

Pg 3



Perak Heritage In Limbo

Pg 4

The State  
of Art in Ipoh



Pg 5

SeeFoon Takes  
Readers  
on a Foodie  
Feeding Frenzy



Pg 9

Did The Orang Asli  
Help Invent The  
Diesel Engine?



## FRESH FOOD CENTRE

### – Far Sighted or White Elephant?

By A. Jeyaraj and James Gough



TEMAN or Terminal Makanan Negara (National Food Terminal)




Pumpkins

A RM110 million National Food Terminal or Terminal Makanan Negara (TEMAN), which is claimed to be “a state-of-art” fresh food centre similar to those in developed countries, has begun operations at Gopeng. This is the first complex of its kind to be opened in the country and would be fully operational on 1 January 2011.

Continued on page 2



Traders' lots



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# First in the Country



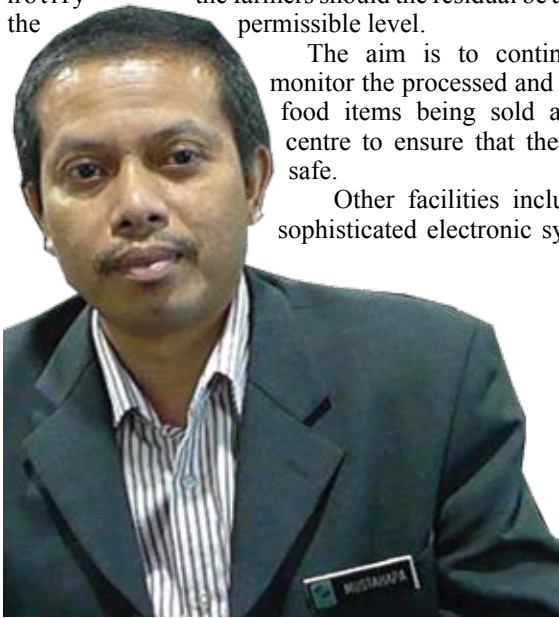
The centre which was set up by Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) was planned to be a modern food supply centre linking production, distribution and consumption under a single complex.

## Food Safety Assurance

TEMAN's role is to co-ordinate and supply all agricultural products and livestock to suppliers and retailers in the country and abroad. Aside from conducting all wholesale activities, the centre is also equipped with a laboratory to test the level of pesticides in vegetables and notify the farmers should the residual be above the permissible level.

The aim is to continually monitor the processed and dried food items being sold at the centre to ensure that they are safe.

Other facilities include a sophisticated electronic system



TEMAN Director Mohamad Mustapha Awang

for auctioning of livestock. This would be the first of its kind in the country. The market price of cattle and goats can be determined through the auctioning.

## Linkage for Farmers and Markets

TEMAN consists of a central trade area for collecting and redistributing of agricultural products to satisfy national food demand. It would manage wholesale activities, associated pre-packaging, assembly and distribution in an integrated and systematic environment.

Through use of technology and relevant infrastructure in place, it would be closely linked to farmers and markets throughout the country as well as international markets.

Located on a 20 ha site, it comprises an administrative block, central wholesale market, retail market, chicken and meat market, fish market, vegetable market, flower centre, ornamental fish centre, cold-room and cafeteria.

## Attracting Right Calibre Traders

FAMA's Division Director Mohamad Mustapha Awang, said that the complex has 287 stalls and about 95% of them have been taken up, but only 30% have moved in.

He wonders, however if people of the right calibre are renting the place. He said FAMA is interested in getting professional traders and those who can be trained to run a wholesale business.

The centre provides facilities to carry out trade on a business-to-business basis. FAMA provides the infrastructure but does not get involved in the business.

Since the complex is on trial, currently most of the stalls are doing retail business. The place is new and people are not aware of its existence.

Mohamed Nasir bin Muda, Manager of the Terminal said that currently two lorry loads of *dokong* (local fruit) and *labu* (pumpkins) are imported from Kelantan and in return *guava* from Tapah and vegetables are exported. The complex also receives fresh-water fish from Sungkai. The fish market operates from 4.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. and the vegetable market operates in the afternoon. He added that he has received enquiries from Mustafa Centre in Singapore and Middle East countries to supply agricultural products.

He said that those customers require large volumes and he had to ensure that adequate supplies are available before committing to any deal. He is also discussing with hypermarkets and supermarkets on their requirements.

Mohamad said that TEMAN has signed an agreement with SAMACO (Seoul Agricultural and Maritime Products Corporation), an agri-business organisation in Korea to provide training.

## First Year Rental Discounts

During the first year of operation, rental at the centre is given at 50% discount. They are RM500 per month for vegetable stalls, and RM800 per month for fish and meat stalls, excluding water and electricity. A cold-room is available for a fee. From the second year of operation the rental will be double.

TEMAN would also be the main distributor of controlled items to ensure that adequate supply is

available at the set price.

## Wholesalers Find Flaws

Mohamad said that the traders at the wholesale market at Kuala Pari were invited to participate, but only a few were interested despite assurances that their wholesale business would not be affected as TEMAN is a national food supply centre, while the wholesale market only caters to local customers.

Secretary of the Persatuan Pemborong Sayur-Sayuran (Vegetable Wholesalers' Association), Tan Peng Kiang, said that the members are unanimous in not moving to the new complex. It is impressive but not practical to handle wholesale business. The stall areas are too restrictive and their current location is better suited to serve the needs of the local community.

Members of the Wholesale Fish Traders Association said they too were not willing to move to the new complex because of its design flaws which make it more suitable for retail business rather than wholesale. One of them said that he receives 60 to 70 containers of different varieties of fish at a time and these must be unloaded immediately. Further, the storage must be such that any particular variety can be retrieved quickly, neither of which criteria is met at the new complex.

## Higher Costs

The traders are happy with the current services provided by Ipoh City Council and only pay RM1,440 annually for the licence fee inclusive of water and electricity.

At the new complex the rental is much higher exclusive of cost of water and electricity. Plus the licence fee must be obtained from Kampar Town Council at an additional cost. The place is too far from Ipoh and with transport costs being higher it will be difficult for them to do business profitably without passing on the additional cost to the customer, resulting in higher prices all around.

Most of the traders are of the opinion that a market that caters for Ipohites must be in Ipoh. They also stressed that the population of Ipoh cannot support two separate wholesale markets. Business is poor and they are struggling to be in business.

The traders have not really taken a stand on what to do if they are forced to move out. They will deal with it when the time comes.

Is this not another potential white elephant planned and built without consultation of the end users?



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IPOH echo

From the Editor's Desk

● by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

# PERAK HERITAGE IN LIMBO

*If destroying relics of our past or doing away with something we consider kolot (primitive) then we are nowhere near the end...*

The public forum organised by the Perak Heritage Society on Saturday, October 16 at Syuen Hotel provided an insight into the thinking of Perakeans at large.

Heritage, as the definition goes, is not confined to buildings alone. It covers such diverse aspects such as beliefs, culture, traditions, music, languages and folklore – to name just a few. Even the almost barren limestone outcrops that greet motorists into Ipoh on the Plus Expressway and the disused tin mining fields in Kinta Valley are items of heritage significance, however inconsequential they may be. And if this definition is to be taken in its proper context, then there is plenty for us to digest. Therefore, making Ipoh or Kinta Valley a UNESCO-listed heritage site, following on the heels of Penang and Malacca,

requires more than just lip service and the frequent knee-jerk reactions associated with those within the heritage circle.

Dato' Hamidah Osman, in her opening remarks, reminded the 100-odd participants to be committed in safeguarding the state's heritage. "Once gone they're gone forever," she decried. Hamidah is right. There is no way of restoring an object to its former glory once it is destroyed. However, her plea for commitment from interested parties, individuals and the media does not necessarily absolve the authorities from blame.

"The authorities should be blamed too," said Mohd Taib, President of Perak Heritage Society. He theorised that the failure to gazette and the reluctance to declare an entity as having heritage significance were reasons why they were being



destroyed. "Commitment is a two-way traffic," he insisted. Property owners sensing that their properties would be declared heritage sites would either sell them or have them developed. The recent destruction of a row of pre-war houses along Jalan Chung On Siew to make way for a budget hotel is proof of this phenomenon.

