

# Investment Linked Fund Performance Report February 2018

### **General Advice Warning**

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

It was a volatile month of February for global and Malaysian markets. The local bourse plunged in the earlier part of the month in tandem with the negative performance of the US Dow Jones Index. The trigger for the market correction in Dow Jones was due to sell-off in the US bond market. FBMKLCI closed the month at 1,856 points, lower by 0.7% m-o-m, off its month low of 1,812.45 levels. Meanwhile, the broader market, FBMEMAS Index underperformed the market to close lower by 1.1% m-o-m.

MGS yields were seen flattening during the period under review. The belly of the MGS curve was seen weakening (rose up to 9 bps) following the BNM OPR hike in January and recent US Treasury sell off. Though, the long-ended curve was supported (down by 5 bps) due to Malaysia's strong economic outlook and higher commodity prices. Ringgit was seen resilient at RM3.9150/USD (Jan'18: RM3.8975/USD). Brent oil prices eased to USD65.78/bbl from USD69.05/bbl due to higher US crude oil stockpiles.

Malaysia had a strong head start in 2018 as the export was seen rising to 17.9% y-o-y in Jan'18 (Dec'17: 4.7% y-o-y), boosted by "front-loading" ahead of the Lunar New Year holiday in Feb'18 and sustained global economic expansion in early 2018.

Going forward, we are expecting positive local equity market in the first half of the year towards the GE14. Continuous inflow of foreign fund, better corporate earnings, and initial public offering (IPO) activities will be the catalysts for the better outlook on the Bursa Malaysia in the year 2018.

For fixed income, post OPR rate hike in Jan'18, BNM is likely to maintain a neutral monetary policy for the remaining of 2018 despite the major central banks are still showing signal towards policy tightening. The external risk factors such as geopolitical tension in North Korea, potential US trade war and fluctuation in crude oil prices will continue to weigh on the local market, but we believe corporate bond space still provides attractive yields given stable monetary stance from BNM and strong fundamentals in local market. As such, we will keep looking to buy on dips of corporate bonds if the opportunity arises.

Based on the performance table below, on monthly basis, AsiaPac, Equity, Global Yakin and Jati Funds had outperformed their benchmarks. Meanwhile other funds had underperformed their benchmarks.

Policyholders are encouraged to focus into regular premium given the current risk and volatile period of the economic and market condition. Risk adverse investors should focus into income fund due to its less volatile as compared to equity related funds.

#### Performance Table: Funds vs Benchmarks

	Asiapa	c Fund	Baland	ed Fund	Divider	nd Fund	Equity	Fund	Global Y	akin Fund	Incom	e Fund	Jati F	und
	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark	Fund	Benchmark
Monthly (%)	-2.38%	-5.01%	-0.25%	-0.21%	-0.90%	-0.66%	-0.50%	-0.66%	-4.05%	-5.76%	0.16%	0.25%	-1.50%	-1.69%
3 Months (%)	-2.40%	0.36%	2.37%	4.56%	4.62%	8.05%	5.52%	8.05%	-3.12%	0.19%	0.99%	1.10%	3.37%	3.93%
6 Months (%)	-5.73%	0.16%	2.17%	3.21%	2.69%	4.68%	4.04%	4.68%	-2.26%	6.34%	1.47%	1.67%	2.11%	5.32%
12 Months (%)	3.39%	17.06%	4.75%	6.84%	4.01%	9.59%	6.35%	9.59%	0.06%	13.01%	3.95%	4.03%	1.13%	8.39%

Source: MCIS Insurance Berhad

## AsiaPac Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

To achieve steady income stream with potential growth in the Asia Pacific Region over medium to long term. The aim of the Fund is to outperform the S&P Ethical Pan Asia Select Dividend Opportunities Index over periods of five or more years.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest in Asia Pacific Ethical Dividend Exchange Traded Fund (ETF), managed by CIMB Principal Asset Management where the ETF is listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange.

The ETF focuses on top 40 ethical and high yielding stocks in the Asia Pacific Region excluding India, Taiwan, Japan, New Zealand and Philippines. The fund provides country diversification across the industry that is traded in US Dollar.

