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Baby Dumping and Sex Education

• By Gisele Soo



KPJ baby hatch, a temporary shelter



Infanticide is an ongoing issue

Cases of baby dumping are on the rise in Malaysia as babies are frequently being abandoned in public toilets, rubbish dumps and even in mosques and prayer houses. Based on the Department of Statistics Malaysia, almost 100 babies are abandoned every year. More than half of them end up dead.

“A thousand cases were recorded from 2010 to 2019. In Perak, 39 cases were recorded from 2015 to 2019,” said Senior Assistant Commissioner Anuar bin Othman, Chief of Criminal Investigation Department, Perak.

FULL STORY ON PAGES 2 & 6

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Absence of sex education and lack of access to contraceptive methods are two major contributory factors

“Some of the factors that cause the death of the child are unsafe delivery, which may kill both the mother and the newly-born, unhygienic environment and severe heart problems,” Pantai Hospital Ipoh Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Fertility Specialist, Dr Jaya Balan Valliapan explained.

Every individual should take ownership of the issue as the government alone cannot tackle the problem on its own. “This is a matter of grave concern. Society should make use of the Volunteer Smartphone Patrol (VSP) system which allows eyewitnesses to report without revealing their identity,” Anuar remarked.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, infanticide is defined as, “The crime of killing a child within a year of birth.”

Some of the reasons why women abandon their babies are insufficient coping skills, lack of problem-solving abilities, emotional immaturity and societal ostracism.

Importance of Sex Education

Sex education is still a taboo topic in Malaysia but there is an urgent need to make sex education accessible to everyone. Sex education can be defined as high-quality teaching about a variety of topics regarding sex and sexuality, understand the beliefs and values as well as norms about these topics. Besides, it also covers several aspects such as the understanding of body parts and the importance of protecting themselves. According to Dr Jaya, baby dumping cases are common among women aged between 16 and 22.

Committee member of the Perak Family Health Association, Fiona Fong and NGO volunteer, Halida Ali, agreed that the absence of sex education and lack of access to contraceptive methods are two major contributory factors. “These are the crucial preventive measures that every party should pay close attention to,” Fiona added.

Period of self-discovery

Self-discovery happens among adolescents where young girls and boys experience biological, psychological and social changes. Self-discovery, which can also be defined as an exploratory period, is a process of discovering and learning more about oneself and who you are. During this period, adolescents are curious and they have a strong desire to experiment. Unwittingly, their actions will put them at risk.

Dr Jaya said that many are not aware of the availability of emergency contraception (EC) which can be used when one has unprotected intercourse. Further concerns about contraceptive failure and incorrect use of contraceptives add to their concerns. There are two types of ECs, copper-bearing intrauterine devices (IUDs) and emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs).

“Precautionary steps are important to protect girls against sexually-transmitted disease (HIV/AIDS) and pregnancy,” Halida posited.

Underlying Causes

Adequate knowledge of sexual etiquette and contraception is essential. Nevertheless, every girl should acquire the skills to protect themselves from unwanted consequences.

Many of them who are single mothers or have delivered a baby out of wedlock are afraid to seek help due to several reasons such as religious concern and cultural sensitivity. In the Islamic perspective, sex is a filthy word. Thus, children are not encouraged to discuss sex openly with their parents. This explains why Valentine’s Day celebration is banned in Muslim countries as it may lead to negative consequences, like engagement in immoral activities. This conduct is being similarly opposed by other religions.



SAC Anuar bin Othman



Dr Jaya Balan Valliapan



Fiona Fong



Halida Ali



Islamic enforcement agencies come down hard on unmarried Muslims caught in closed proximity with the opposite sex. There have been many reported cases in the media. The objective is to shame and not to teach the wrong-doers.

The Qur’an explicitly says that killing a human being is equivalent to killing the whole of humanity. Every child has the right to live and should not be

neglected.

Boys should learn to respect girls and not take advantage of them while girls should be on firm ground and learn to say NO. Educating children is the responsibility of every individual, especially parents. Teenagers should be empowered with sufficient knowledge and skill on sexual and reproductive health.

In Malaysia existing policies and laws to overcome this issue are fairly adequate. It is the lack of involvement of other parties such as the family institution, schools and media that place a dampener on the process.

Dr Jaya stated that Malaysia is growing more westernised and is gradually losing its Asian values. On top of that, religious teaching which emphasises the importance of ‘sex after marriage’ is weakening, as teenagers become less interested in education. Plus, the frequency of youngsters engaging in negative social activities is skyrocketing.

Legal Perspective

According to Anuar, Section 317 of the Malaysian Penal Code states that ‘The punishment of an offence of parents or person responsible for taking care of a child under the age of 12 years who exposed or abandoned the child’ is imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven (7) years, a fine or both.

Solutions to Curb Baby Dumping

NGOs and public agencies have come up with numerous solutions to overcome the phenomenon. Some significant solutions are the introduction of baby-hatch (OrphanCare), awareness campaigns and counselling services.



Baby Hatch

Baby-hatch (OrphanCare) is a foundation introduced for mothers who have no plans of keeping or unable to care for their babies. OrphanCare acts as a temporary shelter for innocent lives. Baby-hatch can be found at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital and some other KPJ hospitals in the country.

The increasing number of baby dumping cases should be brought to light and remedial action should be taken in order to solve the problem.

How does it work?

The occurrence of baby dumping can be explained by the vulnerability of mothers who are prompted by varying reasons such as: being abandoned by their partners when they are pregnant, sexual violence (rape), young mothers, apathy, guilt, confusion, poverty and inadequate knowledge. This will invariably affect the mother’s state of mind and contribute to mental instability. Therefore, the presence of baby hatch is advantageous and the centre plays a vital role in ensuring that the wellbeing of the babies is taken care of.

Infants left at the centre will be sent to the welfare department for adoption. It is a lengthy process where married couples who want to adopt have to go through a waiting list. A baby hatch gives abandoned babies a chance of being adopted by potential families.

Result of the launching of baby-hatch centres in Malaysia:

- 1) Between 2010-2014, 90 abandoned babies were adopted.
- 2) Nine per cent from 88 abandoned babies were placed in the baby hatch.
- 3) After counselling, 52 babies were placed with their own mothers.
- 4) More than 3500 parents have registered to be adoptive parents.



Continued on page 6

A BETRAYAL OF TRUST



Sunday, February 23, will remain etched in living memory as the day sane Malaysians, the country over, were taken on a roller-coaster ride by a handful of miscreant Pakatan Harapan politicians. These high-rollers have no qualms of selling the country for the right price. All that matters to them is the lust for power, influence and money.

One cardinal sin they had committed, at the behest of the *rakyat*, was to collude or for a better term, align themselves with their nemesis for the expressed purpose of wresting control of the government by any crooked means possible.

And to add to the mayhem was PM-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim's insistence that a date be fixed for him to take over the coveted post from Mahathir. He felt that being the anointed successor he has every right to make his demand known.

However, there are people within his party who wished he did not. For one reason or the other Anwar is not liked by many on both sides of the political divide. And the feeling is shared by many Malaysians.

Being pushed to a corner, Mahathir, ever the cunning old fox he is, made his move. He tendered his resignation as Prime Minister on Monday, February 24. An official letter to that effect was submitted to the palace, as is required of protocol. The Agong (King) accepted but appointed him as the interim prime minister while a new candidate is being picked.

To add spice to the political drama, Mahathir as president of Bersatu, a component party of Pakatan Harapan, pulled out from the shaky coalition. That signalled the end of the Mahathir administration. In the course of one day, he went from being prime minister to ex-prime minister and then the interim prime minister. Who could beat that?

The grand old man, the master strategist, has check-mated all attempts at removing him from his lofty perch. And he did it with much finesse and without fanfare. Anwar, Azmin, Muhyiddin and the legion of PM-wannabes are left to lick their wounds.

But what has come of the *rakyat*? I feel the biggest losers are ordinary Malaysians like you and me who want nothing but an administration that cares for our welfare and well-being. We care less for political ideologies and mumbo jumbo that mean little to us. What matters most is to earn enough to put food on the table. We do not wish to be encumbered by political intrigues and scandals, favourite pursuits of the privileged few.

The Agong has the final say in endorsing a government that meets the needs of the *rakyat*. He had decreed that all 222 parliamentarians see him personally and help him pick a likely candidate as prime minister. Alternatively, he could, upon advice, dissolve parliament and seek a fresh mandate from the *rakyat* via a snap election.

Hopefully, by print time on Sunday, March 1, things would have changed for the better and not for the worse.

My fervent hope is, the country does not descend into chaos when the wrong guy from the wrong party is being picked to lead. God forbid.

The Passing of a Friend

I received rather depressing news last week from my brother in Parit Buntar. He told me of a certain Ali Hassan Hamid, an old friend of mine who had just passed away. I could not figure out who this guy was in spite of him giving some leads like him having a younger brother by the name of Yakob who was in the army. His father was a textile merchant in Parit Buntar and owned a shop along Toh Peh Kong Street, a once busy thoroughfare in the town.

Ali Hassan was a seasoned football player and had represented Kerian District and our school during his heydays. It took awhile for me to recall my formative years in Parit Buntar as, like most youths of the 1960s, I left Parit Buntar in 1968 upon joining the Royal Military College in Sungai Besi. That was a good 52 years since I left the



From The Editor's Desk

By Fathol Zaman Bukhari



town. My mind was a little rusty but in its deep recesses, I could recall a comely guy who was always playful with some practical jokes up his sleeves.

It then dawned on me that he was one of many kids whom I had befriended while in primary school during pre-independence days growing up in a sleepy hollow known as Parit

Buntar. We were in our element, a bunch of rowdies, who had no qualms of raiding an old *pak cik's* orchard on a strip of land on the borders separating Province Wellesley and Perak. Mangoes, mangosteens and *buah terap* (related to breadfruits) were fair game. We would sneak into the orchard and climb one of the fruit trees and helped ourselves to the juiciest fruits available.

Hassan would either do the climbing or be the lookout. When the owner appeared with a *parang* (machete) in his hand we would scatter in all directions leaving the fuming *pak cik* to count his losses. Kids nowadays do not enjoy such excitements as we did. It was all part of growing up.

