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KUALA LUMPUR: Bursa Malaysia ended higher yesterday as buying on selected blue chips continued, says a brokerage.

At 5pm, the FBM KLCI rose 8.85 points or 0.51% to 1,756.39 from Tuesday's close of 1,747.54.

The barometer index opened 3.69 points higher at 1,751.23 before moving as low as 1,745.51 in early trade to as high as 1,757.15 during the mid-afternoon session.

Market breadth was positive with gainers leading losers 575 to 474, while 549 counters were unchanged, 1,087 untraded and 11 suspended.

Turnover expanded to 2.55 billion units valued at RM3.06bil from the previous day's 2.19 billion units valued at RM2.35bil.

Rakuten Trade Sdn Bhd vice-president of equity research Thong Pak Leng said key regional indices ended mostly higher on improving sentiment amid the strengthening local currencies against the US dollar.

"In addition, weak US sales will bolster the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates,

thus helping to improve investor sentiment," he told *Bernama*.

Back home, he said the local bourse continues to trade with a positive undertone, supported by sustained buying interest and firmer investor sentiment.

"Hence, we anticipate the benchmark index to trend within the range of 1,740-1,770 for the rest of the week," he added.

Meanwhile, IPPFA Sdn Bhd director of investment strategy and country economist Mohd Sedek Jantan said the FBM KLCI closed firmer at 1,756.39 as the market extended its recovery momentum.

"The benchmark index traded constructively throughout the session, building on yesterday's rebound and finishing near the upper end of its intraday range.

"The stronger close suggests improved conviction compared to the previous session, with buying interest sustained into the final hour rather than fading," he added.

Among the heavyweights, Malayan Banking Bhd added 26 sen to RM12.26, Public Bank Bhd rose three sen to RM5.14,

CIMB Group Holdings Bhd put on four sen to RM8.59, IHH Healthcare Bhd fell two sen to RM8.75, while Tenaga Nasional Bhd was flat at RM14.

On the most active list, Pharmaniaga Bhd edged up two sen to 32.5 sen, Tanco Holdings Bhd added one sen to RM1.38, Zetrix AI Bhd rose three sen to 81.5 sen, TWL Holdings Bhd inched down half-a-sen to two sen, while Velesto Energy Bhd was flat at 31 sen.

Of the top gainers, Hong Leong Industries Bhd jumped 76 sen to RM18.20, KSL Holdings Bhd widened 23 sen to RM3.28, LPI Capital Bhd and United Plantations Bhd put on 20 sen each to RM15.38 and RM30.20, and UMS Integration Ltd rose 18 sen to RM4.26.

As for the leading decliners, Malaysian Pacific Industries Bhd was RM1.40 lower at RM30.80, Fraser & Neave Holdings Bhd lost 88 sen to RM32.30, Nestle (M) Bhd declined 70 sen to RM111.30, BLD Plantation Bhd slid 24 sen to RM15.30, and Hong Leong Bank Bhd shed 18 sen to RM24.80.