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ISSUE **101**



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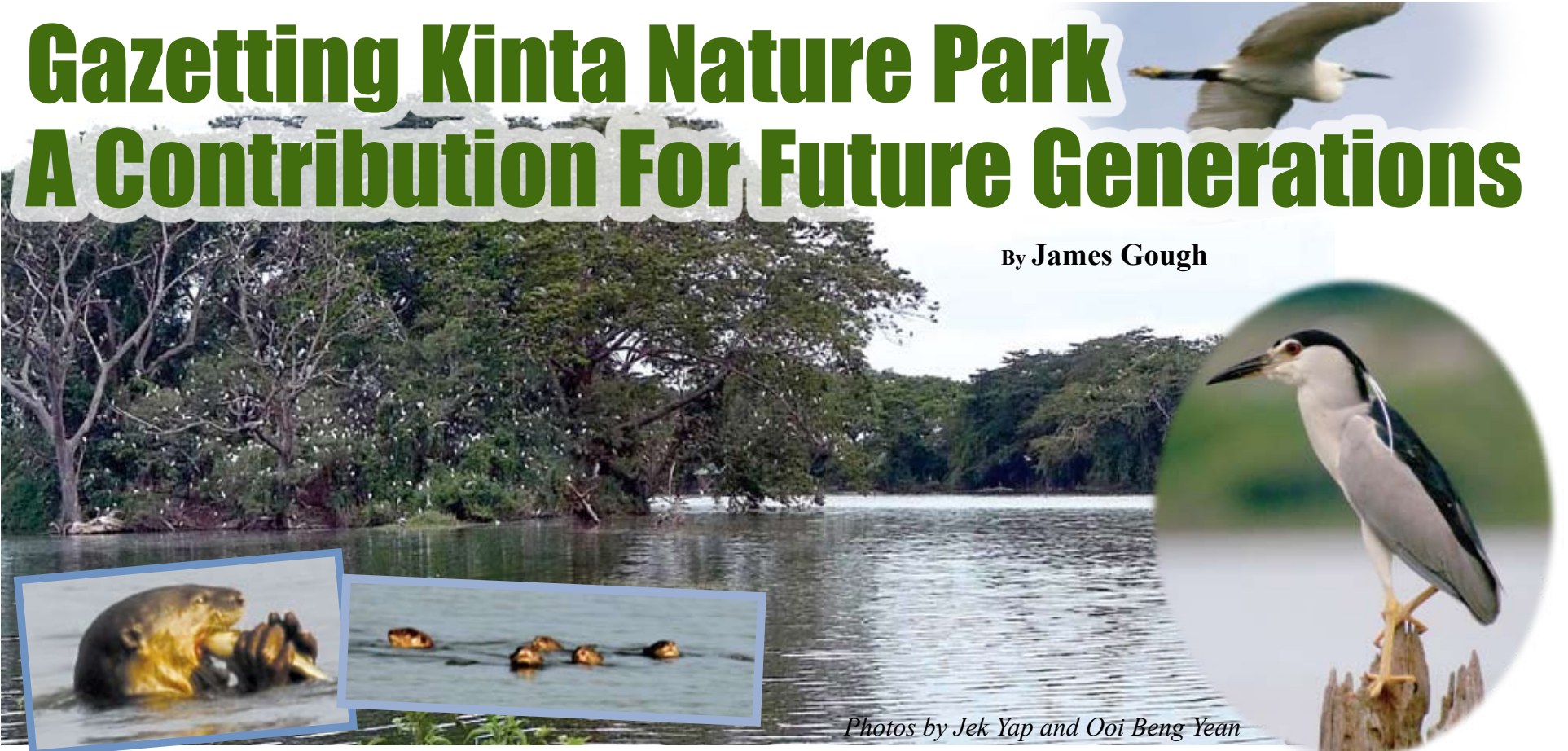
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# Gazetting Kinta Nature Park A Contribution For Future Generations

By James Gough



Photos by Jek Yap and Ooi Beng Yean

**K**inta Nature Park, a heritage from the tin mining industry in the Kinta Valley, is acclaimed to be one of the biggest bird sanctuaries in the country. Its existence is however threatened by the incursions of commercial activities. Wildlife conservationists are worried and want the authorities to do something to protect the park quickly. The park emerged after mining operations ceased and the ponds surrounded by secondary jungle began to attract more than 130 species of birds. One of the islands in the cluster of 14 pristine ex-mining ponds has also become the largest heronry in the country. It will be a waste if the potential of developing the area as a tourist attraction is ignored. It could be the best place for bird-watching. Almost 60% of the birds are listed as totally protected or protected under the Protection of Wild Life Act 1976.

Continued on page 2

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# Threat to Its Existence



The threat to the existence of the park is very real. There have been reports of instances where a whole pond with five breeding species of 2,000 water-birds is located, had been fenced up with the intention of starting com-

mercial fish farming.

Other commercial activities in the area included sand extraction and duck farms. Although the authorities are readily admitting that such activities are illegal, somehow they have been operating there

for years.

There are at least 2 huge duck farms in the area and the nutrient runoff from that is very damaging to the freshwater ecosystem. Sand mining appears to be sporadic. School groups which were there have counted at least 5/6 truck loads per hour leaving the area, causing a real problem for the many bee-eaters that nest in the area (bee-eaters nest in sand banks). As the sand banks get destroyed, so are the bee-eaters.

Ten years have passed since the Perak Government announced that the park is in the process of being gazetted as a wildlife sanctuary, yet nothing has been done. If all goes well, it will be officially gazetted as a State Nature Park soon.

According to the state chairman of tourism, Dato' Hamidah Osman, the plan has been approved. "Now we have to identify which department is going to manage the park as it requires manpower for maintaining the park, keeping the visitors' area clean, tidying the parks and also enforcement of the rules governing nature parks."

"Once the park is

gazetted we will mark the boundary and stop all commercial activities within, similar to what is being done at Royal Belum."

## About The Park

The Kinta Nature Park is located 6 km south of Batu Gajah. It is a strip of land wedged between the Kinta River on the west and the railway track to the east. The Kampar River is on the south. It covers an area of 900 hectares of mining land that had been dredged for tin. By mid 1980's when the tin industry collapsed, the land was left idle allowing it to rejuvenate and heal itself. In time it began attracting water-birds and had become a habitat for a variety of wildlife.



● MNS Vice Chairman Lee Ping Kong

commercial activities must be stopped. Sand mining contributes to deforestation, while duck farming and fish harvesting affects the supply of food; all of which severely affects the ecosystem within the park."

According to Lee the



● Dato Hamidah with students from the Hong Kong School

One of the ponds, Lake Pucung, is over 41 ha wide. It is where the visitor's area and observation tower can be found overlooking an island, where five major families of herons and egrets have made it a permanent home.

The Malayan Nature Society (MNS) in the mid nineties, being aware of the potential biodiversity of this location, made a proposal to the relevant state authorities to set aside the area as a gazetted nature park to be used for recreation, tourism and education.

According to Mr Lee Ping Kong, MNS vice-chairman, the State Government in 2001, then under Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Tajol Rosli, approved the creation of the Kinta Nature Park. At the same time the state government built the existing infrastructure such as, the observation tower resting huts and public toilets at a total cost of RM625,000 and indicated it would subsequently gazette the area as a nature park.

Unfortunately till today, the park has yet to be officially gazetted which "is a cause for concern for MNS", said Lee. "Illegal

## Ecotourism Activities

According to Lee, due to its size MNS had proposed the park to be divided into three zones which would cater for the public such as the current visitors centre, another zone for recreational activities like camping and hiking, and a third zone for natural habitat. "If the park is able to recover and rejuvenate naturally it has the potential to be similar to an open zoo where visitors can drive in and view animals living in their natural habitat. It would be our contribution to future generations."

Eco-Resort Director, Bridget Hedderman who operates the Roots Eco-Resort at Tanjung Rambutan, has included the nature park as one of her tour destinations, and describes the park as "completely amazing. It's the largest heronry in Malaysia and it is easily accessible", Bridget rated the site at 9 out of 10 in quality. Over the last four months Bridget has exposed three groups of students from Singapore, Hong Kong and locally to the park.

Jek Yap of Kinta Heritage told Ipoh Echo that Kinta Heritage has committed to maintaining cleanliness of the park and will send a clean-up crew twice a week to clean the toilets and other public areas. The gazetting of the park is also timely and would be a positive factor should the proposal to turn the Kinta Valley into a tin heritage site become a reality.