I could only cherish the good times spent in a rustic environment free from the spoils of modernity. Foremost, we did not have gadgets like computers and smartphones to keep us occupied. Life was so simple yet exciting those hazy days. Today, it is something else. Ask your kids.

World Glaucoma Week March 8 - 14, 2020



Dr S.S. Gill
Resident
Consultant
Ophthalmologist,
Hospital Fatimah

In conjunction with World Glaucoma Week 2020, Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. Gill talks to us about this "silent thief of sight."

The World Glaucoma Association (WGA) and the World Glaucoma Patient Association (WGPA) have been pushing hard to increase global awareness of this "Sneak Thief of Sight".

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that result in progressive damage of the **optic nerve** (the "main cable" that carries visual information from the eye to the brain). If glaucoma is not treated, it **permanently damages** vision in the affected eye(s) and results in **blindness**. It is often, but not always, associated with increased pressure of the fluid in the eye (aqueous humour).

FACTS AND FIGURES

- **Glaucoma is the second most common cause of blindness worldwide; the third most common in Europe and the USA.**
- An estimated 78 million individuals are currently living with glaucoma (2020).
- It is predicted that 111.8 million individuals will have glaucoma by 2040.
- 90% of glaucoma is undetected in developing countries.
- **An estimated 11 million individuals will be bilaterally blind due to glaucoma by 2020 (13% of glaucoma cases).**
- **Accounts for 90% of blindness in the developing world and 75% of that is treatable or preventable.**
- **Family members of those with glaucoma have a 10-fold risk of getting glaucoma themselves.**

(Source: <https://www.glaucomapatient.org/basic/statistics/>)

Glaucoma has been nicknamed the "silent thief of sight" because the vision loss normally occurs gradually over a long period of time **without many symptoms** until you eventually lose significant vision. In other words, it means that one **will only notice poor vision when the disease is serious** and the **damage to the optic nerve** is advanced.



NORMAL VISION

WHY IT IS OFTEN UNNOTICED

One reason why a person may not realise that he or she is losing vision is because the vision loss involves the peripheral part of a person's vision. This peripheral vision loss is the reason why it goes unnoticed by the patient until the very late stage when the central vision is completely lost. Rarely, in some patients, there may be symptoms of slight eye discomfort, mild headache and halos around lights. Every person aged 40 years and above should go for a **glaucoma screening**.



GLAUCOMA

More on Glaucoma in the next issue of the Ipoh Echo.

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah (05-5455582) or email gilleyecentre@dr.com

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Police-on-police shootings should not be given preferential treatment

Let us imagine that you are about to report a break-in to the police when you were caught in the cross-fire when one person shot another.

What would you say if the shooting occurred at the reception counter of a police station and the person who had drawn the gun was aiming at her colleague? It was your bad luck to be accidentally shot, and you thank your lucky stars that you did not receive a fatal wound.

Wouldn't you demand a thorough investigation into the incident? Or would you think that it is a minor incident that is best forgotten?

On February 17, a police lance corporal at the Pekan Baru police station allegedly drew her pistol and pointed it at her male colleague. The 33-year-old was in a heated argument with a 35-year-old police corporal. The incident which took place around 5.10pm at the report counter of the police station, was witnessed by two other policemen. One of them intervened and removed the gun from the policewoman.

The incident is shocking but not as shocking as the Perak police chief, Razarudin Husain's announcement, that both were still on duty. Razarudin confirmed that the incident had taken place and was the result of a misunderstanding. He also said that an internal investigation was in progress.

Is that it? Does Razarudin not realise the seriousness of the incident? Shouldn't both be suspended, pending an investigation?

Is it any wonder that the general public lacks confidence in the PDRM. This is a serious matter. The public is not reassured when the punishment for drawing a pistol, in a public place, like the police counter, is the equivalent of a rap on the knuckles.

Would the punishment be similar if two members of the public had been involved in a similar altercation, and a pistol had been pointed, but not discharged? There would have been arrests, a period of detention, a lengthy court trial, bail would have been posted and the appropriate punishment dished out.

Is the policewoman under a lot of pressure at work, or perhaps at home? Was the policeman teasing her performance, or did he say something personal? It



time?

Both the policewoman and policeman should have been suspended, and the policewoman should not be allowed to handle firearms, for the rest of her career in the police force.

Would the chief of police fail to take action, unless one had been injured, or died?

Is the police chief aware of the seriousness of the incident? In civilised countries, the two would have been suspended while an internal investigation and an independent investigation were conducted.

So, is this low key discipline, how the Perak police force deals with this type of incident? Or is this normal procedure within the PDRM?

In Singapore, both would have been investigated. The one who drew the weapon would have been suspended and his revolver taken away from him. He would be barred from carrying any weapon. If the drawing of the weapon was due to any criminal intent, the officer would have been arrested and charged. Any negligent discharge of a firearm is a grave matter in Singapore, and may possibly end in the gallows.

The primary duty of the police is to serve the public. To equip a policeman with a firearm is a costly exercise. He has to be trained to use the weapon in a responsible manner. The firearm also costs money, and has to be stored securely, and kept in good order.

More important than the cost of upkeep and training, is the accountability of those who carry firearms. How are policemen trained, and assessed before being permitted to handle firearms?

In February, it was reported that a pistol belonging to a policeman had been used in a hotel robbery in Menglembu. The policeman who was working in Tanjung Rambutan had reported it missing, a month before the robbery.

This is a good time as any to push through the implementation of the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC).

In the meantime, will the Perak police chief take his duties more seriously?

Source:

- <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/02/19/ipoh-policewoman-points-gun-at-fellow-cop-during-heated-argument>
- <https://www.nst.com.my/news/crime-courts/2020/02/565179/police-investigating-how-cop-gun-used-hotel-robbery>

Personality

Passion Keeps Him Going

By Gisele Soo

As the digital era dawns, traditional businesses are being heavily influenced by technology.

However, Ezekiel Veli, now in his mid-seventies, has remained a petition writer for over 50 years. Despite his old age, little has changed for him.

"You don't come across many petition writers now, as almost everything can be found online. It has cut off the hassle of searching around and it is less time consuming," he explained. "To me, it's not about passing time, it's about my contribution to society. This is what keeps me going."

"Having something to look forward to helps to keep my mind sharp and nourished," he said.

Although his children are at the top end of the social ladder, he harbours no plans of quitting. "One of them is a lecturer in a university, the other one is an estate manager and one of my sons is managing the production team. I'm glad to be able to witness their success," he said with much pride.

When asked what keeps him going, he said passion plays an influential role, it fuels his eagerness and enthusiasm. "Until today, I'm still learning from others

which to me, is bliss," Veli expressed.

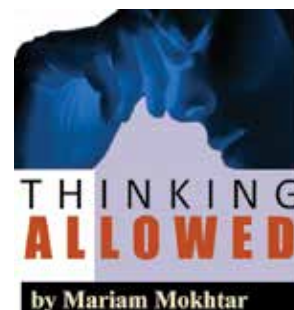
"I am equally proficient in both Bahasa Malaysia and English. My clients, despite the distance, would still visit me. They have been my loyal customers for years," he added.

He does various types of petitions including legal matters and applications, declaration, agreement, appeal letters, wills and contracts. "Each document is also reasonably priced," he stated.

"I can type the documents out spontaneously within a couple of minutes without referring or drafting anything. That's the skill I've acquired over the years," he remarked.

Veli is also actively involved in church activities and willingly helps members of his parish.

Readers can find him in front of the State Mosque along Jalan Dato' Sagor. His working hours are from 9am to 1pm. Readers can contact him at **016-5591202**.



by Mariam Mokhtar

must have been a grievous allegation, to make her draw her pistol and point it at him.

Did the policeman, with whom she argued, taunt her and did he say something offensive, that compelled her to draw her weapon? How far away was she from discharging the pistol? Was he propositioning her? Do these two have work issues and have a testy work relationship? Had their lack of camaraderie been building over an appreciable period of



SeeFoon wallows in all her childhood hawker foods

Pictures by Yugin

The tiger is one of the 12 Chinese Zodiac Animals. People born in the year of the tiger are thought to be competitive, self-confident and brave.

For **Sally Wong** to call her newly-opened restaurant **Little Tiger** is a call to the Foodies of Ipoh and beyond, that there is a restaurant that can hold its own in our highly diverse food paradise and where local palates are mercurial and extremely critical.

But **Little Tiger** can definitely hold its head up high and soon count itself among the luminaries in the Ipoh hawker food scene.

For me, the fact that it is air-conditioned is already a plus point. The decor is cheerful with tropical beach scenes along one wall complete with coconut palms and when you take a photo beside the wall, people will think you're at some idyllic beach location. The tables are clothed in batik, topped with glass and the serving bowls are all porcelain.

Not that that matters of course when it comes to eating out. It's the quality of food that counts and here it doesn't disappoint.

Also, their pricing is reasonable . . . and yes you can get the same dishes outside for less but consider the heat, the jostling for tables and the waiting, not to mention the hygiene; and **Little Tiger** wins hands down.

With a partner/**Chef Raymond Khoo** who hails from Penang, their **Char Kway Teow** (one of my fave hawker dishes) comes with cockles, Chinese sausage and fresh medium-sized prawns. Fried just the way I like it . . . dry, not sweet, with oodles of chilli sauce fried with the noodles and not on the side, lots of bean sprouts and the *pièce de résistance*, a generous topping of **chu yau char** or fried lardons, **RM9.90**. The last time I ordered this I emphasised to the chef to make it extra hot but still it wasn't spicy enough. I guess people don't realise what an insane chilli palate I have!

Social media and also some of my friends were not impressed by the food when they went in the early days of opening (only around two months) but they have certainly picked up speed and most of the items I tasted a week ago were "*must come back to eat again*" quality.

Like the **Vinegar Trotters**, not too sour, not too sweet, the trotter chunks braised to the right degree of tenderness, the skin clean and without hair, **RM15.90**.

Their **Chicken Curry** was excellent, with their own distinctive blend of curry paste and served with potatoes in the gravy, **RM8.90**. This curry can be eaten with plain rice or their toasted bread which was crunchily crispy and is also part of a set with half-boiled eggs or it can be eaten with their **Nasi Lemak** served with either blue (from blue pea flower) or tumeric rice.