#### **Risks**

The Fund is considered low risk given the exposure to only one underlying securities with no attempt to select stocks individually or to take defensive positions in declining markets. Risk is managed at the management level, where the asset allocation of the fund to be reviewed on regular basis, and adjusted to commensurate with the Investment Team view on the relative attractiveness of each asset class.

The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; economic and political developments in related countries, foreign exchange fluctuation, illiquid and inefficient securities in the Emerging Markets, and the financial performance of the underlying companies.

The target market is for investors who are seeking regional exposure from investment and at the same time, seeking for medium to long term capital appreciation with moderate market risk.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had outperformed the benchmark by 739bps MoM (month on month). Global and Asia markets were cautious as worries of more rate hikes in the US saw funds taking money off the table.

## 

AsiaPac Fund Performance Since Inception

#### **Top Ten Holdings**

CIMB S&P Asia Pacific Ethical Dividend Exchange Traded Fund (ETF)

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM0.6642
Fund Size RM42.01 million
Inception Date 15-July-2012
Fund Management 0.85% p.a.

Fee

Pricing Daily

Price Quote Major Newspaper, or http://www.mcis.my
Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

Exceptional Refer to your Policy Document

Circumstances

**Asset Allocation Ranges** 

Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual
ETF	80%	100%	87%
Cash	0%	20%	13%

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	-2.38%	-5.01%
3 months (%)	-2.40%	0.36%
6 months (%)	-5.73%	0.16%
12 months (%)	3.39%	17.06%
2 years (% pa)	22.16%	36.06%
3 years (% pa)	3.34%	-0.62%
5 years (% pa)	5.27%	-0.82%
Since Inception	5.14%	0.70%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not guaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

<sup>\*</sup> Index is S&P Ethical Pan Asia Select Dividend Opportunities sourced from Bloomberg.

## Balanced Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

The objective of the Balanced Fund is to provide security and income, while maintaining and potentially increasing the value of capital over the medium to long-term, through exposure across a range of asset classes. The Fund aims to outperform the performance benchmark over periods of three or more years.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest in Malaysian equities and fixed income securities, including government bonds and corporate debt securities. The asset allocation is reviewed on a regular basis, and is adjusted commensurate with our view on the relative attractiveness of each asset class.

#### **Risks**

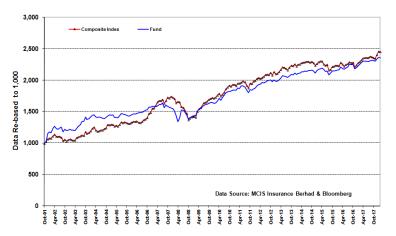
The Fund is considered medium risk given the mixed exposure of equity securities, fixed income and cash. The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; consumer sentiment, financial performance of the underlying companies, industry and economy development, social and political factors, and the liquidity of the underlying assets. Additionally, levels of interest rates, and credit downgrades of defaults can affect the value of fixed income securities

The target market is clients wanting the surety of insurance protection, with an element of potential upside investment exposure.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had underperformed the benchmark by 46bps MoM (month on month). The underperformance was mainly driven by higher exposure of underperforming securities in the portfolio compared to benchmark.

#### **Balanced Fund Performance Since Inception**



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Malaysian Government Securities (Bond)
Northern Gateway Infrastructure Sdn Bhd (Bond)
CIMB Bank Berhad (Bond)
Sarawak Hidro Sdn Bhd (Bond)
Tenaga Nasional Berhad (Equity)
Malayan Banking Berhad (Equity)
Sabah Credit Corporation (Bond)
Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan (Bond)
CIMB Bank Berhad (Equity)
Telekom Malaysia Berhad (Equity)

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM1.1795 Fund Size RM7.97 million Inception Date 15-Oct-01

Fund Management 1.25% p.a.

