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KL stocks to trend sideways next week

SHARE prices on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange are expected to trend sideways ahead of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's two-month leave.

Dealers said that although there could be a few institutional buyings in support of key blue chips, any sharp rise was expected to be trimmed by profit-taking. There is no change in the country's economic fundamentals to attract new funds into the market.

Any movement in share prices would continue to centre on individual stocks based on their strengths, and those which were badly battered in the recent sell-down.

The fact that Dr Mahathir is taking a long leave is not expected to cause panic among investors as the Prime Minister had made it clear that his health was not the reason for him taking leave.

Dr Mahathir also said that there would be no major plans to be implemented by the Government during his absence.

One possible lead that could determine the sentiment of the stock market would be a Cabinet change.

A minor change like the appointment of a new Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister following the resignation of Datuk Abu Hassan Omar, is not expected to shake the market.

"But a major Cabinet reshuffle could," an analyst said, adding that he expected Dr Mahathir to name the new Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister soon.

Last week, the Composite Index rose 9.41 points to 1,107.37 due to the marked increase in the price of financial stocks on Wednesday.

The Emas Index was 0.98 of a point steadier at 316.75 and the Industrial Index gained 20.27 points to 2,047.68.

The Second Board Index lost 11.94 points to 546.17.

On Wednesday, Paracorp Bhd recorded a RM1.65 premium on its debut on the Main Board, over its share offer price of RM3.65. The counter opened at RM5.30 and ended the week at RM6.20.

On Friday, Sapura Motors Bhd chalked a RM4.20 premium on its debut on the Second Board, over its initial share offer price of RM2.10. The counter opened at RM6.30 and ended the day at RM5.70.

Among the actives, Berjaya Group up 32 sen to RM3.40 with 23.728 million shares traded, Ekran-rights down three sen to two sen with 20.710 million, Sinora down RM1.10 to RM13.40 with 15.051 million and CP Bhd down 50 sen to RM14.90 with 12.240 million.

Anson down 15 sen to RM6.35 with 8.055 million, Grand United up 24 sen to RM2.79 with 8.032 million, Perstima down 25 sen to RM5.10 with 8.032 million, Mancon up 10 sen to RM5.55 with 7.111 million and Wing Tiek down 75 sen to RM5.25 with 5.684 million.

The weekly Main Board ready turnover stood at 894.462 million shares worth RM5.185 billion from 821.489 million shares valued at RM4.386 billion last week.

On sectoral basis, consumer products accounted for 34.049 million shares traded, industrial products 141.708 million, construction 54.112 million, trading/services 114.628 million, infrastructure 907,000, finance 359.308 million, hotels 11.835 million, properties 78.259 million, plantations 17.520 million, mining 2.737 million, trusts 1.350 million, closed-end fund 3.185 million, loan stocks 11.741 million, TSR/warrants 42.177

million and rights 20.940 million.
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