KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

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KERATAN AKHBAR
HARIAN METRO (SETEMPAT) : MUKA SURAT 36
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Kuala Lumpur

MetMalaysia nafi khabar angin

Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia (MetMalaysia) menafikan penyebaran mesej kononnya tsunami dan ribut akan melanda 90 peratus kawasan di Malaysia dalam tempoh 72 jam.

Pengarah Pusat Cuaca Nasionalnya Zahari Abdullah berkata, perkara itu tidak akan berlaku di Malaysia kerana Ribut Tropika yang kini melanda barat saya Cebu, Filipina akan ke arah barat dan barat laut.

"Memang sekarang berlaku Ribut Tropika di barat daya Cebu, Filipina, bagaimanapun MetMalaysia mendapati pergerakan ribut itu tidak menuju ke Malaysia, sebaliknya pemantauan mendapati pergerakan ribut melencong ke barat dan barat laut.

"Lokasi terdekat Malaysia iaitu timur laut Sandakan, Sabah dengan jarak 621 kilometer (km) juga tidak akan menerima tempias ribut berkenaan," katanya.

KERATAN AKHBAR
HARIAN METRO (SETEMPAT) : MUKA SURAT 45
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Deruan langkisau masuk daratan

Georgetown: Angin kencang luar biasa sehingga merosakkan ratusan rumah di sekitar Balik Pulau, di sini, malam kelmarin dipercayai berpunca daripada angin langkisau yang memasuki kawasan daratan.

Pegawai Meteorologi daripada Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia (MetMalaysia) Khairul Majid Ibrahim berkata, angin langkisau itu terbentuk daripada kelompok awan kumulonimbus dan biasanya disertai bersama ribut petir.

"Sukar untuk mengetahui sama ada angin kencang itu puting beliung atau tidak. Ini kerana, kami tiada imej atau video yang dapat mengesahkan perkara berkenaan.

"Tambahan pula, kami tidak mempunyai stesen kaji cuaca di Balik Pulau untuk mengesan perubahan cuaca. Stesen yang paling hampir ialah di Bayan Lepas dan di Butterworth," katanya ketika dihubungi, semalam.

KERATAN AKHBAR
SINAR HARIAN (BANJIR BAWA AIR MATA) : MUKA SURAT 14
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Aktiviti Jangmi dipantau

KUCHING - Sarawak sedang memantau pergerakan ribut tropika Jangmi yang menghala tengah dan selatan Filipina, walaupun ia dijangka tidak membawa kesan serius kepada bahagian selatan Sarawak sekiranya ribut itu kekal dengan haluan pergerakannya.

Peta pergerakan ribut tropika Jangmi.

Timbalan Ketua Menteri, Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang berkata, pergerakan ribut itu hanya akan menyebabkan hujan lebat di beberapa tempat di bahagian utara Sarawak seperti Miri, Limbang dan Lawas.

Beliau yang juga Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Pengurusan Bencana Negeri (JPBN) Sarawak berkata, Jangmi akan dipantau dengan teliti tiga atau empat hari ini jika ia menyimpang dari pergerakannya, namun persekitaran semasa tidak menunjukkan tanda-tanda bencana besar akan melanda Sarawak.

Bagaimanapun katanya, semua agensi dan jabatan yang berkaitan sudah diarah meningkatkan tahap kesiapsagaan sejak beberapa hari lalu dalam menghadapi sebarang kemungkinan bencana banjir.

Sementara itu, Jabatan Meteorologi dalam satu kenyataan memaklumkan bahawa ribut Jangmi yang kini berada di kedudukan kira-kira 40 kilometer barat daya Cebu, Filipina, bergerak ke barat laut berkelajuan 15jm/j. - Bernama

KERATAN AKHBAR
NEW STRAITS TIMES (NATION) : MUKA SURAT 34
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Jangmi expected to hit Kudat, Sandakan

KUALA LUMPUR: People on the west coast and north of Sabah have been advised to brace for tropical storm Jangmi which will bring strong winds, heavy rain and rough seas.

