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SHODDY TREATMENT OF PERAK'S PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS

Smiles belie true feelings. Clenched fists don't!



**They need their money. They deserve their money.
It's a disgrace they haven't been paid.**

Read Fathol Zaman Bukhari's full report -- page 2
Also Perak coach Steve Darby on FAM ideas - page 12

Photos by Rosli Mansor



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PERAK STATE FOOTBALL TEAM IN DIRE STRAITS

A desperate situation needs desperate measures – fast!

By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Not so long ago the fans were upset because Perak's state footballers hit a losing streak.

It was a tough period but the lads came through it in great style. They started winning - and winning most convincingly.

What faces them today, though, is a development infinitely more serious than a lack of goals.

It's a lack of finance. The team's broke!

Footballers, coach and staff are all receiving their fees paid in pathetic, erratic dribs and drabs - and months late.

What our lads are currently being asked to bear is an utter disgrace and stands as an appalling indictment of responsible authorities and, of course, politicians of various persuasions who, up to now, have been conveniently looking in other directions.

The Perak team is - to put it bluntly - in the midst of a huge financial crisis. None of it is of their making and, sadly, there appears to be no relief on the horizon.

Comprising one coach, two assistant coaches and 16 players, the team is down to its last cents. Coach cum manager, the formidable Englishman Steve Darby, has been desperately struggling to overcome the financial and associated woes confronting his men. Try as he might, though, he has had precious little success thus far.

After the indignity of being forced to hold his team's practice sessions on the Ipoh Padang, Steve managed to get a partial reprieve from City Hall. Training work, for the moment, can return to the stadium. But how long this reprieve will last is anyone's guess.

Probably not very long, as the authorities maintain large sums are still owing for the team's past use of



We're empty handed! Got no money! Steve Darby and his crew (L to R) ham it up for the camera and try to make light of the otherwise critical situation in which they find themselves.

the stadium facilities.

Far more critical, though, is the matter of funds.

"The last full pay we received was for the month of March," said Steve during an

interview with the Ipoh Echo.

"The lower-paid players got their April pay two weeks ago. The rest, including me, got nothing," he added, dejectedly.

IN SUPER LEAGUE TOP FIVE

What makes the situation even more deplorable is the fact that the Perak team is currently running high in the national league and is placed among the top five teams in the Malaysian Super League. Last season they were the league's runners-up and Malaysia Cup finalists.

The team has also qualified for the quarter-finals of the prestigious Asian Cup Championship 2008 in September, the first Malaysian club side ever to achieve such a distinction. "And all these, mind you, with the minimum of funding and support from those concerned," said Steve emphatically.

The Perak side is managed by the Football Association of Perak (FAP). Before the Malaysian league turned

professional in 1989, football was a sport with a massive following. The likes of Mokhtar Dahari (Super Mokh), Subramaniam, Chin Aun, Dollah Bakar and Ghani Mihat before them, were household names and kids throughout the country aspired to follow in their footsteps.

However, when the game became tainted with corruption through scandals involving bookies and the underworld, its overall popularity took a beating.

EASY TV ACCESS

Today, with the advent of satellite television, football fans have easy access to the big-time games overseas. A click of a remote control sits them immediately in a box-seat at the latest English Premier League match, or at alternative events in the Spanish or Italian leagues. Still, none of this mitigates the woes faced by Steve Darby and his players who don Perak colours for the sake of the game and the honour of the state. Neither does it exonerate, in any measure, those directly responsible for the team's financial status.

According to Steve, revenue for the team normally accrues directly from three specific sources. Besides a generous subsidy from the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM), a monthly stipend should also come from

the state government. Gate receipts make up the balance.

However, since Pakatan Rakyat took over the government following the March 8 General Election, all financial support from the state has dried up. "I have written a formal letter to the MB dated July 2 but as of today, I have yet to receive



The strain shows. Steve and assistant coach, caught in an unguarded moment.

a reply," Steve lamented.

Rescheduling of matches by FAM from weekends to weekdays have unfortunately had a serious impact on gate collections.