The sambal in the **Nasi Lemak** set was delicious, in the old sambal belacan style, the rice had adequate santan but the only disappointment was their ikan bilis and peanuts, (why did they add sugar?) and the ikan bilis was not crispy, **RM13.90**.

Their homemade **Lobak** (meat paste wrapped in bean skin and deep-fried) was tasty, redolent with 5-spice powder and actually for my taste, quite lean. Fat averse eaters will be pleased to know this, **RM9.90**.

Two of my favourite noodle dishes followed. The first, a **Fried Prawn Mee** was yumilicious. Soaking in prawn broth yet, fried to a point to allow the broth to be absorbed into the mix of meehoon and yellow mee, the prawns were medium-sized, with bits of pork, greens, egg, and served with a superlative dry sambal which imbued the noodles with an extra layer of yum. And need I mention **chu yau char** . . . a generous topping of them, **RM 9.90**.

Equally laudable was



Tai Luk Mee



Fried Prawn Mee



Nasi Lemak with the chicken curry



Vinegar Trotters



Kuih Muih



By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen
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For more info go to www.ipohfooddiva.my



Little Tiger's exterior



Little Tiger's interior



Prawn Mee



Char Kway Teow

their soup **Prawn Mee**, the stock simmered with prawn shells and pork bones, again embellished by the addition of their delicious dried prawn sambal, served with bean sprouts and kangkong and good-sized prawns which were very fresh. With the NO MSG sign printed on their menu, I found I could dare slurp the soup with equanimity, **RM9.90**.

They also have **Tai Luk Mee**, a thick wheat noodle pan-fried with a dark soya sauce with the usual garnitures, **RM9.90**.

Then came the desserts, a tempting plate of **Kuih Muih** to choose from. The selection will vary from day to day and as these are all homemade, the taste and texture were all superlative. It was a hard decision but as we were a fair-sized group we managed to select a sampling and tucked in. I particularly enjoyed the **Kueh Talam** and the **Ubi Kayu** (tapioca) topped with coconut, **RM1.50- RM2** each.

LITTLE TIGER CHAR KOEY TEOW

Address: 98, Jalan Raja Ekram, Kampung Jawa, 30450 Ipoh, Negeri Perak.

Tel: 012 516 9833

Business hours: Daily (8am-4pm, 6pm-10pm)
2 days off every 2 weeks.

Baby Dumping and Sex Education . . . continued from page 2

Counselling Service

OrphanCare foundation and Good Shepherd offer counselling services for women who are pregnant or have given birth to a newborn. It is aimed at assisting those who had abandoned their babies as well as providing mental support to encourage them to bring their child back for care. Moreover, the sessions will accelerate problem-solving at the same time. It also acts as an assistant for the mother to be mindful of the crisis she is facing and make informed decisions.

When asked how he approaches baby dumping cases, Dr Jaya said the very first step is to contact and notify the mother's parents and offer guidance to both the parents and the baby's mother.

Awareness Campaigns

The government and NGOs work jointly to launch awareness programmes and campaigns for society providing knowledge and awareness on sex education. There are various types of awareness programmes such as seminars, exhibitions and talks on safe sex and sex education for teenagers in schools, colleges and local universities. Public speaking and awareness-raising programmes should be extended to the community so that the issue will have collective attention and be managed comprehensively.

Besides, a vast array of awareness campaigns and talks will be held in primary and secondary schools. The aim is to provide students with sufficient sexual and reproductive health knowledge. NGO volunteer, Pathma Devi Pakrisamy, mentioned that among the topics covered are 'Safe and Unsafe Touch', 'Cinta Remaja' (teen love) and 'Early Pregnancy'.

The 'Keselamatan dan Perlindungan Diri' (Safety and Protection) handbook which covers 'Good Touch and Bad Touch' is initiated by the Perak State Government and Executive Councillor for Women and Family Development, Character Development and Social Welfare, Wong May Ing. These are distributed to the students.

Asked about the response to her talks, Pathma said it has been surprisingly effective.



Pathma Devi Pakrisamy



She added that success is largely influenced by the presentation strategy where she will firmly emphasise a two-way communication, which includes the use of language and the way the message is being conveyed.

"Language is a very important element to get students' attention. Also, we need to accommodate them and to be extremely cautious with the words we use," Pathma told Ipoh Echo.

Pathma pays close attention to the rural community, especially the B40 category. "My main target group is the rural community, they have very limited access to the internet and they need our help," she stressed.

Don't panic. There is still hope.

Here is a list of NGOs whom you can go to for assistance: **Perak Family Health Association 016 524 7233, Malaysia Hindu Sangam Perak State 05 241 5859 and CARING Society 016 506 1974 or contact Talian Kasih at 15999.**

Community. QIU Celebrates Valentine's with a Twist

By Joelyn Jonathan

First of its kind, Quest International University (QIU) has put together a meaningful Valentine's high-tea party to celebrate with senior citizens.

Held on Saturday, February 22 the students of QIU and more than 40 senior citizens from Activity Center for Older Persons (PAWE) gathered at the Student Centre to celebrate the event.

According to QIU Student Affairs Department Director Associate Professor Dr Gurdip Kaur, the event was organised by 16 of the university's student clubs and societies.

"Love does not just involve intimate partners, but it is for everyone. Therefore, in order to appreciate the senior citizens and at the same time do some charity, we have organised such an event. Besides that, our students will also be able to get the right amount of exposure in doing charity as well as their responsibilities to the community."

"As you can see, most of our students are experiencing such events for the first time. By hosting more of such in the future, students will learn to be better individuals. Hence, the whole aim of the event was to ensure that students will develop a close relationship with the senior citizens," said Dr Gurdip.

During the interview, Dr Gurdip also added that the entire event was on a voluntary basis and the funds were all contributed by the students.

"Each club held small fund-raising bazaar's selling various items and the revenue garnered from the sales were directly contributed to this event. Even the gifts for the gift exchange were contributed by the students of QIU," she told Ipoh Echo.

Teh Wei See, 68, a member from PAWE stated that she feels extremely happy to meet and get together with the students.

"Today is one of the happiest days of my life. To



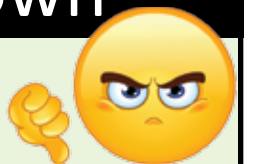
celebrate Valentine's with people of various races makes my heart scream with joy and I enjoy the ambience. From the food served to the activities organised, everything is perfect," she said.

When asked Sam Ming Hui, 21, a student from Quest International University about his thoughts on the event, he said, "the general message we would like to convey via this event is to teach the public to respect the older generation and to love them".

The two-hour event ended with a makeover session followed by an open dance floor session for all the guests including the students and staff of QIU.

Thumbs Down

7-Eleven Located at Blind Corner



By A. Jeyaraj

The new 7-Eleven outlet next to Cititel Hotel along Jalan SP Seenivasagam is located at a blind corner. Knowing the driving habits of our drivers, they will suddenly brake upon seeing the store; not concerned about the motorist behind. This could cause accidents. Cars are also parked along the right lane. This is not the right location for a convenience store. There are no parking facilities for customers. MBI should revoke the licence and allocate another appropriate location.

On Sunday mornings I travel along Jalan SP Seenivasagam to go to the market. Drivers coming from SMI school must look out for cars turning from the right, from Jalan Sultan Yusuff, and cars turning from the left, from Jalan Kompleks Islam, while approaching Cititel Hotel which is in a blind corner. Cars occupy part of the rightmost lane in front of the hotel; I have even seen buses being parked. Customers of the hotel load and unload their luggage in this lane. This is a busy road. The main entrance of the hotel should be from the side lane. Something must be done before a nasty accident takes place.

Ratepayers are wondering whether MBI is aware of this dangerous situation.



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Realities Mismatch

In our dealings with others around us, we often find that the outcomes differ greatly from our expectations. For example, a person who spent his life looking after another suddenly finds that he is not needed anymore and perceives that he has been placed aside. His sacrifices and love were not acknowledged or repaid and feels greatly cheated. To a larger or lesser extent, we have all experienced such feelings of unrewarded good actions resulting in anger and hatred towards a particular person or the world in general.

Often, this is the result of a mismatch between what reality is and what we perceive it to be. In the example above, the feelings of being owed or entitlement come about because the actions performed for the other person were not totally out of love and compassion but partly as an investment, accumulated over the years in a 'debt ledger'.

We are unable to consciously differentiate between the conflicting emotions that drive us but rely on our habitual patterns to deal with life's many events. However, this reality based on unconscious habitual patterns can be greatly different from the objective reality and worst, the reality perceived by the other party which is also created out of his/her own unconscious habitual patterns.

The unintended results can be tragic leading to insecurity, fear, jealousy, anger, depression and suicide. To avoid these sufferings for ourselves and others, the starting point is to be aware and conscious of our true motivations in all our actions. Are they out of unconditional love and compassion, or business investments for future collection?

It is not a matter of moral right or wrong, but we must be aware and know our intentions clearly instead of fooling ourselves that we are giving love when we are actually keeping account. This requires great clarity of mind and courage to admit the truth in all that we think, say or do. Having built up an armour of habitual patterns, we need to wake up and free ourselves from their bindings. Ultimately the universe is perfect if we can only see reality for what it is.



Dr Tan Chin Yong



Connexion

By Joachim Ng

Who cares for you in your final chapter?

Perak, as a state with the largest proportion of aging folks (60 years and above), is likely to witness a boom in homes for the elderly. What is the Government's role in caring for the old? No role except to pass a law in Parliament?

There are two chapters in your life when you need assistance the most — the first and the last. You are helpless in the first year of your life, and helpless again in your last year. Mother is there at the beginning, but will not be there at the end.

There is a misconception that filial piety obliges adult children to be at home to nurse their sickly end-of-life parents. It used to be that way, but we are no longer a farming society when three-generational farm homes were the norm. Dotted around the neighbourhood would be the homes of uncles, aunties, cousins, and nieces. Aged parents could rely on their adult children or relatives because the farm where they toiled was at most 15 minutes walking distance away. The medicine man also dwelled in the neighbourhood.

Those agricultural golden-corn days will never return. So who will take care of you in your final chapter? In between infancy and old age, you pay income taxes to sustain the Government unless you're a freeloader. But when it's time for the Government to retire you, this is it. The Government is your surrogate adult child, if you've been paying your income tax every working year, but it doesn't want the responsibility of caring for you in your final year.

