

LET'S GO FOR '888'

ICW speakers urge elected councils should comprise:

Democracy at work

They spoke to a packed auditorium and had to answer some very tough questions from the floor.



8 political appointees

8 from professional and business ranks

8 from the NGOs (civil societies, residents' associations etc)





(Above) ICW Forum panelists (R to L): Nadeswaran, Fernandez, Augustine, Dr Goh.
(Left) Part of the crowd that came to the Syuen Hotel gathering.

And the biggest question of all...

"Are elected local councils even possible given Malaysia's constitutional restrictions?"

A legal expert was on hand to give his views.

Editor Fathol Zaman Bukhari's no-holds-barred report - page 3
Ipoh Echo editorial - page 4




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AUDACIOUS SNATCH THIEVES EXPAND THEIR HUNTING GROUNDS

There seems to be no limit to the mounting confidence of snatch thieves.

Latest reports from Johor Bahru describe how a female police inspector had her handbag containing RM20,000 wrenched from her arms by a two-man snatch thief team operating from a motorcycle.

The woman officer and a male colleague, both in uniform, had just alighted from a police patrol car that had a punctured tyre. As they walked around the vehicle to inspect the damage, a motorcycle carrying the two thugs, weaved out of the traffic stream. The snatch attack occurred in a flash.

Both officers attempted to give chase on foot but it was futile. The thieves escaped as rapidly as they had arrived.

Johor police explained that the female officer had been carrying such a large sum of money as she was returning from her bank where she had withdrawn the funds to pay for a forthcoming Mecca pilgrimage.

SPOTTING TARGETS

Security experts recognise that a number of snatching criminals have now developed their nefarious skills to a point where they carry out preliminary surveys around banking establishments. These are the areas where they spot likely targets for attack - those withdrawing money from accounts. High on their "possibles" lists are men and women who park their vehicles and walk straight into banking establishments.

While the unsuspecting "targets" are inside the banks the snatchers puncture tyres and await the return of their intended victims. These normally drive off short distances before realising they have a flat tyre. It is then that the thieves strike, just as they did in the case of the female police inspector.

Recent alarming reports of police busting a Johore Baru-based snatch-theft "syndicate" have further served to spotlight the degree to which this so-called "petty criminal activity" has magnified nationwide.

That Malaysia's "petty crimes" are now finding it advantageous to form "syndicates" argues strongly for an urgent reassessment of such activity from the legal standpoint.

NOW NATION-WIDE

Particularly worrying is the growing evidence that the Johor snatch-theft operation is just one of a number currently functioning nation-wide.

Staggering statistics associated with the latest Johor bust serve clearly to underline the need for police throughout Malaysia to begin adopting far more stringent and focused investigative measures.

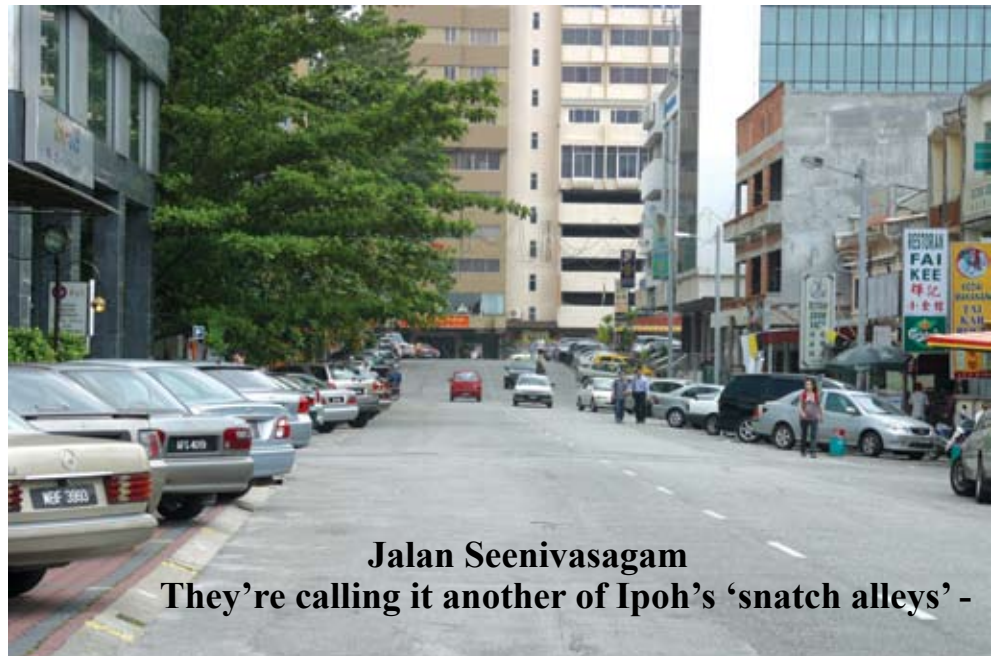
Announcing the arrest of two suspected syndicate members, Johor's Deputy Police Commissioner, Datuk Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff, revealed last month that his officers, in a related action, had seized a horde of 332 stolen mobile phones.

Initial investigations reveal that this particular syndicate's main target was mobile phones as they could be so easily disposed of, explained DCP Mohd Mokhtar.

"There are more members of this particular syndicate and we will be making more arrests," he said. The now busted operation, added the DCP, had been organising snatch-theft raiding for months.

Ipoh Echo's four-month survey of local snatch-theft activity has established, quite conclusively, that such crimes are mounting in number. As a result of public frustration over the lack of effective

Bag snatching - part 2 of our survey by Nisha Devina Roy



Jalan Seenivasagam
They're calling it another of Ipoh's 'snatch alleys' -

counter measures and adequate policing, snatch-theft crimes are now only infrequently being reported.

At the same time, there is widespread concern that expanding snatch-thievery is posing an increasing threat to personal safety on the streets of Ipoh. A mounting death-toll of

here is that someone being an invitation to crime and then falling victim to it automatically bears a degree of responsibility. Obviously, not everyone would agree with this line of thought.

Local police officers warn that snatch-theft hotspots in Ipoh are essen-

Ipoh coffee shop.

According to the website account, the incident had taken place at premises in Taman Ipoh.

The by-standers concerned were initially alerted by the woman's screams as the snatcher pounced. They immediately gave chase and, after running the man down, dragged him off to the nearest police station.

It was there that duty officers, on checking the apprehended man's identification, realised "he was one of their own".

The website report concluded with the paragraph: "Perak police chief, Datuk Zulkifli Abdulah, confirmed that the suspect was a policeman."

Not surprisingly, a story like this was destined to attract intense interest. Within a day or two, it had been picked up by the British international news agency, Reuters, and dispatched to publishing clients worldwide.

On November 21 last, as an initial move for the *Echo's* snatch-crime survey, we posed a number of questions on this incident to a senior Perak Police officer.

"Better you don't interfere," came the officer's blunt reply.

He added: "Investigations are still underway."

As a matter of clarification, the *Echo* wishes to point out that it has never in the past, nor will it ever in the future, interfere in police investigations.

It will, however, as a community voice, always seek to pose, to the various authorities concerned, questions of legitimate public concern.

We maintained back in November, and we maintain today, that the question of an admitted Perak policeman being questioned as a suspected snatch-thief is of

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victims in other parts of Malaysia is being noted. While there have, thankfully, been no snatch-theft deaths reported in Perak, there is a growing fear that it is only a matter of time.

Snatch-thieves, it is acknowledged, operate without a conscience. Police recognise that the majority of these criminals are desperate drug addicts looking to fund their next fix. They also know that such crimes become even more rampant during times of festivals.

CARELESSNESS?