According to Hamidah the park is "an environment that cannot be created. In fact we can package this park together with the dredge which is just a few km from the southern boundary of the park and promote it as a living heritage".

Apparently Lee is not the only person who sees potential in gazetted this park as a nature park. Ipoh Echo hopes that all the promises made will become reality soon.



● Illegal fishing



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# WAY TO GO, IPOHITES!

*It's a mind game. We simply don't have the resolve and wherewithal to be and remain clean. Look at Polo Ground. . .*

• by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

We have been in publication for over five years and have heard nothing but stony silence from the authorities on issues raised by this paper. So it is yet another milestone that we are celebrating because for the first time a serving mayor of Ipoh responded personally to an article in Ipoh Echo. Our lead piece entitled, "Are We Ashamed of Ipoh's Glorious Past" by Jerry Francis (IE 97) has struck a chord with Mayor Roshidi and he has taken the time to write an unsolicited letter giving his or rather MBI's side of the story vis-à-vis the crumbling old buildings which Jerry had highlighted.

## Mayor's Comments

Concerned readers have given their two cents worth by commenting on the piece in Ipoh Echo's website (see [www.ipoh-echo.com.my](http://www.ipoh-echo.com.my)). We received 25 comments, the highest for a single piece of news thus far. However, out of

the lot, Roshidi's response is the most poignant as it provides a glimpse of our mayor's thinking and feelings.

Roshidi refers to Jerry's piece as misleading, believing "it will give a negative perception of Ipoh, per se." We all agree that looks have plenty to do with perception. "The eyes see only what the mind is prepared to comprehend", says Robertson Davies, the famous Canadian novelist.

## Art, Heritage or Eyesore

Perceptive power of the mind transcends the reality we see right in front of us. So a derelict building with windows hanging on hinges, roof almost non-existent and walls crumbling is art in its purest form for some, heritage for a few and an eyesore for the rest. Whatever the mind wants to think, the mere presence of this dilapidated building, standing perilously, at the convergence of two arterial streets is definitely not the best sight. Therefore, the

only sensible thing to do is to have it demolished. Levelling the building is less hazardous to the eyes and minds than to allow it to decay in full view of residents.

## Special Committee

The mayor has alluded to a special committee formed from among the councillors to oversee the decaying buildings. Tracing the errant property owners is a priority he has justifiably imposed as a precondition. The committee's functionality is, however, in doubt as the tenure of councillors came to an end last June. While waiting for fresh appointees, the said committee is being mothballed for good measure. Will it be revived? If past experience is anything to go by, a revival seems almost unlikely; unless the need is too overpowering and the reasons too damning. While the committee drifts into obscurity and the property owners remain faceless and untraceable,

Ipohites continue to suffer in silence. Do we have an option? Yes, we do but at what cost?

Roshidi comes with good credentials. He served Tajol Rosli as his private secretary and then assumed the post of MBI Secretary before taking over as mayor in 2008. The uncertainty of his re-appointment for a second term as mayor was put to rest when the Menteri Besar retained him in his post for a subsequent two-year term, effective June.

## Action Plan

In his acceptance speech, Roshidi had pledged to assist the MB in realising the much-touted Transformational Programme and would initiate an action plan to convert the city into a pedestrian and vehicle-friendly haven similar in stature to Wenzhou in China. The fact that our MB has looked towards a Chinese city as a fitting model to emulate is

totally unexpected, mindful of the impression we have about China.

The Chinese have, since the 2008 Olympics, made tremendous strides in developing their cities and towns. Today Beijing and Shanghai no longer look like what they were, say five years ago. The cities' broad and tree-lined streets remind one of the West rather than the East. The transformation is monumental. Awesome is the word. Chinese haute culture is here to stay.

## Chinese Experience

Sipping coffee at Starbucks at the entrance to the famous Silk Street bargain mall in downtown Beijing recently, I was dumbstruck by the modernity surrounding me. It looked as though I was on Orchard Road,

Singapore. The streets were clean while the road shoulders were spotless. Although there are 5 million motor vehicles, of all makes and models in Beijing, traffic jams are nowhere near those in Kuala Lumpur. Surprisingly, there are no feral cats and stray dogs running wild like we see here in Ipoh.

How could the Chinese do so? Some attribute it to Communism. But to me, it is all a mind game. We simply don't have the resolve and wherewithal to be and remain clean. Just look at Polo Ground. "It's in your blood," said Venera, my Uzbek sister-in-law, teasingly. She is damn right.

Way to go, Ipohites! Way to go! There is much to learn from the Chinese experience, warts and all.

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• by Peter Lee

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Over the years as a Professional Estate Planner, I am privileged to be associated with Rockwills because they have provided me with strong support in my challenging journey of giving the best service to my client and ensuring that wishes are fulfilled through a well written will and trust.

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He is based in Ipoh and can be reached at: **012-5078825/05-2554853** or [excelsec@streamyx.com](mailto:excelsec@streamyx.com).





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## THINKING ALOUD

● By Mariam Mokhtar

Might the Perak state government's controversial cable-car project linking Taiping to Bukit Larut, go the same way as the Penang botanical gardens project dubbed 'the fallen arches'? Both these projects were opposed by the residents of Taiping, and NGOs, because they would destroy and violate the serenity of its natural environment and pristine beauty.

This cable-car project may be another white elephant, but it would certainly cause irreversible damage to Taiping's water catchment area. Many are unhappy that the authorities had to lie low when the protests were at its peak, but surreptitiously crept in to resurrect the project when the protests disappeared.

## Questions

What happens if the project fails to attract the so-called development? What happens if the rich bio-diver-

sity is lost forever? What happens if the water catchment area suffers irreversible damage? What will happen to the residents if they were never consulted about any developmental proposals in their area?

## Oldest Hill Resort

Bukit Larut or Maxwell Hill is the country's oldest hill-resort. The water catchment area provides water to over 500,000 households. Besides, the Matang Mangrove Forest reserve requires water from Bukit Larut, as do local industries.

## Development Attempts

The first attempt to develop Bukit Larut involved the construction of a multi-story hotel on the hill and another in Taiping's Lake Gardens. This was during Menteri Besar Ramli Ngah Talib's tenure and it needed the intervention of the Sultan to halt the development.



## BUKIT LARUT CABLE-CAR: POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

## Latest Revival

The second was when Pakatan's Nga Kor Ming encouraged the RM60m cable-car project because people could reach the peak in 11 minutes as opposed to 30 minutes by Land-Rover. He mentioned a horrific 1,000 visitors per hour if the cable-car was operated at maximum capacity.

In the third and latest revival of the project, the



Menteri Besar's comments caused consternation. He said, "An Environmental Impact Assessment report is not required as the project does not involve major development – no trees would be felled or clearing of land".

The MB mirrored Nga Kor Ming's proposal that the project would not damage the eco-system, as there would be minimal hill-cutting with helicopters being used during construction.

## Window Dressing

However a quick telephone survey suggests intense disagreement and disapproval of the cable-car project.

Environmentalists and concerned citizens quickly pointed out that such assurances were only window-dressing. One retired plantation manager said, "Once the project starts, there is little chance of stopping it. The government will have to pay compensation to the company involved. Helicopters will surely drive away the small animals that live there."

## MB's Statement Challenged

Many expressed their disappointment with the Menteri Besar saying no Environmental Impact Assessment was needed because, "the project did not involve major development".

A Taiping student now studying in Singapore said, "He is neither an environmentalist nor a conservationist. He is not qualified to make such statements."

One-hundred-and-twenty-one years ago, Isabella Bird, a Victorian, went on an expedition to Malaya, and stopped off at the home of Perak's Assistant Resident, W.E.

Maxwell, in Taiping. She described the beautiful Perak countryside and hills around Taiping in her book, 'The Golden Chersonese'. She described the 'bracing air', 'the cool nights' and talked of her fascination with the flora and fauna of the hills.

## Fragile Eco-System

Today, conservationists have discovered that Bukit Larut is home to small animals such as the rhinoceros hornbill, large moths, butterflies, birds, beetles, monkeys and Pope's Pit Viper.

With a cable-car, the constant stream of day-trippers will have dire consequences on the fragile ecosystem of Bukit Larut. At present, the limit on people, because of transportation, becomes a good protective mechanism. Thus, another 'Pulau Redang situation' is averted – when huge visitor numbers destroyed the island's coral reefs.

## Foresight and Vision needed

The development and conservation of Bukit Larut requires foresight and vision. Our other hill stations have lost their charm and have become too commercialised, polluted, congested, warmer (in temperature) and they suffer massive litter problems.