Meteorological Department National Weather Centre senior meteorological officer Dr Mohd Hisham Mohd Anip said the storm, originating from the southern Philippines was expected to hit areas such as Kudat and Sandakan. The storm would last until Jan 1.

"Winds from the South China Sea will be heading towards the centre of the storm causing areas in the east coast and north of Sabah to experience a spillover effect from the storm which moves with a force of 80kmph to 90kmph.

"The winds in Sabah are expected to be around 40kmph to 50kmph."

However, he said there was only a slim chance of the thunderstorm moving towards the Peninsula.

"We have been monitoring the storm for two days and there are no signs of it heading this way," he said, adding that the storm might dissipate at sea while on its way here.

The United States Navy and Air Force Joint Typhoon Warning Centre predicted Jangmi, which struck the east of Mindanao in the Philippines, will move into the South China Sea in the next few days.

According to the Weather Channel, six people were reported dead and thousands have been evacuated, as the tropical storm which is also known as Seniang, drifted through the Philippines, unleashing torrents of rainfall leading to deadly landslides and severe flooding.

More than 13,000 travellers have been stranded, as choppy seas shut down travelling between the country's many islands with at least one bridge destroyed by floods.

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE MALAY MAIL (TOP NEWS) : MUKA SURAT 05
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Kelantan teacher seeks food supplies from KL

KUALA LUMPUR — The shortage of essential items in Kelantan forced a teacher from SK Lakloh, Kuala Krai, Mohd Dahan Mohamaad to source for them here, in preparation for a third wave of floods.

Mohd Dahan, 60, said his fear of the third wave, forecast since Monday until Friday, forced him to come to Kuala Lumpur several days earlier in his four-wheel drive, to prepare for something worse.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department had forecast heavy rains and strong winds especially in the east coast and eastern Johor.

"I fled here several days ago for dear life at the prospect of the third wave of floodwaters," he said.

"Thank God, I received news the situation was improving in Kelantan. My family in Kelantan said that Jalan Gua Musang is now open. I will return with my food supplies, given by friends, for distribution to my village, Kampung Lakloh."

Mohd Dahan hoped the third wave is not as bad as the current floods despite the forecast saying otherwise.

Mohd Dahan said he saw several days ago two container lorries bearing aid for flood victims stop at his village, and also in Gua Musang, as they could not continue to Manik Urai and several badly hit areas in the Kuala Krai district.

"I am amazed with the concern shown by Malaysians who extended aid to flood victims," he said. — Bernama

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE MALAY MAIL (TOP NEWS) : MUKA SURAT 9
TARIKH : 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Freak storm wreaks havoc in Balik Pulau villages

Villagers at Kampung Permatang Pasir check the damage caused by the freak storm. — Picture by Sayuti Zainudin

By Lee Keng Fatt
kengfatt@mmail.com.my

GEORGE TOWN — Six hours of strong winds have left a trail of destruction, including damaging about 500 houses, in Balik Pulau.

The freak storm, that started at 9pm on Monday and lasted until 3am yesterday, ripped zinc roofs off wooden houses and uprooted trees, while the dome of Masjid Jamek Sungai Rusa was also damaged.

The affected villages are Kampung Sungai Rusa, where more than 220 houses were damaged, Permatang Pasir (100 houses), Sungai Pinang (30), Pantai Acheh (four), Kampung Sungai Pinang (three) and Kuala Jalan Baru (five).

No casualties were reported.

Local government committee chairman Chow Kon Yeow, a Balik Pulau resident, said information from the Meteorological Department showed the wind was known as *angin langkisau* (gusty wind).

Workers from the Penang Island Municipal Council have been deployed to clear the area," he told reporters after visiting the villages.

Teluk Bahang assemblyman Datuk Shah Haedan Hussain Ayob Shah said more than 200 people whose homes were badly damaged had been evacuated to three relief centres.

He said he and his team would be coordinating with the Penang branch of the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) to assist the victims.

"I was told the last time something like this happened was in 1967," he said.

Haedan praised the police and other government agencies for their prompt response in helping the victims to evacuate.

Pulau Betong assemblyman Mohd Farid Saad urged the authorities to provide an early warning system for such weather.