Police officers as well as members of the Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation believe that sometimes people become victims of snatch theft because of carelessness. The argument is that women wearing valuable jewellery and carrying designer handbags are drawing attention to these items, particularly if they are doing so in the street.

"Wearing a RM5,000 diamond necklace to the market is not very clever - you are immediately drawing attention to yourself," commented one Perak police officer. The theory

tially those drawing large crowds. They identify areas outside busy shopping centres like Ocean, Ipoh Parade, Super Kinta and Yik Foong as offering snatchers particularly favourable hunting terrain. Ipoh also has a number of notorious "snatch allies" like Jalan Seenivasagam. Snatch thefts in these streets have become quite regular events.

Perhaps the one constant factor, as far as police appeals are concerned, are the repeated requests they make for cooperation from the public.

Cooperation, however, can only be a two way street. If the public is to work with the police, police officers must do their best to cooperate with and show consideration to public concerns.

This raises a particularly thorny issue that has lingered to the detriment of police-public relations in Ipoh for the past six months.

On September 11, last year, Malaysia Crime Watch, a well known website, reported that a man had been seized by a group of male by-standers when he tried to snatch a bag from a housewife in an

From the Editor's Desk

by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

AT LAST, A MEANINGFUL OPEN FORUM

"Bring in the 888 Formula," advised panelist and lawyer, Derek Fernandez, at the Ipoh City Watch (ICW) seminar on Sunday, April 20, at the Syuen Hotel.

The triple 8 arrangements, he explained, call for local councils comprising 8 political appointees, 8 from the professional and business ranks and 8 from Non Government Organisations (NGOs). This final NGO grouping would involve representations from civil societies, residents' associations, the disabled and similar community movements.

Already the triple 8 formula has been endorsed by the Keadilan-led Selangor government under Khalid Ibrahim. Fernandez felt triple 8 would be ideal for Perak. He drew a sharp comparison between this and the type of approach being adopted in Penang. The local council scene on the island, he said, would be dominated by politicians and businessmen.

Some 200 participants, representing various organisations in and around Ipoh, including members of the public, were in attendance at the Syuen. They listened attentively to what academician Dr Goh Ban Lee, lawyer Fernandez and journalist M Nadeswaren (Citizen Nades) had to say on the subject of "Restructuring Local Councils". Also in attendance was the Member of Parliament for Ipoh Barat, M. Kulasegeran who spoke on behalf of the Pakatan Rakyat-led state government.

THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Kulasegeran, in his keynote address, lauded the initiative taken by ICW to organise the forum saying it was a timely move before an official announcement by the state government on the make-up of Perak's 15 local



MP M. Kulasegeran delivers the keynote address

councils. He reaffirmed the desire of the Pakatan Rakyat (People's Alliance) to honour all its pre-election pledges and manifestos, especially those relating to transparency, accountability and good governance. The "Third Vote" he emphasised could not be implemented for reasons of law, as stipulated in the Local Government Act (LGA) 1976.

However, it could be replaced by having 30 per cent public representation in local councils.

Kula stressed the need to make council meetings accessible to the public. Dress code and timings of meetings should be relaxed so the public could attend in number. "In Australian and New Zealand councils meetings are held on a specific day and in the evening. People can come in shorts and sandals," he said. "The present system of having closed-door meetings on unspecified dates and forcing attendees to wear ties and long sleeves is out-dated and cumbersome."

Kula emphasised the need to have agendas and minutes of meetings posted on the councils' websites and on notice boards for general viewing. This spirit of openness should be adopted in line with current trends rather than be trapped in a pre-Independence colonial mentality. Declaration of assets by councillors said Kula would be made mandatory.

"TIDAK APA" ATTITUDE

The President of ICW, Chan Kok Sun, in his welcoming speech, took to task the "tidak apa" (lackadaisical) attitude of the newly elected political representatives in the state government. "ICW has extended invitations to them, including the Menteri Besar, but none took the trouble to respond," he revealed. "The executive councillor tasked to attend the forum asked us to pen his opening remarks instead. When we turned down the request, he declined the invitation. This is ridiculous," he added to thunderous applause from the floor.

The inertia and habits of the previous administration

seem to have seeped into the system. This does not bode well for the People's Alliance in Perak.

Dr Goh Ban Lee drew on his experiences as a councillor with Penang City Council to enlighten the audience on the conduct of local council affairs, especially in its day-to-day management. "As a councillor I have more power than the state executive councillor in charge of local government. I can decide on road names, traffic systems, lands, funds etc while the executive councillor has none."

"The allowance a councillor receives, however, is a pittance. Imagine RM 1000 or less, depending on the locality, but the benefits can be tempting," said Lee. "It could attract the wrong kind of people to sit in the council."

According to the academician, some of the world's most livable cities are in the Scandinavian countries. And this is possible because city councils there are well managed, transparent and very accessible to their residents. Information of all kinds is readily available online. "Traffic fines are issued based on one's capacity to pay. The richer you are the more you pay. Some are known to pay millions to settle their summons. Therefore, Datuks should pay double, Tan Sris triple and Tun much much more. The system does not discriminate one's status like we do here," he enjoined.

LEGALITIES

Fernandez provided a legalistic insight of local councils beginning with the abolition of local council elections in 1965, the passing of the Emergency (Suspension of Local Government Elections) Regulations 1965 to the post March 8, 2008 situation. "We're still in a state of Emergency," he enthused.

"The Regulations, however, are not binding," he added. "There are loopholes in the existing Local Government Act 1976 (LGA) to reintroduce local elections without the passage of a law in parliament." Fernandez quoted Section 14 of the Act which allows a state government to exempt any area within any local authority from the provisions of the Act or from any by-laws. Once a notification is made in the Gazette the state government can exempt local authorities in its jurisdiction from Section 15 (1) of the LGA 76. Thereafter, pursuant to Article 113(4) of the Federal Constitution, the Election Commission can be instructed to conduct local elections.

An alternative approach is for the state government to invoke Section 5 (1) of LGA 76 which requires that "the whole or majority of the members of a Town Council, Town Board or Rural Board established in the state shall be elected instead of appointed or nominated..."

But will the Federal Government accede to popular demand? This is the burning question on everyone's lips. The existing laws are confusing even to those with a legal background - what more to the laymen. Elected councillors may not be the answer, as evident from the performance of our elected representatives in the state legislative assemblies and the parliament. Some don't even know how to conduct themselves properly in the august houses.

Public participation in local councils will ensure some form of transparency and accountability on the part of the management. The current system of appointing loyal party supporters as a form of reward creates room for abuses and corruption. "An office boy or a clerk with minimal educational background sits in the council merely because of his loyalty and sacrifices to the party," said Fernandez. "Someone with such qualifications and affiliations ends up being a 'yes man'. They will 'setuju' (agree) to all proposals made by their bosses leaving little or no recourse for objection. And even if they do object their intelligence will fail them" This will be the scenario if the present system is allowed to continue. The system needs to be revamped.

GASPING IN DISBELIEF

Journalist Nadeswaren's revelations on the many abuses committed by local council members in Selangor had the audience gasping in disbelief. He related the misdeeds of the late Zakaria Deros who was once a member of the Klang Town Council. "He was a councillor

Continued - page 4

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Editorial

THE WAY TO GET REAL CHANGE

Going by the numbers that attended the 're-structuring local councils' seminar on April 20, there is currently an unprecedented surge of interest in local authority affairs among Ipohites. As the president of Ipoh City Watch (ICW) - organiser of the seminar - confessed, the audience that day was by far the largest he had witnessed in any previous ICW function. This change has been brought about by the outcome of the recent general elections. Poor attendances in the past resulted from the widely held view that such gatherings were, in reality, quite pointless. Authorities paid little heed to what was being said in these forums. Furthermore, those in power demonstrated scant interest in addressing problems highlighted on such occasions.

