



WCT secures RM486m Dubai airport deal

Firm partnering Arabtec to provide drainage and sewerage facilities at Dubai World Central International Airport

■ From Ooi Tee Ching
bt@nstp.com.my

DOHA (Qatar): WCT Engineering Bhd has clinched a RM486 million job with Arabtec Engineering Services LLC to construct drainage and sewerage facilities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Dubai Government's Civil Aviation Department awarded the contract to carry out drainage and sewerage works at the cargo airport in the Jebel Ali, 40km from Dubai city.

WCT and Arabtec are required to construct a network of storm water, sewerage and irrigation, pumping stations and retention ponds at the cargo airport known as the Dubai World Central International Airport (JXB).

"WCT and Arabtec are equal partners in this 500 million dirham project," executive director Chua Siow Leng told Business Times.

WCT Current Middle East projects					
Project description	Country	Contract value (RMm)	Contract period (months)	Start date	Completion date
Bahrain City Centre	Bahrain	1,280	28	2006	2008
Dukhan Highway	Qatar	784	24	2005	2007
New Doha International Airport - Package 1 - Civil Works	Qatar	1,880	33	2005	2008



WCT will fund its share of the cost of works through internally-generated funds and bank borrowings.

The job will see construction of 100km pressure pipes and 120km

gravity drain pipes of up to 3.2m in diameter.

"Work has started and is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2008," he added.

The job will fatten WCT's order

book to RM4.2 billion and earnings should flow into the company's financials this year.

"The 10 per cent advance payment will go towards procurement of bulldozers and back-hoes. We'll receive progress payments as we go along," he said.

Having built the Bahrain Formula 1 circuit in 2002 with Gulf Corp Council and finished the Al-Seef flyover in 2005 and Durrat Al-Bahrain Expressway in 2006, WCT's reputation as a reliable contractor has gained attention among governments in the Middle East.

"It takes time to build our reputation in this region. We've been trying to get jobs in Dubai city as early as 2005. Now, we can say that partnering an active local partner is the best business model," he said.

Arabtec is one of the top three contractors in the UAE. It is undertaking the bulk of construction works at the new cargo airport in Jebel Ali.

Costing US\$8.17 billion (RM28.4 billion), its facilities will be able to handle 120 million passengers and 12 million tonnes of cargo per year. Upon completion, JXB will be the world's largest or roughly the size of Chicago's O'Hare and London Heathrow airports combined.

Malaysia assessing offshore ringgit trading

■ By Roziana Hamsawi
roziana@nstp.com.my

MALAYSIA will assess the risks and rewards of having the ringgit internationalised before it makes any decision on the matter, Bank Negara Malaysia Governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz said yesterday.

"We will look at how Malaysia might benefit from this, and whether the benefits outweigh the risks," she told reporters in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Zeti said if the Government decides to internationalise the ringgit, it need not necessarily mean full liberalisation.

"It can be a partial liberalisation on internationalisation," she said, declining to comment whether such a move could happen this year.

Bank Negara does not allow domestic banks to trade the currency

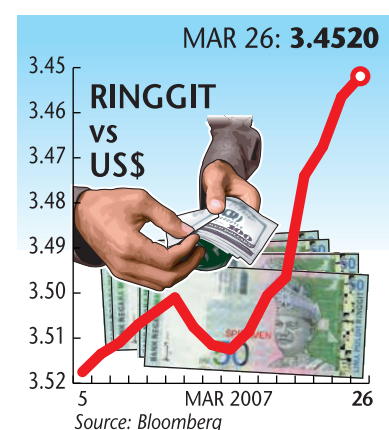
overseas, a ban aimed at cutting supply of ringgit to speculators following the Asian financial crisis in 1997-98.

Some economists and analysts, taking the cue from foreign currency liberalisation measures announced last week, now expect the central bank to liberalise the ringgit within the year.

Citigroup Inc, for example, expects the ringgit to be tradeable offshore by year-end, a move it said could help dispel the image among investors globally that Malaysia has a capital-controlled economy.

The US-based bank raised its ringgit 12-month forecast to 3.36 per dollar from a previous forecast of 3.45.

Speaking to reporters after chairing a public lecture on financial policy and stability, Zeti said the strong ringgit should reflect the un-



derlying strength of the economy and its fundamentals.

"This is most important because that will sustain the levels. Otherwise, you are just going to see

volatility," she added.

The ringgit has advanced 2.1 per cent against the US dollar this year to the highest since February 1998. Last year it climbed 7.1 per cent.

The central bank last week removed a cap on domestic banks undertaking foreign exchange transactions, and allowed foreign investors more access to credit to buy local currency bonds and properties.

Malaysia's economy grew 5.9 per cent in 2006, and is expected to grow 6 per cent in 2007.

The lecture, meanwhile, was held in conjunction with the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB) 5th general assembly and 10th council meeting.

Basel-based Bank of Financial Settlement (BIS) Financial Stability Institute chairman Josef Tosovsky

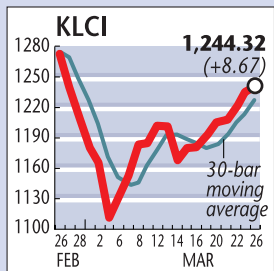
>> See Page 36, Col. 3



FTA talks set to resume in mid-April

P36

NEWSWISE



Intra-day Resistance: 1247-1268
Intra-day Support: 1219-1240

COMMODITIES

	MAR 26	MAR 23
KL Tin (US\$/MT)	14,385	14,130
CPO (RM/MT)	2,008	1,995
SMR (sen/kg)	954.00	951.00
Brent Oil (US\$/bbl)	64.18*	63.33
Gold (RM/gm)	73.16	74.08

Source: Bloomberg * at press time

FOREX RATES

	MAR 23	MAR 22
USD	3.4695	3.4640
GBP	6.8111	6.8196
EUR	4.6215	4.6379
JPY100	2.9361	2.9477
SGD	2.2849	2.2834
HKD100	44.4173	44.3483
AUD	2.7935	2.7949

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia

WORLD MARKETS

	MAR 26	MAR 23
SINGAPORE		
STI	3,204.55	-1.27
Vol (b)	1.36	+0.06
HK		
Hang Seng	19,765.85	+73.21
Vol (HKSb)	39.86	-3.15
TOKYO		
Nikkei	17,521.96	+41.35
Vol (b)	1.53	-0.37
LONDON		
FTSE-100	6,339.40	+21.40
Vol (b)	2.05	-0.28
WALL ST		
DJIA	12,481.01	+19.87
Vol (m)	206.00	-27.00

OTHER PAGES

BizNews	35-45
Chart Point	43
BizFocus	44-45
BizWorld	46
Bursa Malaysia	47-51
Unit Trusts	52