



## Bursa Malaysia opens lower

🕒 24/03/2022 09:53 AM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 24 (Bernama) -- Bursa Malaysia opened lower today as mild profit-taking emerged, after the barometer index closed 0.76 per cent higher yesterday as investors may stay cautious in an anticipation of the development of the geopolitical tensions.

At 9.05 am, the benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) fell 1.68 points to 1,596.20 from 1,597.88 at Wednesday's close.

The barometer index opened 2.03 points easier at 1,595.85.

On the broader market, losers were ahead of gainers at 194 to 135, while 195 counters were unchanged, 1,778 untraded and 12 others suspended.

Total turnover stood at 178.28 million worth RM84.12 million.

Malacca Securities Sdn Bhd said with Wall Street taking a pause after a recent strong rebound, the firm expects the profit-taking activities may spill over to the local front, especially on technology stocks.

"We think investors may stay cautious in an anticipation of further sanction against Russia, which may lift commodity prices another round," the brokerage firm said in a note.

It said crude oil jumped above the US\$121 per barrel mark as the disruptions to the crude export via the Caspian sea pipeline fuelled worries over tighter global supplies, while crude palm oil (CPO) is traded above RM6,300 per tonne yesterday.

Among the heavyweights, Maybank and CIMB rose two sen each to RM8.96 and RM5.39, respectively, Petronas Chemicals gained five sen to RM9.64, Public Bank increased one sen to RM4.66, while IHH Healthcare fell seven sen to RM6.47.

Of the actives, CSH was flat at 16.5 sen, and Focus Dynamics, Velesto Energy, Siab Holdings and Sapura Energy was half-a-sen higher at 3.5 sen, 11 sen, 22 sen and 3.5 sen, respectively.

On the index board, FBM 70 increased 24.27 points to 13,676.52, FBM Emas Index increased 18.18 points to 11,411.19, FBM Emas Shariah Index ticked up 10.36 points to 12,016.44, FBMT 100 Index rose 14.91 points to 11,099.20, while FBM ACE lost 26.45 points to 5,556.23.

Sector-wise, the Industrial Products and Services Index accumulated 0.98 of-a-point to 204.92, the Plantation Index rose 10.79 points to 8,059.19, and the Financial Services Index expanded 43.10 points to 16,791.92.

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