A feeling of hope abounds. There is new confidence among the people that, perhaps, they are no longer as powerless as they had imagined. Change can, indeed, be brought about by ordinary people.

This new spirit of participation, while a decidedly healthy development, raises one all important question. Will a change in the Government attitude truly result in the voices of the people being heard and their grievances being addressed? Or, once the euphoria subsides, will the masses be disappointed with an emerging situation little changed from that provided by the previous regime?

Clearly established during the ICW presentation was the belief that real change at the community level can only be brought about by the reintroduction of elected local councils. Only then can responsibility and accountability become tangible factors of day-to-day political life at this level. No matter what clever and ingenious methods are employed to appoint councillors, as long as they owe their positions to sources other than the people directly, duty and loyalty to those they supposedly represent can never be sustained.

Indeed, the sensation that the people may have to revise their expectations has already begun to emerge.

All speakers at the ICW gathering referred to developments taking place in Penang. The island's State Government has, since coming to power, created a business centric council rather than a people centric one as was promised before the elections. The ominous prediction of the ICW speakers was that the people may be in for disappointment.

In these circumstances, what can the people do to ensure that members of local councils do what they had sworn to do? In the end it really matters little whether local government is elected or appointed if the people are vocal, critical and learn to be continuously demanding.

The problem lies more with an apathetic public rather than an uncaring authority for, as the saying goes, people get what they deserve.

During the seminar a member of the audience asked: 'What is the Ipoh City Watch going to do?' Though the panel's opinion was that this question should be directed at councillors perhaps the ICW could be the tool that effects change. It could be

the instrument that enables public sector participation, monitors local government activities and applies pressure where necessary to ensure councillors do what they have undertaken to do.

To empower people to exercise their rights effectively and efficiently they need to be well informed and knowledgeable. Enabling this requires organised structure and mechanism. The ICW can create this by first establishing resident organisations in each of the geographical sectors that make up Ipoh and then by creating specialist committees to oversee each of the council's various functions.

In fact, the physical platform for creating resident organisations already exists. All that is required is to organise and empower it. As for the specialist committees, there are the various organisations that represent professionals in numerous fields ranging from finance and law to architecture and medicine. There also exist various organisations that represent public interests and concerns ranging from arts

and culture to preservation of heritage and conservation of the environment. These bodies could be harnessed to play a role in ensuring the government does its job.

With today's information technology, creating an effective network for information exchange and lobbying for improvement, would not be too difficult.

The local government must be forced to recognise these organisations, provide them with information and listen to their opinions. Indeed the State Government could partially fund the activities of these private committees.

This could be achieved either by legislation or convention. If the new State Government is truly desirous of enabling effective people participation in government this would be an effective way of achieving this.

Such a mechanism would prove to be more transparent than having representatives sitting in the council which will always give rise to perceptions of conflict of interest or abuse of power.

Continued from page 2



substantial public concern. Current conditions in Ipoh, as outlined in our previous report on the snatch-theft menace, strongly reinforce our stand.

Such enquiries as we have directed to police authorities, we assert - and we have made these enquiries regularly since November last - should never be brushed aside. Rather they should be handled frankly and transparently for the enhancement of both public well-being

and public trust in police authority.

We therefore, once again, respectfully pose legitimate questions in the public interest to the authorities concerned:

What were the results of investigations into the Ipoh policeman concerned? Was the man formally charged with an offence? If so, has his case gone to court? And if a case has been heard in court, what were the findings?

Alternatively, if formal charges have not been laid against the man, what were the reasons for this decision?

Finally, if the investigations are still underway,

can you kindly explain why these have taken so long? The woman whose handbag was snatched has provided full details. So, too, have those who were involved in the citizens' arrest associated with this case.

In the circumstances, it is perhaps relevant to point out that police in certain other states appear to take a decidedly different approach in matters concerning the Police Force's public image.

Early last September, for instance, four men attached to the Sentul police headquarters in Kuala Lumpur were linked to a snatch theft

case. They were alleged to have assisted in snatching a businessman's bag containing, among other things, cash to the value of RM 5,000. The offence reportedly occurred at 6 pm one evening as the businessman was walking near a hotel in the Federal Capital's Jalan Ipoh. All four policemen allegedly concerned - corporals and constables - were released on bail a week after they were remanded. Full details were provided by the authorities and the matter received prominent play in the press.

Again, in mid-March this year, police in Penang readily provided informa-

tion that a lance corporal officer on the island had been seized in a drug raid. The officer concerned, according to officials there, was under a 10-day remand order. The case, they indicated, had been classified as trafficking under Section 39B of the Dangerous Drugs Act. This, it was noted, carried a mandatory death sentence upon conviction.

Both situations were transparently and well handled by the police forces investigating the respective incidents. Perhaps Perak can learn much from the way these matters were handled.

A meaningful open forum . . . continued from page 3

yet he did not pay any assessments on his properties. He even had the audacity to operate an illegal restaurant on state land."

Another item of immense value to councillors is hawkers permit. Nadeswaren recounted how one councillor in Pataling Jaya had at least 50 such permits to his name.

"He pays RM30 to the council for a permit and then rents it out to genuine hawkers charging them RM300 or more, depending on the location.

Multiply RM300 by 50 and you can figure the amount of money he makes in a month," said Nades. "The situation may be the same in Perak and in other states.

"Therefore, it is imperative that we have reliable and honest people in the councils, not cheats and miscreants."

There was a resounding "yes" to restructuring local councils in Perak. Most were of the opinion that the

current system of nominated councilors is not the answer to the rate-payers' woes.

The 888 formula, advocated by Derek Fernandez, seems the most logical solution.

However, during the question and answer session, a few of the participants still raised the oft-repeated "sampah, longkang and rumput" (rubbish, drains and grass) issue so familiar with Ipohites.

There are still those who fail to comprehend the fundamental objectives of public forums.

The forum's intention was to obtain feedback from the public on ways to restructure local councils in Perak, not feedback on solid waste management!

ICW will compile the report and forward a memorandum to the Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin in due course.



Dr Goh Ban Lee

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ONE DAY IN THE LIFE . . .

. . . of Gritty Old Sam Kim Choon, age 79

Everyone in the Millennium Heart Caring Society entourage thought they were approaching an old man standing in the doorway of his garden shed. Leaning on crutches, Sam Kim Choon was smiling broadly and was happy to see the guests who had come to greet him on his 79th birthday.

The first impression of a birthday boy doing his gardening on a special day was soon corrected. Sam was waiting for them at home, a 10 ft x 8 ft structure that would have been adequate for a chicken coop or a storeroom.

But Sam isn't complaining – in this dilapidated hut he has lived contentedly for the past 18 years. Content? Yes, because in it he has been, by and large, independent.

INSIDE STORY

He has been dependent on his crutches for 30 years but he has accepted this with grace. They make him move around faster; they are, he says, "for mo-

bility". Sam lost his left leg in an accident when he was a lorry attendant. He was flung from the vehicle during a collision and the injuries he sustained necessitated amputation.



Sam and his treasured bike

After being discharged from the hospital, Sam stayed in a rented house with some friends. The gritty and spirited bachelor did not wallow in self pity. He went through years of physiotherapy and counselling. It was during one of these hospital sessions that he was noticed

by a community-minded individual who referred him to the president of the MHCS, Jenny Lim Chooi Ying.

Sam's determination and quiet demeanour

hardship and constraints, he successfully obtained a licence.