This arduous job is undertaken by aged care service providers who establish homes set up mostly in converted properties. But without Government assistance, how many private services can meet gold or silver standards? Some weeks ago, a very aged Ipohite at a high-fee home fell in the bathroom-toilet of his room long past midnight. Despite bleeding, he managed to crawl to an SOS button but was noticed by a home staffer only two-and-a-half hours later.

Is there a government-funded programme to train elderly care nurses for jobs in retirement homes, certify them annually, and conduct performance audit through KPIs and customer feedback? Which authority monitors compliance with standard operating procedures, reviews checklists for building and facilities maintenance, and inspects logbooks recording healthcare duties?

There will obviously be a wide spread in the quality of facilities, accommodation, and meals as fees differ. But the standard of nursing care should be consistent and stay within an approved bandwidth in all homes.



Community

Valentine's Day Remains Relevant

By Joelyn Jonathan

February 14, a day that is much awaited by all (sic). Despite being the shortest month in the year, February has a significant date to many of them. Valentine's Day is celebrated across the world by almost everyone. Individuals shower their other halves with gifts and flowers on this day as a sign of love.

Valentine's Day was initially celebrated to pay a tribute to St Valentine who died some time in AD 270.

According to history, Saint Valentine, a Catholic priest, was executed on February 14 as punishment for secretly marrying Roman soldiers. Despite the laws made by Emperor Claudius II about remaining the single status for all Roman soldiers, Valentine believed otherwise and got the soldiers married in a secret Christian ceremony.

Over the years, gifts and flowers, preferably red roses, are exchanged between loved ones as a symbol of love. As we enter a new decade, the act of showing gratitude on Valentine's Day is not the same as how it used to be. Ipoh Echo went on a quest and discovered how Ipohites spend their time on that auspicious day.

As of this year, Valentine's Day was on Friday. On the night of February 13, a number of stalls were set up around Ipoh Garden and Buntong selling flowers, chocolates and soft toys. With all these stalls along the road, some still preferred to purchase their bouquets of flowers from florists at UTC.

During an interview session with Satchia, a florist from UTC, he stated that he still receives a number of customers requesting red roses.

"Both old-timers and the young ones came crowding into my shop. It's always the red roses. I've only received one customer requesting sunflowers!"

"People still prefer giving flowers on Valentine's Day and I don't think that this habit will die off. But compared to last year, our customer count has definitely reduced,"



Satchia

said Satchia, the owner of New Foo Choon Florist.

He also shared an interesting story about one of his customers.

"As I mentioned earlier, the act of giving flowers will never die as can be seen through this one uncle who never fails to drop by my shop and pick up some flowers for his wife. This has been going on since my grandfather's days," he expressed.

According to Fathol Zaman Bukhari, 71, during Valentine's he takes his wife out for dinner as a sign of gratitude.

"Although we do go out for dinner regularly, this year's Valentine's I try to do something different. I decided to take my wife, daughter-in-law and granddaughter out for dinner. Unfortunately, the date clashed with my granddaughter's maths tuition," he sighed.

Valentine's is not entirely celebrated by the older generation but by the millennials as well.

When asked on how he spent his Valentine's, Kumaresan Moorthy, a 20-year-old from Politeknik Ungku Omar said that it was with his friends and family.

"I think Valentine's is not just about spending with your significant half but it's a day you show gratitude to anyone who means the world to you. To me, it's my mum. I surprised her with a gift that her heart desired," he said.

He insisted that an ideal gift for Valentine's is the gift of love.

"You should always express your love and not just do it on this particular day. Roses and chocolates are just a symbol but the true act comes from the heart. This day will not wear off one day if everyone understands the true meaning of love," he explained.

To express love, it should be done every day and not just on February 14. One should understand the meaning behind Valentine's Day before celebrating it and not be a blind follower.

From the older to the younger generation, Valentine's Day will continue to remain a significant day in February.



Kumaresan Moorthy

Community Trash Hero Ipoh

By Mei Kuan

Established in January 2019, Trash Hero Ipoh is a non-profit organisation under the global volunteer-led movement, Trash Hero World.

Ipoh Echo spoke to NorHazira Jalik, the Ipoh girl who founded Trash Hero Ipoh.

"I did beach clean-ups on my own for about four years in Kuantan while I was working there. One day, one of the Trash Hero members asked me to join their clean-up. That was my first time learning about Trash Hero and I set my heart to find out more. A year ago, I returned to Ipoh and decided to initiate this Trash Hero Chapter," NorHazira, fondly known as Ira, told Ipoh Echo.

The objective of Trash Hero Ipoh is to create awareness that keeping our environment clean is a collective responsibility that we all share.

"We do clean-ups every week. Everyone can join when they are free. No cost. No sign-up. Just show up. Meanwhile, an eco-brick programme with SJK (T) Menglembu and SMK Rapat Setia will start in March," she explained.

"For clean-ups, we collect data to identify problems and the kind of trash most likely to be found in that spot. After that, it will be given to the authorities for the next course of action. For talks, we raise awareness about plastic pollution and how dangerous it is to our health, society, economy, marine life, other creatures and also the



planet," Ira highlighted.

To date, Trash Hero Ipoh have carried out 35 clean-ups made possible by 295 volunteers including 48 children. A total of 620.7kg of trash, 24.2kg of recyclables and 15,394 cigarette butts were collected.

What motivates her to keep doing what she is doing? "The volunteers, who keep coming to support and have fun together with Trash Hero Ipoh. Plus the positive changes in the lifestyle of our family, friends and volunteers after joining Trash Hero clean-ups. Small changes can make a big impact in the future," she enthused.

"We need to, together, make sure our home or city is clean by stopping the use of plastic, straw or other plastic packaging and opt for eco-bags, containers, water bottles etc.," she concluded.

Interested readers who would like to get involved can visit the Trash Hero Ipoh Facebook page or its website: trashhero.org. One can also email to trashheroipoh@gmail.com or call 012 5982622.



Islamic Pawn Shop

By Rosli Mansor

With the imminent opening of Islamic pawn shop, Ar-Rahnu's second outlet in Ipoh, Koperasi Anggota Kerajaan Ipoh Berhad (KAKIB) took a step further in their business venture.

KAKIB Chairman, Khairul Anuar Mohd Nor said that the second outlet of Pajak Gadai Islam Ar-Rahnu is an initiative for the public's convenience.

"Seeing the good response from Perakeans, we've planned to open a more strategic and comfortable chain of the pawnshop," he mentioned.

"We still charge the same fee which is 80 sen for every RM100 with margins given from pawners up to 80 per cent of the original value," Khairul explained during a media conference at KAKIB office in Jalan Dato' Onn Jaafar on Thursday, February 13. "Up until 2019, Ar-Rahnu transactions amounted to nearly RM2 million and it is an encouragement for developing the second KAKIB Ar-Rahnu.

Established circa 1923 during the colonial era, KAKIB is the second oldest cooperative to date, with around 6,679 members and assets worth RM97 million and RM70 million in capitals.

According to Khairul, KAKIB membership is exclusive to civil servants including statutory corporations.

"KAKIB recorded a total of RM6.9 million in profits during 2018. Last year, KAKIB announced overall dividends payout as much as 18.1 per cent, covering fee dividend (7.1 per cent), stock dividend (8 per cent) and special savings dividend (3 per cent)," Khairul noted. "We also established our own tourism agency KAKIB Safar Travel & Tours in 2018, conducting tourism businesses focusing on Umrah packages."

For more information, get in touch with KSTT via numbers 05 5252998 or 016 4216471. Also reach them via email kakibsafar@gmail.com or go to their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/kakibsafartravel.



Caring Hands

Students and teachers of Upper Six of SMK Raja Perempuan Ipoh (RPS) took part in a community service with the theme "CARING HANDS" to raise awareness about the importance of caring for less privileged students.

The Form Six students, especially from the Interact Club organised this project as part of the club's annual community service programme. Club teacher-advisor Sushil Kaur said it was the first time the club carried out community service at Sekolah Semangat Maju, Kampung Tawas, Ipoh – School for the Intellectually Disabled. This programme was carried out on February 15.

According to the school authorities, they just moved to this building which is next to the school. This building is used more for older students. As it is a new place they need help to decorate and rearrange their stuff which is a difficult task and could not be carried out by their special students.

RPS students were given the task of drawing murals on the wall, completing handicrafts, cleaning up the storeroom and an indoor cute garden which was donated by the Interact Club too. In addition, to make sure the RPS students interact with Semangat Maju School students, a telematch was organised. Not easy task for the girls but they did a good job and are very proud of their own masterpiece.



During the telematch, RPS students carried out a few games and gave away special hampers to all the students. It was an enjoyable event. This programme has created awareness among the students and they were touched to see how difficult it was to handle these special kids. They have even volunteered to render their services in future for the school.

Even though this programme was organised by the Interact Club, the activities were assisted by all Form 6 students and teachers. They worked hand-in-hand to make it successful. Besides that, this project is relevant and should be encouraged because it develops and equips the students with the knowledge of caring, responsibility and cooperation. Interactors were proud to carry out such a significant project and had a fun time contributing to society by upholding the motto "Service above Self".



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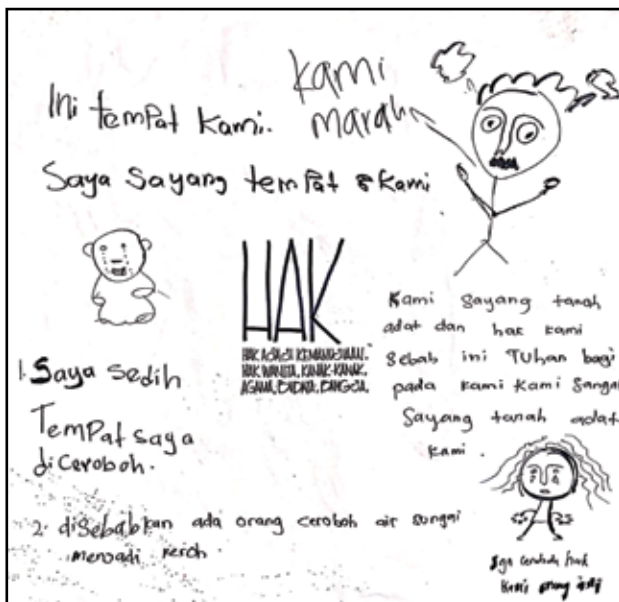
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News

A Voice for the Orang Asli

By Chris Teh & Gisele Soo



Civil human rights

As a final push to the ongoing legal proceeding regarding the building of a mini-hydro dam at Kampung Ulu Geruntum, Gopeng by Perak Hydro Renewable Energy Corporation, two concerned Perakans, **Roz Hussin** and **Chan Yuen-Li**, organised an art workshop at the location recently.