Once Bukit Larut is 'modernised', with food outlets and other amenities for our instant entertainment and gratification, the destruction will accelerate.

Politicians should not sacrifice our natural treasures in the name of progress and development. What will we leave our children, if there was nothing to appreciate and continue to protect, on behalf of future generations?

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## BUSINESS

## There is Money in Waste

There is plenty of money to be made from waste and the government is prepared to help those who want to venture into the biomass sustainable production industry. Speaking during a media briefing recently, Technical Adviser to Switch-Asia Programme, Dato' Leong Kin Mun, said that his team was on a promotional drive in Pahang, Kedah, Johor and Perak to invite SMEs keen on participating in the programme. Between 5 to 10 biomass SMEs in Perak will be se-

lected and they, with the rest from the country, will be provided with the following benefits:

- Complimentary training in biomass technology.
- Funding and financing opportunities.
- Coaching service for biomass commercialisation projects.

Biomass is defined as "a form of biological matter that can be utilised as a kind of fuel or in other industrial processes. The most common kinds of biomass are wood, grass

or agriculture crops." That, according to Leong, does not exclude human and animal wastes. "So, IWK and the pig-breeders can also be considered", he said.

The briefing for SMEs in Perak is on Thursday, July 29, at Tower Regency Hotel, Ipoh.

For details on the programme, contact Project Secretariat, Ms Cherrie Choong, at **03-8884 8882**. The Secretariat is located at 20, Jalan Diplomatik, Presint Diplomatik, 62050 Putrajaya.

FZB

## One-Stop Cultural Programme a Hit



The one-stop cultural programme, a brainchild of Encik Abdul Mutalib Abdul Rahman, the new director of the Department of Arts and Culture Perak (Jabatan Kesenian dan Kebudayaan Perak), is a hit with Ipohites and visitors alike. It showcases the cultural heritage and diversity of the

various communities in the country. The weekly show at Ipoh's night market (Gerbang Malam) has received positive response from shoppers, casual visitors and foreigners. Events on the card include traditional songs and dances, skits and sketches and martial arts. Additional activities on the final night were Chinese calligraphy,

khat (Arabic writing) and kite-making.

Mutalib was present at the closing of the programme at Gerbang Malam recently. "It's a roaring success judging from public's feedback," he told Ipoh Echo. "Gerbang Malam is the right choice of venue."

The show, he said, was in concert with the Malaysia concept eagerly pursued by the government. "There is tourism potentials too," said Mutalib.

The programme could be a money-spinner provided it is being properly packaged and promoted. "It should be continued," he insisted.

RM

## OBITUARY

## Man with a Vision for Ipoh City Council

● By Jerry Francis

**Ipoh's second Mayor Dato' Ismail Shah Bodin was a man with a vision – to see Ipoh's City Council become a caring one.**

During his tenure (1993-95), the city council became caring for its employees and caring for the residents, in line with the national call for a caring society.

"We want everyone to think of Ipoh City Council as one with a big heart", he told me once. "We want to stress to the people, particularly the council's employees that we do care about their welfare. In this way, we hope to instil confidence in the employees for their dedicated and efficient service to the residents."

In return, said Ismail, the city council expected the co-operation from all residents to make the city beautiful and efficient. Thus, he launched his motto "We Care – Excellence Through Teamwork", soon after his appointment.

His vision was not merely lip service, but also action oriented and he led by example, qualities which are quite rare these days. As a 'no nonsense' man, he immediately set his brand of administration to ensure his vision would

become a reality. He knew where the weaknesses were as he had been the secretary of the then municipal council from 1985 to 1989.

Ismail would move about incognito in his private 'Beetle' (car) to make surprise inspections, including checking on rubbish collection, clogged drains and over-grown bushes.

In spite of his heavy work schedule, Ismail was also actively involved in various voluntary works.

He was also the honorary commander of the Battalion 503, Territorial Army and deputy president of Perak Cultural Council.

Wherever he served, he left with distinctions. In Parit as the Perak Tengah District Officer, he was instrumental in starting a payment-by instalment scheme to recover the large amount of arrears on quit rent. In Manjung, he ensured the popular Teluk Batik beach was not being littered, and in Taiping, he cleared street stalls and petty traders by relocating them.



Ismail's illustrious career began in 1965 as secretary of Tapah District Council and later as ADO in Kuala Kangsar, Selama and Sungai Siput before leaving for a course in Japan. On his return in 1974, he was appointed as the first general manager of the State Agriculture Development Corporation and served until 1979 before becoming District Officer of Perak Tengah and Taiping and later as State director of Land and Mines.

Ismail, 71, a member of the Dewan Negara Perak, died of blood poisoning on June 26 and was buried at the Gurap Muslim Cemetery on Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman.

## ARTS AND CULTURE

## A Cultural Night with Ipoh's Own Wind Orchestra

There was something for everyone at the inaugural concert of the Kinta Valley Wind Orchestra on July 4. Opening to a sold-out audience, with 6 months in the making, the 50 odd musicians, led by artistic director and conductor Eugene Pook, certainly did "get their act together", as so aptly put by the organising chairperson, Tan Ling-Li. This was made possible by the vision and generosity of Dato' K.K. Lim and other sponsors.

From symphonic to classical renditions, big-band pieces to hit movie themes, pop tunes to old-time favourites in Chinese, Malay and English, the audience was truly entertained. Three soloists: Joost Flach (oboist), Foo Cheong Lin (saxophonist), Philip Boey (GuZheng), and



two vocalists: Estee Pook and Alan Low, and several guest musicians, gave the concert that added touch. The members of the orchestra comprised students from different schools and people from different walks of life coming together for the first time, showing that beautiful music can be produced under the right direction.

The concert ended with calls for an encore, and the orchestra playing

two more songs, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, because it being the USA Independence Day, and Barry Manilow's *Copacabana*, to the delight of the audience.

The concert was a great success to say the least, and for those of us that were there, we look forward to more; for those who missed it, they can certainly look out for the next one!

VWSL



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# How has Ipoh Echo made a difference?

**Chin Chee Kong,**  
General Manager, Meru Valley Resort



“Copies of Ipoh Echo get snapped

up so fast at our Resort and we are always asking for more! Our residents and members find Ipoh Echo a good read and its contents both informative and entertaining. Congratulations on this milestone and we will continue to support the paper in every way possible”

**Jefri Palpernarvan,**  
Agency Manager

“Heartiest congratulations to Ipoh Echo on your century milestone. From a very modest beginning, Ipoh Echo has not only survived but is thriving in a very challenging environment. Having made its mark as a respected community newspaper, I am



confident it will chart new frontiers while remaining true to its founding philosophy”

**Mr L.S. Lim (Cempaka)**

“It’s an interesting and informative read. Obviously it has benefited the city’s community in many aspects especially the food, features and events coverage. Hopefully, we look forward to an extra page in the contents”



**Chan Kok Keong,**  
Lawyer

“Ipoh Echo has succeeded exceedingly. I make it a point to read every issue which comes out. And I believe I speak for many. There are now echoes everywhere reverberating from the 1st issue, in and around Ipoh. But as we all know, Ipohites have left Ipoh in droves over the years. Sadly, there are now and will be more echoes of Ipoh outside Ipoh than inside the town. Some call it city but Ipoh’s heyday was when it was a town and was better known then



than now. No matter that they be echoes from the past or present, in or out of Ipoh; what is important is Ipoh’s future and I have no doubt Ipoh Echo will play an important and lively part in this direction”

**Dato’ Abdul Rahim Md Ariff,**  
Secretary Ipoh City Council



“I have been an avid reader of the Ipoh Echo. Its content is interesting as it touches issues of interest to the city folks. Its reporting is transparent and comments made are fair. My sincere hope is for Ipoh Echo to thrive and uphold these good journalistic values and continues to act as mouthpiece for all Ipoh residents”

**Connie Lim, homemaker**

“Ipoh sar hor fun, Ipoh pak kopi, Ipoh mali...it’s all about Ipoh. It’s true Ipoh has changed. Some say good, others not so good. We’re two hours away from KL, an hour and a half from Penang. Can’t complain mah. And Ipoh Echo? That’s a great step forward for Ipohites. A journey of a thousand miles begins with small Ipoh Echo baby steps.



Don’t agree? Let me see you step forward and do better”

**Wern Sze Gill,**  
Director Media Masters Publishing

“A paper all Perakians can call their own. What an achievement! Congratulations to the Ipoh Echo team for working so hard in providing us the pleasure of reading Malaysia’s only community paper! To all advertisers out there, you’ve made the right choice in supporting



the paper. We wait with anticipation the day Ipoh Echo goes daily! Keep up the great work!”