One significant development arising from the

forum was the RM50,000 grant from the state government to Centre-KUTAI of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Seri Iskandar. The centre has been tasked to collect and collate folk stories from Perak and transform them into a book for dissemination to Perakeans. "The sum may not be much but it is a step in the right direction," said Mohd Taib. However, some doubted the ability of UiTM to take on the job, let alone complete it. Evidently, the size of the grant has led some to think otherwise.

Professor Amran Hamzah of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia raised one pertinent point about heritage – Outstanding Universal Value. The universal value of a heritage site has to be identified and promoted. Kinta Valley's association with tin mining and prospecting is second to none. In the mid-1980s when prices of tin ore fell, the valley's prominence took a beating. Tin and anything related to the metal, is the universal value that needs to be highlighted. Therefore, maintaining an operational tin dredge, a working

palong with running water and tin tailings on it and *dulang* washing are a must to achieve the target. Cultures, traditions, languages, tribal habitats, etc., too require exposure. "These are the intangibles which deserve similar treatment," he remarked.

Judging from the foregoing, Perak still has a long way to go. It took Penang and Malacca almost 20 years to be where they are today.

"Some soul searching is in order if we want results," said Mohd Taib. "And the first question we need to ask is whether we have done enough?"

If destroying relics of our past or doing away with something we consider *kolot* (primitive) then we are nowhere near the end.

## One Wife and Three Breakfasts ● by Peter Lee

A rich businessman named Thong has been married to his wife, Trisha since 1970 in the traditional Chinese way. They have three children who are now aged 33, 35 and 37. He then married again, Jessica, in 1983 and has 2 children now aged 23 and 25. Subsequently, in 2002, he took Evon as his third wife who bore him a child who is now aged 8. Thong always begins his day by having his breakfast with Trisha first and then moves on to Jessica's house for his second breakfast. Thereafter, he will end his breakfast in Evon's house. The three women are not on good terms. His daily routine with all these breakfasts has made him obese and his health is affected. Recently, when asked by a close friend if he has planned for his family in terms of wealth distribution should he pass away, his reply was this never crossed his mind. He now feels that it is time to quickly take action on it. But the question is would a will be sufficient for his predicament?



In the case of Thong, one has to determine who the legal wife is. Since Thong married Trisha in 1970, Trisha is considered the legal wife because under the Malaysian law for non-Muslims, traditional marriages before March 1, 1982 are recognised and the woman is the legal wife. Therefore in Thong's case, any marriage after March 1, 1982 is void which means that Jessica and Evon are not considered legal wives. That being the case, Jessica, Evon and their children shall have no right of succession or inheritance to Thong's estate if Thong passes away without a will or a trust.

First Thong will have to list down his movable and immovable assets. With that in place, he can then specify in detail in his will for the distribution to his first family. Then it is best that he specifies the other assets to be transferred or assigned to two separate Private Trusts for the second and third family. The first most important matter Thong has to do is to appoint Executors and Trustee for his will and trust. Due to the poor relationship between the women, it is crucial that Thong appoints a Trustee Company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to be the Executors and Trustee for his Estate. This is because Rockwills Trustee Bhd. ensures expertise in this field of work, impartiality, professionalism and perpetual existence. If individuals from any one of the families are chosen to be Executors and Trustee then it can raise questions of impartiality and trustworthiness. In addition, the problem can turn ugly if members of one family are appointed as Executors/Trustee and members of another family are holding the Death Certificate because the original Death Certificate is the first key to unlocking Thong's entire estate.

Appointment of guardian for children over 21 years is not required but essential for the child who is 8 years old if Thong and Evon were to pass away together. In setting up the Private Trust for the second and third family, Thong is named the "Settlor". He appoints Rockwills Trustee Bhd. as the "Trustee" and a family member to be the "Protector". A "Protector" acts as the watchdog on the Trustee. Then he has to name all his respective "Beneficiaries". All these key players will be stated together with the instructions and conditions of distribution to the beneficiaries in a legal document called the "Trust Deed".

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 G. Sivapragasam

**The State of Art in Ipoh**

At 11 a.m. on October 3, Tan Sri Dato' (Dr.) Hj Ahmad Azizuddin, with a few simple heart-warming words, declared open for public viewing an exhibition of oil paintings by Indonesian artist Budi Utama Siagian. The exhibition entitled 'Love, Dream and Hope 2010' held in the Garden Villa located at No. 5, Jalan Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah ran for a week ending on October 10.

On the day of the opening there was an audience of about 70 and during the entire period of the exhibition it attracted, I am told, about 5 visitors a day. To me these are sad numbers considering the fact that in war-torn Sri Lanka a similar event would attract hundreds of visitors each day.

**Art as Culture**

Forget the number of paintings sold; going by the numbers that visited the exhibition, I can only conclude that the title of the exhibition 'Love, Dream and Hope' is not only a synopsis of the paintings on display but an apt description of the level of Ipoh's interest in culture.

An art exhibition in Ipoh is already a rare occurrence, this being the case, an exhibition by a foreign artist should most decidedly have been an event to celebrate. However this did not happen. It is depressing to note that art is perceived by members of Ipoh society to be so valueless that they would not even spare an hour in the course of a week to visit the exhibition. With response of this kind it would be a brave soul who would undertake the task of organising a similar event anytime in the future.

**Art in Development**

We talk of achieving developed status by the year 2020. I don't think we

really understand what this status means. It is not only the material that defines a developed society. It has to be complemented by things that feed the soul. The true appreciation and enjoyment of culture in the form of visual and performing arts are factors that define the level of quality life. They, more than anything else, instil in us higher values and make us better people. It must be remembered that it was art that set man on the path to civilisation.

If it is too late for the adults, at least efforts should be made to inculcate the appreciation of art in school children. Parents should be encouraged to take their children to events of this nature. Schools must make these a part of their curricular activities. We talk of providing a well rounded holistic education to our children. This is what it is.

**Art Centre Urgent**

No. 5 is a great place for public events of this type. However, it is set up to

accommodate a variety of uses. An art exhibition needs a lot more than what is available there. Anyone who has visited an art exhibition in a location dedicated to this purpose will know what I mean. The paintings need to be presented to the viewer in a manner that delivers true appeal.

Proper lighting, a conducive environment and fitting infrastructural support are critical to enable the visitor to truly enjoy the works on display.

What Ipoh needs is a good art gallery. For some time work has been going on to turn the back portion of the building that houses the Ipoh Town Hall into a gallery. It is unfortunate that it still continues to be a work in progress. Hopefully when it is com-

pleted it will have facilities to accommodate exhibitions of paintings both by local and foreign artists.

**Art to be Commercial**

Visitors at the opening ceremony of the exhibition included three local artists who at some time or other have held exhibitions of their works. Their stories of attendance at their events were all too familiar – not too many people came to view their paintings and few pieces were sold. They feel that promotion of art in Ipoh is only possible with patronage of Ipoh's wealthy.

I however see it a little differently. I am aware that currently almost every one of the events associated with the performing and visual arts are sponsored and subsidised. This has to change. The artists need to

view it as a business and, as with any commercial enterprise, it needs to be structured as such. There is no necessity to reinvent the wheel. It has been done elsewhere. All we need to do is to duplicate the model.

**The Art of Budi**

Let me end by saying that Budi's paintings, executed in vibrant bold colours, depict the daily activities of the common people. In these scenes he interprets the inner feelings of the people whether they are engaged in business, entertainment, conflict or amusement and relates them to his audience forcefully. They could easily be interpreted as portraying our local life scenes. The most significant work was undoubtedly Si Dongkok IV. The artist's talent in bringing to fore the true face of the definitive mischief maker is truly remarkable.

To those who missed the exhibition all I can say is that they missed an experience.

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## Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

# SeeFoon Takes Readers on a Foodie Feeding Frenzy

What do you do with out-of-town visitors who come to Ipoh for a day or two or three? Yes you could take them on the Heritage Trail Walk on Saturdays at 8.00 a.m. (on your own if one is not scheduled – just get the trail map from hotels or the Tourist Information Centre at Jalan Bandaraya) and show them the caves, the Herb Garden, Kellie's castle, Gua Tempurung, etc.; and then there is food, glorious food to fill up not only stomachs but the idle hours in between. So for the next three issues, I will be presenting to you dear readers, a Foodie Trail guide for all the meals you may wish to eat in a day from morning till late night. These are naturally my personal preferences and many of you may have your particular favourites. For more details on the various restaurants or stalls, we'll put reference numbers on the issues in which they have been featured in greater detail. These can be obtained online at: <http://ipohecho.com.my> by downloading the relevant PDF.