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Price Quote Major Newspaper, or

http://www.mcis.my

Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

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Circumstances

**Asset Allocation Ranges** 

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Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual		
Malaysian Equity	40%	60%	49%		
Fixed Income	40%	60%	48%		
Cash	0%	20%	3%		

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	-0.25%	-0.21%
3 months (%)	2.37%	4.56%
6 months (%)	2.17%	3.21%
12 months (%)	4.75%	6.84%
2 years (% pa)	4.28%	4.81%
3 years (% pa)	2.71%	2.28%
5 years (% pa)	3.50%	3.06%
Since Inception	5.37%	5.61%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not guaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

\* The benchmark index is a composite of 50% FBM KLCI Index and 50% of Markit iBoxx ALBI Malaysia TR Index (Since Dec '12). Prior to that, the index used was HSBC Malaysia All Bond Index for the fixed income portion. Benchmark return is calculated on re-based basis. The source is from the subscription of Markit Indices.

## Dividend Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

To achieve steady income stream with potential for capital growth over medium to long term by focusing mostly on high dividend yielding stocks and money market instruments. The aim of the Fund is to outperform the FBM KLCI Index over periods of five or more years.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest in a broad selection of companies listed on the Malaysian Stock Exchange. Using a relative value methodology, the fund focuses on undervalued stocks relative to fundamental value, with the aim of achieving an income stream, together with some degree of long-term capital gains.

#### **Risks**

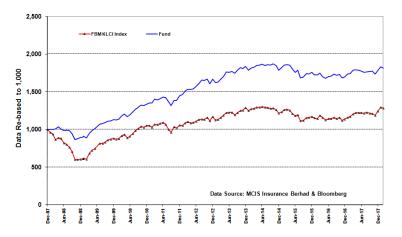
The Fund is considered high risk given the exposure to equity securities. The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; consumer sentiment, financial performance of the underlying companies, the performance of the industry and economy, and the share market in general, social and political factors, and the liquidity of the underlying assets.

The target market is clients wanting the surety of insurance protection, with an element of potential upside investment exposure.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had underperformed the benchmark by 156bps MoM (month on month). The underperformance was mainly driven by higher exposure of underperforming stocks in the portfolio compared to benchmark.

#### **Dividend Fund Performance Since Inception**



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Petronas Gas Berhad
Public Bank Berhad
Petronas Chemicals Group Berhad
Malayan Banking Berhad
Maxis Berhad
Tenaga Nasional Berhad
Telekom Malaysia Berhad
DiGi.Com Berhad
Axiata Group Berhad
IOI Corporation Berhad

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM0.8620 Fund Size RM34.6 million Inception Date 21-Jan-08 Fund Management 1.5% p.a.

Fee

Pricing Daily

Price Quote Major Newspaper, or http://www.mcis.my

Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

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Circumstances

**Asset Allocation Ranges** 

Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual
Malaysian Equity	80%	100%	96%
Cash	0%	20%	4%

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	-0.90%	-0.66%
3 months (%)	4.62%	8.05%
6 months (%)	2.69%	4.68%
12 months (%)	4.01%	9.59%
2 years (% pa)	2.56%	5.91%
3 years (% pa)	-0.69%	0.64%
5 years (% pa)	2.16%	2.54%
Since Inception	6.04%	2.49%
Yield #	3.14%	3.21%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not quaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

\* Index is FBM KLCI sourced from Bloomberg.

# Yield data is sourced from Bloomberg, and MCIS.

## Equity Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

The objective of the Equity Fund is to achieve capital growth over the medium to long term by focusing on high quality equities listed on the FBM KLCI Index. The aim of the Equity Fund is to outperform the Index over periods of five or more years.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest in a broad selection of companies listed on the Malaysian Stock Exchange. Using a relative value methodology, the fund focuses on the stocks whose shares appear undervalued relative to fundamental value, with the aim of achieving long term growth in capital value.

#### **Risks**

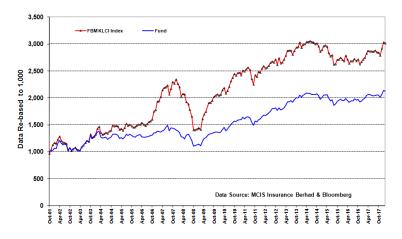
The Fund is considered high risk given the exposure to equity securities. The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; consumer sentiment, financial performance of the underlying companies, the performance of the industry and economy, and the share market in general, social and political factors, and the liquidity of the underlying assets.