"Poor turnout at matches is a bane. Who would want to see matches on weekdays when they have to work the following day?" questioned Steve.

Poor gate receipts mean less money for the team. FAM, too, must also bare a substantial portion

of the blame for the current financial crisis facing the Perak team. It has failed dismally to keep its side of the bargain - the continuing provision of promised grants.

"FAP has yet to receive its dues," emphasised the Perak coach.

TIGHTEST OF ALL BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

When it comes to budget constraints there's not a football side in Malaysia that can match the financial measures put in place by Steve and his staff.

Reality is that the Perak team is struggling along with the smallest of any of the equivalent budget operations across the nation.

"We are operating at about 50 per cent of the other teams in the league. Our budget is even smaller than some of the teams in the President's Cup," Steve revealed. Despite these restrictions, the Perak team has managed to make considerable headway in both the local league and in Asia.

Prudent spending by the association has managed to reduce its operating

costs by almost RM1 million. The take-home pay of players has been trimmed. The team's size has been lowered from 30 to a precarious 16 members. They fly to playing venues via the cheaper Air Asia routes and refrain from staying overnight in their away matches. What is more, there are no match bonuses for players like before.

As if to rub salt into gaping wound, unpaid bills,

A deeply concerned coach, Steve Darby, is privately struggling to find a way through the financial crisis enveloping his team.

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SWEARING-IN THE COUNCILLORS

An occasion like no other before

After more than four months, the long wait is finally over. The appointment of mayor, presidents and councillors for the 15 local councils in Perak became formalised on Friday, July 18, at Ipoh's Banquet Hall, State Secretariat Building.

The swearing-in of 338 new councillors was done collectively in front of the Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Mohammad Nizar bin Jamaluddin. As such it was the first occasion of its kind ever held in the state.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Previously, only mayors and council presidents were sworn-in by the MB. Councillors took their oaths of office in the presence of their respective council heads. The latest ceremony was a departure from the norm and undertaken for good reason.

Nizar must have foreseen the advantage of having the new councillors under one roof so he could address and advise them all at one time.

According to Nga Kor Ming, the Executive Councillor for Education,

Local Government and Transportation, some 2,900 applications came from throughout the state for councillor positions.

Of this, 250 were short listed and interviewed. Eventually only 93 were picked to fill the 30 per cent slot reserved for NGOs and professionals. Those picked came from varied backgrounds and professions, said Nga.

They included doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and even a retired senior naval officer. The remaining 245 candidates are political appointees from Pakatan Rakyat, including five from the Opposition Barisan Nasional.

The distribution seems fair and it has fulfilled PR's pre-election promise of returning power back to the people.

PAST CORRUPTION AND INEFFICIENCY

Nizar in his keynote address lambasted the previous administration for allowing the current state of affairs to exist in the 15 local councils. "The rakyat has a very poor impression of local councils. They

feel that those running the councils are corrupted and inefficient," he said.

The MB argued that this was probably the reason why ratepayers were reluctant to pay up their dues. A sum of RM30 million is currently owed by ratepayers to local councils throughout the state.

The greater proportion of this missing total has been identified as comprising unpaid bi-annual assessment rates.

NO BLAME

"I don't blame them for not paying," he added. "How are they to pay when services are below par?"

He implored the appointees to take their jobs seriously and return the shine to local councils. "Whether you continue in your appointment when your term expires is condi-

tional upon your performance," he warned.

The duration of office for councillors in Perak is one year - December to December. So the current crop of councillors will only serve until December 2008. Any extension thereafter is contingent upon their performance.

The hour-long ceremony was not without surprises. Missing from the crowd of VIPs was Dato' Seri Tajol Rosli, former MB and Opposition Leader. Missing too were the other BN state assemblymen. There were 18

empty seats in the front row and their absence was only too obvious.

Nga pleaded ignorance when asked for an explanation of the vacant seats. "I am not their guardian angel," he replied.

Apparently, no invitation was sent to the BN representatives and this was confirmed by Hamidah Osman, the assemblywoman for Sungei Rapat..