## Day 1

### Breakfast

(all these shops will have sold out by lunchtime; some even earlier)

#### 1. Curry Mee

- Xin Quan Fang (174 Jln Sultan Iskandar, diagonally opposite the New Town Police station). Order a big bowl of the 'Liu' (a combination of chicken, prawns, stewed pork, roast pork, pig's skin and ear) which comes with its special sauce. Be prepared to wait especially on weekends.
- Restoran & Kafe New Weng Fatt (1 Lebuhraya Ipoh, Ipoh Garden South). They were formerly operating across the road.

#### 2. Pan Mee

- Kafe Tim** (1 & 3 Jalan Medan Ipoh 1E, Medan Ipoh Bistari). Ask for dry or with soup and add fish paste, pig's liver, tripe and your choice of sweet potato leaves or Choi Sum. Also available from the same shop: fish-head noodles and curry mee.
- Pusat Makanan Chha Yong** (2 Tingkat Tmn Ipoh 11, Ipoh Garden South). More original but chilli sauce may be a bit sour for some. For a milder chilli, try **Kedai Minuman & Makanan Hua Nam** (32 Jln Raja Ekram – New Town).



## Mid-Morning Break

### 1. Egg Tart

- Hong Kee Confectionary** (Kedai Kopi Weng Seng, 14 Jln Cockman – New Town).
- Choy Kee Biscuits** (Simee Market – only take-away or 37 Psn Bercham Timur 1, Tmn Bercham Baru).

### Lunch

(Preferably before 2.00 p.m. for availability)

- Kedai Kopi Kong Heng** (75 Jln Bandar Timah – Old Town and next door **Kedai Kopi Thean Chun**). The most famous hawker stall centre; a must-visit place for all who visit Ipoh. Here, gathered under two roofs of these ancient coffee shops are all the hawker delectables for which Ipoh is renowned. You'll have to wait for a table during lunch time though. Here's the choice of fare, each one highly worth savouring.

- Chicken tauge & soup kuey teow** (both stalls are good)
- Yau Yu Ong Choy** (blanched kangkong with cuttlefish and a rich peanut sauce)
- Chinese Satay** (with pork) – ask for the liver and intestines
- Rojak**
- Chee Cheong Fun** (try also the stuffed version and eat it with either mushroom sauce or pigs' skin curry)
- Popiah**
- Caramel Custard** (only from Kedai Kopi Thean Chun)

- Big Tree Food Garden – Dai Shu Keok** (Jln King, off Jln Tokong, behind Tuck Kee Restaurant, Pasir Pinji). This location is famous for their *Yeong Liu* or *Yong Tau Foo*, vegetables and bean curd stuffed with fish paste, fish balls and their deep fried fish/pork turnip roll. Select from the vast array, hand it to the person behind the counter and they'll serve it with your choice of clear or mildly curried soup. Other dishes to try here are the Congee or Chinese Rice porridge with your choice of ingredients and the *Lui Cha*, a Hakka specialty of rice, chopped mixed vegetables served with a thick soup/sauce made from ground Chinese green tea leaves, basil, mint, coriander, sesame seeds and peanuts.

## Teatime

- Ipoh White Coffee & Kaya Toast** at Nam Heong Dim Sum, 2 Jalan Bandar Timah (Old Town).
- Soya Milk & Beancurd – Tao Ching & Tao Fu Fah** at Funny Mountain Soya Bean, 49 Jalan Theatre, opens 10.30 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.

## Dinner

- Li Garden** (57 Laluan Pinji Seni 4, Taman Pinji Seni – corner coffee shop on left about 500 m after first traffic light at turn-off to airport). Open: 5.00 p.m.-Midnight Tel: Mr Chan (012-5002135) Mr Liew (012-5183370). Do book in advance and order their fish head hotpot. Other specials: *Nam Yu Fah Lam*, fried pork belly marinated in red fermented bean curd, their bread wrapped chicken curry, fried or steamed clams, beef brisket soup, braised lamb shank, steamed chicken with ginger, sizzling tilapia, and basil fried rice. See IE 98.
- Soon Fatt Restaurant** (42 Jln Seenivasagam – New Town, 05-2436864). Salt-baked Tilapia, smoked chicken, *Tai Look Meen* (fried thick noodle with oodles of fried pork lard), spicy sautéed intestines, *belacan* fried sweet potato leaves. Private rooms available. See IE 76.

## Late Night Supper

(opens after 10.30 p.m. & continues till the wee hours)

Stalls near Yik Foong Complex, directly across the road from the big market or Pasar Besar, Jln Laxamana (New Town). Choice of:

- Har Meen** (Prawn Noodle) – Excellent
- Roast Pork**
- Char Kway Teow** (stall says Mee Goreng)
- Yeong Tao Foo**

IE107 featured Seafood Noodles. A reader has written in to say that Kim Keei has moved from Jalan Yau Tet Shin and is now relocated to a corner coffee shop off Jalan Bendahara behind the new shoplots exactly opposite the Grassland/88 bus depot, a short distance from Sri Maju bus depot.

## Are you Stressed-out, Career-Committed or Single Parents?

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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.

**Perak Entrepreneur and Skills Development Centre (PESDC) Career Day** on November 2 (Tue), from 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., at Kompleks Latihan PESDC, Jalan Johan 2/2, Kawasan Perindustrian Pengkalan 2, 31500 Pusing. Free admission. Recommended for those wishing to find employment in factories and those wishing to learn more about SME. Interviews and talks by key industrial players. Opening ceremony by Dato' Hamidah Osman at 9.30 am. Call: **05-3668869** (Mr. Ng Kah Choong).

**Ipoh Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ISPAC) Food Fair** on Sunday November 7 at St John's Ambulance HQ Ipoh, 134 Jalan Raja Aziz, Ipoh. Stall sponsorships, donations and volunteers are welcome. Coupons will be on sale. For details or enquiries please contact **016-5608905** (Doreen) or **016-5279515** (Rani).

**Free Meditation Class and Healing.** Twin Heart Meditation: 7.00 p.m. Wednesdays, October 20 - November 24. Guided meditation open to public. Healing with no-touch, no-drug therapy done by trained volunteers: Saturdays, 2.00-6.00 p.m., October 16 - November 27. Contact: Centre for Prana Yoga & Self Transformation, **05-2554590** or **012-5222461**.

**Perak Lung Health Day Public Forums.** Pantai Hospital Ipoh: 'Coughing & Short of Breath' & 'Obstructive Sleep Apnea', November 13. Contact: **54005712** or **5405725**. Hospital Fatimah: 'Stop Smoking Made Easy', November 20. Contact: **5455777** (Susan). Ipoh Specialist Hospital: 'Asthma', November 27. Contact: **2408777** ext. **8111**.

**Perak Heritage Architectural Photo Exhibition** from November 7-23, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., at Garden Villa, 5 Jalan Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah.

**Child Safety Programme "Be Smart Be Safe"** for school counsellors and teachers from primary schools, on November 9, at Dewan Sukan Batang Padang, Tapah. Educators, care-givers, pre-school teachers and parents who are interested can contact PWV at **05-5469715**. (Please refer to page 7.)

**Rotary Club of Kinta's Dinner Talk on "How to make money from the share market through strategic investment - A Personal Experience"** by Mr. Koon Yew Yin, on November 9 at 7.30 p.m, Bonzai B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Syuen Hotel Ipoh. Seats are limited. Contact: Dr. Michael Chong **012-5012350** or Mr. Arthur Yeong **012-5301888**.

**Professional Golf Association Malaysia (PGAM) Clearwater Classic and Pro Am 2010** on November 10-13, at Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort, Batu Gajah, Perak. Pro Am Tournament on November 13, tee off at 1.30 p.m. Call: **016-5236154** (Yuvaraja).

**Perak Bar Committee Talk 'The 2008 Global Financial Crisis: Origins and Response'** by Mr. Tommy Thomas on November 12, at the Perak Bar Secretariat, 41 Jalan Dato' Maharajalela at 4.00 p.m. Limited seats. Call: **05-2537590** or **05-2415457**.