ON HIS OWN

In 1990, Sam wanted



A small hut . . . all he needs for a home

got him a job in a plastic factory in Jelapang, not far away from his rented room. Pooling their resources and time, members of the society made sure transportation was provided.

Meanwhile, Sam learned riding a modified motorcycle. Despite great

to be on his own and decided to move out of the rented house.

Jenny Lim came to the rescue. She contacted her contractor-brother-in-law and appealed on Sam's behalf. The hut was then built, gratis, on a small plot of land granted by a neighbour who had close

links with the MHCS. Sam's new home was completed in three weeks.

To this day he has no bathroom, no kitchen, not even a ceiling fan but as he insists, he isn't complaining. He crosses over to his neighbour's place if he needs the bathroom.

Sam got the modified motorcycle, ACB 7280, in 1993. This buoyed him as it enabled him to go to work without having to depend on the kindness of others and he could buy his meals from nearby stalls.

FIGHTING ON

A meagre salary of RM750 a month keeps Sam going. The money pays for his meals, petrol, and expenses to service his hearing aid and basic needs like groceries and toiletries.

There is also the continuing interest the MHCS nurses for him. This has been a massive moral support.

Apart from buying him a sumptuous lunch of

steamed fish, fried chicken and braised pork on his 79th year, Jenny Lim and her crew gave Sam a new mattress, bed sheets, a pillow and an angpow.

Of course, Sam needs more things. After years of use, his motorcycle is falling apart. Major repairs have to be done and the tyres have to be changed.

Things in the house – the door, the wall, the window – require minor attention.

Meanwhile, life goes on for him. After a full day's work, Sam Kim Choon returns to potter about the hut on his crutches.

There's not much to worry about here – only a decades-old TV set, a radio, a couple of run-down chairs, some wooden racks and well-thumbed newspapers. He has his independence and, for now, this is what matters most.

PETER KHIEW

For more details, call Cheah Kin Yeu of MHCS on 012-5387317 or Jenny on 012-5389989.

COMMENT

THE AIRPORT ISSUE IS AN "EGO-THING"

Social activist expounds on how to care for the environment

"Every state wants to have its own airport when the distances between them is so short," mused renowned social activist Gurmit Singh. "It's an ego thing." He was alluding to the attitude of Malaysians towards their environment.

Gurmit is a familiar figure with Malaysians.

Since graduating with an engineering degree from the University Malaya in 1970, he has been actively involved in championing environmental issues in the country.

The major cause of global warming, according to Gurmit, is the burning of fossil fuel. He declared: "There is a need to

examine the national transportation policy if we want to curb green house gas emissions and make Ipoh an environmental friendly city."

He lamented the absence of a central governing body to manage matters relating to transportation. The system is in a shambles.



Gurmit Singh

Another way of ensuring a clean environment is to reduce the consumption of electricity. This involves laymen who only need to follow simple tips.

"Consumers think that switching off lights is the best way to conserve energy. How wrong can they be," remarked Gurmit. "They forget that

air conditioners, water heaters and refrigerators consume more electricity than ceiling fans and lights." This naïve view, he added, is so common among Malaysians.

Gurmit Singh's comments were made at a talk organised by the Perak Academy last April.

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THE WAY IT WAS ... 100 YEARS AGO THIS FORTNIGHT



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Saturday,
2nd May,
1908

Editorial

The sensational case of a plantation dispute reported from Kuala Selangor where the Manager of the Padang Gajah Estate came in unfortunate collision with the coolies employed on it, promises to be a test one, the decision in which would prove equally useful and instructive to planters and coolies alike. The broad facts, attending the regrettable incident, are that the Manager of this estate was not furnished with the necessary funds to pay the wages of the coolies as they fell due.

The natural outcome of their being left unpaid was that insubordination and refractoriness became rampant among the labourers, who were, it was suspected, instigated by their head kangany. The embarrassed Manager, after holding council with the Visiting Agent, resolved to cut the Gordian knot by summarily dismissing the unpaid workmen, and ordering them to leave the estate in 24 hours, tendering them the gratuitous, though excellent, advice that it was open to them to sue the estate for the recovery of their arrears of wages in the civil courts. The men, however, did not show any alacrity to act upon either the mandate or suggestion, and the head kangany refused to leave empty handed. He is also reported to have incited the coolies to take up the same refractory attitude. The manager has sworn an information that he went about in danger of his life, and he called for police protection. But unfortunately at this stage the calm and prudent line of conduct, which the manager was pursuing seems to have been abandoned by him, in favour of more drastic measures. Before the

arrival of the police, the manager precipitated matters by arresting the head kangany with the aid of a few planter friends and they were conveying him off the estate, when the kangany was rescued by a large number of coolies, several of whom were shot at and wounded by the planters in 'self defence.' The coolies are now charged with rioting and the head kangany with abetment of the same. As the case is sub judice, commenting on its merits would be undesirable; but we venture to express the hope that definite rulings will be made by the courts as to the procedure to be adopted by managers where they are unable to pay their coolies; and how far private parties may act as police on estates.

* * * * *

Kinta Notes

Yesterday before Mr Justice Woodward, sitting with Messrs A.C. MacHade and E.C. Hatch as Assessors, a Mohamedan Kling, named Kadir Hassan, largely a boy in the employ of Mr Steadman, was sentenced to the extreme penalty of the law for shooting with a gun, on the last day of the year, a Chinese-Siamese woman, called Viviana, in a private compound situated in Chamberlain Road. The accused, after committing the deed, tried to commit suicide in a similar way, but, after being over two months in hospital, completely recovered. The accused was defended by Mr E.H.B. Rix, of Messrs Maxwell and Kenion, while Mr Noel Walker, the Deputy Public Prosecutor, conducted the case for the prosecution. Both the learned Judge and the Assessors, visited the scene of the murder during the interval, as the defence set up was that the deed was accidental, and that accused, who was under the influence of liquor at

the time, had fired at a bird and never noticed the deceased woman at all.

* * * * *

Wednesday,
6th May,
1908

Local & General

The Ipoh Convent Lottery has been prohibited by the Government

* * * * *

Kulim, from reports received, would appear to be in a state of siege as it were, owing to the new custom duties levied by the Kedah Government. The miners having threatened a sack of the town, all shops are closed, the population scattered, the leading residents in hiding and reinforcements from the capital are on their way to this once promising, but now said to be a doomed place.

* * * * *

Thursday,
7th May,
1908

The Ipoh Convent Lottery

Letter to The Editor 'Perak Pioneer'

Dear Sir.—I was surprised to read in your esteemed journal that the above lottery has been prohibited by Government. I hail from Ceylon, where no gambling of any sort is countenanced, and would not have been surprised had this happened there; but over here, where licences are issued to conduct gambling dens, and where the working classes lose all they possess, we

cannot understand why a lottery, with such a commendable object in view as the building of a Convent and an Orphanage, should be prohibited. The majority of the people who take part in this do so more out of charity than otherwise, and I think no one is likely to come to grief on account of this lottery, whereas at the gambling dens, licensed by Government, as large number of poor people are ruined every night.

It is rumoured that permission was obtained from Mr. E.W. Birch for conducting this lottery, and if this is true why the Government should countermand the permission, immediately that official's back is turned, is a problem that I, as a new arrival, find difficult to solve. Mr Birch, as the British Resident in Perak, was the proper person, I believe, to obtain that permission from. If he did give it and on the strength of it the Convent authorities went to all the expense and trouble, the Government should certainly let them conduct the lottery without putting all concerned to a deal of inconvenience this prohibition would entail and without disappointing the thousands that have already purchased tickets. If necessary, the Convent could be warned not to start any more lotteries.