An event of such significance must be opened to all regardless of one's political affiliation. After all, local councils are not the preserves of the elite.



All sworn-in and ready to roll . . . well, almost . . . and then there were the vacant seats



Ipoh's new mayor, Roshidi Hashim (right) receives his letter of appointment from the Menteri Besar.

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EDITORIAL

IMMINENT RECESSION?

Ever since the petrol and diesel price hike of June, 2008, prices of essentials have skyrocketed.

Low-grade rice, favoured by the working class, sells at RM26 per ten-kilo pack. Teh and kopi tarik cost RM1 a cup while roti canai, capati and tosai are similarly priced. Before June it was possible to enjoy a light lunch for under RM4. This is not possible now.

Today, mee and kuey teow goreng cost between RM3 to RM3.50. A plate of nasi campor with either fish or chicken and vegetables at Vanggey Restaurant, Jalan Yang Kalsom, costs RM4.20 (previously RM2.80). And if you were to add a glass of iced lemon tea, the bill comes to RM5.70. Set lunches at eateries, bistros and social clubs used to be RM9.90. Today they cost RM12.

With America's economy in the doldrums, due to the combined effect of the sub-prime mortgage mess and the spiralling price of petrol, reverberations of the mounting international economic crisis must soon be felt on this side of the globe.

Recessions are generally associated with declines in a country's real gross domestic product (GDP), or a negative real economic growth. According to definition, a recession occurs when real growth is negative for two or more successive quarters of a year.

Bank Negara has revised GDP for this quarter (July to September) from 6 to 4.2 per cent. Inflation will reduce real growth significantly. Since the petrol price hike, inflationary pressure has pushed prices of goods and services upwards. The government has always been discreet when announcing inflationary rates. The Consumer Price Index (CPI), a barometer to gauge inflation, is being manipulated to provide an exaggerated figure so as to allay perceived fears.

The inflationary rate for this quarter has surpassed the seven per cent level. As such our real growth is already in negative territory. And if these trends continue in the next quarter (October to December) we are in trouble.

Letter to the Editor

CHALLENGING THE CHOICE

Sir; We would like to protest the appointment of 'outsiders' as councillors to the Kampar Town Council.

Even if we accept Nga Kor Ming's (Ex-Co Chairman for Local Govt) bias for 'professionals' as councillors, which we do not and which we think is ill conceived, we cannot accept the fact that 'outside professionals' have been appointed whereas 'Kampar professionals' have been ignored. There are company secretaries, doctors, engineers, chartered accountants and lecturers in Kampar some of whom have applied to serve their town as councillors. Yet these people have been ignored in preference for 'outsiders'.

We would like to know the criteria for selecting local councillors - other than being a professional. What make these 'outside professionals' superior to those from Kampar?

The invitation to the public to apply for councillor positions is no more than an eye-wash when the criteria is not made known. Surely 'local knowledge and residency' and 'loyalty to the town' are very important criteria. Still, they have been ignored in as far as 'Kampar professionals' are concerned - unless the selectors think that Kampar people are not smart enough to manage their own affairs.

On the matter of competency we can only point to the fact that Nga Kor Ming has made an absolute mess of the whole exercise. And going by the letters in the papers it is not just in Kampar but in Ipoh and other towns as well.

Can the PR Government please explain to the Kampar people why we were deemed intelligent enough that they would assiduously court us during the elections; but after the elections we are not deemed intelligent enough to manage our own town?

We know Nga Kor Ming is new in the job but it would do him a lot of good if he read up on the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) which stresses the importance of consulting and involving residents in local government matters.

Kampar residents consider this a snub and an outright insult that the PR Government has such disdain for our ability to manage our own affairs. This is especially hard to stomach as the MB who is a Kampar boy has allowed this to happen. We suppose now that he resides in the MB mansion in Ipoh, he does not regard himself a Kampar boy anymore.