The target market is clients wanting the surety of insurance protection, with an element of potential upside investment exposure.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had outperformed the benchmark by 116bps MoM (month on month). The outperformance was mainly driven by higher exposure of outperforming stocks in the portfolio compared to benchmark.

#### **Equity Fund Performance Since Inception**



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Tenaga Nasional Berhad Public Bank Berhad Malayan Banking Berhad IOI Corporation Berhad Petronas Chemicals Group Berhad CIMB Bank Berhad Telekom Malaysia Berhad Sime Darby Plantation Berhad Petronas Gas Berhad Petronas Dagangan Berhad

#### **Fund Information**

 NAV (28.02.18)
 RM1.0637

 Fund Size
 RM10.20 million

Inception Date 15-Oct-01 Fund Management 1.40% p.a.

Fee

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Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

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Circumstances

**Asset Allocation Ranges** 

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Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual		
Malaysian Equity	80%	100%	97%		
Cash	0%	20%	3%		

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	-0.50%	-0.66%
3 months (%)	5.52%	8.05%
6 months (%)	4.04%	4.68%
12 months (%)	6.35%	9.59%
2 years (% pa)	4.47%	5.91%
3 years (% pa)	1.14%	0.64%
5 years (% pa)	3.47%	2.54%
Since Inception	4.71%	6.96%
Yield #	3.33%	3.21%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not guaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

\* Index is FBM KLCI sourced from Bloomberg. # Yield data is sourced from Bloomberg, and MCIS.

## Global Yakin Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

The fund aims for capital appreciation in the long term by investing in an international portfolio of Shariah-compliant equities and equity-related securities of companies with good growth potential.

#### **Investment Strategy**

The Fund is to feed into Aberdeen Islamic World Equity Fund (AIWEF) which managed by Aberdeen Islamic Asset Management Sdn Bhd. The Fund invests in shariah approved securities across the globe.

The Fund seeks to achieve its objective by investing in an international portfolio of Shariah-compliant equities and equity-related securities of companies with good growth potential. The countries that the Fund will invest in will include, but not limited to Canada, United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Brazil and Mexico.

#### **Risks**

The Fund is considered low risk given the exposure to only one underlying securities with no attempt to select stocks individually or to take defensive positions in declining markets. Risk is managed at the management level, where the asset allocation of the fund to be reviewed on regular basis, and adjusted to commensurate with the Investment Team view on the relative attractiveness of each asset class.

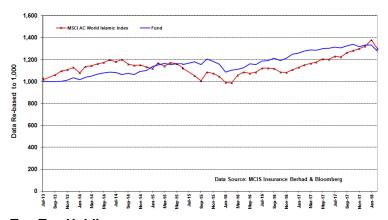
The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; economic and political developments in related countries, foreign exchange fluctuation, illiquid and inefficient securities in the Emerging Markets, and the financial performance of the underlying companies.

The Fund is suitable for investors who seek capital appreciation over a long term investment horizon and who are willing to accept high level of risk.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had outperformed the benchmark by 981bps MoM (month on month). The outperformance was mainly due to outperforming of the underlying securities compared to the benchmark index.

Global Yakin Fund Performance Since Inception



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Aberdeen Islamic World Equity Fund (AIWEF)

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM0.6391 Fund Size RM34.41 million Inception Date 8-July-2013

Fund Management 0.85% p.a.

Fee

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Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

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Circumstances

#### **Asset Allocation Ranges**

Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual
AIWEF	80%	100%	89%
Cash	0%	20%	11%

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	-4.05%	-5.76%
3 months (%)	-3.12%	0.19%
6 months (%)	-2.26%	6.34%
12 months (%)	0.06%	13.01%
2 years (% pa)	7.57%	14.68%
3 years (% pa)	3.51%	3.67%
5 years (% pa)	-	-
Since Inception	5.40%	5.81%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not guaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

<sup>\*</sup> Index is MSCI AC World Islamic sourced from Bloomberg.

## Income Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

The objective of the Income Fund is to provide investors with security of income by investing in a mix of fixed income and fixed deposit securities. The aim of the Fund is to outperform the HSBC Malaysia Local Currency All Bond Total Return Index.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest into underlying asset classes as per the Asset Allocation Ranges. The asset allocation is reviewed on a regular basis, and is adjusted commensurate with our view on the relative attractiveness of each asset class. The Fund invests in cash and fixed income securities including government bonds and corporate debt securities.