Perhaps Mr Birch never gave the permission and the rumour to the effect that he did is false. Even in that case, considering the object and the expense the Convent, which can ill afford the loss, has already been put to, I think the Government would be justified in allowing it to be held for this once. If proper representations be made to the authorities I feel sure the decision just arrived at would be reconsidered.

Yours etc.

A Singhalese
Taiping, 6th May, 1908

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us stay in air-conditioned surroundings most of the day – this would include our cars. How do we do it then?

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Ipoh: Facts and Fancies

by Ho Tak Ming

The Dato' Sri Adika Raja

The most influential Malay in 1900s Ipoh



The Grand Hotel, Ipoh, first opened its doors in December, 1909.

After the death of the tenth Dato' Panglima Kinta Mohamed Yusuff in 1903, Dato' Sri Adika Raja, Wan Mohamed Salleh became the richest and most influential Malay in Ipoh.

He was born in 1861. At 20, he entered the service of the Perak Government as a Malay writer. He was for a time Superintendent of Penghulus in the Ulu Kuala Kangsar district and, in 1902, was appointed Assistant Collector of Land Revenue.

He took up residence in Ipoh after his marriage Toh Puan Sharifah Rodiah, the widow of the eleventh Dato' Panglima Kinta Abdul Wahab. With the new Dato' Muda, Che Wan bin Mohamed Yusuff, who later became the 12th Dato' Panglima Kinta, Ipoh had two able Malay leaders who looked after the welfare of their constituents.

The Malay Settlements in Ulu Kinta are flourishing. Mr. Worthington (the Assistant District Officer) says that Che Wan, the new Dato Muda of Kinta, stepped in and took over the debts due by Malays to a Chetty, thereby conferring a benefit of which the reduced interest was a very important fraction. The Settlements wanted an influential Kinta Malay to take an interest in them. The improvement in the condition of the Kinta Malays is due chiefly to the influence of one or two leading men with a strong national spirit. Whatever the reason the result is remarkable. The Resident remarks that one great factor in this improvement has been that Dato' Sri Adika Raja has taken up his residence in Ipoh.

ENTREPRENEURIAL

The Dato' Sri Adika

Raja was an entrepreneur in the mould of Dato' Mohamed Yusuff. He built a number of townhouses in Hale Street, each with a nice little open plot of land in front for a garden, and a driveway wide enough for a horse-drawn carriage. This was a most picturesque site, facing the padang and almost exactly behind the Chartered Bank's premises.

THE LEECH STREET SETTLEMENT

In 1909, the FMS Government established a Malay Settlement at Ipoh behind the new market in Leech Street, known as Kampong Pasar Bharu. A new bridge was built across the Kinta River close to Patrick Street near the market. The road leading to the settlement, later called Jalan Datoh, opened up many fine building sites. The lots were rapidly



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The Dato' Sri Adika Raja's house in the Malay Settlement.

taken up by many of the leading Malays of Ipoh, including the Dato' Sri Adika Raja, the Dato Muda and other chiefs, the river location being especially popular with the Malay community.

ISTANA FOR IPOH

In 1912, HH Sultan Idris Shah, accompanied by the Raja Permaisuri and suite, paid a short visit to

Ipoh, as guests of the Dato' Sri Adika Raja. He was so pleased with everything, especially the exceeding cleanliness of the town, that he decided to build an Istana in Ipoh. He had already selected a very recherché site in the well-laid out Malay Settlement. The Ipoh newspaper reported proudly:

HIS HIGHNESS IN IPOH

HH had known Ipoh since the time when there was only a small kampong on the river bank, and now, when he came to visit after having reigned for 25 years, he found the makings of a great city. HH had enjoyed his visit so much that he decided to build himself an Istana in the delightful Malay kampong where the Dato' Sri Adika Raja lived.

MADE A MARK

The Dato' Sri Adika Raja certainly made a difference to Ipoh since deciding to make it his home. In September 1909, PZ Creet of Penang came to Ipoh to see about the feasibility of opening a first-class hotel in the town. He entered into negotiations with the Dato' Sri Adika Raja for a long lease of his

residence in Lahat Road with its spacious grounds. The property was built by Dato' Abdul Wahab in 1894.

After considerable renovations, the Grand Hotel opened its doors to the public on December 16, 1909. The timing was perfect. Fuelled by both the tin and rubber booms, the hotel enjoyed a high occupancy rate.

In 1912, the Dato' Sri Adika Raja, on Creet's suggestion, built an annexe of ten suites of rooms along the most modern lines. Each suite comprised a bedroom with a verandah. The whole complex was lit by "simpitrol" gas.

The following year the Dato' built another annexe of ten rooms with a large dining room, entirely lit by electricity, making the Grand one of the finest hotels in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States.

The Dato' Sri Adika Raja was one of the few locals who mixed with Europeans on an equal footing. He was a skilled chess player who had beaten many Europeans at Ipoh Club competitions.

He was also a good billiard player and was often the only Asian to enter the Ipoh Club Billiard Tournament.

Musings by See Foon Chan-Koppen



See Foon

I came across this interesting phrase recently on one of my desk-bound surfing excursions. It intrigued me: *terminal seriousness*.

I had never connected the two ideas before. But if you looked up *serious* in the thesaurus, another word could be *grave*! So, seriousness can be terminal. We do have the common expression *deadly serious*. When I look around me, I realise how prevalent this malady is and how afflicted most of us are.

I suffered from terminal seriousness for years beginning with my formative years of proving myself and making my way in the world to the heady days of being a big boss and wielding power. I still remember prefacing a lot of my opening sentences with the word "Seriously". Many of my friends and their friends and friends of friends all have the same affliction. We all know at least one terminally serious housewife who cannot come for lunch because she has to clean the oven because the maid cannot

do a proper job. There's the stressed out *towkay* who cannot go on a family holiday because he has to look after the books, or the politician who believes in his own empty promises. And let's not forget the followers of spiritual gurus who live their lives by "My Guru says" or the medical cults with their worshippers who regurgitate word for word everything their doctor prescribes or preaches. I am not condemning high ideals and altruistic actions. All I'm suggesting here is that we need a healthy dose of irreverence and a good sense of humour to make the world a happier place to be.

LAUGH!

Let's laugh at ourselves, our foibles, our mistakes, our gaffes, our embarrassing moments and, in general, we need to just simply laugh more. Let's not take ourselves so seriously.

We have all heard the adage laughter is the best medicine. Overwhelming research clearly shows that people who laugh and play more are not only happier but also physically healthier. Laughter and play both help the immune system to lower stress hormones, increasing natural disease-fighting killer cells and lowering blood pressure.

Terminal Seriousness

Let's stop being too concerned about ourselves. Let's remember to have fun.



Whether you're "too young" or "too old", a sense of fun boosts your immune system

Laughter aids in reducing symptoms of neuralgia and rheumatism. It has positive benefits on mental functions because it changes your perspective!

Can't we learn to have more fun, to sit back and relax and, at least for brief periods, lighten up? Where do we "relax" now? In coffee bars that serve jolting caffeine and fast food joints flush with high-fat, junk food! In bars where we down our beers, whiskey, vodka or whatever is our poison of choice. In night clubs where we dance the night away to ear-drum shattering music.

'PURPOSEFUL' VACATIONS

We take serious vacations, full of purpose, active leisure, and often exhausting agendas. We're going on discovery holidays chockfull of meaningful eco-touristic potential, tackling the highest, fastest, longest, oldest, most expensive, least discovered. It's no wonder we need a vacation from our vacation.

My own definition of having fun has changed. For years it was travel to an island beach, a night of London theatre, or to shop for the latest fashion in Paris or Milan. I certainly enjoyed time with my family, but much of the daily planning eased "fun"

out of the equation. Fun fell into predictable patterns: dinner out, a movie together, entertaining friends, a nightclub opening. Fun had to have a destination and, more often, a purpose. Many of us, sadly, have to learn to have fun. But living demands a sense of humour.