Balik Pulau district police chief Supt Lai Fah Hin said police had opened emergency counters at the southwest district police headquarters, Sungai Korok and Sungai Pinang police stations, and SK Sungai Rusa and SK Permatang Pasir for victims to lodge their reports.

He said 234 reports were received so far.

BERITA ONLINE
BERNAMA.COM
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Angin Kencang Dan Laut Bergelora Berterusan Hingga Esok

KUALA LUMPUR, 30 Dis (Bernama) -- Angin kencang dan laut bergelora kategori ketiga di perairan Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Johor timur, Sarawak, Sabah (pedalaman, pantai barat dan Kudat) dan Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan dijangka berterusan sehingga esok.

Menurut **Jabatan Meteorologi** hari ini, angin kencang timur laut itu dengan kelajuan 60 kilometer sejam (km/jam) dan ombak mencapai ketinggian sehingga 4.5 meter berbahaya kepada semua aktiviti pantai dan perkapalan termasuk pekerja di pelantar minyak.

Selain itu, kawasan pantai di Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang dan Johor timur terdedah kepada kejadian kenaikan paras air laut sehingga esok.

Jabatan itu juga memaklumkan angin kencang dan laut bergelora kategori ketiga di perairan Samui, Tioman, Condore, Bunguran, Reef North, Layang-Layang, Reef South, Labuan dan Palawan juga dijanGka berterusan sehingga esok.

Angin kencang timur laut itu berbahaya kepada semua aktiviti pantai dan perkapalan termasuk pekerja di pelantar minyak.

-- BERNAMA

BERITA ONLINE
BERNAMA.COM
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

BERNAMA.COM
MALAYSIAN NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY

Pergerakan Ribut Tropika Jangmi Dipantau Rapi

KUCHING, 30 Dis (Bernama) -- Sarawak sedang memantau pergerakan Ribut Tropika Jangmi yang kini menghala tengah dan selatan Filipina dengan teliti, walaupun ia dijangka tidak membawa kesan serius kepada bahagian selatan Sarawak sekiranya ribut itu tetap dengan haluan pergerakannya.

Timbalan Ketua Menteri Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang berkata pergerakan ribut itu hanya akan memberi kesan hujan agak lebat di beberapa tempat di bahagian utara Sarawak seperti Miri, Limbang dan Lawas, namun ia dijangka tidak serius.

Beliau yang juga Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Pengurusan Bencana Negeri (JPBN) Sarawak berkata ribut tropika itu akan dipantau dengan teliti tiga atau empat hari ini sekiranya ia menyimpang daripada pergerakannya, namun persekitaran semasa tidak menunjukkan tanda-tanda bencana besar akan melanda Sarawak.

Bagaimanapun, katanya, semua agensi dan jabatan yang berkaitan sudah diarah meningkatkan tahap kesiapsagaan sejak beberapa hari lepas dalam menghadapi sebarang kemungkinan bencana banjir.

Bercakap kepada media selepas majlis penyerahan replika cek RM2juta oleh Ketua Menteri Tan Sri Adenan Satem sebagai bantuan buat mangsa banjir di bangunan Dewan Undangan Negeri di sini Selasa, beliau berkata beberapa tempat di Sarawak sudah dinaiki air semalam, namun keadaannya tidak serius, dan air surut beberapa jam kemudian.

Jabu berkata pihaknya sudah menjangka paras air akan naik di Pantu (kira-kira 136km dari Kuching) yang mengalami banjir semalam memandangkan kawasan itu sememangnya rendah, dan air sungai akan melimpah sekiranya berlaku hujan walaupun sedikit.

Beliau berkata banjir turut berlaku di Baram (kira-kira 824km dari Kuching) semalam, namun paras air sudahpun surut beberapa jam kemudian.

Sementara itu, **Jabatan Meteorologi** dalam satu kenyataan yang dikeluarkan di sini memaklumkan bahawa Ribut Jangmi yang kini berada di kedudukan kira-kira 40km barat daya Cebu, Filipina, sedang bergerak ke arah barat-barat laut dengan kelajuan 15jm/j.