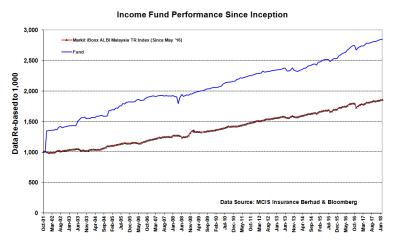
#### **Risks**

The Fund is considered lower risk given the exposure to cash and fixed income securities. The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; consumer sentiment, financial performance of the underlying companies, the performance of the industry and economy, and the share market in general, social and political factors, and the liquidity of the underlying assets. Additionally, levels of interest rates, and credit downgrades or defaults can affect the value of fixed income securities.

The target market is clients wanting the surety of insurance protection, with an element of potential upside investment exposure.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had underperformed the benchmark by 9bps MoM (month on month). The underperformance was due to underperforming of the fixed income securities compared to the benchmark index.



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Malaysian Government Securities
Northern Gateway Infrastructure Sdn Bhd
SAJ Capital Sdn Bhd
YTL Corporation Berhad
Quantum Solar Park Malaysia Sdn Bhd
Government Investment Issue
Sabah Development Bank Berhad
PBFIN Berhad
BGSM Management Sdn Bhd
Sabah Credit Corporation

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM1.4246 Fund Size RM26.97 million Inception Date 15-Oct-01

Fund Management 0.5% p.a.

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Fund Manager MCIS Insurance Berhad

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Circumstances

#### **Asset Allocation Ranges**

Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual
Fixed Income	75%	100%	96%
Cash	0%	25%	4%

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*
1 month (%)	0.16%	0.25%
3 months (%)	0.99%	1.10%
6 months (%)	1.47%	1.67%
12 months (%)	3.95%	4.03%
2 years (% pa)	4.76%	3.61%
3 years (% pa)	4.79%	3.82%
5 years (% pa)	3.91%	3.48%
Since Inception	6.59%	3.86%

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not guaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

\* The benchmark index is Markit iBoxx ALBI Malaysia TR Index (Since Dec '12). Prior to that, the index used was HSBC Malaysia All Bond Index. Benchmark return is calculated on rebased basis. The source is from the subscription of Markit Indices.

## Jati Fund Monthly Report (February 2018)

#### **Investment Objective**

The Jati Fund is invested in accordance with Shariah principles in Shariah sanctioned equities, money market instruments, and fixed income investments. The aim is to provide security and income, while maintaining and potentially increasing the value of capital over the medium to long-term. The Jati Fund is not a takaful product.

#### **Investment Strategy**

To invest in a broad selection of Shariah approved securities listed on the Malaysian Stock Exchange. Using a relative value methodology it looks to buy stocks whose shares appear undervalued relative to fundamental value, with the aim of achieving an income stream, together with some degree of long-term capital gains.

#### **Risks**

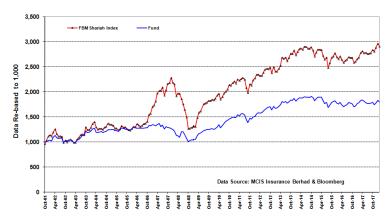
The Fund is considered high risk given the exposure to equity securities. The following factors can potentially affect the value of the Fund; consumer sentiment, financial performance of the underlying companies, the performance of the industry and economy, and the share market in general, social and political factors, and the liquidity of the underlying assets.

The target market is clients wanting the surety of insurance protection, with an element of potential upside investment exposure.

#### **Fund Performance**

For the month ended February 2018, the fund had outperformed the benchmark by 319bps MoM (month on month). The outperformance was mainly driven by higher exposure of outperforming stocks in the portfolio compared to benchmark.