The aim was to provide relief to the Orang Asli community as they endure the abrupt changes to their lives. The villagers have built a blockade on their former durian orchard, now a flattened ground and the site for a turbine to generate electricity from the dam.

With 20 pieces of 3ft x 3ft large format paper and a supersized 3ft x 8ft banner, the Orang Asli drew their frustrations and impending fate bearing five factors in mind: *hak* (civil human rights), *asli* (indigenous), *asas* (basic needs), *alam* (environment) and X ('cross' – juxtaposition of sensitive issues such as taking away of the Orang Asli's forest and construction of the mini dam).

Speaking on the reasons behind the workshop, Hussin explained, "We'd like to provide an opportunity for the Orang Asli to articulate their concerns to the outside world. Usually, when issues like these are being voiced out, it's done through the Tok Batin (tribe chief). Even with the best of intentions, if the information is channelled from top-level individuals, it'll be inaccurate."

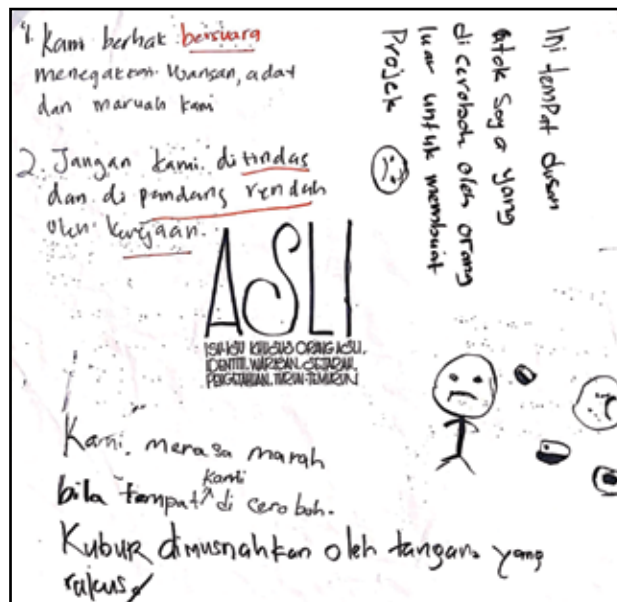
"The Semai in Kampung Ulu Geruntum are not being heard properly," she added. "Yes, there are people that offered help, but they didn't ask what form of help the tribe needs. Thus, they've no idea how to bring up certain topics, especially embarrassing ones."

"Since the Orang Asli don't have a proper platform to voice their objections, they resort to violence and drug abuse," Hussin added. "Worse, Orang Asli children sent to schools in town are bullied because they cannot speak the major languages as well as the other children do."

"We (Malaysian majority) are not stopped from speaking our mother language," Hussin elaborated. "The Orang Asli, especially the younger ones, are told not to speak their own language in schools."



Location of the mini dam construction



Specific indigenous human rights



Chan Yuen-Li



Art therapy workshop (for children)

In the banner and large papers, recurring problems illustrated by the Semai tribe are drunkards and the taking away of their sanctuary.

"We'd like some basic necessities such as landline phone and the internet."; "We don't want intruders to take over our residence!"; "We have a say in this matter!" and "I hate drunkards that physically abuse my family!" were some of the comments left by women of the tribe on the papers.

One particular drawing from a kid of the tribe depicts a face in black and white halves.

"I asked the kid what the drawing meant. She said it's a depiction of a mother and daughter who died together because they couldn't go to a clinic on time," Hussin explained. "It is so sad to hear."

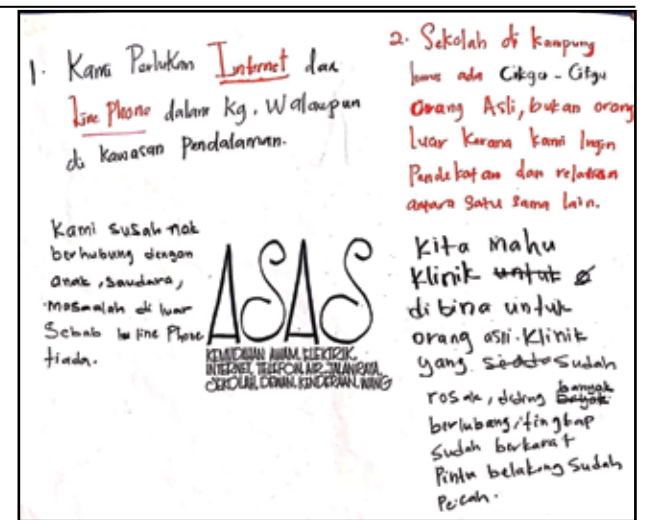
To make way for development, the Semai's burial ground was bulldozed and is now just another pathway to more opening for lands near the mountaintop.

"A 5km-long pipe is to be built from the mini-dam to the location of the blockade," Yuen-Li said. "If the mini-dam project goes through, 95 per cent of the water will be channelled to the turbine for electricity generation purposes."

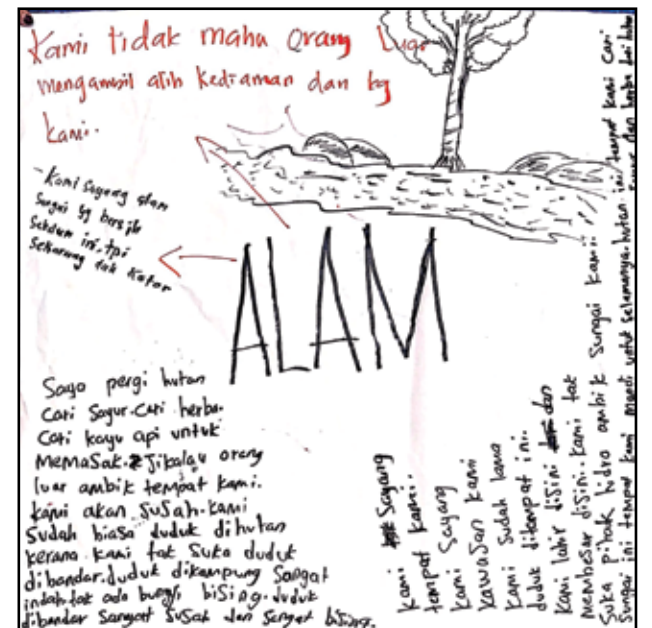
"What about the remaining volume of water? The Orang Asli depend on the river for most of their daily activities," she stressed. "The company of the mini-dam project promised that it won't affect the livelihood of the Orang Asli but they didn't keep their promise."

"Cutting down the vast types of forest trees will definitely destroy the environment," Yuen-Li added. "Giving way to profit-making monocultural forest trees such as generic palm oil trees and rubber trees is detrimental. You'll never be able to see the diversity of plants and animals that true nature can give."

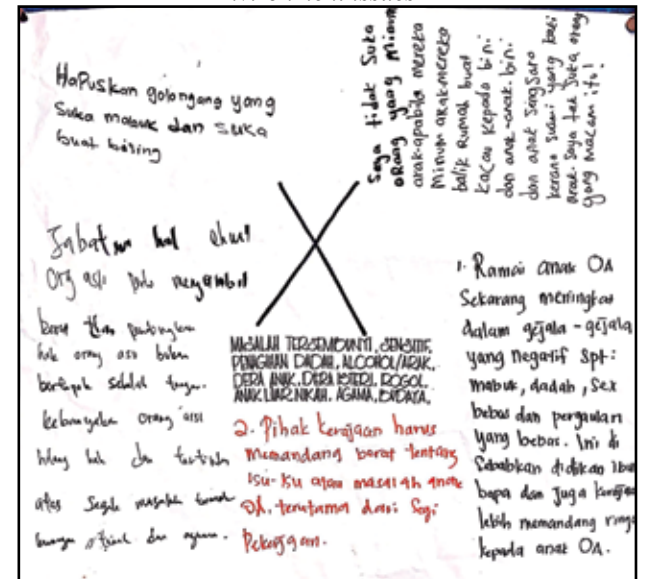
As a founder of Nomad Adventure, an adventure company focusing on various outdoor activities such as white-water rafting and jungle trekking, Yuen-Li stressed



Basic needs



Environment issues



Sensitive issues

that the cutting down of forest trees in the Ulu Geruntum area for development purposes will impact Gopeng as a tourism destination greatly.

"Since 2017, flooding has become more severe because no trees and plants were available to absorb the high volumes of rainwater," she lamented. "Nowadays, whenever there is dry weather, water levels are lower than usual. This doesn't make for a pleasant experience for water-rafting enthusiasts."

"To the Orang Asli, the jungle is both their sanctuary and their blood and sweat," Hussin expressed. "Just for the purpose of developing the land, a few centuries of their work are gone."

"I understand that everyone will eventually need to improve their quality of life but that takes time. The same applies to the Orang Asli," she bemoaned. "Driving them to desperation isn't the way. Destroying their land of living and their burial grounds is definitely unacceptable."

"This is my first time doing an art therapy workshop with Malaysians, the true ones to be exact," Hussin noted. "I lived outside of Malaysia for a few years. It is high time that I do something to contribute to the country now that I'm back. I'm never happier than doing this for the real Malaysians."

Hussin and Yuen-Li's efforts show that one doesn't have to be a prominent figure to help the Orang Asli.

"If you see an Orang Asli around you, welcome them with open arms and help them out wherever you can," Hussin urged. "Never exclude them."

The final hearing for the court case will be on March 2 at the Ipoh High Court.