**K. Letchimanan, Project & Finance Director, Y’s Men’s Club of Ipoh**

“We thank you for all the support and publicity given to our Club via Ipoh Echo. As we belong to an international organisation, we make it a point to send your publication to our brother clubs overseas. We enjoy reading Ipoh Echo very much as the standard of



presentation and articles are commendable.

## ANAK PERAK

● By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

They say that it runs in your genes but whether it was hearing his parents crooning day and night, or watching them perform professionally and picking up by ‘osmosis’, Iqwal Hafiz is a young singing sensation who has set his sights on recording in the USA and following in the footsteps of his idol Michael Jackson.



in the performing arts in Malaysia.

### Began Singing at 4

The journey of success into the world of show business of this young talent began when he was only four years old. The dramatic rise of this super young talent has been breathtaking. He had recently made Malaysia proud by winning four gold medals, one silver medal and one Hollywood Industry Award in the World Championship of Performing Arts (WCOPA) in Los Angeles in five vocal categories which includes Pop, Rock, Contemporary, Open Style, Original Work. Over 5,000 artists from 48 countries participated in the WCOPA. Iqwal was selected twice to represent Malaysia in the WCOPA.

In August 2008, Iqwal was again invited to represent Malaysia at ‘The Best New Talent Award’ at Kodak Theatre,

Los Angeles, where he was crowned ‘The Best International Artist’ by defeating other participants from USA, Philippines, Guatemala, Africa, Mexico and Jamaica, to name a few.



## HOME GROWN TALENT EYES THE BIG TIME

14-Language Talent Iqwal has created his mark by being the first Malaysian to perform at the Kodak Theatre, Los Angeles. This young talent, not only can dance well, but also sings in 14 languages: Italian, Spanish, Mexican Latin, Tagalog, Arabic, Hindi, Thai, Korean, Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tamil, Malay and English. His first singing attempt was at the age of four when

his mom, first discovered his exceptional talent. He got support from Ali Mpire (ex-XPDC vocalist) and Mel Wings (ex-Wings vocalist). His hardworking mom, Myn had exposed him to International music, singing competitions and enrolled him in a prominent music school to polish his skills. Since then he has performed along side famous artists like: M. Nasir, Ramli Sarip, Zainal Abidin, Faizal Tahir, Nash, Aishah and Mawi, in various concerts such as Citrawarna Malaysia, Malaysian Water Festival, Citrarasa Malaysia, Festival Gendang Malaysia, Di Ambang Merdeka and

**Dato’ Tomiyasu & Datin Mina Ushiama,**  
Permanent Residents



“Viva Ipoh Echo!! From the first stage of 3 protagonists to 100th issue today, you

have consistently done a wonderful job. We first check See Foon’s article for good foods and then we go to heritage issue. As we have seen the change of Ipoh for the past 40 years, we are concerned in this subject. Please keep highlighting it to preserve these precious assets in Perak. Korekaramo ganbatteku-dasai!

Masrah Hijrah Concert, to name a few. He also performs for most of Berita Harian and Harian Metro events such as: Karnival Jom Heboh TV3, Anugerah Bintang Popular, Fiesta Media Idola, GP Joran & Perkampungan Hadhari, as a resident artist and has done so since he was 11 years old.

### Composing Since 12

Iqwal has been composing songs since he was 12; one entitled, ‘Secangkir Kasih’ which he performs with Dayang Nabila. With two albums published - Iqwal ‘09 & Iqwal 1Malaysia, he has set his sights on more achievements. He is in the ‘Malaysian Book of Records’ for ‘First Artist to compose 1Malaysia songs in 6 languages’ (Malay, English, Mandarin, Tamil, Iban & Kadazan) and he has a grand plan to gather all the artists originally

from Teluk Intan such as Jamal Abdillah, Shidee, Zahid, Dato’ M Daud Kilau, to perform at the leaning tower of Teluk Intan.

Iqwal is not one to rest on his laurels. To improve his standing in the entertainment world, he will continue to compose and follow in the footsteps of his idols: Sudirman and Michael Jackson, aspiring to succeed like them. Firstly he wants to record an English song in America. Many would be cynical at his ambitions but for him “nothing is impossible if one continues to pursue one’s dreams”.

Iqwal will be performing at Ipoh Echo’s 100th issue Anniversary celebrations at the Impiana Hotel on August 6. It promises to be an exciting event.

### Websites:

[www.iqwalhafiz.com](http://www.iqwalhafiz.com)  
or [www.iqwal.com.my](http://www.iqwal.com.my)



## IPOH ECHO MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY



The story of the Mother Teresa Reading Shelter was published in Issue 90. Calls from readers wanting to know more about the Shelter and its activities prompted the Shelter to launch My School Programme, specially tailored for children deprived of formal education due to lack of personal documents. Currently seven children attend the programme and are taught Bahasa Malaysia, English and Maths and during break are served snacks and drinks. The students are also exposed to creative arts and crafts and enjoy recreational activities.

Since the last article was published, Ipoh Echo readers have visited the Shelter and have encouraged other children's homes to use the facilities. As a result, more students visit the Shelter on Saturdays to make use of the reading facilities. More activities will be planned after their first anniversary celebration in August.

The Shelter is open six days a week and needs: volunteers for teaching of 3R, conducting personal development sessions, as well as books and stationary items and snacks for the children. Contact Lucy: 017-5699262.

AJ

### COMMUNITY

## OK Tak OK Counseling Workshop for Teachers



Soroptimist International Ipoh and Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) were hosts to a group of 118 representative teachers from the district of Larut Matang and Selama for a one-day workshop called "OK TAK OK". This workshop whose aim is to teach children what is and what is not acceptable behaviour from adults, had won an International Huright Osaka Award in 2005.

They enlisted the expertise of trained counselors Dr. Prema Devaraj (Programme Director for WCC) and Ms. Tasha Merican (Project Officer WCC) to train and share their knowledge with the teachers from Malay, Chinese and Tamil schools on how to recognize the signs displayed by a sexu-

ally abused child and how to handle the situation without causing alarm to the child. This workshop was targeted at teachers because teachers are often the ones who are able to spot changes in their pupil's behaviour.

Statistics show that 85% of sexually abused children knew their perpetrators and Perak has the fourth highest incidences of rape and incest in the country.

The programme which is conducted in a very sensitive and informative manner is designed for standard 5/6 pupils so the teachers were all asked to look at the video from the eyes of a 12 year old. The video was 28 minutes long and contained 4 short cartoons and 3 video scenarios involving the acceptable

### LETTERS

#### Bercham Residents Woes

Living in Bercham, a developed part of Ipoh, retired persons like me, as well as other senior citizens, feel neglected as far as the transport system is concerned. Bus service to Bercham from Ipoh is very irregular, especially on weekends when there is no proper schedule. Service has worsened since taken over by Ipoh Sentral. Another big problem is that many times we have urged

the authorities to allow Perak Roadways to use the Bercham-Tasek route while plying to Klebang, but the Ipoh city council just does not bother. Poor people like me have to walk to work from Bercham to the Tasek Industrial estate. We had sent our request to have bus services from Bercham to Tasek through city councillor Lim Huey Shan, but he just ignored us. We hope the authorities will do something.

CHRIS NG

### Special Announcement

A talk on "Cognitive Education for Autistic Child" at Hospital Pantai Ipoh, by Mr. Roland Hifler who is being flown out specially from Geneva at the invitation of Datin Grace Lee, Patron of Autism Support Association for Parents, Ipoh, Perak (ASAP) promises to enhance current models of management and education for autistic children.

Roland, an educator and therapist, a graduate of the Faculty of Psychology and the Educational Sciences of Geneva University, has for ten years, been directing an education and therapy practice where he gained extensive clinical experience with autistic people. He is the founder of the programme for autistic children authenticated by Geneva University and currently organises and lectures, sharing his knowledge at conferences in Europe for parents and professionals. Anyone with an interest or involvement with Autism is welcome:

Hospital Pantai, Ipoh, Dahlia Utama (4th Floor)

Date: August 8, 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 9.00 am - 5 pm

Contact: 016-5535803 (Pek Imm) and 016-4227076 (Charlotte).

Fee: RM70.00

### Ipoh Echo CLASSIFIEDS

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and not acceptable behaviour of adults towards children. Dr. Prema said that recognizing a child who is sexually abused is not as easy as it seems but from the video one is able to pick up clearly, especially from facial expressions, body language and general changes in behaviour, that something is amiss.