Jati Fund Performance Since Inception



#### **Top Ten Holdings**

Tenaga Nasional Berhad
Petronas Chemicals Group Berhad
Axiata Group Berhad
Sime Darby Plantation Berhad
Petronas Gas Berhad
Maxis Berhad
Telekom Malaysia Berhad
IOI Corporation Berhad
IHH Healthcare Berhad
Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad

#### **Fund Information**

NAV (28.02.18) RM0.9016 Fund Size RM13.01 million

Inception Date 15-Oct-01 Fund Management 1.35% p.a.

Fee

Pricing Daily

Price Quote Major Newspaper, or

http://www.mcis.my MCIS Insurance Berhad

Fund Manager Exceptional Circumstances

Refer to your Policy Document

**Asset Allocation Ranges** 

Asset Class	Min	Max	Current Actual
Malaysian Equity	80%	100%	92%
Cash	0%	20%	8%

#### **Performance Table**

Period	Fund	Index*				
1 month (%)	-1.50%	-1.69%				
3 months (%)	3.37%	3.93%				
6 months (%)	2.11%	5.32%				
12 months (%)	1.13%	8.39%				
2 years (% pa)	1.16%	4.70%				
3 years (% pa)	-1.67%	0.77%				
5 years (% pa)	1.43%	3.87%				
Since Inception	3.66%	6.74%				
Yield #	2.87%	2.57%				

Notice: Past performance is not indicative of future performance, and the performance of the Fund is not quaranteed.

The Fund returns are calculated by MCIS and based on the value of the NAV, and for periods greater than 12-months are annualised numbers. Actual returns of the Fund are on a net basis (gross of tax and net of fees) and based on the performance of the Fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/ contributions paid for the product.

\* Index is FBMS Index sourced from Bloomberg. # Yield data is sourced from Bloomberg, and MCIS.

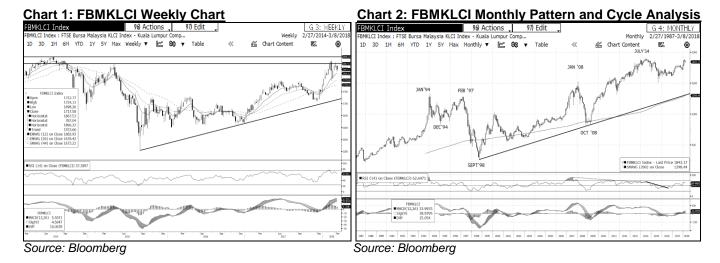
## **Equity Market Review and Outlook**

#### **Market Review**

It was a volatile month of February for global and Malaysian markets. The local bourse plunged in the earlier part of the month in tandem with the negative performance of the US Dow Jones Index. The trigger for the market correction in Dow Jones was due to sell-off in the US bond market. FBMKLCI closed the month at 1,856 points, lower by 0.7% m-o-m, off its month low of 1,812.45 levels. Meanwhile, the broader market, FBMEMAS Index underperformed the market to close lower by 1.1% m-o-m. Average daily value traded on Bursa in Feb fell 17% m-o-m but rose 14% y-o-y to RM2.87bil. The lower trading value could be due partly to the shorter trading month as Bursa Malaysia was closed for Federal Territory Day on 1 February and Chinese New Year (16-17 February).

On the domestic economic front, Malaysia's exports growth increased by 18.9% y-o-y in 2017, its strongest pace since 2004. The strong growth was driven by a synchronised recovery in global economic growth. Meanwhile, the headline inflation rate normalised to 2.7% YoY in January (3.5% in Dec 2017). This was mainly due to a slower rise in F&B and transportation costs during the month.

Globally, US real GDP growth was revised slightly lower to 2.5% in 4Q17, from 2.6% in its first reading, and compared to 3.2% in 3Q. This was mainly on the back of a lower reading in gross private investment of 3.5%, from 3.6% in its previous estimate and compared to a gain of 7.3% in 3Q. On the other hand, IMF has just upgraded its global growth forecast, and the US was able to push through its tax cut policy in late December 2017.



#### **Market Outlook & Strategy**

Technically, the FBMKLCI index underwent a roller-coaster ride during the shortened month of February. The short term trend is still down. However, long-term uptrend remains intact, supported by both 60-day & 200-day moving average lines. Support levels are located at 1,840 to 1,800, while resistance levels at 1,950 to 2,000 level.

