

Malaysia Strategy Bear case hunting

Stock picking amid bear case index range

The stock market started the year on a volatile note with external uncertainties overshadowing fund flows and investment actions. With the KLCI hitting below our bear case of 1,580 (lowest at 1,545), we list stocks that have declined by >10% over the month, offering an opportunity to accumulate, especially those that were affected by the AI-DC theme - PIE, YTLP, IJM, GAM, ECW. Alternatively, investors could seek shelter in sectors that are agnostic to the AI-DC theme, domestic-driven and defensive; these would be banks (AMMB, CIMB, PBK), consumer (AEON, MRDIY, FFB) and healthcare (IHH, KPJ, OPTIMAX).

Over-reaction to AI-DC; keep calm

Echoing our analyst, Hussaini Saifee in his reports ASEAN Data Centre: Keep Calm and Carry On and Asean Data Centre: From Supply Restriction to Demand Collapse - Keep Calm, we believe stocks such as PIE, YTLP and GAM have been unduly punished and such a pullback offers an opportunity to accumulate. PIE, which carries the weight of its strength from its parent, Hon Hai/Foxconn, which in turn is a key Nvidia supplier with sales growth driven by rising AI demand, should still be on track to deliver. GAM, with a construction orderbook related to DC of <7% of total also saw its value decline >10% despite its diversified revenue streams from Australia, Taiwan and infrastructure-led projects in Malaysia. IJM and Suncon were also affected as contractors; we upgraded Suncon to HOLD (from SELL) on valuations (see Reiterating POSITIVE on Malaysia Construction). While YTLP took a plunge from this theme, share price action was further exacerbated by its proposed corporate exercise of a bonus issuance of unlisted warrants. However, at current valuations, it suggests that YTLP's AI-DC value has been completely discounted. By sheer association to the AI-DC theme, property developer ECW was also not spared given its land sales to Microsoft; we see value in ECW with potential in the JS-SEZ theme.

Go AI-DC agnostic, domestic-driven and defensive

If we have to take out the AI-DC theme from the equation in the market, key sectors that should still drive the KLCI index would be the banks and consumer sectors on domestic-driven factors, while healthcare offers defensiveness. Macro-driven support lends strength to these sectors from expected stronger consumer spending patterns and the investment upcycle. Demand for healthcare remains robust, further aided by medical tourism. KLCI index component picks for these sectors are CIMB, PBK, MRDIY and IHH. Other Buys include AMMB, FFB, KPJ and OPTIMAX.

Brace for short-term volatility; themes still hold

Our five themes for 2025 (1: External disruptions, 2: Domestic secular plays, 3: State-driven activities, 4: Investment realisation, 5: Corporate restructuring) are intact despite short-term volatility (see <u>Malaysia Strategy</u>: Brace up for a volatile year). Wildcards from external traderelated policies may still stir a storm in the cup but we believe there is still upside to the Malaysian market once the dust settles. Our 1,740 YE KLCI target (15x 2026E PER) is unchanged.

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AI - Artificial Intelligence DC - Data centre JS-SEZ - Johor Singapore Special Economic Zone



Figure 1: Stocks with downside movements >(-10%) in the period of 15-31 Jan 2025

Stock	Target Price	Rating	Share Px (15 Jan)	Lowest Px (15-31 Jan)	Variance (%)	Share Px (5 Feb)	CY25E PER at 15 Jan 2025	CY25E PER at Lowest Share Px
PIE Industrials Bhd	7.50	Buy	5.73	4.29	-25%	4.71	23.0	18.0
YTL Power	4.70	Buy	3.83	2.93	-23%	3.17	10.3	7.9
Sunway Construction Group	3.35	Hold	3.90	3.26	-16%	3.82	22.2	18.5
Ranhill Utilities	0.90	Sell	1.41	1.21	-14%	1.36	30.3	26.0
IJM Corporation	3.60	Buy	2.71	2.34	-14%	2.43	17.1	14.7
Gamuda	5.00	Buy	4.45	3.85	-13%	4.38	20.7	17.9
Wasco	1.47	Buy	1.19	1.03	-13%	1.02	8.1	7.0
Eco World Development	2.25	Buy	1.90	1.65	-13%	1.90	15.5	12.3
Yinson Holdings	4.78	Buy	2.66	2.32	-13%	2.35	12.1	10.5
Greatech Technology	2.25	Hold	2.23	1.98	-11%	2.07	27.9	24.8

Source: Bloomberg, Maybank IBG Research

Figure 2: Movements of FBMKLCI Index

Index	Share Px on Start Date	Highest Px In the period	Lowest Px in the period	Variance (vs end date)	Variance (vs highest px)	Variance (vs lowest px)	PER on start date	PER on end date
FBMKLCI Index (15 - 31 Jan 2025)	1,562.1	1,590.8	1,544.9	0 %	2%	-1%	14.4	14.4
FBMKLCI Index (1 - 31 Jan 2025)	1,632.9	1,641.3	1,544.9	-5%	1%	-5%	15.2	14.4

Source: Bloomberg, Maybank IBG Research

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