**Tenby Schools' 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner** at Syuen Hotel on November 12 (Fri), at 7.30 p.m. Calling all former students of Tenby Schools Ipoh! Tickets are priced at RM80 per seat or RM800 per table. Call the school office at **05-2538530**.

**YWCA Ipoh 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner**, November 16, 7.00 p.m. at YWCA Centre, 132 Persiaran Anderson. RSVP November 10. Contact: **05-2417635** (Linda).

**Composition VII Saxophone Quartet** on November 18 (Thur), 8.00 p.m. at Ballroom, Syuen Hotel Ipoh. Contact: **05-2413388** (CM Musicom Yamaha), **05-5454111** (The Music Store), 05-5479828 (Creative Music Academy) or **05-5487814** (PSPA). Other enquiries: **012-5215756**.

**Dinner Talk by Amnesty International Malaysia (Ipoh)** on issues of human rights. December 2, 7.00 p.m., at Ipoh City & Country Club. For dinner tickets, call: **019-5057086** (Hj. Zakaria Hj. Yahya) or **012-6290223** (Mr Sethu).

**Perak Academy Lectures, "No Democracy without Gender Equality: The Case for Women's Rights in Malaysia"** by Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir. On Friday, December 3 beginning 7.30 p.m. at Syuen Hotel, Ipoh. For details and reservations call Wai Kheng at: **05-5478949** or **016-5518172**.

**Ekspo "Kids World"**, December 4 & 5, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., at SMJK Perempuan Perak (Dewan Leong Wan Chin), Jalan Raja Permaisuri Bainun. Contact: **012-5693109** (Celia).

**The Roots Manesh's Programme for Special Needs.** Every Saturday and Sunday, 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. at The Roots Echo Resort, Tanjung Rambutan. Every special needs child must be accompanied by one adult for free; additional adult is RM15; non special needs child RM10. Proceeds will go into the Manesh Fund. Lunch, drinks & snacks provided. Contact: **05-5335411** or email: [therootsmalaysia@gmail.com](mailto:therootsmalaysia@gmail.com).

**Ipoh YMCA Dance Club**, free lessons for beginners for 3 months starting December 2010. Age 16 and above. Wednesdays 8.30-9.30 p.m. Call: **016-5322380/012-5993927**.

**Perak Academy Lectures, "No Democracy Without Gender Equality: The Case for Women's Rights in Malaysia"** by Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir. On Friday, December 3 beginning 7.30 p.m. at Syuen Hotel, Ipoh. For details and reservations call Wai Kheng at: **05-5478949** or **016-5518172**.

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## news roundup

### Orang Asli Activist Is Admitted To the Bar



Amani Williams-Hunt bin Abdullah was accepted as an Advocate and Solicitor to the High Court of Malaya recently.

Williams-Hunt, 57, a Semai Orang Asli from Tapah and fondly known as Bah Tony amongst the Orang Asli communities throughout the country, is very active in Orang Asli (OA) advocacy and was President of Persatuan Orang Asli Semenanjung Malaysia from 1987 to 1991.

Bah Tony who worked as a Banker for 26 years, resigned from his job in 2006 to do his Certificate in Legal Practice. He has been studying law part time since 1999 saying that "becoming a lawyer enabled him to seek justice and help for his community".

Currently he is a Member of the National Advisory Council for the Development of the Orang Asli Community, a think-tank established under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, and also a Committee Member for Orang Asli Rights under the Malaysian Bar Council.

Williams-Hunt is married to Puan Khatimatul Husna and has 6 children, 2 boys and 4 girls from ages 10 till 30.

JAG

### '120 Years of Faithfulness'



Church of St Michael Ipoh recently celebrated its 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a Mass and procession.

Themed '120 Years of Faithfulness', the Mass was celebrated by Bishop Antony Selvanayagam, of Penang Diocese together with Parish Priest Fr Michael Cheah and his assistant Fr Anthony Chong, on a huge canopied stage in the church's car park.

The main event of the celebration was a procession starting from the church onto Jalan Sultan Idris Shah (Brewster Road) then turning into Jalan Sultan Iskandar (Hugh Low Street) and Jalan Raja Ekram (Cowan Street) before returning to Jalan Sultan Idris Shah and the Church.

St Michael's Church is a historical building.

JAG

### Love and Death in Java



Teamworx Television and Film GmbH of Germany, a leading German production house, is currently producing a 2-part 90-minute television movie filmed

## Deepavali Treat



AmBank Group hosted a pre-Deepavali treat for 60 Indian children and grown-ups at Ipoh City and Country Club recently. The event was part of the Bank's on-going Corporate Social Responsibility Programme (CSR) of caring for the less fortunate. AmBank Regional Manager, Region 2, Ms Jessie Wong, officiated at the function. The attendees were entertained to food, drinks and tele-matches courtesy of the event organisers, Kelab AmBank Group. Each participant was given an AmBank passbook, as a form of encouragement to save with the bank. They also received prizes and goodies from Jessie. The recipients were from eight participating schools in Ipoh. Among them were 20 single mothers.

RM

## Ribbon of Life Campaign



Pantai Hospital Ipoh recently launched their Ribbon of Life Campaign in conjunction with the World Heart Awareness and Breast Cancer Awareness programmes. The launch included an interactive public forum in which speakers spoke on related topics followed by an art exhibition at the Garden Villa, Ipoh.

President of the Breast Cancer Welfare Association, Ms Ranjit Kaur, herself a 'survivor', shared her experience during her "Journey in Breast Cancer" in which she clarified the facts and myths when one is faced with this disease.

Ranjit later moderated a group of survivors who also shared their experiences in handling the disease. The campaign kicked off on October 1 at Pantai Hospital where staff and family members underwent a week-long free ECG and clinical breast examination. The campaign will continue over the next two months with road shows covering villages and corporations such as TNB, banks and factories.

The exhibition, a collaborative attempt with Kinta Heritage Society, RTM, Pink Champion Society Perak and well-meaning individuals, was officiated by DYTU Tuanke Zara Salim, Raja Puan Besar Perak on October 18. Drawings by five talented local artists were on display in the gallery for public viewing. Proceeds from the sales of these art pieces will go to Pink Champion Society Perak and Breast Cancer Welfare Association and also to fund community outreach programmes in the state. The five artists are Aminudin Mohd Daud, Mirzal Abdul Manan, Shamsul Baharin, Dzulkarnain Daud, Azizul Rabu and Julbert Maranon. The theme of their artworks is on heritage sites in Perak.

The last activity of the campaign is a massive bicycle rally through Ipoh which is scheduled for December 18.

JAG/RM

totally in Malaysia of which 10% of the locations are filmed around Ipoh.

Love and Death in Java, the title of the film, is basically a love story and a period movie set amidst the turmoil in Batavia, Java from 1939 to 1949 at the start of the Second World War.

One of the scenes taking place at the verandah of the Station Hotel had actors and actresses dressed in period costumes of the colonial era. The previous day had the crews filming at Batu Gajah and in front of the Town Hall.

## Child Safety Programme in Batang Padang

Seroptimist International (SI) Ipoh and Perak Women for Women (PWW), together with Batang Padang District Education Department will be organising a one-day interactive workshop on "Be Smart Be Safe" for school counsellors and teachers from primary schools at Dewan Sukan Batang Padang in Tapah on November 9.

The "Be Smart Be Safe" programme is used as part of the training to teach participants how to conduct prevention programmes for children. The training begins with an introduction lecture on 'What is Child Sexual Abuse', and continues with a short game on 'Perception and Reality of Child Sexual Abuse'. At the third session, participants watch a video 'Ok Tak Ok Siri 2' which teaches children about safety which includes "good touch" and "bad touch"; the second half of the day is spent briefing them on how to use the video to run a personal safety programme for the children. Each participant is given a dry-run to practise what they have learnt. The one-day interactive training will be conducted by trained facilitators from Women's Centre for Change (WCC) Penang.

This programme has been conducted with the approval of the Ministry of Education and has covered all primary school counsellors in Kinta Utara and Kinta Selatan districts, Selama & Larut Matang and now in Batang Padang district. They hope to run this programme in all districts in Perak so that teachers and school counsellors in turn will be able to conduct this child safety programme at their respective schools.

Educators, care-givers, preschool teachers and parents who are interested in this programme can contact PWW at **05-5469715** for further details.

## Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign



Dato' Hamidah Osman, Executive Councillor for Tourism and Women's Affairs, called on the youths of today to be wary of human trafficking, a crime punishable under the Human Trafficking Act 2007. Hamidah was addressing NGOs, students and members of the public at the launching of the Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign held at Polytechnic Ungku Omar, Ipoh recently.

Present at the launch were the Menteri Besar's wife, Datin Seri Saripah Zulkifli, Deputy Secretary General Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, Dato' Abdul Rahim Mohd Radzi and the National Council for Women's Organisations Malaysia Deputy President, Faridah Khalid. "The cooperation of the public is sought to fight the scourge. They can call 999 to report or pass on information," she added.

To date, said Dato' Abdul Rahim, about 1,900 victims, mainly women and children, had been saved and placed under protection order by the courts. Most were foreigners who were duped into entering the country under the pretext of seeking jobs but ended in the flesh trade instead.

"The Government is considering amending the Human Trafficking Act 2007 to give it more bite," Rahim told the media, "and that includes extending the prison term of those convicted of the offence."

The welfare of the victims will not be ignored. "We're in the midst of improving facilities at shelter homes in the country," said Rahim. There are four shelter homes that cater for victims including the latest at Tanjung Keling, Malacca which can accommodate between 180 to 200 inmates.

RM

Donovan could not reveal the cost of producing the movie saying "I am not the main producer" but said the expenditure to house his team of 75 crew for a whole week was "sizeable". His expenditure did not include the other multiple support crews coming in and out for the week. A welcome bonanza indeed for Ipoh's hospitality and service industry.



# wellness

## Hobble Hobble, Joints No Trouble

By See Foon Chan-Koppen



*Consultant Orthopaedic, Trauma & Sports Surgeon*

**W**ell its time to throw away the crutches, walking sticks or whatever walking aid you may use. Bound up the stairs and dance the night away with gay abandon and banish worries about painful surgery. Help is at hand in the person of Dr. Vishvanathan who is the man of the hour and popularly known by his patients as 'Dr. Growth Factor'.

No we're not referring to the GDP or the stock market movements. When Dr. T. Vishvanathan, Consultant Orthopaedic Trauma and Sports Surgeon, talks about growth factors (GF) he is referring to injections he administers to your knee, elbow, shoulders, hips, wrists or wherever there is inflammation and pain in your joints.

## Growth Factors Help in Joint Regeneration

And it is all made from your own blood which eliminates the fear of having some foreign matter injected into one's body.

When I first learned of ‘Growth Factors’ and being ever the curious one plus the fact that I was in pain with a knee inflammation, I hobbled over to Dr. Vishva’s clinic on the second floor of the Ipoh Specialist Hospital for a

consultation. A physical examination where he manipulated and probed around my knee, occasionally eliciting yelps of pain, produced a diagnosis of, “no breaks, or serious injury, just inflammation” which meant that my knee was perfect for injection of ‘growth factors’.

### Simple Procedure

A quick visit to the Lab the next day saw the technician removing four vials of blood from my arm and two hours later I was back in Dr. Vishva's clinic waiting for my injection. In actual fact, I could have waited as it only takes half an hour for the blood to be converted into the serum. However being averse to wasting time waiting, I went back to the Echo office.

The process of converting fresh blood into serum is apparently a simple one. The blood is put through a centrifuge and the blood separates into three layers. Depending on whether the need is for tendon, cartilage, ligament, muscle or whole joint repair, the speed used for centrifuging will be prescribed by Dr. Vishva, resulting in different growth factors predominating in the top layer where they concentrate. From 4 vials of blood, all that remains for injection is one syringe of serum. This however must be injected within a four-hour window from withdrawal to injection for it to be effective.

### High Success Rate

After having administered these injections (some repeatedly) to more than 3,000 patients since 2007 when he first trained in this technique in Spain, under the auspices of The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) which represents the patient, health professional and scientific societies of rheumatology of all the European nations, Dr. Vishva can now predict how well these injections work for different stages of degenerative joint diseases. Classifying them into four stages, his experience shows that in Stage 1 and 2 arthritis, there is an 80% chance of success, Stage 2-3, 50-60% Stage 3-4, 30%,

Stage 4 which is very advanced has at most a 20% chance of success. For Stage 3 onwards he usually recommends arthroscopy or more serious surgery depending on condition, followed by GF injections.

Dr. Vishva, who received his MBBS from Gwalior, India in 1992, went on to do his Master of Medicine in orthopaedics at University Sains Malaysia (USM). Being an orthopaedic surgeon, he naturally performs surgery too, like for fractures and accident cases. This may include the more complicated ones of hip and knee replacements and shoulder surgery. However he said, “But now with the new medical paradigm of Tissue Engineering, I always look first at regenerative options before exploring surgical options. The results I have achieved have been so rewarding. Growth factors are easily obtainable, the effects are predictable, and unlike stem cells, very affordable.”

### Cost-Saving

He continued, “When I first came to Ipoh in 2007 after learning the techniques in Europe, growth factors was ahead of its time and relatively unknown in Malaysia. Today its been commercialised, with kits being sold by drug companies that cost up to seven times the price that I’ve established within my practice. Avoiding unnecessary surgery is also cost-saving for my patients and this is always the first line of defence I recommend.”

“As a physician, the admonition I’ve been taught has always been ‘First do no harm’ and with GF there are no side effects,” he added. In KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital, Dr. Prasad, another Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, who has the adjoining clinic from Dr. Vishva, also prescribes and gives the same growth factor injections. So Ipohites you now have a choice of options and doctors for your joint problems.

**Dr. Vishvanathan's clinic:**  
**Suite 2-25, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital**  
**Tel: 05-2408777, 2415107 Ext: 8508/8509**  
**[tvishna@ish.kpjhealth.com.my](mailto:tvishna@ish.kpjhealth.com.my)**

# Now I see you, Now I don't

*In our continuing series on Eye Health, we ask Dr. S.S. Gill, Resident Consultant Ophthalmologist at Hospital Fatimah, about blindness due to diabetes mellitus.*

**I**n our continuing series on Eye Health, we ask Dr. S.S. Gill, Resident Consultant Ophthalmologist at Hospital Fatimah, about blindness due to diabetes mellitus.

“One in six diabetic Malaysians above 30 years old, are at a high risk of becoming blind, making it the second biggest cause of curable blindness in the country. That is approximately 25,000 diabetics with families to support becoming blind every year due to diabetic eye disease.”

“A diabetic patient runs a risk of suddenly going blind if they have uncontrolled diabetes and if they have never had their eyes checked.” Diabetes Mellitus is one of the leading causes of blindness in Malaysia due to a complication affecting the eyes called Diabetic Retinopathy. “The disease is responsible for over 80 per cent of blindness in diabetics,” says Dr. Gill.

Diabetic Retinopathy (damage to the retina) is an eye disease that can cause decreased vision and blindness. Depending on a patient's condition, Diabetic Retinopathy can progress quickly or slowly. Factors that may hasten the progress include poorly controlled diabetes mellitus, heavy smoking, poorly controlled hypertension and high cholesterol.

Diabetic Retinopathy occurs when vessels at the retina leak and the retina becomes ischaemic (lacking oxygen supply) or unhealthy. When the retina lacks oxygen, it produces a substance which induces the formation of *abnormal weak blood vessels*, which start bleeding. When the abnormal vessels bleed, it can lead to immediate and sudden blindness.

Many people diagnosed with diabetes, succumb to blindness because of late detection. "If you are diabetic, you are 25 times more at risk to blindness compared to the non-diabetic person," says Dr. Gill. "Many diabetic patients are unaware also that by the time they have symptoms of blurring vision, it may be too late!"

"There was a patient in his 30s who used to skip lunch and have a carbonated drink instead. Five years later, he developed diabetes mellitus. His doctor started him on diabetic medication and advised him to go for regular eye checks. Although he was taking his medication, he did not go for any blood tests to see if his diabetes was well controlled. He also did not follow his doctor's advice to go for regular eye check-ups. One morning he woke up to find that he could hardly see in one eye."

When he was finally checked, not only did he have Diabetic Retinopathy but also kidney failure. He is now partly blind in one eye because he sought treatment late when there was already extensive damage to the eye. More of his vision could have been saved had he sought treatment earlier.