The most encouraging bit of research I found on laughter is a study by Vanderbilt University. It found that laughter uses 20% more calories than normal activities (as in terminal seriousness!). If we laughed between 10-15 minutes a day, that could add up to a total weight loss of 4 pounds a year. Now that I can handle.

A GENTLE TIP

I'd like to share a technique taught by Thich Nhat Hanh, a meditation master who has written many books. He says that whenever we're agitated, to breath in deeply and say to ourself: "I feel calm" and on the out breath: "I am smiling". Five minutes of this is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face in the most stressful of times. The wonder of this technique is its simplicity and its portability.

Finally, I'll let e. e. cummings have the last word: "The most wasted of all days is one without laughter."

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Serves: 6
INGREDIENTS
2 medium (600g) eggplants
Coarse cooking salt
¼ cup (60ml) olive oil
1kg diced lamb
½ tsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground turmeric
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 large (200g) onion, finely chopped
2 ¾ cups (680ml) water
2 strips lemon rind
1 cinnamon stick
¾ cup (125g) seedless prunes, halved
½ cup (80g) blanched almonds, toasted



Kafe Paprika's
Lamb, Eggplant and Prune Tagine

1 tbsp honey
2 tbsp chopped fresh coriander leaves
2 tsp sesame seeds, toasted

METHOD

1. Cut eggplants into 1 cm slices, place in colander, sprinkle with salt; stand 30 minutes. Rinse slices under cold water, drain, cut into quarters.

2. Heat oil in pan, add lamb and ground spices, cook, stirring, until lamb is browned all over; remove from pan. Add gar-



lic and onion to pan, cook, stirring, until onion is soft. Stir in water, rind and cinnamon stick. Return lamb to pan, simmer, covered, about 1 hour or until lamb is just tender.

3. Stir in prunes, nuts, honey, coriander and eggplants. Simmer, covered, about 30 minutes or until eggplants are tender. Discard cinnamon stick and rind. Serve sprinkled with sesame seeds.

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KNOW YOUR ASSEMBLYMEN

Based on the premise that good governance begins when the people hold their leaders accountable, our own correspondent conducted short interviews with the Perakians who won in the March 8 election. This is the first of a series. Remember the faces: they have four years to prove themselves to you.



Ong Boon Piow

Constituency:

Tebing Tinggi

Party: DAP

Age: 28

Service centre:

5A, Jln. Chung On Siew, 30250, Ipoh.

Tel:

016 565 7856

Blog:

Piow Independent Thinking Zone.

Blog Address:

ongboonpiow.blogspot.com

Education: Studied at Yuk Choy Chinese School, first in Hugh Low Street and then at Jalan Kuala Kangsar. Did his engineering course at UPM, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering and Manufacturing.

Marital Status:

Single.

Hobbies:

Reading newspapers.

Sports: Jogging.

'You don't need a partner to go jogging.'

Life in Politics

At UPM, he made frequent contributions to the suggestion box. His earnest notes earned him the nick name "the Michael Chong of UPM".

In the late 1990s, he was concerned about overcrowded Chinese schools. Instead of voicing his concerns in a coffee shop, he decided it would be better to articulate his thoughts through a legal and suitable medium such as the DAP.

The 2008 election was his first. He won against three-time incumbent Dr Chee Wai Koon.

Complaints from his constituents

Tebing Tinggi is an urban area in the heart of Ipoh. Ninety per cent of the complaints from his constituency are about "drains, street lamps and potholes" which are City Hall issues. However the residents always come to him since they don't know who their councillor is.

In the weeks immediately after the

General Election, he had an average of 100 phone calls and 300 smses per day.

The State issues facing his constituency

Business in Ipoh is slow. Businesses are just surviving because there is insufficient activity. It gets slower after 6pm.

The bus services need to be upgraded. Some bus services stop at 10pm. Workers have to take a taxi home - an added expense.

Generate more tourist activity. The purpose is to get tourists to stay a night instead of being a stop over for tasting good Ipoh food then moving on.

Ong's proposals to stimulate activity in Ipoh

Enhance the tourist industry. It is a team effort that does not require much investment. If MBI can keep the town clean and all shops keep their premises tidy and attractive it might enhance the heritage image of Ipoh Town and entice tourists to stay a night here.

Do little things that would be interesting for other people. For example: Ong wants to use the name Hugh Low Street - have a short historical background on it so visitors can get glimpses of Ipoh history as they go around the town. Multi-lingual signboards within Ipoh town proper would give the impression that you we are concerned about our guests.



Su Keong Siong (Thomas)

Constituency:

Pasir Pinji

Party: DAP

Age: 41 years old.

Service Centre:

49 Jln. Sultan Pasir Pinji, 31650, Ipoh.

Tel:

016 5500 600

012 5280 600

Blog:

under construction

Education:

Studied at ACS Sitiawan

until Form 4. Then his family moved to Ipoh where he did his Form 5. Did his A levels in the UK where he also read law. He sat for his CLP in 1992 and started a law practice in 1993.

Marital Status: Married; one son. His wife is also a lawyer. No, not in the same firm.

Hobbies: He used to breed koi but the fish needed regular maintenance and he couldn't find sufficient time to do a good job of it so he gave it up.

Life in Politics

His father, Su Liang Yu, was a politician. He was the MP and Assemblyman for Bruas in 1969 under the PPP banner and held the seat till 1978. In the family of five siblings, Thomas is the youngest and the only one active in politics. He entered politics in 1999 during the time of 'reformasi'. He first stood for election in 1999 in Malim Nawar against then MCA incumbent Lee Chee Leong.

Thomas lost. The following year, he started a service centre at Pasir Pinji. Four years later, in 2004, he ran for the Pasir Pinji seat and won. Thomas's service centre is open daily from 9 to 5. It is also open on Tuesday and Thursday nights. He has an assistant during the day; occasionally, his wife helps out.

The grouses of his constituents

Drains, rubbish, maintenance. Problems at the market, generally bread and butter issues. These are the regular City Council issues that take up a lot of his time. He also has the occasional family dispute to arbitrate as well.

What are his concerns for Perak?

Abuse of public funds. Stop the wastage, e.g. a small project at Pasir Pinji market can cost RM200k. Where are the results?

Push for a fairer government

He cites the case of the fish farmers at Lawan Kuda who have been contributing towards the state economy but have difficulty getting titles to their land.

Land issues

His constituency is

Pasir Pinji but the rakyat from Lawan Kuda and Tambun come to him for help.

He always had an inclination towards politics. No much choice there - it was part of his upbringing.

What does he think are the expectation of his constituency?

We have to deliver. Give us some time and we will live up to their expectations. The grouses that were not resolved for some reason or other, we now have the opportunity to do something about them.



Wong Kah Woh

Constituency:

Canning

Party: DAP

Age: 28

Service centre:

417 Jln. Pasar, Kg. Simee, 31400, Ipoh.

Tel:

012 3830 619

Blog:

kah woh's chamber

Blog Address:

wongkahwoh.blogspot.com

Education: He studied at SMJK (C) Choong Hua Bidor until Form 5 and did Form 6 at St. Michael's Institution. He went for his law studies at IIUM and mastered both Civil and Islamic Law. Knowledgeable in Arabic and Jawi.

Marital status:

Recently married.

Hobbies: Reading.

Sports: Used to play badminton 4 times a week. His new schedule demands this be reduced to once or twice a week.

Life in Politics

Wong's father was an ordinary member of the DAP since the 1970s. Wong recalls how, at 10, he followed the 1990 GE results avidly.

