

OCBC OPENS FIRST ISLAMIC BRANCH IN SOUTHERN REGION

Bank's seventh branch in Johor aims to consolidate OCBC's position as a leading foreign banking force in the state

Skudai, 8 February 2010 – OCBC Al-Amin Bank Berhad (OCBC Al-Amin), the wholly-owned Islamic banking subsidiary of OCBC Bank (Malaysia) Berhad (OCBC Bank), today announced the opening of its first branch in the southern region, consolidating OCBC's position as a leading banking partner to individuals and businesses in Johor.



L- R: OCBC Al-Amin Bank Berhad's Director & CEO Syed Abdull Aziz Syed Kechik and OCBC Bank (Malaysia) Berhad's Director & CEO Mr Jeffrey Chew, at the official opening of OCBC Al-Amin Skudai branch.

The OCBC Al-Amin Skudai branch becomes OCBC Bank's seventh overall in Johor – the most among all foreign banks in the state – where it has long established its presence through branches in Johor Baru, Taman Molek, Muar, Segamat, Kluang and Batu Pahat.

Speaking at a media conference to introduce the OCBC Al-Amin Skudai branch, OCBC Al-Amin Director & CEO Syed Abdull Aziz Syed Kechik said the new operations in Johor would cater to the needs of individuals and businesses in both the immediate and surrounding areas through the provision of Shariah-compliant products and services.

“There remains vast potential in Johor and, as a bank with a long history in the state, we are both committed to and excited about the prospects of growing with this fast-developing part of our country; which is why we have opted to

open yet another OCBC branch here.

“More specifically, we see Skudai as a community whose people are looking for more sophisticated products and services to help spur on their personal and business activities in order to achieve their aspirations. There are several residential areas in and around the vicinity that we believe are ready for the kind of offerings we have in store.

“In addition, there is a vast number of businesses operating here, and we believe our business banking services would be of great interest to them. Of course, the presence of the Iskandar Development Region in the vicinity illustrates the extent of the opportunities before us,” he said.

Elaborating on the Bank’s strategy En Syed Abdul Aziz said: “Skudai is a thriving locality. In the 1900s, it thrived mainly on mining and agriculture. Today, it has diversified into other key sectors including engineering, plantation, electrical and electronics, and education. Going forward, Skudai is expected to also become a hub for agro and food processing businesses, ICT and retail tourism. Our presence here, we believe, would help catalyse the growth of these industries through the provision of innovative financial services.

“With the opening of this branch, we are now more accessible to both existing customers and those who have long wished to bank with us, but might have found our other six branches in Johor – through which Shariah-compliant products are also available – a little far,” he said.

During the event, Syed Abdull Aziz also announced the introduction of the Bank’s latest offering, *Diminishing Musharakah Asset Financing-i*, a new term financing product offered on a floating rate basis. It is available to corporate customers for financing of industrial and commercial properties.

“We expect good response to this new product, which acts as a viable alternative to our existing fixed rate financing offerings,” he said.

The *Diminishing Musharakah* principle is a combination of two Shariah contracts – *Musharakah* and *Ijarah* – in which the Bank and the customer are first to jointly own the asset under the *Musharakah* contract, with the Bank subsequently leasing its share in the asset to the customer under the *Ijarah* contract.

Syed Abdull Aziz added that the Bank would continue to pay particular attention to communicating its message that Islamic Banking is for all – young and old, individuals and businesses, and Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Also present at the media conference was OCBC Bank Director & CEO Mr Jeffrey Chew.

The 5,500 square foot 3-storey OCBC Al-Amin Skudai branch opens daily from 9.30am to 4.00pm, Monday through Friday, and offers a range of the Bank’s Islamic banking products and services.

Among the offerings here are a self-service banking lobby known as *OCBC Fastlane*, an SME helpdesk, a retail customer service area and teller services. The fully-automated *OCBC Fastlane* features cash and cheque deposit machines, alongside automated teller machines (ATMs). It provides 24-hour

services and is fully covered by CCTV and protected round-the-clock by security personnel, seven days a week.

As part of the opening celebration, OCBC Al-Amin is offering customers an attractive wealth management programme called *Rezeki Dalam Genggaman*, through which customers may enjoy an indicative rate of 2.50% p.a. on the 3-month *General Investment Account-i* and 2.00% p.a. *hadiah* for *Savings Account-i*. Customers also receive free gifts upon signing up for selected products. The promotion ends 31 March 2010 and the free gifts are available while stocks last.

In addition, corporate customers of the OCBC Al-Amin Skudai branch get to enjoy special indicatives rates for general investment accounts until 28 February 2010.

OCBC Al-Amin has progressively built a stable of over 30 products involving 12 key principles of Shariah compliance, ranging from simple deposit and financing offerings to complex investment banking solutions.

“We believe we are well on the way to establishing our Islamic banking practice as one that offers a comprehensive range of alternatives to conventional banking products, and thus a greater number of choices for the consumer,” he said.

The public may call 1300 88 0310 or visit www.ocbc.com to find our more.

OCBC Al-Amin now has five branches, and its products and services may also be accessed via all 29 OCBC Bank branches. The first OCBC Al-Amin branch opened at Jaya One, Petaling Jaya, on 1 December 2008. The other branches are located at Kota Damansara, Wangsa Maju and Sungai Petani.