Jaraknya dari bandar terdekat di Malaysia ketika ini ialah kira-kira 767km ke timur laut Sandakan, Sabah, dan ketika ini ia tidak membawa kesan signifikan kepada Malaysia.

-- BERNAMA

BERITA ONLINE
BERNAMA.COM
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

BERNAMA.COM
MALAYSIAN NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY

Ribut Jangmi: Elakkan Kawasan Pantai Dan Laut Di Sabah

KUALA LUMPUR, 30 Dis (Bernama) -- Penduduk di kawasan perairan Sabah (Kudat, Pantai Barat, Sandakan dan Pedalaman) dinasihatkan mengelak daripada sebarang aktiviti marin terutamanya pada 1 Jan, 2015, berikutan ribut tropika 'Jangmi' yang dijangka akan menyebabkan cuaca buruk.

Ribut Jangmi dijangka menyebabkan keadaan laut bergelora di perairan Sabah dalam tempoh 31 Dis hingga 2 Jan.

Ketua Pengarah Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia, Datuk Che Gayah Ismail berkata ramalan dari Joint Typhoon Warning Centre (JTWC) menyebut bahawa ribut itu kini berada 665km dari Timur Laut Sandakan dan sedang bergerak ke arah Barat dengan kelajuan 15km sejam (kmsj).

"Ribut itu boleh menyebabkan angin kencang selaju 50 hingga 60kmsj yang berbahaya kepada semua aktiviti perkapalan dan pantai termasuk menangkap ikan dan perkhidmatan feri," katanya kepada Bernama ketika dihubungi, hari ini.

Che Gayah berkata selain perairan Sabah, Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan dan Sarawak (Miri dan Bintulu) turut akan mengalaminya.

Tambah beliau ribut tropika Jangmi ini boleh mengakibatkan ombak mencapai ketinggian 4.5 meter serta hujan lebat di kawasan berkenaan.

-- BERNAMA

KERATAN AKHBAR
KOSMO (NIAGA) : MUKA SURAT 52
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Kerjasama CyberSecurity, MAMPU mantapkan keselamatan digital

KUALA LUMPUR – CyberSecurity Malaysia bekerjasama dengan Unit Pemodenan Tadbiran dan Perancangan Pengurusan Malaysia (MAMPU) untuk memantapkan keupayaan keselamatan digital, seiring dengan perubahan teknologi maklumat semasa.

Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif CyberSecurity Malaysia, Dr. Amirudin Abdul Wahab berkata, memandangkan penggunaan telefon pintar semakin bertambah maka ancaman keselamatan siber dijangka meningkat tahun depan.

"Tidak ada tahap keselamatan yang 100 peratus sempurna tetapi kami boleh mengurangkan ancaman yang ada.

"Selaras itu, MAMPU dan CyberSecurity Malaysia akan bekerjasama dalam tujuh bidang termasuk pengurusan insiden keselamatan siber, forensik digital dan tadbir urus, risiko serta pematuhan keselamatan maklumat," katanya.

AMIRUDIN (dua dari kiri) bertukar dokumen perjanjian dengan Omar (dua dari kanan) di Kuala Lumpur semalam.

Beliau berkata demikian selepas menandatangani perjanjian persefahaman dengan Ketua Pengarah MAMPU, Datuk Wira Omar Kaseh di sini semalam.

Antara ancaman keselamatan siber ialah ancaman canggih berterusan, malware dan risiko lain.

KERATAN AKHBAR
NEW STRAITS TIMES (SPECIAL) : MUKA SURAT 7
TARIKH : 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

2014 IN TECH

It has been quite an eventful year for technology. ***Izwan Ismail*** *takes a look at some of the major happenings in this arena*

SELFIE, social media, cyber attacks, curved TVs, Uber, mirrorless cameras and women in tech are some of the buzzwords in information technology this year.

Malaysian consumers and companies have been investing in tech products throughout the year.

Based on Frost & Sullivan's ICT Outlook for Malaysia, spending on IT hit about US$9 billion (RM31 billion) this year, and this includes US$5.5 billion on hardware, US$1 billion on software and US$2.5 billion on services.