When he was in Form 5, he could not understand why Malay students could, after taking their Form 5 exams, do a matriculation course and then enroll for the university course of their choice (eg law and medicine). Why did he

have to go through Form 6 before he could get into a local university? And that was not even guaranteed.

In 1999, on completion of his Form 6, Wong joined the DAP. In the 1999 GE, he assisted the Perak Chairman Ngeh Koo Ham in translating his English media statements into Chinese. Away in university, he kept in touch with the DAP office and continued helping out with translation work via e-mail.

In 2004, he was made special assistant to Lim Kit Siang who had to be away for his Federal parliamentary duties. Wong took care of the local issues, i.e. MBI issues, in Ipoh Timur.

Service Centre

Wong Kah Woh has his service centre at Kampung Simee, next to the market. The centre was started by Teh Hock Ke, the previous DAP candidate for Canning. Teh failed in his bid in 2004 but the service centre was maintained. It was effective and addressed the common MBI issues i.e., SLR (sampah, longkang, rumpit)

The grouses of his constituents

Fifty per cent of the complaints are still the MBI issues of grass cutting, faulty street lamps and drains.

The rest are major issues, like the proposed re-zoning to commercial status for Taman Teh Teng Seng or the Light Industrial Area at Ipoh Garden East, an issue that remains unresolved.

Other issues

Wong is aware of the cases of snatch thefts and house break-ins even during daytime. He will gather more information before consulting with the Police Department.

His short-term goal

Revamp MBI. If MBI could be more effective, Wong is sure his constituents will be happy and he will, in turn, have more time to attend to state issues, like job creation. Too many of Ipoh's young, he observes, are working away from home.

JAG

YOUNG PERAK

A section of interest and action
for the youth of our state

Students from participating schools are invited to share their thoughts with others. Contributors may write about or photograph things/events outside their respective institutions of learning. Human interest stories, observations and reflections are welcome.

E-mail articles to –

editorial@ipohecho.com.my

attn: Peter Khiew

FotoEkono 平靚快

Picture Of Happiness

DIGITAL EXPRESS

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MAIN CONVENT GETS A 'FACE-LIFT'

Simple but meaningful - this would best describe the conclusion of SMK Main Convent Ipoh's centenary celebrations.

The financial support from well-wishers and benefactors enabled the

institution to undergo a face-lift. It was repainted, the ageing electrical wiring and fittings were given due attention. There has also been a partial replacement of school and classroom furniture.

MAKING THE BEST OF THINGS

Notes on a Salvation Army Home Visit

With mixed feelings I prepared myself to visit the Salvation Army Boys' Home in Tambun. I had never been to a 'home'. Therefore I had no idea of the thoughts and emotions young people have to grapple with when they are residents of one. This made me anxious and kept my excitement in check.

I knew I was going to see boys who live away from their parents. These children have gone through difficult patches. How should I start asking about their background? Would it be too sensitive an issue?

I'd wanted to visit a Home from a personal wish to broaden my horizon. I decided that the best approach was to take the situation as it unfolded, one step at a time. A quotation from Mother Theresa flashed across my mind: 'Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody - I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than a person who has nothing to eat.'

When I arrived at the Home, I was cordially received. I had to wait to talk to three boys. During this brief period, I noticed the impeccable condition of the house and the surrounding grounds. From outside, came the sounds of children at play. I was there, quietly listening when my first interviewee walked up to me.

We sat down and started talking. His voice was very soft so I adjusted my tone to his and our conversation went on smoothly.

Timothy Chuah Seong Kean is 19 years old. He is from Ipoh and has lived in this Home for almost eleven years. He said he was glad to be there. Timothy sells cakes and chocolates. His ambition

is to become a chef and open his own business in Australia.

He wakes up at 5.30 am every morning, have breakfast and then help with some of the

him.

Kelvin too says he is happier. He has lived in the Home for seven years now. He loves swimming and is very ambitious in his studies. He mentioned

make them give up.

As my visit drew to a close, I was introduced to a woman who herself had been in a Home. She has since left but recognises a debt of gratitude to the Salvation Army Home. She does volunteer work in the place.

LESSON

What did I learn?

After the short time I spent in Tambun, things began to appear to me differently. Now I think



Above, from left: Kelvin, Jason and Timothy.

housework. There's school. He explained that after school hours everyone has lunch and a shower. There is time set aside for study. They have tea together and then there's more housework to do. When all is done, the boys play with friends or just enjoy their free time before dinner.

WHERE THEY BELONG

Timothy's hobbies are playing football, cycling and working his computer. He said when he was young, he was a naughty boy and his parents used to fight. Going back to see his father, volunteers Timothy, doesn't give him the "feel of a family gathering". The Salvation Army Home, Timothy declared, is where he belongs; it is his family.

Jason Ong Jia Sheng, 17, and Kelvin Lam Chee Wai, 18 agreed with Timothy. Both are from Kuala Lumpur and sons of single parents. For Jason, coming to Ipoh made a big difference. He feels better - after all, here, he said, he has "loads of friends" with whom he could share his problems. Playing and spending time with his friends is very important to

proudly that he is taking O-levels to become a doctor in Australia.

The Salvation Army is a movement founded in 1865 by William Boot. From London, England,



The under-10 year-olds have one another to share the day.

it has spread to many parts of the world. The Salvation Army Home in Tambun is hosting 44 boys in shared accommodation. The youngest boys are under 10 years. Timothy is one of the 'big brothers'.

I was amazed to hear of the boys' ambitions. I also found it remarkable that none of them felt uncomfortable talking about their personal background. To me it was a demonstration of how strong these young guys are - difficulties don't

we should open our eyes, be more aware of others and help more often. I think the children at the Tambun Home deserve a better future.

The best memory of my visit is the way every resident smiled broadly when I greeted them. I remember those welcoming faces. I hope they never lose that open smile.

KRISTIN HARTLICH

Form 5,
SMK Main Convent Ipoh

CHALLENGING PROJECT FOR 02 KINTA SCOUTS

Jamboree set to enhance spirit of comradeship, among other positive goals

What does it take to mount a big scale programme like a jamboree that will involve some 500 boy scouts and girl guides from various troops and companies in Malaysia?

Alot, say the organisers from the 02 Kinta Scout of St Michael's Institution. But they are taking it all in their stride. They view the task as a challenge, a responsibility that sharpens their skills at organisation and planning.

The main objective

of the mammoth gathering is to strengthen ties between the scouts and guides from the various schools. Activities will also be geared to enhance the spirit of comradeship, the sharing of ideas and the promotion of understanding among troops.

To generate funds to meet expenses - expected to be approx. RM4,000 - the organisers are sending out letters to companies and individuals. Advertisements in the pro-



Photographs show the 02 Kinta Scouts going about their preparations for the big get-together.



gramme booklets would be most appreciated.

St Michael's troop is 82 years old. It was set up

in 1926 and is therefore one of the oldest in the country. For details, please call: 05-2540418.



BEWARE SCAREMONGERING ... VIA EMAIL



This despicable practice is spreading and the genuinely concerned are being hoodwinked.

Worried Malaysians - all acting in good faith - are dispatching e-mails around the country as a warning to friends and relatives to beware of a new deadly spider threat.

But the threat is nothing more than a concoction by distorted minds.

The e-mail currently in circulation is utter nonsense.

But if you didn't know this you might, understandably, be fearful

... particularly if there are young children in your home.

And, believe it or not, it's all to do with toilet seats!



The spider:
Telamonia
dimidiata

Below is the e-mail calculated to scare Malaysians.

To: ipohecho.ndr@gmail.com
March 28, 2008 9:12 AM
Subject: Please read and pass on.....