To make matters worse for him, he is also on haemodialysis three times a week for kidney failure. This is an example of a person who has become ill in the productive years of his life. It is unfortunate when cases like these happen.

Diabetic patients often go for eye checks only when they develop eye problems. Although they are told that diabetes can cause blindness, many do not take this seriously until they develop some loss of vision. Blindness can be avoided by seeing your eye doctor early.

"I cannot stress enough that there is more to diabetes management than just going for a fasting blood glucose check and taking diabetic medicine. It is frustrating that so



*Dr. S.S. Gill*  
*Resident Consultant*  
*Ophthalmologist*

many patients are either unaware of vision complications due to diabetes, or choose to ignore their doctor's advice of going for regular eye checks."

His advice, "Seek treatment early". A vast majority of patients who develop Diabetic Retinopathy have NO symptoms until the late stages of the eye disease, by which time, irreversible damage to the retina may have occurred despite the availability of treatment.

*More on diabetic eye diseases in the next issue.*

*For more information on eye health and eye diseases,  
call 05-5455582, email: [gilleyecentre@dr.com](mailto:gilleyecentre@dr.com) or visit [www.fatimah.com.my](http://www.fatimah.com.my).*

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# letter from ulu kinta • by Mariam Mokhtar

## Did the Orang Asli Help Invent the Diesel Engine?

Who would have thought that the principle behind the fire-piston or *api-lantak*, once widely used by the Orang Asli to make fire, was adopted by Rudolf Diesel to invent the Diesel engine?

Most Orang Asli make fire by two methods – friction, rubbing two sticks together or percussion, striking stone on stone. The Jakun and Semalai are more sophisticated and use an ingenious device called the fire-piston or as it is commonly known in Malay, *api-lantak*.

Since prehistoric times, the fire-piston has been used as a means of kindling fire and is found in communities where the blowpipe is used as a weapon. The fire-piston may have developed out of blowpipe construction.

### Precision Engineering

These Orang Asli understood the behaviour of gases and used precision engineering to produce the fire-pistons. The fire-piston consists of two pieces – the plunger (piston) and the base (cylinder). The base is a hollow cylinder about 3 to 6 inches long, with a bore of 0.25 inches diameter. It is sealed at one end and open at the other. The plunger (piston) fits nicely in the base. The plunger has a handle so that a firm grip can be applied to it. A recess to place the tinder is bored out from the front of the plunger. An 'O' ring made from natural fibres, moistened with water, or fat, ensures an air-tight seal.

When the piston is quickly rammed into the cylinder, the compression of the air raises the interior temperature to 300 deg C, to ignite the tinder. The piston is then quickly withdrawn and the smouldering tinder transferred to a nest of combustible material of wood shavings, dried fibres or leaves and fanned slightly, to create a flame. A proper fire can then be started with bigger kindling material.

Fire-pistons have been made from wood, animal



Api-Lantak

horns, elephant ivory or bamboo. A commonly used wood is the *tempinis* (*Streblus elongatus*). Material for the tinder is fuzz from the young leaves of the *tukas* or Fish Tail palm (*Caryota mitis*). The seal or the 'O' ring is from the *terap* fibre (*Artocarpus elasticus*).

### From Demo to Patent

In 1871, Professor Carl von Linde, a physicist and head of the Thermodynamics Laboratory of the Technical University of Munich, toured the Far-East and stopped in Penang to deliver a talk. A fire-piston was presented to him as a souvenir, and told that it came from the indigenous peoples in the peninsula.

When the professor returned to Germany, he had a "show-and-tell" demonstration and used the fire-piston to light a cigarette. One student, a young man called Rudolf Diesel sat enthralled. Europeans then, were competing to develop the internal combustion engine and the automo-

bile. The rest, as they say, is history for Diesel successfully applied for the patent in Britain and Germany and invented the world's first self-ignition internal combustion engine.

### OA Inspiration

Thus, it was the Orang Asli's *api-lantak* technology which inspired Diesel. The fire-piston can be used one-handed, requires minimum physical effort and is not weather dependent – it can be used to make fires wherever and whenever. The principle is simple – compression of air. One thrust of the piston is all that it takes to instantaneously ignite tinder.

Research tells us that the *api-lantak* disappeared as matches, and later lighters, were introduced into the Orang Asli communities. There was a brief resurgence when the Orang Asli were driven deeper into the jungles during the Japanese occupation because the men lacked matches to light their much needed cigarettes.

### Tragedy of Modern Culture

Sadly, few, young Orang Asli are interested in the older methods. Even museums in Perak, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore have no fire-pistons on exhibit. Three are on display in a Jakarta museum.

The shame is that there is neither appreciation nor recognition of this simple yet scientific but sophisticated tool in our culture. It is left to western enthusiasts and hobbyists, wood-crafters, pyrologists and bush-crafters to be enthusiastic about this ancient heritage and tradition of the Jakun and Semalai.

That is the greater tragedy. We live in an age where access to information and technology is greater than before but in our desire to adopt modern technology, we allow memories of the past to slide past us.

Those interested in how an *api-lantak* is constructed may go to the following websites:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NKq4ChNOew>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yK2yqcKdUZc>

## Around Town with Caroline



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# Anak PERAK • By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

## Queen of Nursing Homes Worried over MANPOWER FREEZE

She came bearing gifts of delicious pastries from her son's cake shop the Deli Garden, a caring gesture that is revealing of Nancy Chang Hong Chee PJK, P.P.T.'s temperament and vocation. Amongst those in the know, she's the 'Nursing Home Queen' a well-deserved accolade for a lady who has established and now runs a dozen nursing homes around Perak and one in Kuala Lumpur.

### Teacher for Deaf and Dumb

Running Nursing Homes is a second career for Nancy, having been a handicapped teacher for the Deaf and Dumb for most of her life. Nancy, who hails from Sitiawan, trained as a regular teacher, and because she always had a predilection of caring for the sick, the infirm and the handicapped, she underwent further training, resulting in her being not only a specialist teacher for the Deaf and Dumb, but for years, she acted as a court interpreter for them.

From 1979 till 1992, Nancy taught at Pasir Puteh Sekolah Raja Di-Hilir. Her optional retirement in 1992 left her in a quandary: too energetic to sit around and be idle and yet in dilemma as to what else to pursue. So Nancy prayed for Divine guidance and the answer came to her to help old folks. The rest as they say is history.

### First Home

Nancy persuaded a few nurses to partner with her and opened her first nursing home in Jalan Tambun with nine rooms and only one helper. It was tough going at first as people in Ipoh had trouble digesting the concept of sending their parents to a nursing home. For the first few months there were only two or three patients but slowly and surely the idea of nursing care for the elderly gained acceptance and by 1994, Nancy was confident enough to venture off on her own and set up the Carevilla home in

Greentown on 1st Street, which subsequently moved to Lebuhraya Ceylon.

Carevilla was the first nursing home to be registered with the Welfare Ministry and since then, she's been opening homes at a rapid rate, all of which are registered or in process. Currently she admits to having lost count of the exact number of homes in her group most of whom were set up with different partners who manage the day-to-day running and logistical details. Of these, Nancy is the sole owner of three but she assumes an overall administrative role for all the homes.

### Rapid Growth

Today, Nancy runs homes in Teluk Intan (2), Sitiawan (1) and Kuala Lumpur (1) and closer to home, Bercham, Westpool Park, Pasir Puteh, Victoria Park, Jalan Chung Thye Phin, Pasir Pinji, Canning Garden, Ipoh Garden, and the latest addition in Greentown.

Rates at these homes vary from RM700 to RM2,500 per month depending on the level of sophistication and whether its for dormitory, double or single rooms. The monthly fee covers all food and care provided by trained hospital attendants. Trained nurses arrange for the taking of prescribed medication for patients who require supervision and in case of emergency, all homes have access to a Doctor on call.

### Care Ratio

All patients are accepted on a first come first served basis although they will not take in patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease or Dementia as the man-power requirements of care in these cases is astronomically high. Where the Welfare Ministry's requirement for nursing homes is based on a ratio of one care person to 18 patients, all of Nancy's nursing homes work on a ratio of one care person to 6-7 patients for those who are sickly, and 1 to 10



Nancy Chang Hong Chee

for those who are well.

