM3bn industrial park in Negeri Sembilan took another step forward on Friday, after the developers signed a tripartite agreement to create a joint venture for the project. Eco World Development Group Bhd will own 55% of the special purpose vehicle to develop the project within the Malaysia Vision Valley 2.0 economic corridor. SD Guthrie Bhd will hold a 30% stake, and Negeri Sembilan state agency NS Corporation will have the remaining 15%. *(The Edge)*

Iris Corporation: Plans internal reorganisation to form new holding company

Iris Corporation Bhd has proposed an internal reorganisation to create a new holding company, to separate the group's investment holding function from its operating businesses. The exercise involves a share exchange and the transfer of its listing status to a newly incorporated entity, Iris Group Bhd, which will then take over Iris Corp's listing status. In a bourse filing with Bursa Malaysia on Friday, Iris Corp said the proposed reorganisation will be implemented via a members' scheme of arrangement. *(The Edge)*

Sime Property: Launches RM2.4bn Vision Business Park in Negeri Sembilan

Sime Darby Property Bhd on Friday unveiled a 760-acre industrial development within the Malaysia Vision Valley 2.0 growth area in Negeri Sembilan. The Vision Business Park features an 80:20 industrial-to-commercial ratio, with 623 acres for industrial use and 137 acres for commercial businesses of all sizes, said Sime Darby Property in a statement. *(The Edge)*

HoHup: Slips into PN17 status after unit defaults on RM113m loan facility

Ho Hup Construction Co Bhd said on Friday it has been classified as a Practice Note 17 (PN17) issuer after its subsidiary defaulted on outstanding loan facilities of RM112.7m. The construction company said it received a demand notice from Insas Credit & Leasing Sdn Bhd over Ho Hup's role as guarantor for its wholly-owned subsidiary Bukit Jalil Development Sdn Bhd, which failed to repay the outstanding loan amount. *(The Edge)*

Upcoming key economic data releases

Date

Malaysia – March's Inflation Rate

Apr 23

US – March's Durable Goods Orders

Apr 24



Stock Selection Based on Dividend Yield

	Sector	Price (RM)	Dividend/Share (RM)	Dividend Yield (%)
Bermaz Auto	Consumer	1.11	0.15	13.78
Amway (M)	Consumer	5.07	0.47	9.27
British American Tobacco (M)	Consumer	6.21	0.54	8.70
Sentral REIT	REIT	0.78	0.06	8.26
YTL Hospital REIT	REIT	1.04	0.08	7.98
REXIT	Technology	0.63	0.05	7.94
KIP REIT	REIT	0.87	0.07	7.75
Hektar REITS	REIT	0.49	0.04	7.63
CapitaLand Malaysia Trust	REIT	0.64	0.05	7.56
Paramount Corporation	Property	1.03	0.07	7.28
MBM Resources	Consumer	5.43	0.39	7.24
Taliworks Corporation	Utilities	0.70	0.05	7.14
MAG Holdings	Consumer	1.23	0.08	6.67
Magnum	Consumer	1.23	0.08	6.67
Ta Ann Holdings	Plantation	3.92	0.26	6.58

Source: Bloomberg

User guide: Mercury Securities compiles a list of dividend-yielding stocks for conservative long-term passive investors looking for regular income whilst capping downside risk of their investment.

Methodology: The list above includes stocks that have a high dividend yield, estimated to be greater than 4% per annum. These stocks also have a history of paying dividends consistently, having paid dividends for the past 3 years.

IPO Tracker

Company	Listing Sought	Issue Price (RM/Share)	No. Of Shares (m)		Closing Date	Listing Date
			Public Issue	Offer for Sale		
WTEC Group Berhad	ACE Market	0.25	90.2	43.2	15 Apr	29 Apr
Reach Ten Holdings Berhad	Main Market	0.52	200.0	100.0	18 Apr	2 May
West River Berhad	ACE Market	0.39	71.5	35.8	17 Apr	5 May
Fibromat (M) Berhad	ACE Market	0.55	32.3	24.8	25 Apr	8 May
Cuckoo International (Mal) Bhd	Main Market	1.29	143.3	222.1	5 Jun	24 Jun



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Published & Printed By:

MERCURY SECURITIES SDN BHD
Registration No. 198401000672 (113193-W)
L-7-2, No 2, Jalan Solaris, Solaris Mont' Kiara,
50480 Kuala Lumpur
Telephone: (603) - 6203 7227
Website: www.mercurysecurities.com.my
Email: mercurykl@mersec.com.my