Three women in KL, turned up at hospitals over a 5-day period, all with the same symptoms.

Fever, chills, and vomiting, followed by muscular collapse, paralysis, and finally, death. There were no outward signs of trauma.

Autopsy results showed toxicity in the blood. These women did not know each other, and seemed to have nothing in common. It was discovered, however, that they had all visited the same Restaurant along Jalan Kuchai Lama within days of their deaths.

The health department descended on the restaurant, shutting it down. The food, water, and air conditioning were all inspected and tested, to no avail.

The big break came when a waitress at the restaurant was rushed to the hospital with similar symptoms. She told doctors that she had been on vacation, and had only gone to the restaurant to pick up her check. She did not eat or drink while she was there, but had used the restroom.

That is when one toxicologist, remembering an article he had read, drove up to the restaurant, went into the restroom, and lifted the toilet seat. Under the seat, out of normal view, was a small spider.

The spider was captured and brought back to the lab, where it was determined to be the Two-Striped Telamonia (Telamonia dimidiata), so named because of its reddened flesh color. This spider's venom is extremely toxic, but can take several days to take effect.

They live in cold, dark, damp climates, and toilet rims provide just the right atmosphere. Several days later a lawyer from JB showed up at a hospital emergency room. Before his death, he told the doctor, that he had been away on business, had taken a flight from Indonesia, changing planes in Singapore, before returning home. He did not visit the restaurant, while there. He did, as did all of the other victims, have what was determined to be a puncture wound, on his right buttock.

Investigators discovered that the flight he was on had originated in India.

The Civilian Aeronautics Board (CAB) ordered an immediate inspection of the toilets of all flights from India, and discovered the Two-Striped Telamonia (Telamonia dimidiata) spider's nests on 4 different planes!

It is now believed that these spiders can be anywhere in the country. So please, before you use a public toilet, lift the seat to check for spiders. It can save your life! And please pass this on to everyone you care about.

Here's where the hoax originated
- the United States of America.

The following story was posted on the internet. Quickly it was spread, via e-mails, throughout the USA and beyond.

WARNING: From the University of North Florida

In an article by Dr. Beverly Clark, in the Journal of the United Medical Association (JUMA), the mystery behind a recent spate of deaths has been solved. If you haven't already heard about it in the news, here is what happened.

Three women in North Florida, turned up at hospitals over a 5-day period, all with the same symptoms. Fever, chills, and vomiting, followed by muscular collapse, paralysis, and finally, death. There were no outward signs of trauma. Autopsy results showed toxicity in the blood. These women did not know each other, and seemed to have nothing in common. It was discovered, however, that they had all visited the same Restaurant (Olive Garden) within days of their deaths. The health department descended on the restaurant, shutting it down. The food, water, and air conditioning were all inspected and tested, to no avail.

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So please, before you use a public toilet, lift the seat to check for spiders. It can save your life! And please pass this on to everyone you care about

Officer Sylvia Steele
University of North Florida

Demolishing the hoax . . .

The Ipoh Echo has researched this latest attempt at internet scaremongering and made some very interesting discoveries

First of all, the Journal of the United Medical Association does not exist - neither is there any evidence that such an article written by 'Dr Beverly Clark' appeared in any recognised medical journal.

Furthermore, the Civil

Aeronautics Board mentioned in the US warning disbanded in 1984!

It seems this urban legend has taken many forms over the years. As it circulates more detail is removed or replaced to make it more believable.

The earliest Internet version was found in 1999 and linked the mysterious deaths to "Big Chappies Restaurant" in "Blare

Airport" in Chicago (The Chicago Airport is called "O'Hare Airport"). The spider was hilariously named "South American Blush Spider" or "Arachnius Gluteus".

Omission of the fictitious airport and replacement of the equally false spider with a real one - 'Two-Striped Telamonia' - together with the latest addition of a Malaysian environment, have given this old hoax new life.

Sport

by Steve Darby

“THE BEST PRACTICE”

We can produce quality players and in greater numbers. It can be done.

Recently I stated in a Malay language newspaper that we (that is, football in Malaysia) are wasting money sending players to Europe on exposure visits or training stints. Rather we should be looking at the “best

practice” available in Malaysia, which at the moment is the state of Kedah which is producing player after player and reaping the benefits at senior level.

There are many reasons for my skepticism in going abroad. Firstly, I have worked in a professional club in England. The reality is that players from overseas who cannot play for the club in a competitive game are more often that not a nuisance to the Coaches and end up purely being used to make up numbers in training. The trip is often arranged through management who are removed from the day to day reality or through a marketing department that is looking to appease sponsors.

Secondly, if a young player is sent to England and visits the youth

academies of Manchester United or

FA President's Cup players with other guys who have disappeared from football. These include players such as Rushanizam Idrus and Ramzi Ruzawali.

But let's take it on to a further stage. In 1997, Malaysia held the World Youth Cup. Of the squad of 20 players only two - S Saravanan (Pahang) and Tengku Hazman (Johor FC) - are playing regularly in the M

league. Compared this to the English team which included Owen, Carragher, Murphy, Upson, Euell, Dyer, Morris and Macken who are all EPL players, if not international, at senior level. The French team was captained by Thierry Henry, with defenders Sagnol and Gallas (Arsenal) Silvestre (Man Utd) and a certain Nicholas Anelka on the bench!

So to me the key issue is, firstly, Talent Identification. How are the players chosen? Is it objective? Scientific? Also, more importantly, who is choosing players? Is it coaches or is it administrators or, even in the reality of Malaysian sports, politicians?!

Hence, the important

thing is to devise a Talent identification scheme that is as reliable as can be. There will always be mistakes, some players don't develop, and some get

injured. But as the players are in many ways economic investments, let's develop a programme that is the “best practice”.



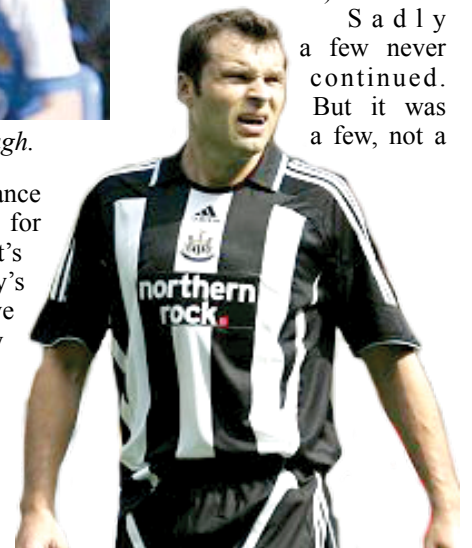
In England, he had a stint at Middlesbrough.

deserve a chance to play football for their country. It's not only a boy's game and I have seen many talented female footballers.

If each state had a training complex and of course was maintained and not left to rot, then we would see more and more quality young players. Then, maybe, a few of them could be sent to Europe not just for experience but to obtain contracts. It's not a naïve pipe dream, it happens in Australia where each State has an Intensive Training Centre (ITC) and then the best go

to the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in Canberra. From this academy of excellence many players have graduated to Europe. I worked there in 1995/6 and players such as Viduka (Newcastle) Emerton (Blackburn) and Neil (West Ham) were all players I worked with. True, some stayed in Australia and played in the national league and others even played in Malaysia such as Angelucci and Zelic (Johor FC).

Sadly a few never continued. But it was a few, not a



He is now one of the stars at Newcastle United.

majority. Let's invest in top class facilities and dedicated quality Malaysian coaches. We can produce quality players and in greater numbers. Hopefully, one day, when we ask - where are they now? - maybe the answer would be Italy, Spain or England.

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