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Objection to Hill Slope Development

Residents, NGOs and political parties objected to three hill slope projects proposed in Ipoh Local Plan 2020 at a public hearing sessions to voice their objection to Ipoh City Council's proposed amendments on land usage involving a total of 151.18 hectares of land in three areas on the Kledang Saiong Range. The land will be converted to agricultural, housing and commercial purposes.

Meor Razak Meor Abdul Rahman, Sahabat Alam Malaysia Field Officer, was the spokesman for the group and said that amending land usage of permanent forest reserve into a mixed development will have an adverse effect.

One of the three proposed areas for mixed development is located on the slope of the Kledang Saiong Range, along the Ipoh-Lumut highway, and is very sensitive.

Any activity on the slope could result in mud and flash floods and endanger the residents nearby as well as the highway users. The water flows into Sungai Pari which would be flooded and affect people staying along the river.

Meor added that the areas proposed for the amendment are located near the habitat of the Siamang monkey, an arboreal black-furred gibbon native to the place and is fully protected under the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 and development will affect the monkeys. There are various species of butterflies, crickets and other wildlife living in the forest which will vanish if the project takes off.

During January 2019, about 10 hectares of forest in Kledang Hill along Lumut highway was cleared and Menteri Besar (MB) Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu said that it was illegal clearing and perpetrators will be punished and later in the year he informed that the hill will be replanted. Now he says that the place will be developed for commercial purposes.

Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah had declared the Kinta Valley as National Geopark geology site. Therefore, all natural areas should be protected and not destroyed.

R. Mohanarani, Parti Sosialis Malaysia central committee member, who was at the hearing session enquired why some of the land under the Kledang Saiong permanent forest reserve has private ownership. "This is very strange and wrong. How can some individuals actually own the land in the permanent forest reserve?" she asked. "We urge the state government to take back the permanent forest reserve land which has been given to the private sector."

Residents from Kg DBI had earlier objected to the building of apartments in their kampong. The Ipoh Plan stated that the place is empty land, which is not true.



Families have been living here for many years. Previously, the residents were told that their houses would be built for them at a subsidised cost. What happened to that proposal?

I think the hearing is only a formality and nothing will be changed in the plan.

Low Guo Nan, Perak MCA, Complaints Bureau Chief complained that conditions set by Ipoh City Council calling for a public hearing on the Ipoh Local Plan 2020 as being unfriendly to the public. The invitation letters sent out by the council were handed a few days before the start of the two-day hearings held on February 17 and 18. Many did not receive the invitation letters.

The letters should be sent at least two weeks prior to the hearings to give people time to apply for leave since the hearings were held on working days.

Low said that the council had also imposed conditions that those with objections must read the Planning Act Policy and mention the chapter and paragraph before raising an objection. This will definitely scare people, as not everyone is well versed with the Act and will probably not attend the hearing.

The hearing should be held in a transparent manner, and all interested, including the media, should be invited.

Paul Yong Choo Kiong, Chairman for the Perak Housing, Local Government, Public Transport, Non-Islamic Affairs and New Villages Committee, chaired the meeting. Residents who attended were unhappy because only a few people were allowed to speak. They said Paul was not able to answer a number of questions and was not competent.

Paul Yong said that a decision will be made on the objections during the state planning committee meeting, which will be chaired by the MB and held on March 12.

Paul Yong is acting as a postman and will tell the MB what he thinks is relevant. For the hearing to be meaningful, the MB and members of the state planning committee should have been there and a decision could be made. People who conduct hearings must have authority to make decisions.

Little time and publicity were given for people to respond. The signboard in Meru was put at the end of a dead road which had few houses. It should have been placed at the entrance to Meru Valley. The signboard for Taman Chepor Sentosa was along the approach road, not easily seen. It should have been placed at the surau. I was told that the board in Buntong had fallen down. The closing date was Monday, January 27, a public holiday. This shows the commitment of the government.

One has to ask, who are the beneficiaries of these projects?



iSpeak

By A. Jeyaraj

Upcoming

Seminar cum Exhibition

By Rosli Mansor



Ar-Ridzuan Medical Centre, Ipoh will conduct a two-day hip bone and knee surgery seminar cum exhibition at Travelodge Hotel (formerly Heritage Hotel) on March 7 and 8.

Orthopaedic surgeons and specialists across the country are expected to attend, including those from South Korea and Australia.

Ar-Ridzuan Medical Centre, an entity under the Perak Islamic Religious Council and Malay Customs, is wholly owned by the Perak State Islamic Economic Development Corporation Sdn Bhd.

General Manager Khairul Salleh Abdul Rani said the event would help establish Ar-Ridzuan as a notable medical centre in the state.

It would be led by Dr Loh Choong Sing who has over 20 years of experience in knee corrective surgery.

"The exhibition is based on the concept that ideal experiences should be shared among the orthopaedic community," said Khairul during a media conference at Impiana Hotel. "Live surgeries will be conducted for participants to observe. They are two hip bone-replacement and three knee-replacement surgeries."

Further explaining, Khairul said, "Orthopaedic surgeons will be able to watch the surgical procedures from a specific approach to gain more knowledge on cementation techniques and implantation procedures."

Kindergarten brings the Buzz of Learning to town this March



Kinder Labz is looking to bring the buzz of learning to visitors through a Family Fun and Open Day which will be held at the kindergarten's grounds on March 14; giving visitors a closer look at the buzzing kindergarten.

A host of interesting activities will include 'Rainbow Wizard Brew', 'Plastic Egg Faces', 'Expressive Henna Art' and much more; to offer visitors a glimpse of the curriculum adopted by the kindergarten, the British Early Years Foundation Stage.

"We're looking at making this event educational, fun and memorable for everyone, from the little ones right up to their parents. The activities we have planned for our Open Day will give visitors a closer look at our curriculum and the environment we have here at the hive," said Mrs Puvanes, Head of Academics at Kinder Labz.

In an effort to make the event an exciting and engaging one for the visitors, the team from Kinder Labz will be giving out 'Buzz-ports' (passports) to visitors at the reception as they enter the hive; and upon completion of the activities listed, they will be able to redeem a goody bag at the office.

In preparing for the event, Ms Rachel, a teacher at Kinder Labz said, "We're having so much fun preparing for the Family Fun and Open day, we can't wait to see everyone enjoying themselves. With so many fun activities we have in store for you, come with your family and join in on the fun."

The event is set to start at 9am and end at 2pm on Saturday; parents who are looking to sign up their children at Kinder Labz will enjoy a special promotion on the day. For more information on the event, call or Whatsapp 010 664 4211 or email puvanes@kinderlabz.edu.my.

Food Further Afield

Shaved Ice: Cool Down like a Local

By Mei Kuan

Nestled under the shade of a huge tree, Long Bing Shui Dang (Long Bing Drinks Stall) is an unassuming spot to cool off for the locals for over 70 years.

Located along the roadside of Jalan Pantai in Kuala Kurau, its bestsellers are *hong dou bing* (shaved ice with colourful ingredients and syrups – RM3) and *huang li bing* (pineapple shaved ice – RM2). Yes, you hear the prices right!

What lies underneath the pile of fluffy shaved ice is a generous portion of ingredients from chunks of pineapple, grass jelly cut into strands to palm seeds – you name it.

Other items on the menu are various fresh fruit juices, fresh coconut water, coffee and tea.

For those who are craving some light bites, there is a fritters stall named Wang Yu Yuan Xi Ya Jian (Wang Yu Yuan Fritters)



just next door, serving the famed prawn fritters which can be eaten with yellow noodle (noodle is optional), fried glutinous rice cake, banana fritters, sweet potato fritters and tapioca fritters among others since 1993.

One can opt to have food delivered from the three coffee shops on the other side of the road too.

Long Bing opens daily from 11.30am till 6pm while Wang Yu Yuan operates from 11am till 5pm (closed on Wednesday).



LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

Prolonged Road Obstruction



Near the junction of Jalan Lee Kwee Foh and Jalan Raja Azman Shah are some leftover road works. They have been there for close to six months. No work is carried out but half the road is blocked by a toilet and other construction material, as a result, there is congestion there every morning. Why can't the city council remove this unnecessary obstruction? Along Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah are some similar obstructions. I don't know how long they have been there.

Philip Leong Choo Kong

Community.

Recycling Corner

By Chris Teh

Establishing a new recycling corner in the neighbourhood is to encourage the 400-odd Taman Tasek Jaya residents to think of ways of keeping their river clean.

The recycling corner, located at Padang Kawasan Rukun Tetangga (KRT) (neighbourhood watch), Taman Tasek Jaya, was launched on Saturday, February 15.

The community recycling programme, the second so far, is part of an on-going project to conserve forest and river habitats in the Upper Kinta River basin by Global Environment Centre, a non-profit organisation working on environmental issues of global importance.

"We'd like to encourage people to manage waste properly," said Norazrin Hj Mamat, programme officer for the project. "Always start small by not letting waste get into drains or rivers."

Speaking at the launch, Tuan Romzi bin Zamari, the Community Development Department chief of Ipoh City Council, stressed that conservation of Kinta River's cleanliness is important as the river is a major source of water supply for Perakans.

"It is crucial for all parties, including both public and private sectors, to work together in conserving our precious water resources," he said. "Waste management via recycling could be one of the sure ways to increase the effectiveness of river conservation."



Hajar Ahamed, an officer from the National Unity and Integration Department (Perak) hoped that more of such programmes will be organised in the future.

"We welcome collaborations from NGOs which would benefit the community," she said. "Today, we have 25 students from Quest International University Perak to provide support for the event by collecting and segregating wastes at the new recycling corner."

Ahmad Zainuddin, Chairman of KRT Taman Tasek Jaya conveyed his gratitude to organisers of the



programme.

"This initiative was started in January this year," he stated. "The collected recyclables will be sold monthly to an authorised vendor (recycling centre). Income generated will be used to financially support future community activities and the maintenance of this recycling corner."

Organic wastes can be used as compost or enzymes for gardening purposes, while decorations could be made out of inorganic ones.

Business.