The only way to recognize this is through observation. These children often become quiet and withdrawn. Sometimes they even become disruptive.

If children are taught what is and what is not acceptable behaviour from this very easy education programme, we may be able to stop some of the sexual abuse suffered by these innocent children. Children should be encouraged to speak up and inform their peers, parents, friends etc. All too often the very people the kids trust are the ones who let them down.

Soroptimist International Ipoh will be working closely with Perak Women for Women and will continue to monitor and follow up with the schools. The next project will be held in Kuala Kangsar.

MALIKA RAMIAH



Ipoh Echo being read around the world

Ipoh Echo even has fans in Switzerland!

#### Ipoh White Coffee

Guess what?

I found Ipoh White Coffee in one of the large grocery stores in the area. What a pleasant surprise! I bought enough to last me

for a while. As an Ipohite and one who has traveled widely, there is no better coffee than Malaysian Coffee.

LIONEL MUTHIAH  
Newberg OR, USA

#### World Heritage Site

I was interested to read about Perak's proposed application for five locations as World Heritage Sites, Ipoh Echo 99. I assume these will be applications as five separate sites.

As a cave fanatic, and ardent cave conservationist, I was pleased but curious to see Gua Tempurung on the list. Gua Tempurung is certainly an impressive cave. But I wonder what are the justifications for singling out this cave amongst all the caves in the Kinta Valley. And why just the gua and not the

gunung (hill)?

I wonder if it would be more advantageous to include a group of Perak's limestone hills rather than single out one particular cave? Or even combining the tin heritage with the relevant caves.

Compared to caves in East Malaysia, those in the peninsula are only babies in terms of length. And on a world ranking they don't compare. So in my humble view, I would like to consider a group of Perak's limestone hills/caves rather than one single one.

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## COMMUNITY

# Manjung Red Crescent



Red Crescent members from SMJK Nan Hwa, Manjung attended a 3-day work camp organised by the local chapter at the school grounds recently. The event was graced by the chapter's deputy chairman, A. Shamugam. In his opening address, Shamugam called on the

members to uphold the movement's principles. He thanked them for the good services they had rendered during civil disasters, festivities and sporting activities.

Shamugam told Ipoh Echo that the movement had recently received a donation of RM10,000

from Lumut MP, Dato' Seri Kong Cho Ha. The money, he said, would be used to purchase much-needed mannequins and aids which were required for training purposes.

In order to realise the "a first-aid in every home" programme, the chapter is conducting free training for the public. Those who have benefitted include housewives and members of non-governmental organisations. "The chapter is prepared to train anyone", said Shamugam.

Anyone keen on taking Shamugam's offer can contact him at: **012-5067953**.

**Saminathan**

## A Lingerin Nightmare



Students and teachers of Sekolah Kebangsaan Tambun have faced a lingering nightmare for the last 15 years without any respite in sight. Their school is susceptible to flooding due to overflowing waters from Sungai Pinji nearby. And despite mitigation

works, the problem remains unresolved. The school was inundated once more on Wednesday, June 30. This was the worst flooding ever, as the school compound was a sea of water, one metre deep.

"It's terrible", said Senior Assistant, Puan Dawiah Mat Isa, to Ipoh

Echo when met. "The water destroys books and electrical appliances. Cleaning this mess is so time consuming and also back-breaking", she added. With the UPSR trial examination just around the corner, she is bracing for more problems ahead but is taking things in her stride.

Students and staff joined in the cleaning-up operations. "It's become a routine", said a dejected Puan Ainun Nur Abdul Rahman, the Coordinator for Special Education. "Hopefully, something can be done to overcome this nightmare for good", she implored.

**RN**

## Bon Odori 2010 @ Meru Valley Resort

Ipoh: Bon Odori, a popular Japanese cultural festival, will be celebrated in Ipoh this year after a six-year absence.

The event, which is open to the public, will be held at the award-winning Meru Valley Resort in Jelapang, Ipoh, on Saturday the 24th of July from 6.30pm to 10.00pm. The last Bon Odori which was celebrated in Ipoh was held at Padang Ipoh in 2003.

Organised by the Consulate-General of Japan in Penang, The Japan Club of Ipoh, the Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society, together with Meru Valley Resort, Kinta Properties and Tenby Schools, the event is set to expose Ipohites with a dose of Japanese culture, fun and food at Bon Odori.

"There will be a Taiko Drum performance and Aikido demonstra-

**盆踊り Bon-Odori Ipoh 2010**

24th July 2010 (Saturday)  
6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
Meru Valley Resort  
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For enquiries, please call:  
05-253 7530 (Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society)  
05-529 3333 / 529 3353 (Meru Valley Resort)

Organised by:  
The Consulate-General of Japan in Penang | Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society | The Japan Club of Ipoh  
Tenby Schools | Kinta Properties Holdings Sdn Bhd | Meru Valley Resort Bhd

tions, and also Bon Odori dances. Visitors can sample an array of local and Japanese food and also

learn 'kingyo tsukui' (goldfish scooping) and 'yoyo tsumi' (balloon fishing), two common festival games in

## Pretty Fraulein Wishes To 'Balik Kampong'



Having never set foot on Asian soil, Kristin Hartlich, had no idea what to expect when she packed her bags and bid her little hometown near Frankfurt, goodbye. Kristin hails from a small township that straddles the Rhine River in Germany. The place is surrounded by hills just like Ipoh. The similarity made her feel much at home when she arrived in the city after a long drive from KLIA.

Kristin, an exchange student, enrolled in Main Convent Ipoh and lived with her foster parents, Mr and Mrs Romesh Roy and their two grown-up children.

"Malaysia is my second home", she remarked coyly. "I love the food, the weather and the warmth of the people. The fact that different cultures and beliefs could assimilate and live harmoniously under one roof is baffling", said Kristin in obvious reference to her foster parents who had come to accept her as a member of their extended family.

When asked what she cherished most about Malaysia, she marvelled at the closeness of the typical Malaysian family.

"Staying here has been a great experience for a

naïve girl like me. I got to learn about cultures, traditions, languages and dialects and partake in festivities such as Hari Raya, Chinese New Year and Deepavali. This in itself is a gift like no other", she added.

During her free time Kristin indulges in sports. Hockey is her favourite having played the game big time in Germany. She is also an accomplished musician, the saxophone being her instrument of choice. She has taken up cooking seriously and can prepare exotic Indian dishes in a jiffy. She attributes this to her foster mother who herself is a talented cook.

"Ipoh is a culinary haven", she insisted. "I'm a big fan of spicy food, especially those served on banana leaves." She spoke fondly of her foster mother. "She sent me spices via snail mail when I was in Germany."

When asked what was the striking difference between Germany and Malaysia she had this to say. "It's the mentality and lifestyle", she replied obviously prepared for such a question.

"Malaysians are pretty laid back. Things are much more relaxed here as opposed to Germany. Back home, we live a structured lifestyle where orderliness is a priority. Living in the fast lane can be very stressful and that accounts for the many emotional and physical breakdowns among Germans," she recounted.

Though the idea of coming to Malaysia seemed a novelty at first, this pretty fraulein now considers herself a bona fide Malaysian. On her departure recently, she opined, "'Balik kampong' will be a term of endearment to me."

Ipoh Echo wishes her the very best in all her endeavours.

**DINESH K**

## Historical Bridge Reopens



After being closed for almost a year, Sultan Iskandar Bridge is now open to the public effective July 2. The century-old bridge had undergone repairs, which were expected to be completed in December of this year. However, due to the commitment of the contractor

towards the project, completion was well ahead of schedule.

The soft reopening of the bridge was officiated by MB Perak, Dato' Seri Dr. Zambray Abdul Kadir.

The original design of the 64-metre bridge will be maintained, Zambray told reporters. "However, a tower will be added to ac-

centuate its beauty as the city's landmark."

This is the second renovation since 1960 and it costs the state government RM10 million. For the record, between 16,000 to 20,000 motorists use the bridge daily.

**RN**

Japan," said Mr Teng Khai Weng, president of the Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society.

Admission is free and

visitors who purchase a RM20 food voucher booklet will be entitled to participate in a Lucky Draw. For enquiries, please con-

tact: **05-2537530** (Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society), or **05-5293333/5293353** (Meru Valley Resort).



## BOOK REVIEW

## New Children's Novel by Ipoh-Born Author Promotes Understanding of Children-related Medical Conditions

Understanding alopecia  
**GREAT-GRANDMA'S HAIR LOSS REMEDY**  
Rebecca Loke



with illustrations by John Hussey

Ipoh-born author and former SK Raja Perempuan school student, Rebecca Loke, together with Ipoh-based

Media Masters Publishing launched a children's novel "Great Grandma's Hairloss Remedy" recently. She talks to Ipoh Echo about the inspiration behind her new book.