SELFIE CRAZE

AS new products flooded the market, new tech trends became hits.

And Malaysians, as well as other tech consumers around the world, were hit by the selfie culture.

Selfie was probably the biggest craze in the tech world this year. From men on the street to celebrities, and sportsmen to politicians, almost no one was untouched by the phenomenon.

This was driven by the popularity of smartphones with improved front-camera capability and the creation of the selfie stick.

People do it everywhere and at anytime, in public places, at home, in the plane and on mountain tops.

Selfie culture is also driven by the popularity of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, plus better mobile Internet connection.

People want to share with others everything they do, and this drives the trend.

Perhaps one of the more high-profile selfies was the one that had Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and US President Barack Obama, when the latter visited Malaysia in April. Najib posted it on his Twitter account and it went viral.

MIRRORLESS TREND

In the camera section, mirrorless cameras made an impact this year with Sony, Samsung, Fujifilm, Panasonic and Olympus capable of taking DSLR-quality images.

Sony, with its A7 range of full-frame mirrorless cameras, gained lots of interest among photo enthusiasts who wanted 35mm DSLR-quality images in a small package.

This year also saw WiFi capabilities in cameras getting traction. This feature allows users to send pictures taken to the Internet or other devices.

Sony, with its A7 range of ***full-frame mirrorless cameras****, gained lots of interest among photo enthusiasts.*

CYBER ATTACKS

This year was also a year of cyber attacks and, this time, banking sites and ATMs were the targets of cyber criminals.

A huge amount of money was lost this year due to the hacking of automated teller machines (ATMs) in Johor, Malacca and Selangor.

A syndicate ran off with RM1.271 million from Affin Bank Berhad and Affin Islamic Bank Berhad in these states, using only SIM cards and hi-tech telephony equipment.

Not long before that, banking sites like Maybank2u and CIMB Clicks were compromised when the so-called "God" of Malware penetrated the firewalls of these sites.

According to an analysis by MyCERT, the attacks were more pertinent mobile devices running on Android and devices with unpatched Windows operating system.

What used to be just harmless attacks have turned into a nightmare for banks and customers, and this was just the tip of the iceberg.

CyberSecurity Malaysia CEO Dr Amirudin Abdul Wahab said the cyber attackers were using the Zeus Malware Family to infect computers and trick users into giving away their mobile phone numbers.

Banking sites and ATMs become a prime target by ***cyber criminals.***

UBER STRIKES

On the local front, the popularity of online taxi booking has opened the market for rideshare and taxi service company Uber.

Unheard of more than a year ago, the presence of Uber taxis in local roads created a stir in the beginning, but continued to be a popular choice of transportation among tech-savvy commuters.

Again, the trend was driven by smartphones.

What people need to do to get a Uber ride is to use the Uber app to request it.

It uses PayPal or credit card as payment methods and one never needs cash.

The popularity of ***online taxi booking*** *has opened the market to* ***Uber.***

BATTLE OF SMART DEVICES

Apple and Samsung lost grounds to Chinese low-cost brands, such as Xiaomi, Huawei and Oppo.

Research company IDC said Samsung's third-quarter market share dropped 8.7 percentage points to 23.8 per cent as its shipments fell 8.2 per cent from a year earlier.

Apple's market share fell to 12 per cent from 12.9 per cent, while Xiaomi came in third with a market share of 5.3 per cent, up from 2.1 per cent a year earlier.

Lenovo ranked fourth with a market share of 5.2 per cent, up from 4.7 per cent, followed by LG's 5.1 per cent.

Despite this, Samsung retained its leading position in the global smartphone market in the last quarter.

Compared with Apple, Samsung seemed more aggressive with one launch after the other of its smartphone range, such as Galaxy S5, Note 4, Galaxy K Zoom, Gear 2 and other models, while Apple iPhone 6 was hit with a bendable body issue.

While the two brands continue to dominate the market, it was a sad year for former king of mobile phones Nokia.

Its Nokia Lumia brand name was changed to Microsoft Lumia, as a result of the rebranding of the Nokia devices division, which was acquired by Microsoft in April.

The first Lumia phone with the Microsoft label on it was Microsoft Lumia 535, which was launched this month.