Signed on behalf of "Angry Kampar Residents"
Ridzuan Lee Bin Abdullah,
Jalan Baung, Taman Julucong, Kampar

THINKING ALOUD

By G. Sivapragasam

AFTER SUCH A GRACIOUS START



Sultan Azlan Shah, in his State Assembly opening address, called for a harmonious sitting.

He urged assemblymen from both Pakatan Rakyat and Barisan Nasional to present good ideas, defend the respectability of the chamber and behave with decorum through words, actions and behaviour.

He went on to remind members that the time for campaigning was past. It was, he said, now appropriate for all to honour their pledges to the people.

They should work together and manage the government process without subscribing to partisan politics.

BUT THEN...

Unfortunately, once the assembly functions began in earnest, the sage advice given by his Royal Highness was all but forgotten. The air was peppered with sound and fury. There were shouting matches, insults, accusations, walkouts, threats, racial slurs and the predictable police reports.

Though inexcusable, such behaviour was, perhaps, understandable. Assembly machinations had become a new experience for both sides of the political divide. Members from both Pakatan Rakyat and Barisan Nasional were coming to terms with the reality of their new roles and were attempting to measure each other and stamp their relative authority and power.

Still, they had forgotten that the world is a far different place today than it was a decade ago. All that is said and done now is not only recorded and documented. It can be telecast live to an immense audience. More pertinently, once it goes onto the net information becomes permanent and sits in cyberspace available for recovery by anyone who has a mind to. A remark once made becomes a permanent imprint that no retraction or apology can remove.

It is more probable than not that when

Assemblywoman Hamidah Osman asked the Speaker her foolish question it was not so much out of malice as an attempt to exhibit wit and impress her colleagues.

Whatever her motivation, her remarks resoundingly backfired. It would have served the good lady from Sungai Rapat well to have paid particularly close attention to the advice given by his Royal Highness at the beginning of the session.

There needs to be a consciousness that, as leaders functioning in today's technological world, they create perceptions across a much broader populace. Thoughtless behaviour not only damages them personally but, significantly enough, the people they represent as well.

Perak's legislature is unique. A margin of 3 legislators separates the Pakatan Rakyat that forms the current state government and the Barisan Nasional that used to govern our state. There is no overwhelming dominant force as in previous assemblies. The experience of the members of the old government and slim majority of the new evens out the opposing forces.

A FACT NOT LOST

The power structure is made even more complex by the party in control being made up of three distinct segments with differing philosophies. This is a fact not lost on the opposition and one which they attempted to exploit by calling for the election of the speaker by secret ballot. Whether the overall situation delivers an opportunity for progress or presents a formula for failure is left to be seen.

But one thing is certain, transparency will increase and abuse of power will decrease.

The new conditions have resulted in a few historical firsts.

For the first time a Malaysian of Indian origin was elected as the Speaker of the Assembly and a woman chosen as deputy

speaker.

It was also the first time that the proceedings were telecast live and of course for the first time the Legislative Assembly is controlled by the party that sits in opposition in Parliament.

Hopefully, by the time of the next session, much of the macho posturing will have died out and serious heed will have been paid to the advice of his Royal Highness.

LOOKING AHEAD

Perak remains one of the least progressive states, a situation that requires urgent address. Progress is not going to happen if the Pakatan government focuses all its effort on the misdeeds of the previous government. By the time such an exercise was completed the assembly's term would have expired and would have seen nothing done for the people.

Both camps need to realise they have made promises to improve the standard of living of the poor, enhance the quality of life of all and provide opportunities for the youth to earn a living in this state.

Promises need to be fulfilled. It requires bold vision, innovative planning and committed execution.

To assist them in this mission are three factors that, if well exploited, can significantly improve the prospects of success.

Ironically, the very lack of development in the past has left the State's natural resources and environment relatively intact. This conveniently delivers the first opportunity for planning and executing a sustainable development program.

Here the formula for success encompasses present day knowledge and technology without the need to address the consequences of past mistakes.