Joo Hong Chan Salted Egg

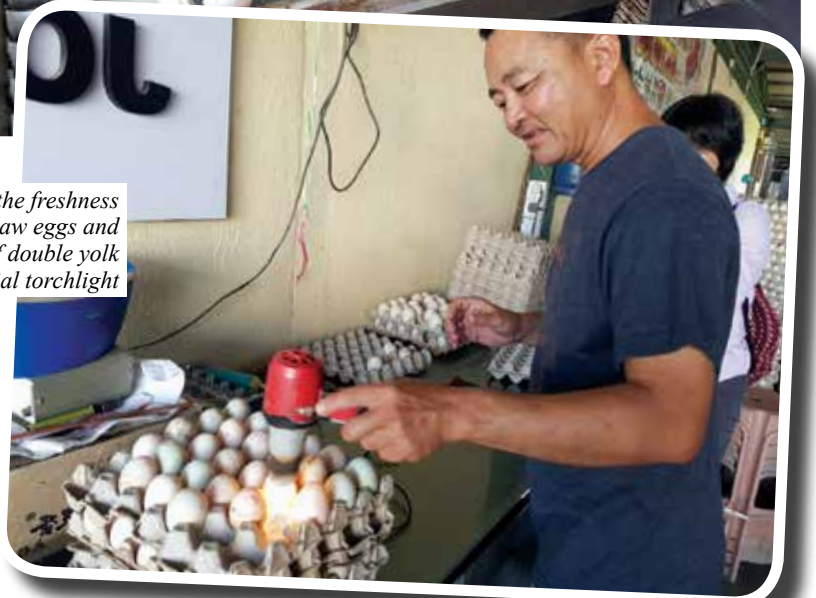


Tan Swee Lee with his products



Sorting raw duck eggs into different sizes

Tan checking the freshness of the raw eggs and presence of double yolk using a special torchlight



By Mei Kuan

Ipoh Echo got an exclusive one-on-one with Tan Swee Lee, the third generation running the Joo Hong Chan Salted Egg Factory which was established in 1950 along Jalan Besar in Kuala Kurau to learn all about the craft.

"In the whole of Malaysia, there are approximately 20 salted egg factories. In Perak, there are about 10 salted egg factories in which four are located in Kuala Kurau. We are one of the longest established ones," the Kuala Kurau-born Tan shared.

According to him, duck eggs are used instead of chicken eggs because the latter's thin shell breaks easily. Presentation-wise, salted chicken eggs appear yellowish while salted duck eggs appear reddish. In terms of texture, the egg white will turn out watery in salted chicken eggs and more solid in salted duck eggs.

"The fresh eggs from the local duck farm come in different sizes. Thus the first step is to sort them into sizes of AA, A, B, C and D (biggest to smallest). Some raw duck eggs appear whitish while some appear greenish, depending on the duck breed. Many prefer the green ones as it has a better texture," the amiable Tan explained.

"Sometimes, there will be a double yolk within a duck egg. We will check the freshness of the raw eggs and the presence of double-yolk using a special torchlight," he pointed out.

Then each egg is fully wrapped in the clean mud from mountains already mixed with natural sea salt imported from Australia. Subsequently, it is coated with a layer of burnt paddy husk for extra protection from breakage. Finally, it will be stored for two weeks.

"When we started, everything was done by hand from the sizing to the coating. Now it is partially handmade with the aid of machines. Each day we can produce up to 30,000 eggs. Besides consuming it just like that, some like to make use of our salted eggs to make *kaya* (coconut jam), mooncake, *pao* (bun), sticky rice dumpling and salted egg yolk crab in seafood restaurants among others," he highlighted.

"A quality salted egg must be able to preserve the freshness of the duck egg. Thus the mud and amount of

salt used play an important role. If too much salt is used, it will be too salty to taste while the egg white and egg yolk will harden," Tan concluded.

Salted eggs being the main product, century eggs are also made in-house. Made of 100% natural ingredients, his creations are exported all over the peninsular. Tan has regular customers of all ethnicities.

Joo Hong Chan Salted Egg Factory is located at **No. 125, Jalan Besar, 34350 Kuala Kurau**. It opens daily from 8am till 6pm (9am till 5pm on Sunday). For more information, call **05 727 7296**.

Nosh News

Really? Ghost for breakfast?

By Joelyn Jonathan

A typical Chinese breakfast, best taken with a cup of black coffee, the **Yau Char Kwai** or **Cakoi** or **Youtiao** is loved by most Malaysians. The most popular type is the twin-stick and the horseshoe cakoi. The latter are usually stuffed with red bean paste.

The name **Yau Char Kwai** which means “oil fried ghost”, originated in the Song dynasty as a protest by the people against an evil minister Qin Hui and his wife who caused their favourite patriot, general Yu Fei to be executed. In protest a cook devised this bread which symbolises an intertwined couple and condemned them to eternal hell, being fried in oil and eaten by the people.

Hence the name **Happy Ghost 2.0**, is a literal translation for the product they sell and is a cakoi outlet that has been operating for over 30 years. Presently managed by the third generation, Happy Ghost 2.0 is the second shop to be opened in Ipoh. The first stall was opened in New Hollywood Cafe, Ipoh’s famous food court and the second has plenty to offer its legion of fans.

According to its owner, Kelly, 28, her aim is to create a “modern” cakoi.

“The traditional cakoi goes well with coffee. I’m trying to improvise by adding in new ingredients. I’ve introduced the following: cheese cakoi, chocolate cakoi, marshmallow cakoi and the curry fish ball. Little did I know but they’re well received by my customers.

“Cakoi is like bread. It goes well with almost



everything,” she added.

When asked about ingredients used, Kelly told this scribe that she only used fresh products with no preservatives and MSG.

“The recipe came from my grandmother and was passed down to my mother and now me. I just try to make it better, speaking of which, I’m planning to introduce the ayam rendang cakoi as a Hari Raya special. So stay tuned.

“A good cakoi should be crunchy on the outside and soft on the inside. Although it gets cold, it should not be chewy. Our principle is to serve only good quality food to our customers,” Kelly enthused.

Their best-sellers are the Kaya Chakoi and the Golden Cakes (Nian Gao).

Happy Ghost 2.0 is located at No. 24, Jalan Mustapha Al-Bakri, Taman Jubilee, 30300 Ipoh, opens daily (except Mondays) between 11am and 4pm. If you crave for some good cakoi Happy Ghost 2.0 is a place to go.



The VJ Food Club

By Jo Lynn Chong



Working with the Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health, The VJ Food Club has been operating a food stall that employs people with disabilities at Restoran New Hollywood, Canning Garden, Ipoh, since December 2018. It is the third community project by The VJ Food club.

With the theme “Break The Stigma”, this long-term project is aiming to create an employment platform for people with disabilities.

The VJ Food Club is a social enterprise by a catering and bakery business called VJ Cakes & Culinary. Both are founded by an Ipohite, Seevashankar Vickneswaran (fondly known as Seeva) and co-founded by his mother, J. Vasanthi, hence the name VJ. The VJ Food Club was established in 2017 whereas VJ Cakes & Culinary in 2015.

“Right now, we are employing people who are mentally challenged. We also have a staff member who is deaf and mute,” Seeva explained. “We are looking at other areas of disabilities as well.”

“The Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health is actually the main centre we work with but we are open to working with other centres and other



Seevashankar Vickneswaran

disability associations,” Seeva elaborated.

“We have also started working with New Hollywood Restaurant themselves to employ other handicapped staff for them,” Seeva enthused.

Selling only dim sum and pau, all from halal-certified suppliers, the food stall offers around 25 to 30 different varieties of dim sum, of which new varieties are always added. About 10 varieties of pau are offered. Dim sum is sold at RM6 to RM9 per dish; pau is sold at RM3 for one and RM5 for two. (Topseller is the Salted Egg Pau.)

For Seeva, his inspiration for The VJ Food Club came from the time he was studying abroad. “I noticed that most of the businesses there were driven towards creating an impact either socially or environmentally,” Seeva explained.

When asked about the public’s response towards their



food stall, Seeva told Ipoh Echo that it has improved a lot. “As time progressed, people started to understand that this particular stall here is employing people with disabilities,” Seeva expressed.

“When we first started in New Hollywood, we were going for Western snack bites,” Seeva elaborated. Some of the delicacies first offered during the early stages of the project were Popcorn Chicken, Popiah Cheese Goreng as well as Grilled and Rainbow Cheese Sandwiches.

“About two or three months in, we realised that this is actually a very famous spot for Chinese halal food, so we did a little bit of research then we decided to source our dim sum and pau from halal suppliers,” Seeva explained.

The VJ Food Club food stall operates daily from 7am to 1pm or till sold out (closed on alternate Mondays). They do have plans to come up with their own halal food and also have a brick-and-mortar place in the future.

For more information, visit their Facebook page at The VJ Food Club and their Instagram page at thevjfoodclub. You can also send them an email at Vjcakes31@gmail.com or call them at 010 931 9423.

Nostalgia

Infanticide and the Little Daughters-in-Law



Ipoh Convent Orphanage c1935



Elim Home orphans c 1920

By Ian Anderson

The problem of unwanted babies has been with us for thousands of years. It seems that all too often, we can enjoy the fun without caring about the consequences. Often the problem was simply solved by infanticide. Others were, and still are, sold into a life of slavery. Child sacrifice to ancient deities and spirits also took its toll. These practices took place across the world and were very common during the Greek and Roman empires, where live babies were simply thrown on the local rubbish dumps and left to die; the lucky ones being rescued by good Samaritans and adopted as their own. China also has a long history of the disposal of unwanted babies.

For China, some people lay the blame at the door of the Chinese Government and its "One child a family" policy". During that period some 40 million young girls went 'missing'. A certain stretch of the Yangtze River was known to be a common site of infanticide by drowning until government projects made access to it more difficult. But this is modern history and does not consider those hundreds or thousands of years, that stretch back far beyond modern China. Infanticide has been commonly practised in China since ancient times and recorded in history since the 3rd century BC; by the time of the Song dynasty (960–1279 AD), it was said to be widespread in some provinces. At that time there was a belief held by some Chinese that newborn children were not properly "human", and were not to be considered as such until after the sixth month after birth. Thus, in those early days, killing an unwanted child, mostly restricted to little girls, was an acceptable practice. But why choose to murder your female child?