### Tell Us About Your Book

Great Grandma's Hairloss Remedy is the first in a series on Children's Concerns published by Media Masters Publishing, which tells the story about 8-year-old James, who has a condition called alopecia universalis, or total hair loss. It is targeted for read-

ers between the ages of seven to twelve, and offers a heart-warming tale about how James learns to cope with his hair loss condition.

There is also a question and answer section about alopecia at the end of the book, explaining the cause of hair loss, who gets it, and how it affects one's health.

### What Inspired You To Write Your Latest Book?

The inspiration for this story comes from my 10-year-old son Ethan, who

developed alopecia universalis when he was four years old, resulting in his losing all his hair on his head and body. Since having this hair loss condition, Ethan has received many comments and questions regarding his baldness as many people have never heard of alopecia universalis. Ethan had to learn how to cope with negative responses like name-calling, and with a lot of support from family and friends, he learned to develop a positive outlook on his condition.

### What Do You Hope To Achieve With This Book?

I hope to help young minds gain an early understanding and appreciation of difficulties and differences existing in societies everywhere. Understanding hairloss in children is just one example. There are so many other concerns affecting children so we hope to educate young minds with a series of books focusing on children's concerns.

Great Grandma's



Hairloss Remedy by Rebecca Loke is available at all major bookstores and Meru Valley Resort in Ipoh. For more information, contact: [info@mediamasters.com.my](mailto:info@mediamasters.com.my) or call **05-2495938**.

## ISH FOOTBALL FEVER



Football fever has not only affected the ordinary man in the streets but corporations in the city. One such victim was the Ipoh Specialist Hospital

(ISH). The first floor of the hospital had been turned into a gallery for football aficionados complete with a replica of the World Cup trophy, flags, colours

and information on all 32 teams participating in South Africa. Along with these was a giant TV screen for the convenience of those who wished to keep themselves updated and entertained. The atmosphere and mood of the greatest game on Earth was encapsulated within the confines of the floor.

"Staff, both non-medical and consultants, partook in this month-long competition entitled, 'My Team is the Champion'", said Ahmad Nasiruddin Harun, the CEO, to Ipoh

Echo. "There are 723 administrative staff and 55 doctors on our list. They donned jerseys of teams of their choice." A huge hamper awaited the winners. The hamper was on display on the floor for all to see."

Visitors got to enjoy the ambience and had a go at a game of football from the many tables available. Response from the public was encouraging, as many were seen milling around their favourite teams. "It's our contribution to the game which has a huge

following worldwide", Nasiruddin remarked.

ISH support sports and teamwork and they have teams for various sports, like, football, badminton, etc. The hospital takes

part in friendly matches, one of which was with TNB, and also in the KPJ Sports Carnival whereby 20 hospitals participate.

RM



## HOSPITAL FATIMAH SCHOOL OF NURSING



The Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing (HFSON) held its graduation ceremony in June 2010 at Hotel Impiana, Ipoh. The climax of the ceremony was the oath taken by 41 young ladies. The oath emphasized the disposition these graduates need, to carry out their duties with total dedication as a nurse.

The class of 2009 comprised 21 students who received a Diploma in Nursing and 20 who received a Certificate of Assistant Nurse. The

class achieved 100% passes with one student, Lim Soo Mui, scoring highest among all student nurses in the 109 nursing schools in Malaysia. Parents, tutors, friends, and members of the Board of Directors of HFSON, management and staff of Hospital Fatimah witnessed this auspicious event.

Ms Mary Narayanasamy, the Principal Tutor of HFSON, when asked about her hopes for the graduates in their future undertaking said, "I hope that they will continue to study their post

basic courses to become specialised nurses". Dato' Simon Chan, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of HFSON, said, "Nursing is, in many ways, a vocation. It's tough treating people who are sick. I have great admiration for the nurses, and my wishes for them are to be brave, keep an open mind and treat all their patients as equals."

Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing was established in 1994 (formerly known as City Nursing School) and initially began with the

conversion of 'Nursing Aides' to State Enrolled Nurses (SEN). Ten years later, the Malaysian Nursing Board approved a new conversion training programme from SEN to State Registered Nurses. In 2007, the School received recognition as an Institution of Higher Education when it was successfully registered by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Today, the School offers two courses, (i) Diploma in Nursing; a conversion programme from Assistant Nurse to Staff Nurse (A 7309) and (ii) Certificate of Assistant Nurse (A 7308) – previously called SEN. Both these courses were approved by the Malaysian Nursing Board and the Malaysian Qualification Agency.

The School, which started at the basement of Hospital Fatimah, is now located at No. 12, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, in a building which used to house the Congregation of the Brothers of Mercy until 2002. The curricula of the School include core subjects such as Behavioural Sciences, Basic Sciences and Nursing Sciences and compulsory non-nursing subjects such as Pendidikan

Moral, Pengajian Malaysia and Pengajian Agama, all taught by full-time and part-time Nursing Tutors. Some Visiting and Resident Consultants of Hospital Fatimah teach specialised subjects in the School voluntarily on their own time. Students of the school also undergo clinical experience in the wards of Hospital Fatimah, Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun Ipoh and Hospital Bahagia Tanjung Rambutan.

Students of Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing also learn about "Pastoral Care", (where counselling or comfort is offered to

those in need of help with emotional problems or stressful situations) and "Palliative Care" (which aims to alleviate pain and discomfort to improve the quality of life for patients with terminal illnesses).

Expansion plans for a new building of the School are in progress. The groundbreaking ceremony of the new building recently took place in February 2010 and the building is expected to be constructed soon. This double-storey building will accommodate six new classrooms, staff offices, a resource centre and an auditorium.



Nurses Training

For more information call:  
**Hospital Fatimah School Of Nursing**  
[A4P2470(PKP614)]  
No 12, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah,  
31400 Ipoh, Perak.  
Tel: **05-254 2084** Fax: **05-253 2084**  
Email: [hfson888@streamyx.com](mailto:hfson888@streamyx.com)



## YOUNG PERAK

## 01 Kinta Scouts 90th Anniversary



To commemorate its 90th anniversary, the 01 Kinta troop of ACS Ipoh, held a jamboree within the school's compound recently. The 01 Kinta troop has come a long way since its formation proving that scouting values have never lost their appeal. This year's theme was "Past, Present & Future". The objective was to connect all scouts, old and new, as a means to revive the scouting spirit. Ramesh Muthiah, a consultant engineer from Manchester, recounted the movement's history and its many luminaries. Senior Assistant of Co-Curricular Activities, Manoharan, described scouting as a game of purpose and encouraged members to find ways to capture the hearts of youths. With a turnout of over 750 participants the gathering was a success. Competitions such as marching, backwoods cooking, banner designing and others were held. Main Convent took the cooking title while St Michael's Institution, the foot drill title. Overall champion was Ave Maria Convent.

DK

## A Worthy Concert



Tenby Schools Ipoh showcased its students' latent talents by hosting a production entitled, "The Power of The Dream" at Politeknik Ungku Omar recently. The cast consisted of kindergarten, primary, secondary and A-Level students. Their performances had the audience rooted to their seats throughout the show. The school choir warmed up the crowd with a couple of catchy songs. Advisor Mrs Lai Kwong Wa, in her opening speech, welcomed the audience and promised them a night to remember. Dance routines – traditional, modern and a fusion of both – were staged. Several Michael Jackson songs, such as "Heal the World" and "We Are the World" were sung by the 'King of Pop' wannabes. Skits and sketches acted by primary school students touched the hearts of many. The sixth formers did a fine job with their version of Macbeth. The highlight of the evening was a musical performance by "The JEMS" (Josiah Hoo, Eric Lam, Michael Broom and Sean Wilson). Organising Chairperson, Mrs. Siva, attributed the success of the concert to the support given by students and staff.

DK

## Rural Spread of ICT Vital



Krian District in northern Perak has not missed out on KICT (Information and Communication Technology) opportunities other districts have enjoyed. The state government has been focused on spreading ICT to rural areas for some time and in line with this objective, an ICT fair was held in Bagan Serai recently to optimise people's interest.

The one-day fair was officiated by Hussin Mat Ali, the Multimedia and Communication Commissioner for North Region. The creativity of students was on display for all to see. Exhibits by students of Sekolah Menengah Teknik Krian, Bagan Serai, drew much praise from visitors.

