PM: Ringgit to be more stable this year

Malay Mail 10/1

PUTRAJAYA — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is confident the measures taken by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) will help make the ringgit more stable this year.

He said the decline in the ringgit's position was a source of concern to many, but the situation was outside the government's control.

Najib, who is also the finance minister, said of 149 world currencies, 123 faced a decline in value against the US dollar and Malaysia was no exception.

He said three uncontrollable factors influenced the ringgit's value — excessive speculation in the offshore market, fall in oil prices, and rise in US interest rates last December.

"With the measures taken by BNM, the market is convinced the ringgit will be more stable and volatility curtailed to normal levels in the near term," he told the first monthly gathering of the Prime Minister's Department for 2017 here yesterday.

Najib also said there were signs of optimism and confidence the Malaysian economy would recover positively this year after being faced with global challenges last year.

"Among the challenges were oil prices which are now at US$54 (RM241.62) a barrel compared to US$44 (RM196.88) last year," he said.

"The price of palm oil is also at an encouraging level now, namely RM3,200 a tonne compared to RM2,600 last year. Rubber prices have also tripled.

"All these gave us the confidence if we undertake vigorous initiatives, this year can be a successful year." — Bernama