Traditionally, in a Chinese family, there can be nothing more important than the male bloodline. Not too many years ago, even in Ipoh, male children "rule the roost", while the females were virtually ignored. Fathers looked upon their daughters as an unnecessary expense. Anything spent on education was a waste of hard-earned money, as was the entire cost of bringing up a daughter. As soon as they were of marriageable age, daughters would 'marry out' and serve their new husband's family. Until that day they could cook and clean and serve the males in their family.

Much of the history of Chinese infanticide came to be known in the western world from the many Christian missionaries that travelled in China in the early days. To some extent, they were successful in their mission. Christianity in China appeared in the 7th century, during the Tang dynasty, but did not take root until it was reintroduced in the 16th century by Catholic Jesuit missionaries. The Methodists soon followed and as you can imagine were shocked and horrified when they first came across infanticide in China. They found live babies being buried alive on the beaches and later, in the 19th century, deliberate drowning of infants in water-filled pots as live burial was no longer generally acceptable. Like all missionaries, the Methodists sent back regular reports and many of these were published in The Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review. An issue of the magazine in 1839 records: "Infanticide in China is wholly confined to the female sex" and "A boy is valued and cherished, while a daughter is despised". In 1865, they then produced an etching entitled "Burying Babies in China".

Ipoh had thousands of immigrant Chinese around the same time as that etching was produced, but thankfully, as they were almost all unaccompanied men, infanticide did not come with them. But as the years went by, Ipoh had many Chinese families and the problem of unwanted babies, again mostly female, reared its ugly head. Local orphanages were needed for the care for these poor waifs and two Christian organisations, the Sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus and the Elim Gospel Hall stepped into the breach. The latter's first intake being six little girls from China in 1915.

Strangely enough, although infanticide was levelled at all Chinese, the Hakka dialect group had a better solution. Directly translated from the Chinese it is known as "Little daughters-in-law". The basic premise was that if you had an unwanted daughter then you gave the girl to a Hakka family who had or was expecting a son. The two children would grow up together and when they reached the right age they would marry.

This was a very common system for the Hakka in Ipoh before the Japanese Invasion.

The Phoong family of Ipoh had six sons and one daughter. The only daughter, Ah Thye's fate was sealed. As a youngster, she was given to a Chinese family who were returning to China. They had a son a little older than her. Her role was to be a "Little Daughter-in-law" to the family while waiting to marry their son. Unfortunately, he was a little "slow" as modern parlance has it and before long passed away from a high fever, never reaching marriageable age. In her later years, she often recalled that the one thing she was sorry about was that because of his difficulties she had teased him to the point approaching unkindness. No longer needed by her adopted parents, as soon as she was old enough she went to medical college and studied Bacteriology. While working as a hospital nurse, she met a Kuomintang General and subsequently



Ah Thye as Kuomintang Nurse

joined the Kuomintang army as a nurse.

With six sons, the family gladly took in four Little Daughters-in-Law. Sadly, two of the little girls died from eating poisoned berries growing close to their wooden house. No more little girls joined the family.

Descendants of the family and the Little Daughters-in-Law still live in Ipoh.



BURYING BABIES IN CHINA,

From the Methodist Ministry, March 1865

Tourism

Strengthening Cooperation

By Mei Kuan

Spearheaded by Ipoh City Council in collaboration with Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club, over 20 media practitioners embarked on an expedition from February 14 to 16 to Kuala Terengganu with multiple aims: to enhance all-round cooperation between the city council and Perak media, to spread cheer to the underprivileged, to build camaraderie with fellow media practitioners based in Terengganu and promote Perak tourism products.

Kicking off the itinerary was a corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme at Rumah Tunas Harapan Darul Hilmi (Darul Hilmi House of Hope) in Seberang Takir.

"We express our utmost gratitude to Perak State Agriculture Development Corporation and Menteri Besar Office who made a cash contribution of RM3000 and RM1000 respectively to assist the orphanage. In addition, Tourism Malaysia, Tourism Perak, Lost World of Tambun and Eonsave have also lent a helping hand in the form of goodie bags and hampers," Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club President, Rosli Mansor Ahmad Razali explained.

"We did a similar workshop cum retreat last year in Langkawi with positive response. One of our goals is to obtain feedback from the media in line with the vision of making Ipoh City Clean, Green and Progressive," Public Relations Officer of the Ipoh City Council, Mohd Syahrizal Azmi pointed out.

The highlight on the second day was a gathering with members of Terengganu Media Journalists Club (KAWAT) led by its President, Khairul Azlam Mohamad



Rumah Tunas Harapan Darul Hilmi



One of the monuments at TTI

at Sumai Hotel Apartment.

"As a return favour, we would be glad to visit Perak next," Khairul enthused.

During the 3-day trip, participants got the opportunity to experience first-hand the beauty of the Eight Dome Mosque in Jerleh which is famed for its resemblance to the St Basil's Cathedral in Moscow, Russia. Equally memorable was the tour around the Islamic Civilisation Park (TTI), an outdoor edutainment park featuring 23 great Islamic monuments. It was followed by a 45-minute guided cruise along the Terengganu River which offered a view of the Crystal Mosque, first and only mosque built entirely from steel and glass hence the crystal-like image.

With *keropok* (traditional Malay fish cracker snack) galore to tempt the group's taste buds, other eye-catching sites visited were the Terengganu Drawbridge, the first of



Terengganu Drawbridge



Presenting contributions to the home

its kind in South-East Asia and the Central Market which is known as Pasar Payang.

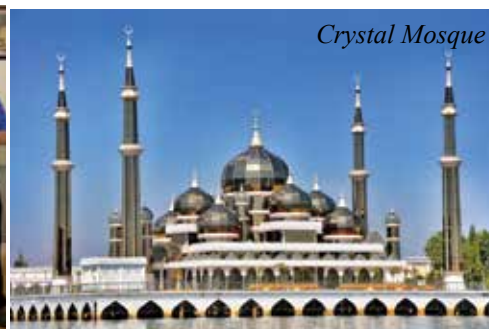
For more updates, visit the club's Facebook page: **Kelab Sukan & Kebajikan Media Perak.**



Eight Dome Mosque



Workshop



Crystal Mosque



Gathering with members of KAWAT



Pasar Payang

HAPPENINGS

Only pay RM30 for chargeable events/seminars announcements. You get 3 media avenues for the price of one: • Print (circulation 100,000) • Website (over 1 million hits per month – verifiable) • Facebook (Free public events are published FREE)

Announcements must be sent by fax: 05 543 9411; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

COMMUNITY

SUNWAY OXBRIDGE ESSAY COMPETITION 2020. Submit essay entries from **FEBRUARY 12 - MARCH 11 (by 1pm)**. Open to Forms 1-5 Malaysian students from all schools, except those using an international syllabus. Essays must be original and unpublished. To find out more visit www.sunway.com.my/essay.

SHARPENED WORD: A MILLION STARS, A MILLION HOPES TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT. MARCH 14, 2.30pm-5pm, 15 Market Street (PWW Gallery), Ipoh. In collaboration with Perak Women for Women & Soroptimist International and in conjunction with International Women's month we celebrate. Guest speakers, Saras Manickam, winner of 2019 Commonwealth Short Story Award 'My Mother Pattu' and Michelle A. Navajas, author of the booklet 'After-Rain Skies, A Million Stars'. More information on their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta/.

SUNWAY COLLEGE IPOH BLOOD DONATION CAMPAIGN 2020. MARCH 14 & 15 (Saturday & Sunday), 10am to 3pm at Sunway College Ipoh. This event aims to increase the blood supply for Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun Ipoh and to raise public awareness on the importance of saving lives. The target is to reach 160 blood donors. All are welcome.

REACT CRIME SURVIVAL PROGRAMME, MARCH 21 (Saturday), 2.30pm-4.30pm at Kinta Riverfront Hotel & Suites, Lavender Hall, Level 3, Jalan Lim Bo Seng, 30000 Ipoh. The programme emphasises simple yet effective skills and techniques to counter street crime in Malaysia and provides effective intervention towards crime prevention for everyone. Entry by donation. Limited seats only. First come first served. Get your pass at The PWW Shop, 15 Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh. Call: 012 596 8933 or 012 521 2480 for enquiries.

WORLD KIDNEY DAY FUN RUN. MARCH 28 (Saturday), 7am-12pm at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh.

Organised by the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Malaysian Society of Nephrology (MSN) and the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF). Dust off your running shoes and sign up for this sporty, laughter-filled extravaganza today! A line-up of exciting happenings at the event for the public includes lucky draw prizes, health checks, booths and cooking demos. Ticket prices: RM38 (for 500 early bird participants); RM48 (normal price) for the 5km Fun Run; RM25 for the 1km Fun Walk (for patients and caregivers only). Register via the JOMRUN app or contact Faizul 013 388 4094. Visit <http://www.nkf.org.my> or call 03 7954 9048 for more information.

53RD ANNIVERSARY REUNION DINNER 'CLASS OF 1967' OF SULTAN YUSSUF SCHOOL, BATU GAJAH. MARCH 28 (Saturday) at the Perak Malayalee Association Hall, 14A Medan Istana (opposite Gunung Cheroh Temple), Ipoh. Entertainment is by The Waves. Former students of the batch are requested to call Dato' Gregory Wong at 012 517 2858, Dato' Dr Bhupinder Singh at 012 499 6444 or Mr Gopalan Nair at 012 450 2620 for further info and reservations. Closing date March 15.

ALPHA @ CGMC (For Non-Muslims only). Starting MARCH 1 (every Sunday for 11 weeks), 1pm-3pm at Canning Garden Methodist Church, 23 Jalan Keliling, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh. An opportunity to explore the meaning of life and faith through a series of talks in an open and friendly setting. Lunch will be provided. For further information, call 05 546 2023 or email: cgmcipoh@gmail.com.

Kechara Earth Project. LET'S RECYCLE FOR GREENER EARTH. EVERY 4TH SUNDAY of the month, 9.30am-11.30am in front of Ipoh Garden Post Office, Jalan Dato Lau Pak Khuan, Ipoh Garden, 31400 Ipoh. Carton boxes, paper, metal/aluminium, electronic equipment, plastics, light bulbs, batteries and used clothes. Funds are channeled towards Kechara Food Bank that serves the urban poor and underprivileged community in Ipoh. For more details, contact: 016 532 8309 (Mr So) or 012 522 3200 (Ms Yee Mun).