The ***bendable iPhone 6*** *was subjected to much criticism by consumers.*

CURVED TVS

To turn around dropping sales, TV manufacturers worked on a number of technologies to appeal to consumers, including curved screens.

LG Electronics, Samsung and Sony all jumped on the curved TV bandwagon, with various sizes and resolutions, and based on different technologies.

The uptake of curved TV was not as strong as the manufacturers had expected, despite the promise of a more immersive viewing experience.

Consumers were more interested in larger screens and more innovative technologies, like organic light-emitting diode (Oled) and 4K, which supposedly give better, higher quality pictures.

Curved TVs *did not really make a big impact in the market.*

Datuk Yasmin Mahmood is CEO of MDeC.

WOMAN ON TOP

The appointment of Datuk Yasmin Mahmood as chief executive officer of Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC) in September was a recognition of women in IT.

It was a boost to women and for the industry. Yasmin brings with her more than 25 years of industry and leadership experience to oversee MDeC's initiatives, which include MSC Malaysia and Digital Malaysia.

MDeC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali described Yasmin as a leader with strong credential and extensive experience.

One of her goals is to realise Digital Malaysia through initiatives, and women empowerment is a subject close to her heart.

With initiatives like eRezeki, Yasmin hopes to create an impact on the lives of Malaysians.

While the programme is meant to raise the livelihood of people whose earnings fall into the bottom 40 per cent of the income pyramid, it could be a option for more Malaysians, especially women, to become more productive, she said.

"I believe in our young people. I believe in their passion, energy and creativity."

Prime Minister Dauk Seri Najib Razak *on the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre's (MaGIC) role in producing more young entrepreneurs.*

KERATAN AKHBAR
BERITA HARIAN (BISNES) : MUKA SURAT B3
TARIKH : 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Kerjasama Cyber-Security, MAMPU

Cyber-Security Malaysia bekerjasama dengan Unit Pemodenan Tadbiran dan Perancangan Pengurusan Malaysia (MAMPU) bagi memantapkan keupayaan keselamatan digital, seiring perubahan teknologi maklumat (IT) semasa.

Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Cyber-Security Malaysia, Dr Amirudin Abdul Wahab, berkata memandangkan penggunaan telefon pintar semakin meningkat, ancaman keselamatan siber dijangka meningkat tahun depan.

"Tidak ada tahap keselamatan yang 100 peratus sempurna, tetapi kami boleh mengurangkan ancaman yang ada.

"Selaras itu, MAMPU dan Cyber Security Malaysia akan bekerjasama dalam tujuh bidang, termasuk pengurusan kejadian keselamatan siber, forensik digital dan tadbir urus, risiko serta pematuhan keselamatan maklumat," katanya selepas menandatangani perjanjian persefahaman dengan Ketua Pengarah MAMPU, Datuk Wira Omar Kaseh, di Kuala Lumpur, semalam.

Kerjasama strategik dua tahun

Antara ancaman keselamatan siber ialah ancaman canggih berterusan, malware dan pelbagai risiko lain.

Amirudin berkata, kerjasama strategik selama dua tahun itu juga membabitkan usaha membangunkan kecekapan dalam bidang keselamatan IT, kesedaran dan program penanaman bagi keselamatan maya, jaminan keselamatan serta pensijilan produk untuk keselamatan siber.

"Kerjasama ini meliputi pelbagai bidang teknikal berkaitan keselamatan siber, termasuk pembudayaan keselamatan siber dalam kalangan komuniti digital Malaysia.

"Pengguna atau organisasi yang menggunakan sistem, aplikasi dan komputer yang lemah serta tiada pengetahuan mengenai keselamatan siber, akan menjadi mangsa penjenayah siber," katanya.

BERNAMA

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE STAR (EVENTS) : MUKA SURAT 14
TARIKH: 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

Media appreciation tea session
Malaysian Biotechnology Corporation Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Dr Mohd Nazlee Kamal (centre) and bioeconomy development division senior vice-president Zurina Che Dir (front row, third from left) with the lucky draw winners during the company's media appreciation tea session at KL Hilton. The event was held to thank media representatives for their continuous support throughout the year.