The objective of the fair had been achieved judging from the enthusiasm of the huge crowd that came a calling. Some of the older folks were not that naïve. They knew how to handle computers and the many gizmos on show.

RN

## SPORT

## ERNEST LAUNCHES CENTURY RIDE 2010

The launching of Century Ride 2010 was formally declared on Thursday, July 8, at Tower Regency Hotel Ipoh. It was officiated by Organising Chairman, Ernest Balasingam and witnessed by members of the working committee and the President of Kelab Roadrunners Ipoh, Chong Him Shoong. Ernest told reporters that a larger number of participants would partake in this year's outing. "We reckon some 600 riders will congregate at Bukit Kinding Resort, Tg Rambutan." This home-grown cycling extravaganza is into its fourth edition and, judging



from feedback, is gaining prominence with a large number of foreign entries coming from Singapore, Thailand and even Japan. "They simply love the challenge and the route

we fixed," said Ernest. There are more sponsors this year than previous. Therefore, there will be more prizes for everyone. Prizes for lucky draws too are aplenty. "Support from

Perakeans is essential to make this a calendar event in the state," said Chong. The state government and the tourism department are behind the organisers. It will be flagged off on Sunday, August 1 at 7 a.m. in front of Bukit Kinding Resort, Tg Rambutan. Those who finish the 160-km ride within the time limit of 7 hrs 30 mins will be rewarded with a finisher's medal, a T-shirt and an achievement certificate. If you wish for more details please visit Century Ride's website at [www.centuryridemalaysia.blogspot.com](http://www.centuryridemalaysia.blogspot.com) or call Ernest at 012-5162687.

FZB

## A Memorable Visit for Children



Thirty-one children, who are undergoing treatment in the Paediatric Ward of Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, were taken on a "memorable" trip to Penang by the Ipoh Rotary Club recently. They visited the Toy Museum, Chocolate Boutique and Queensbay Mall. There was great excitement and much merriment as the children moved among the exhibits at the toy museum and chocolate boutique. The idea to cheer up the children under the club's community service project was mooted by past president Wu Chee Thutt together with Dr. Akbar Ali Hitam Ali and Dr. Chuah Bee Sim and staff members of the hospital. The one-day trip by chartered bus was under the supervision of Rotarians Cheah Sau Voon and Chan Siew Yee.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: 05-2552181; or email: [announcements@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipohecho.com.my), by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**Malaysian Nature Society – Kinta Nature Park Field Trip.** Sunday July 18, meet up at 8.30 am at KNP visitor area. For details, contact Lim Kim Chye (016-553 8431) or Lim Swee Yian (016-422 3895). For the latest info, log on to [www.mnsperak.wordpress.com](http://www.mnsperak.wordpress.com).

**The Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health** presents 'Vision of Forever' Odissi. Artistic direction by Ramli Ibrahim and featuring artistes of Sutra Dance Theatre. July 24, 7.30 pm, State Banquet Hall, Jalan Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab, Ipoh. Contact: 05-5335457 or 012-5056049 (Mr Subain).

**Kinta Medical Centre Antenatal Class** conducted by Dr. (Mrs) Dharmini Prushothaman. Saturday July 24, 2.00-4.00 pm. Free admission with attractive gifts. Light refreshments will be provided. For further information and registration, call 05-2439590.

**The All-American Boys Chorus Concert** on July 27 (Tuesday) at Wesley Methodist Church Ipoh Sanctuary, 121 Jalan Lahat (inside ACS compound). In aid of the Kesselring Building renovation. Entry by invitation only for adults and children 6 years and above. Contributions/donations at RM200, RM100, RM50 and RM30. For enquiries, contact: WMSI (Linda/Lai Ping) – 05-2545122; WMCI (Chee Peng) – 05-2545331; PSPA (Sara) – 05-5487814; Creative Music Academy (Daphne) – 012-5183290; Ebony Guitar (Kee Leong) – 05-2540349.

**Ipoh City Watch Dinner 2010.** The postponed dinner is on again. Friday, July 30, at 8 pm, Ipoh City and Country Club, Jalan Kampar. Entertainment and lucky draw on the card. For details and reservation contact Steven Lee at 016-5052848 or e-mail: [sleekk@yahoo.com](mailto:sleekk@yahoo.com).

**Mariaville Kindergarten's 30th Anniversary Family Carnival** on August 7 (Saturday) 9am-1pm. Food, pony

rides and fun-filled activities. All are welcome. For further information, contact: 05-5454344 (office).

**Talk on "Cognitive Education for Autistic Child"** by Mr. Roland Hifler at Hospital Pantai Ipoh on August 7 from 9am-5pm. Fee: RM70. For further information contact: 016-5535803 (Pek Imm) and 016-4227076 (Charlotte).

**Y's Men's Club Ipoh 45th Installation of the President and Board of Directors** will be held at Hotel Excelsior Ipoh (14th Floor) at 7.30pm Saturday, August 14. For more information, contact: 012-5381939 (K. Letchimanan) or 016-9719098 (K.N. Chandran).

**Portuguese Eurasian Association Perak (PEAP).** Are you an Eurasian of Portuguese descent or know of anyone who is but has yet to register with PEAP? If you do, please forward details to: Portuguese Eurasian Association Perak (PEAP), P.O. Box 594, Taman Ipoh, 31407 Ipoh. Email: [peap09@gmail.com](mailto:peap09@gmail.com).



## COMMUNITY

## "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players"



These words from Shakespeare's *As You Like It* rang true literally for forty young participants who attended a two-day workshop recently, organised by Perak Society of Performing Arts (PSPA) Junior Associate Conference at Taman Budaya, Ipoh. The participants were introduced to the theatre and the world of stage production in a number of workshop sessions with 'Exploring Stage and Theatre' as the main theme. These young people whose ages range from 12-18 and were from schools around Ipoh, were given the opportunity to draw on their creativity and inherent talent in order to realise their potential as stage actors and actresses. On hand to guide them were facilitators with vast experience in the per-

forming arts. Rosalina Ooi, Jeya Jeyaratnam, Chantelle-Shakila Tiagi, Jeffrey Chew, Sylvia Wong, Jacqueline Thong, Gerald Goh and Xavier Fong, in their respective sessions, took the participants through their paces, demonstrating how action, movement, voice, song etc. were fundamental to acting and could take one to great heights as a stage performer.

The conference, overseen by the president of PSPA, Datin Rosalina and the organising chairperson, Doreen Kam, began with an introduction to the theatre by Datin Rosalina. Immediately after that was a 'Laughter' session conducted by Jeya who believed that the 'feel-good effects of laughter' would help raise energy levels. Through her activities, she

## IPOH BRIEF

## Long Awaited Ipoh-KL Electric Train Service to Start in August

The long awaited Electric Train Service (ETS) plying Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur and Seremban will commence commercial runs on the first week of August. This was confirmed to Ipoh Echo by the COO of ET Sdn Bhd (a subsidiary of KTMB), Encik Azizullah Kinayatullah. Azizullah, however, could not confirm the actual fare price which he said was pending approval by government authorities.

The ETS, which became possible following the construction of a dual-tracking system, will operate eight return trips daily between Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur.

There are two types of services. The Express Service will take one hour and 50 minutes and will make six stops between Ipoh and KL Sentral. The scheduled stops

are Batu Gajah, Kampar, Tanjung Malim, Kuala Lumpur and KL Sentral, while the Transit Service will stop at all the stations along the way and the journey will take two hours and 15 minutes. The current travel time between Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur is two hours 50 minutes.

The full journey from Ipoh to Seremban will take 3 hours. Each train set will consist of 6 coaches with a seating capacity of 350 passengers. The top speed of the train set is 140 kph. The train schedules and fares to the various destinations will be announced later.

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taught the participants to laugh at themselves and shed their inhibitions, thus preparing them for what was to come next. Before the session was over, everyone was psyched up and raring to go.

Jeffrey then carried out a session on 'Exploring with Song', highlighting how music and song could be an integral aspect of stage performances. The participants clearly enjoyed this session. Chantelle explored 'Action' and got the youngsters to understand the significance of movement and action. Sylvia meanwhile got the participants to exercise their vocal cords, with hilarious results. Xavier had 'stage tips' for the soon-to-be stage performers, drawing together aspects of imagination, body language and

voice projection and demonstrating how these can be exploited for a successful and memorable stage performance.

