

MALAYSIA WEEKLY ECONOMIC NEWS

(23 March 2020 – 27 March 2020)

Topics	Highlights
<p>Businesses more exposed to cyber-attack risks in digital economy</p>	<p>Malaysia's thriving digital economy and the recent surge in workforce mobility across the region are exposing businesses to cyber-attacks, according to Deloitte's report commissioned by VMware. However, in terms of preparedness measures, Malaysia is ahead of its peers with low levels of exposure due to strong regulatory cooperation and a comprehensive privacy regime, despite less impressive relative organisational capability, said the report. The report stated that there is an opportunity to boost the region's gross domestic product by US\$145bil over the next 10 years if enterprises adopted an intrinsic security approach that ensures business continuity while driving greater adoption of new technologies. Consequently, being appropriately prepared can mitigate the risks to organisations and minimise the potential of an attack.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star, 27 March 2020)</i></p>
<p>Bank Negara to publish reports on April 3</p>	<p>Bank Negara will be publishing three reports focusing on financial stability, how it operates as well as an economic and monetary review and they will be released on April 3. It said yesterday the three are the Annual Report 2019 (AR 2019), Economic and Monetary Review 2019 (EMR 2019) and the Financial Stability Review for Second Half 2019 (FSR 2H2019). Bank Negara said for this year, it had taken a different approach in its publications. The AR 2019 publication aims to further reach out to the members of the public to enable greater understanding of what the bank does, how it discharges its mandates and accountabilities as well as on the roles and functions of the bank.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star, 27 March 2020)</i></p>
<p>More jobs are at risk</p>	<p>More jobs are at stake, particularly low-income jobs, with the extension of the movement control order (MCO) due to the continuing coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. Experts warn that businesses with weaker cash flow may introduce temporary pay cuts or lay off employees, especially such roles that could be replaced via automation and mechanisation. Workers in several industries such as hospitality, tourism, retail and aviation have already been affected by Covid-19 due to weak market demand and business shutdowns following the two-week MCO period. For context, the government has ordered all businesses – except for certain industries – to be closed from March 18 to April 14 to contain the spread of Covid-19.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star, 26 March 2020)</i></p>
<p>February inflation up at slower pace of 1.3%</p>	<p>The inflation rate increased by 1.3% in February from a year, but this was slower than RAM Ratings' forecast of a 1.5% rise, according to the latest data issued by the Statistics Department. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased to 122.4 from 120.8 a year ago, it said in a statement on Wednesday. On a monthly basis, the CPI remained unchanged at 122.4 as compared to January 2020. The CPI for January to February 2020 rose by 1.4% from the previous corresponding period. The increase in the overall index was driven by the index of miscellaneous goods & services (2.5%), transport (2.4%), housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels (1.6%) and communication (1.5%).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star, 25 March 2020)</i></p>
<p>Glove grouping seeks approval to operate 100% capacity</p>	<p>The Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (MARGMA) is seeking the government's approval for its members to operate at 100% capacity to meet urgent local and global demand in the fight against COVID-19. Its president Denis Low fears that if the situation is not addressed urgently, it might lead to a chronic shortage of medical gloves. According to him, Malaysia uses about 120 million pieces per year, which could be easily be met, and MARGMA has assured the Health Ministry that there would be no shortage.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star, 25 March 2020)</i></p>