KERATAN AKHBAR
NEW STRAITS TIMES (COMMENT) : MUKA SURAT 15 & 17
TARIKH : 31 DISEMBER 2014 (RABU)

A cooperative cushion for rubber growers

SUSTAINED RETURNS: Through cooperative invesments in downstream processing of raw materials, worrying over low rubber prices will be a thing of the past

THE price of natural rubber is down. This is not the first time. It has happened before, and it will again.

On Dec 24, the price of tyre-grade Standard Malaysian Rubber (SMR) 20 stood at 505.5 sen against 748.5 sen registered on the same date last year, while latex-in-bulk settled at 368 sen a kg from 554.5 sen a kg a year ago.

History bears testimony to the fact that rubber prices have always gone through cycles of ups and downs. When high demand chases low supply, prices will be bullish. Likewise, when oversupply caters to shrinking demand, the opposite is true. Prices turn bearish.

Dr Ahmad Ibrahim is fellow of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia

When prices are up, rubber growers go shopping. But when rubber prices hit historic lows, rubber growers cry. Downstream rubber users, on the other hand, seldom lose.

When rubber prices does go well down, as is the case now, rubber growers, especially smallholders, bear the brunt of the pain. This is because rubber smallholders depend on the rubber tree for their income. They are always at the mercy of world rubber prices.

The last time rubber prices hit the highs was when demand from China exploded. Now, the Chinese economy has slowed down. Demand for tyres is down. So is the demand for natural rubber. Tyres are still the biggest users of natural rubber. The other giant economy, India, is also not seeing as vigorous a growth. Another big natural rubber market, the European Union, is also not so robust. Throw in the current low price of petroleum, and the concoction spells doom for natural rubber prices.

The ones most affected are the rubber smallholders. Plantations are not so badly impacted. They have rubber and oil palm. They also have downstream investments. Some have palm oil downstream companies, such as refineries and oleochemicals. Others have investments in rubber products, especially gloves.

Very few smallholders have both rubber and oil palm. At least, if they have both, there may be times when good palm oil prices can compensate for poor rubber prices. But this time around, both rubber and palm oil face bearish times.

Palm oil prices are also down from a year ago. It is time rubber smallholders rethink their future strategy.

Now, rubber smallholders supply two types of products to the downstream manufacturing business.

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Though rubber smallholders ***supply the raw materials*** *for manufacturing, they have* ***no stake in these lucrative businesses.***

Giving growers a share in industry

→ *From Page 15*

One is the rubber latex itself, which goes into making tyres, engineering rubber products, including for the car industry, rubber seals and fenders for mining and other sectors and, last but not least, the various types of gloves.

The other raw material that comes from rubber smallholders is rubberwood. Most of the furniture we export is made from rubberwood.

Though rubber smallholders supply both raw materials, they do not have a stake in the downstream businesses of rubber products and rubberwood furniture.

This is unfortunate because the returns from the many downstream businesses are many times higher than the earnings from just selling raw rubber and unprocessed rubberwood. The downstream business is controlled by investors who do not produce the raw materials.

It is an irony that the farmers who supply the raw materials for the manufacturing sector remain poor, whereas the people who invest in the machinery to process the raw materials into consumer products are many times richer.

It is time this situation is changed. If we look at the situation in developed economies, there is a way to bring better returns to the producers of such materials.

The answer lies in the formation of a powerful cooperative business. In the United States, soya bean farmers have long adopted the strategy.

There, cooperatives operate successful investments in soya bean crushing, edible oil refineries, and also logistics and transport. The returns from such cooperatives are then shared with the farmers.

During times of high soya bean prices, the cooperatives benefit. The farmers share the benefits. Whereas during times of low soya bean prices, the cooperatives also benefit. Again farmers enjoy a share of the profits from the downstream businesses.

Rubber smallholders should emulate the cooperative business model of soya bean growers in the US.

They should come together nationwide to form cooperatives and venture downstream. Initial help from the government would be useful. Once the cooperatives achieve business stability, worrying over low rubber prices will be a thing of the past.