### Staffing Problem

When asked what were the main problems encountered in her business, Nancy said, "Our biggest problem is staffing. We used to bring in foreign help under the special service sector but since June 2009, the Ministry of Home Affairs has frozen all intake and we're in a state of panic as to how we can provide the care for our patients."

"To make matters worse, our current batch of foreign workers have a maximum time limit of 5 years to work, after which it is compulsory for them to return home. After we have spent our precious time and money in training them to provide the kind of care for which we're well known", she added. "At this rate, our elderly and infirm are being denied their right to the care that they deserve."

Ipoh Echo hopes that the Welfare and Home Affairs Ministry will study the grave matter at hand and give care stalwarts like Nancy Chang the helping hand which she so enthusiastically offers to the elderly and the frail. For this Anak Perak, the future looks fraught with obstacles.

## property

# Kinta Properties Leads the Way in Eco-Friendly Development

Kinta Properties, an established developer with nearly 40 years track record in Ipoh, launched the FIRST of its kind, Semi Detached Eco Friendly Homes on October 20 together with the official opening of their third branch office at Bandar Baru Sri Klebang; a 650-acre freehold mixed-development township along Jalan Kuala Kangsar, Ipoh.

These eco-friendly homes named Ashby have the following features: rainwater harvesting system to recycle rainwater for cleaning and gardening; solar reflective paint, which deflects 90% of heat, keeping the walls cooler, reduces the interior by up to 5 degree Celsius, has a higher resistance to moulds and discoloration and comes with a 10-year warranty from the paint manufacturer, Nippon Japan; Roof sisalation below roof tiles further reduces heat from the sun rays on the roof; Solar Heater panel taps sun's rays to heat up water for bathroom usage.

Ashby homes come complete with Solar panel, booster pump and copper piping to 4 bathrooms; inverter

type air-conditioning piping which also reduces air-conditioner electricity consumption by up to 50%; high ceiling & large windows with powder-coated frames allows for natural lighting & ventilation, thus further reducing dependency on artificial lighting. The homes are designed with cross ventilation to all living spaces.

The concept of Ashby homes are private spaces; with the design/location of living areas & patio at the rear of the house where one can enjoy the privacy of the garden away from the noise pollution of passing vehicles & prying eyes of nosy neighbours.

The maid's room and kitchen being situated at the front portion of the house ensures monitoring of delivery/postman and unwanted visitors at the main gate. The position of the kitchen also allows easy access to the kitchen when one returns from marketing especially with purchase of fish, poultry, etc.

An Ashby home consists of 4+1 rooms with individual attached bathrooms.

Parklane Residences come with 3-tier security system of: patrolling and stationed guards at the guardhouse to screen visitors and individual alarm system in each home; perimeter-fencing wall secured with Photobeam sensors; surveillance via Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras using a reliable brand name of CHUBB.

In conjunction with the launching of Ashby Eco Friendly homes, the developer also feted the residents and public to food and games galore a few days later. In line with their Eco theme, the food and drinks were served using biodegradable utensils. The plates were made of oil-palm fibre, whilst the cups were from sugarcane fibre. Even the forks and spoons were made of edible cornstarch!

Looks like this is one developer in Ipoh who is ready to lead the way to reduce carbon footprint and climate change.



## community

# Selling Cendol for a Living



A widow's dream of continuing with her late husband's cendol business was realised when her application for micro-credit was approved by Yayasan Bina Upaya. The RM2,000 loan was used as a working capital for her fledgling business and to repair her motorcycle. S. Supplachamy, 51, travels daily from Simee to Old Town. She sells cendol by the roadside using the motorcycle as a mobile

stall. "I don't have a permanent site to operate," said the widow to Ipoh Echo. "The place where I am now is most suitable as it's readily accessible to my regular clients." She starts at 10.00 a.m. and ends at 6.00 p.m. "It's back-breaking but who's complaining." Fortunately, she has her son to assist her. Supplachamy and her late husband have been selling cendol for over 17 years.

RN

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## LETTERS

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## No End to Housing Woes

I am one of the 26 unfortunate souls who are unable to realise our dreams of seeing our house in full view.

Ten years ago my husband and I signed a Sales and Purchase Agreement with the developer who undertook the Taman Perpaduan Permai housing project in Bercham. The house was in our son's name. The agreement stipulated that the house we purchased and paid for with a bank loan would be ready within a fixed period of time. However, this promise was not honoured, as the developer had problems fulfilling its financial obligations and finally wound down. The project was subsequently abandoned and we buyers were left in a lurch.

Jabatan Perumahan Negara took stock of the problem and a new developer was identified to continue with the project. Recently, I received a letter from the lawyers of the new developer stating that the stalled project would be revived post haste. The fact that the 26 houses in question would be completed was well received by us. Our happiness, however, was short-lived. In the same letter we were told to pay a sum of between RM10,000-20,000 to the new developer as fees for infrastructure works, which was the cause for the project being abandoned. The said amount is over and above the balance 20 per cent of the purchase price owing to the former developer.

We are given three months to make good these payments – the end-financing and money for infrastructure works. How am I to pay? I am a pensioner with no access to extra funding other than my meagre pension. Since the project was abandoned, I had to buy another property nearby to live. So now I am being burdened with two housing loans – one for the abandoned house and the other for the house I now live in.

Isn't Jabatan Perumahan Negara formed to protect house buyers like me? It looks like our woes are not about to end. The only recourse left is to seek justice from the housing tribunal. But that will take time as the tribunal has too many cases to arbitrate. Where else shall I turn to?

JENNY

*Jenny requests the other 25 house owners to contact her so together they can make a stand on this issue. Please do the needful – Ipoh Echo*

## Combined Bus Service Sdn Bhd – Ipoh Residents' Final Hope

With the Combined Bus Service finally in operation at the beginning of October, Perak residents will heave a sigh of relief hoping that the transport system will improve with links to towns like Kampar and Teluk Intan. For retired citizens like me, it is hoped that this consortium will have one boarding point at Hospital Teluk Intan, for those going to Ipoh. Students, nurses, OKU (*Orang Kurang Upaya* – physically-challenged people) and hospital patients make up the majority of the passengers from here. Cab service is hefty at RM2 for just a 3-km ride to Bandar Baru Express stand. The current express bus service provided by Ipoh Teluk Anson Express is far from satisfactory, mostly rude drivers who use it as a personal 'pos laju' service for delivering parcels, and victimising passengers.

SEBASTIAN DE CRUZ

## Poor Customer Service from Streamyx

I was having intermittent disconnection problem with Streamyx and called their Customer Service. Their technician arrived on a Sunday morning and said that the problem was on their side since one of their equipment was struck by lightning and another person would attend to it the following day. Another technician came the following day and said that the setting of my modem was faulty. I told him that I had not tampered with the modem and that I am getting intermittent connections to the internet.

A few days later I was not able to go online at all. On September 17 I called their Customer Service and the following morning I received a call from a technician that he would come later; but he never came.

On Monday I called again and this time the Customer Service person told me to do the 'ping' test and informed that there was nothing wrong with my modem and someone would attend to the problem. For the next four days I was calling Customer Service twice daily once in the morning and then in the afternoon and each session lasted for an hour or so. Each time I was given a different reason for the cause of the problem. First I was told that the cables are being repaired, another person said the cables were stolen and many customers are facing problems and finally I was told that underground cables are being repaired and it takes time.

On Friday evening a technician called saying that he would come the following morning. After eight days the system was restored, but on the following day I was not able to go online. On Monday morning I managed to contact someone. The technician came in the afternoon and restored the system. He said that the fault must be from the connection in the telephone pole and another person would come the following day to attend to it.

Every time I had to contact KL and no one was able to give me the name and contact number of a person in Ipoh. Why not give the phone number of the contact person in Ipoh which would be more convenient?

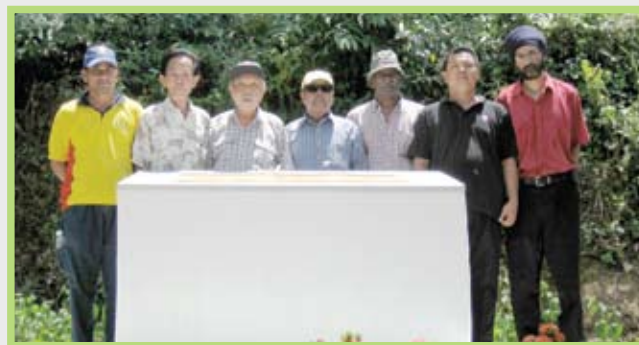
My system was down for more than eight days and when I asked Customer Service how to go about getting a refund they were not able to give me an answer. I still do not know how to claim a refund for the period the service was not provided.

