

KEFIMA sets up RM40m kenaf facility

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PUTRAJAYA: KEFIMA Malaysia Sdn Bhd, a joint venture between a local company and Kenaf Eco Fibers Italy SpA (KEFI), will set up a RM40mil kenaf fibre processing facility in Setiu, Terengganu.

The facility, which will comprise a separation plant and kenaf-based heat and sound insulators manufacturing factory, is targeted for completion by the end of the year.

KEFIMA is 70% owned by Malaysia-based Kenaf Eco Fibre (M) Sdn Bhd and 30% by KEFI, which will buy the heat and sound insulators produced by the factory over the next two years.

"We will only be involved in the processing and marketing of the product," KEFIMA director Datin Naru Aini Abdul Rahman told reporters after the signing of the shareholders' agreement yesterday.

She said the National Tobacco Board (NTB) had drawn up a plan to get tobacco farmers to switch to kenaf planting and that the Terengganu government had allocated 2,400 acres in Setiu to be planted with kenaf.

Under a contract farming agreement between NTB and KEFIMA, farmers will be able to sell kenaf stems to KEFIMA at a pre-determined price.

"This will help ensure that tobacco farmers who are displaced will benefit from the new crop," Naru Aini said.

Tobacco farmers in the country are facing competition from lower cost producers around the region, with the impending liberalisation of the domestic tobacco industry by 2010 under the Asean Free Trade Area.

In his speech, Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui said the kenaf industry had been identified as a new area of growth in the agricultural sector.

6.90 to US\$567.40 an ounce on Monday, dealing in US\$558.90 to US\$568.60 - a high since March 6.

LONDON
Tin prices closed at US\$8,256.60/US\$566.50 an ounce on Monday, versus US\$8,156.00/US\$560.90 in strong New York late on Friday.

SILVER
The record per ounce in New York

closed at US\$10.85/US\$10.86 on Monday, the highest since August 1983.

COPPER
Copper futures closed at US\$3.89 to US\$4.380 on Monday, dealing from US\$3.890 to a new life-of-peak at US\$4.380.

Since the beginning of the year, copper for May

contracts peaked at US\$4.380 on Monday, dealing from US\$3.890 to a new life-of-peak at US\$4.380.

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delivery has rallied some 22.5%.

Spot March shot up 6.35 cents, or 2.6%, to finish the day at US\$2.4750, after hitting a new peak for the spot contract at US\$2.4840.

LONDON
LME three-months copper settled at US\$5,310 a tonne on Monday, after hitting a new all-time high of US\$5,320 earlier.

RUBBER

KUALA LUMPUR
The Malaysian rubber prices ended higher yesterday amid concerns over supply shortage of the commodity due to heavy rain in most parts of the country, dealers said.

"Heavy rain hampered tapping and in turn caused shortage of supply, thus driving up prices," one of the dealers said.

The dealer added that the upward trend was also supported by the rally of Tokyo rubber futures.

At the close, the Malaysian Rubber Board (MRB) official physical price for tyre grade SMR20 was up nine sen to 707.00 sen per kg compared with 698.00 sen per kg recorded on Monday.

Latex in bulk rose 3.5 sen to 549.50 sen per kg from 546.00 sen per kg previously. - Agencies

PRODUCE

KUCHING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES
(per tonne)
Sago flour: RM60.00
Scrap: RM40.00
Cocoa (raw beans): SMC IC: RM4,000.00

KUCHING PEPPER
White
Grade 1: RM744.00
Black
Grade 1: RM452.00

COCOA
Dealer purchase prices of cocoa beans

wet cocoa beans (sen/kilo), Dry cocoa beans (RM/tonne)

	High	Low
Tawau		
Wet beans	169	140
SMC 1A	5150	4980
SMC 1B	5100	4930
SMC 1C	-	-

	High	Low
Lahat datu		
Wet beans	150	150
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4600	4550
SMC 1C	-	-

	High	Low
Tenom		
Wet beans	115	95
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4735	4535
SMC 1C	4270	4070

	High	Low
S.Bernam		
Wet beans	120	120
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4300	4300
SMC 1C	4200	4200

	High	Low
B.Datoh		
Wet beans	140	140
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4440	4400
SMC 1C	4340	4300

	High	Low
A.Tawar		
Wet beans	100	100
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4600	4200
SMC 1C	4500	4100

	High	Low
Batu Pahat		
Wet beans	130	130
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4500	4020
SMC 1C	4200	3960

	High	Low
Muar		
Wet beans	-	-
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4800	4800
SMC 1C	-	-

	High	Low
Jerantut		
Wet beans	160	120
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	5200	4800
SMC 1C	-	-

	High	Low
Raub		
Wet beans	110	110
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	5300	5300
SMC 1C	-	-

	High	Low
Kuching		
Wet beans	-	-
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	4440	4051
SMC 1C	4000	3500

	High	Low
Sarikei *		
Wet beans	-	-
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	-	-
SMC 1C	3500	3400

	High	Low
Sibu *		
Wet beans	-	-
SMC 1A	-	-
SMC 1B	-	-
SMC 1C	3400	3400

Note: (*) = Not Graded
Source: Malaysian Cocoa Board