The intensive two-day workshop culminated in stage presentations by the different age groups who used dance, voice, song and movement to communicate their perception of what 'Happiness is...'. With merely a couple of hours of rehearsal, it was the moment of truth for the participants when they proved that they were indeed capable of staging fast-paced, highly-charged and enthralling performances. The internal audience of mainly parents were entertained by the riveting presentations.

It was an exciting 2-days for the participants, as evidenced by the

laughter and spontaneity during the workshop sessions. Alexander Joseph (13 years) and his brother Adrian (12 years) felt the workshop was fun and enjoyed the new experiences, while Isabelle Leong (17 years) and her friends

from MGS were seen giving their all in the activities. Perhaps the question that could be uppermost in everybody's mind after the workshop is "To be, or not to be (an actor): that is the question." (Hamlet).

R. SANDRA

## Surveillance Cameras Being Installed Within Ipoh City

About 100 strategic locations within Ipoh City are to be covered by surveillance cameras. Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim stated this after chairing the city council full board monthly meeting recently. He said that initially, seven CCTVs are being installed and would be operational by the end of this month. There will be two operation centres to monitor the CCTVs, one manned by the police and the other (a back-up centre) operated by city council at its premises. City council's staff is currently attending hands-on training in Penang on how to manage the CCTV systems.

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## MY SAY



● By Jerry Francis

The cause of the frequent flash floods in the Ipoh Garden-Canning Garden areas lies right under Jalan Fair Park at the Jalan Hospital junction. This is a well-known fact, yet for years the Ipoh City Council and the relevant departments have not taken any remedial measures.

Every time there is a heavy downpour, the areas on both sides of the monsoon drains from Sungai Senam up to Ipoh Garden South and Hock Lee Park, experience flash floods, affecting some 2,000 residents. Worse affected is the Police's Federal Reserve Unit complex at Sungai Senam, where the monsoon drain runs beside it.

Following continuous heavy rains on June 27, I received a number of calls from residents in the affected areas. As I had promised to personally take a look at their long lingering problem, I made a quick inspection of the

affected areas during the rain.

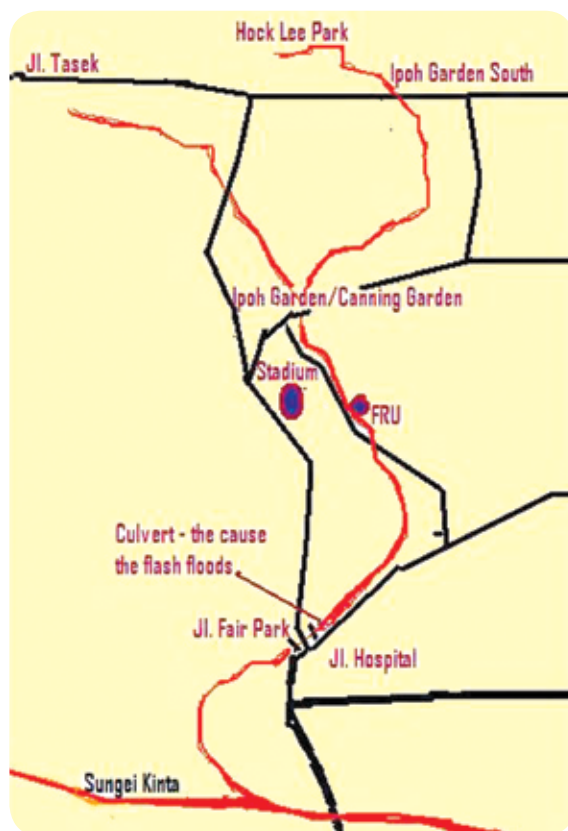
Jalan Fair Park, which cuts across the monsoon drain, formed a dam causing the water-level at one end to rise to above four metres from its normal level and where the only culvert is located was a whirlpool, as the water was sucked across the road and gushing out at the other end to flow into Sungai Kinta.

At the Police Reserve Unit complex, a number of staff quarters and cars were affected.

It is ridiculous to expect one culvert about 4x4 feet to be able to contain the thousands of litres of water flowing down from Canning Garden, Hock Lee Park, Ipoh Garden and Ipoh Garden South.

The culvert was constructed over half a century ago before the vast housing developments had taken place upstream. No improvement has been made since to ease the flow under the road.

Best solution is to build a bridge to replace the culvert, but it would be costly. However, "pipe jacking" or excavating to lay additional culverts, each about 6x6 feet, could be cheaper and sufficient to reduce the large volume



● The route of the monsoon drain where floods occurred

of water by about half and thus overcome the flash floods problem. It is estimated that the cost of laying additional culverts is about RM500,000.

This is a small amount considering how it would benefit the residents, who have been affected by flash floods for about 20 years. Residents of the affected areas have formed a residents' association to bring

their plight to Ipoh City Council.

"We are appealing to the city council to solve the flash floods problem without further delay", said Lee Peng Kuan, vice-chairman of the residents' association.

"Whenever there is heavy rain, especially at night, the residents in the affected areas cannot sleep, worrying about the im-



● The cause of flash floods

pending floods. The water will rise fast and subside within half an hour."

Lee, a technical assistant in an engineering firm, has been crusading against the flash floods in the last 10 years. He has even gone out in the rains to study the impact of the rainwater and calculated the amount of water the culvert under Jalan Fair Park could take. Armed with such data, he had joined force with the residents and over the years they had made various appeals and suggestions to the city council and the relevant departments to deal with the problem, but to date, no attempt at resolution is in sight. "What the city council did about five years ago was to convert a children's playground at Hock Lee Park into a water

retention pool, but it did not help," said Lee.

Commenting on the residents' appeal, city councillor in charge of the zone Ms. Ceylyn Tay, admitted that the city council is fully aware of the problem. She sympathises with the residents and hopes they will bear with the problem for a bit longer. Tay plans to bring up the issue before the city council. "Since it will involve a large amount of funds, we need the State Government to help get an allocation for the project from the 10th Malaysia Plan", she said.

This means the affected residents will have to face the impending flash floods as the North-East Monsoon that brings heavy rains is just around the corner.

## Chronic Kidney Disease on the Rise

More and more hospitals are expanding their Dialysis units and Ipoh's Pantai Puteri Hospital is no exception.

Medical News Today defines Dialysis as 'the artificial process of getting rid of waste (diffusion) and unwanted water (ultrafiltration) from the blood. This process is naturally done by our kidneys. Some people, however, may have failed or damaged kidneys which cannot carry out the function properly – they may need dialysis. In other words, dialysis is the artificial replacement for lost kidney function (renal replacement therapy)'

Prevention is better than cure. When a person is diagnosed with early stage chronic kidney disease (CKD) which is categorised in 5 stages, (stages 1-3) he/she should ideally co-operate with the nephrologist to be successfully managed.

"About 40% of my patients are undergoing dialysis," says Dr. Teo Sue Mei, a practicing nephrologist since 1997. She sees about 70 to 80 kidney patients a week in Pantai Hospital Ipoh. Unfortunately, "most of my patients come to me when they are at stage three or higher".

When CKD worsens to stage five, or end-stage renal disease (ESRD), the



patient needs renal replacement therapy. For the fortunate few who are able to get a suitable kidney from a donor, transplantation is a viable option. However for the large majority of those afflicted, dialysis is the most popular form of treatment and the patient will have to depend on it for life.

When asked why there is an apparent pro-

liferation of CKD, Dr Teo lists the main reasons for CKD progression as uncontrolled diabetes; uncontrolled blood pressure; drugs or herbs that may be toxic to the kidneys; infection; dehydration and kidney stones, which block the urinary tract.

She further adds, "Timely identification of causes leading to the rapid decline of renal function,

as well as prompt treatment, is important to preserve kidney function".

Some patients with CKD stage three will be able to halt or delay the disease progression to stage five. "But that depends on the underlying cause for the CKD. For patients with diabetic kidney disease, the disease tends to progress."

"The severity of CKD

at diagnosis is also an important factor which predicts the rate of progression to stage five. The more severe the kidney failure is at presentation, the more likely that the patient will progress."

In order to delay the onset of ESRD, Dr Teo lists five rules which are:

- Good blood pressure control – 125/75 mmHg
- Good diabetes control in patients with diabetic kidney disease
- Stop smoking
- Low protein diet for those with CKD stage three and above
- Certain hypertension drugs (e.g., angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers) can reduce the leakage of protein to the urine and help slow the progression of kidney failure.

Family members and friends can also play an important role by reminding CKD patients of these five golden rules. Dr Teo further added, "Prevention of kidney disease is the most important aspect. As kidney disease is most often silent in the early stages, people who fall under the high-risk group should undergo regular screening."