The historical performance of the FBMKLCI in March has been mixed. The Malaysian market registered average m-o-m gain of 2.4% over the past eight years. However, over a 40-year period, it posted an average m-o-m decline of 0.3%. We expect the FBMKLCI to track the performance of the global markets in March. Any downturn will be opportunity to accumulate at lower price.

Going forward, we are expecting positive local equity market in the first half of the year towards the GE14. Continuous inflow of foreign fund, better corporate earnings, and initial public offering (IPO) activities will be the catalysts for the better outlook on the Bursa Malaysia in the year 2018. Investors will also be closely tracking the political news for hints on when the 14<sup>th</sup> General Elections (GE14) will be held. The current term of Parliament expires on 24 Jun and the general elections must be held within 60 days after that date.

#### **Fixed Income Review and Outlook**

#### **Market Review**

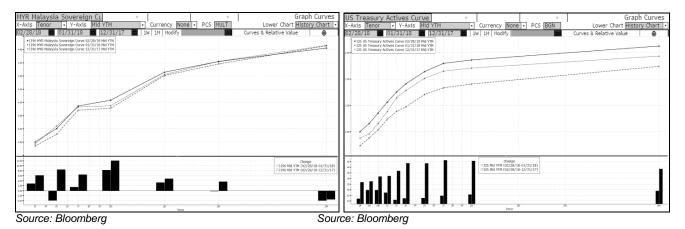
Malaysian Government Security yields were seen flattening during the period under review. The belly of the MGS curve was seen weakening (rose up to 9 bps) following the BNM OPR hike in January and recent US Treasury sell off. Though, the long-ended curve was supported (down by 5 bps) due to Malaysia's strong economic outlook and higher commodity prices. Ringgit was seen resilient at RM3.9150/USD (Jan'18: RM3.8975/USD). Brent oil prices eased to USD65.78/bbl from USD69.05/bbl due to higher US crude oil stockpiles.

On local economic data, Malaysia's GDP grew by 5.9% y-o-y in 4Q'17 (3Q'17: 6.2%), thus making the full year GDP for 2017 at 5.9% (2016: 4.2%). Expenditures on F&B, communications and hotels & restaurant kept the strong growth in consumer spending at 7.0% (3Q'17: 7.2%) and continues to be the anchor for growth. Private investments also strengthened to +9.2% y-o-y as business added strongly on capital stocks of machineries and equipments. On the other hand, Malaysia had a strong head start in 2018 as the export was seen rising to 17.9% y-o-y in Jan'18 (Dec'17: 4.7% y-o-y), boosted by "front-loading" ahead of the Lunar New Year holiday in Feb'18 and sustained global economic expansion in early 2018. Import growth rose to 11.6% y-o-y (Dec'17: 7.9%), lifted by the surge in import for re-exports. All in all, the trade balance was seen higher at RM9.7bil.

The auctions unveiled in February 2018 are as follows;

Government Auctions				
Issue	Issue Date	Amount	Bid-cover	Avg Yield
		(RM million)	(times)	(%)
7-Year New Issuance of MGII(Mat Aug/25)	7/2/2018	4,000.00	2.28	4.13
10-Year New Issuance of MGS(Mat Nov/27)	28/2/2018	4,000.00	2.07	4.06

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia



10-year US Treasury yield moved higher to 4-year high at 2.95% as US economic data was seen better than the market expectation, mainly on job creation (200k vs 180k consensus in Jan'18) and inflation (2.1% vs 1.9% consensus in Jan'18). Further strengthening market expectation from 3 to 4 times Fed rate hikes this year, soonest expected to be in March by 25bps. The yield was last seen stabilizing at 2.86%.

#### Market Outlook & Strategy

Post OPR rate hike in Jan'18, BNM is likely to maintain a neutral monetary policy for the remaining of 2018 despite the major central banks are still showing signal towards policy tightening. The external risk factors such as geopolitical tension in North Korea, potential US trade war and fluctuation in crude oil prices will continue to weigh on the local market, but we believe corporate bond space still provides attractive yields given stable monetary stance from BNM and strong fundamentals in local market. As such, we will keep looking to buy on dips of corporate bonds if the opportunity arises.