A. JEYARAJ

*Ipoh Echo's comments:*

*Our office went through exactly the same scenario as that detailed above. Isn't it time that Streamyx got their act together? Where is their service mindset?*

## community A Memorial for the Unsung Heroes



The epic Battle of Kampar, which pitted the advancing Japanese Imperial Army against the withdrawing British Army at the opening stages of the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, is well documented in history books. The four-day battle (December 30, 1941 to January 2, 1942) is a classic deliberate attack on a defended position where combined-arms tactics are used to the maximum.

The British 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, having suffered heavy losses after a bruising engagement at Jitra in Kedah, withdrew to Kampar to defend and to cover the passage of 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, which was tasked to hold Ipoh.

The high grounds covering the entrance into Kampar provided tactical advantage to the defenders and the British used it judiciously. They prepared their positions on the forward slopes overlooking the trunk road. These positions were augmented with fire trenches, wire and field obstacles, which were covered with direct and indirect fire from mortars and artillery.

The battle began with the Japanese brigade encircling the British positions on December 30. The following day they conducted probing attacks to determine the defenders' weak points. Having found the weak spots, they then launched an all-out attack. The close-quarter fights, which involved bayonet charges and hand-to-hand combat, were fierce.

The Indian troops gave a good account of themselves. In one such incident along Thompson Ridge, a company of 60 Sikhs and Gujars from the Jat-Punjab battalion were deployed to retake the occupied trenches. This under-strength company, commanded by Captain John Graham, charged at the Japanese. They were mowed down and 34 of them, including Graham, were killed. Despite the odds they managed to retake the trenches.

The Japanese, fearing that their advance to Singapore would be hampered, landed troops in Teluk Anson (Teluk Intan) to outflank the British. They were successful in doing so and on January 2, 1942, 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was ordered south to Slim River. Japanese losses were estimated at 500 while those of the British were close to 150, mostly Indians.

The spots where the battle took place are now developed and remain a contentious issue with heritage and history buffs who clamour for their upkeep. Although promises are made by the state government to retain one of the sites, there is little physical evidence.

Local historian Harchand Bedi and the Ex-Servicemen Association of Kuala Dipang took it upon themselves to do the needful. They built a monument, costing RM20,000, at the battle spot as a tribute to the unsung heroes. The monument, said Harchand, is just a part of the complete memorial.

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my say



● By Jerry Francis

# Massive Anti-Dengue Action Expected To Tidy Up Country



The serious threat posed by Dengue may after all be 'a blessing in disguise' for the country. It has resulted in the entire government machinery taking affirmative action against the mosquito-borne disease.

Although various effective measures are being looked into, such as releasing genetically-modified mosquitoes, the need to create a clean and healthy environment for all will have to be given priority and the massive move will no doubt pave the way throughout the nation.

Punishing owners of premises with bigger fines and jail term under the Control of Communicable Diseases Act and the Destruction of Disease Bearing Insect Act for 'breeding' Aedes larvae will not effectively control the disease. What about the pools of stagnant water, clogged drains and rubbish dumps in public places and construction sites? Will local authorities, large corporations and construction firms be fined too for failing to clear them?

The fight against Dengue therefore needs to expand to include all possible breeding grounds for mosquitoes nationwide. Thus, it means that the country needs to be generally clean and tidy.

The federal government's recent move to rope in all Menteri Besars, ministers, state secretaries, district officers and district health officers to form committees on Dengue at various levels is seen as a positive action.

The question is: can the committees

effectively carry out their task? Let's hope they will not fizzle away just like all the decisions taken in the past, following an outbreak of a disease or after a disaster. An example is the proposal last year to set up task force teams in every district in Perak on a search and destroy mission of mosquito breeding grounds.

Certainly, I do not expect this massive combined effort against Dengue will suffer the same fate since the threat of Dengue is very serious in Malaysia. Between January and early October, a total of 38,330 people have been infected with Dengue, which also claimed 117 lives.

The fact that the Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin is heading the national-level committee on Dengue shows the federal government is making a determined move to combat the disease.

Within Ipoh City alone, it was once estimated there were over 20,000 illegal dumping grounds, which are potential mosquitoes' breeding sites. Just imagine the magnitude of the problem as each rubbish dump contains empty bottles, tin cans, plastic containers and other items that could accumulate water and breed mosquitoes.

All these illegal dumps must be cleared first if the fight against Dengue is to be successful. I am not blaming the city council for the illegal rubbish dumps; it is the residents and their attitudes that have created them.

The city council made many attempts to clear the dumps, but only to find new ones being

created at the same sites within days after being cleared. Some residents even feel that as long as rubbish is not thrown within their vicinities, they and their families are safe. As a result they are seen daily throwing plastic bags of rubbish outside their housing estates while on their way to work.

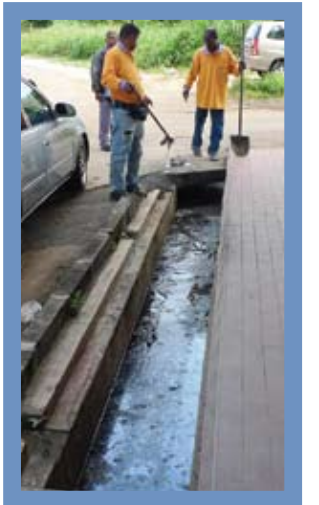
Even those in the so-called affluent areas, such as Ipoh-Canning Garden, have been seen dumping rubbish indiscriminately. The fact that these illegal dumps are sources for diseases is not their concern. Yet, they will readily blame the local authorities whenever there is an outbreak of disease in their areas.

It is about time the city council makes good on its threat to send out enforcement officers in plain clothes to arrest those responsible for such acts. Make an example by charging them in the courts. Failing to do so will only encourage these people to continue to dump the rubbish and blame the city council for not clearing them.

The residents need to realise that it is important to live in a clean and healthy environment. They have an obligation to society to take care of their surroundings and guard against indiscriminate throwing of rubbish so that everyone can live in a cleaner and healthier environment that is free from diseases.



Empty bottles and containers scattered at an illegal rubbish dump along a road in First Garden



A badly clogged drain in Tambun being cleared

## Seventy-Five Years of Tin Miners' Togetherness

The Diamond Jubilee of Perak Chinese Mining Association, which was celebrated in "low profile" recently, saw the presence of a large number of children of the pioneer tin miners in the Kinta Valley.

Among them were the current president of the association, Choong Tien Chuah, the son of prominent tin miner Choong Sam while its vice president Dato' Chin Lean Choong the son of another prominent tin miner Dato' Chin Pek Soo. Some of the other distinguished personalities present were Tan Sri Dato' Hew See Tong and Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian.

Also present were two former Ministers of Primary Industries, Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Dato' Paul Leong Khee Seong, both sons of Ipoh tin miners.

The association was formed in 1935 by a group of 54 Chinese miners with the purpose to safeguard the interests of the Chinese tin mining community. Its current membership is 45, a far cry from its 300-strong membership when the tin mining industry was at its peak in the 70s.

Association president Choong in his speech deferred describing the mining industry as a "sunset"



The Main Table (l-r): Dato' Chin Lean Choong, Tan Sri Dato' Hew See Tong, Datuk Paul Leong Khee Seong, Choong Tien Chuan, George Lee, Dato' Cheong Kai Fu, Teoh Chin Chong, Foo Wan Lian, Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian, Dato' Chin Lean Keat and William Teoh Beng Siang

industry preferring to explain that the low tin price is only a "transitional eclipse" that the demand for the metal had never diminished whatever the price". Choong added that the Association has "persistently" appealed to the government to preserve all marginal mining lands as well as to open more land for mining in anticipation of an upturn of the tin price, however its appeals have fallen on deaf ears so far.

Nevertheless Choong still 'harbours a faint hope' that the fortunes of the mining industry may one day change for the better and allow the association to be relevant for the next 75 years.

The current tin price is US\$26,500 per ton which is nearly three times that of the ceiling price under the last International Tin Agreement.

JAG

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