Secondly, Perak for the first time has the opportunity to chart a development path independent

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THUMBS UP

NEVER TOO OLD TO DREAM

... Better still, never too old to execute a plan

Mohamed Adnan Osman is 65 and Mazlan Rahmad is 56. Osman was a teacher; Mazlan was with the Army. Just as their families and friends were getting used to the idea that the two were really going to "take it easy", the retirees made their startling announcement. They were taking on a Herculean task – cycling from Putra Jaya to Beijing, a distance of approximately 9,000 kilometres!

Before setting out on their journey last May, Adnan and Mazlan agreed that the challenge would take more than tenacity and grit.

But they were undeterred. They said, separately and jointly, that they were out to prove one thing. They wanted to set an example that would convince others that, regardless of age, one could



Dr Harbaksh Singh (extreme left), Perak St John Ambulance deputy commander, about to flag off the adventurous retirees - Mohamed Adnan (in blue shorts) and Mazlan, wearing the big darker sunglasses).

still achieve goals.

So, they cycled off, hopes pinned on fortitude and determination to carry them through.

Adnan and Mazlan, acknowledged that they would have a gruelling

time pedalling from the northern half of Malaysia, crossing the Thai border from Bukit Kayu Hitam in Perlis and proceeding to Hatyai in Thailand.

The duo would then proceed to Bangkok, head-

ing towards Vientiane in Laos, then Hanoi in Vietnam.

Full of optimism, they expect to reach Beijing, the host city of the 29th Olympic Games before Aug 8, the opening day.

The tedious and back-breaking journey that cuts through wild and most rugged terrains would end at the "bird's nest" stadium.

There, after pedalling furiously for 9,000 kilometres, Adnan and Mazlan, would meet the Malaysian contingent to whom they would extend a historic greeting and the best wishes of a nation.

St John Ambulance Malaysia, also in conjunction with its centennial celebration, sponsored ambulance escort for Adnan and Mazlan, until the border at Bukit Kayu Hitam.

Perak St John Ambulance secretary Manin Singh calculated that it would take the pair approximately 75 to 80 days to cover the distance.

Paying tribute to the gritty cyclists, he added that it was worth emulating the duo's spirit.

Peter Khiew

... Gracious Start
from page 4

of extraneous forces.

This enables it to plan and execute a programme that is in the best interest of the State and its people.

Thirdly, the Perak populace is desperate for progress and would be more than willing to join forces with the authorities to improve the state.

In addition there also exists a vast reservoir of Perakans outside the state who are experts in a variety of fields and who are most willing to assist.

There is a real opportunity for Perak to emerge as a powerhouse of the modern age.

What is needed is a vision of what we want the state to be by 2010, an audit of its resources and a plan to use the resources to transform vision into reality.

Ultimately, the vision must be shared with the people, thereby motivating them to join the government in achieving the ambition.

CANCERLINK IPOH GIVES TEENAGE SURVIVORS A WELCOME BREAK

26 travellers return with stories of an "enthralling" day

On a fine Saturday last June, 26 teenage survivors from Perak went on an excursion to Kuala Lumpur. The outing was organised by Cancerlink, Ipoh Branch. The group was accompanied by the organisation's chairman, Dr Akhbar Ali and six volunteers.

A chartered bus took the young travellers and their escorts to the Federal capital. Each teenager received a 'goodie bag' containing drinks, a hand towel, water, a packet of juice and some snacks.

The group's first stop was the National Science Centre. They were taken



Volunteers and their young charges at the National Science Centre

on a guided tour of the centre and had lunch served in the cafeteria. The Petronas Twin Towers were their next stop. A member of the staff took them up the towers and onto the connecting bridge.

There, the guests had a panoramic view of nation's capital city. The young excursionists said it was both "breath-taking" and "fantastic". The crossing of the connecting bridge from one tower to another

was another matter. The exercise was exciting to some and frightening to many. Frightened or not, all the participants said they thoroughly enjoyed the visit.

Esme Subramaniam

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GENTLE LAST WORD

In his last piece for the Ipoh Echo, an ailing Dato Seri Yang Rashdi bin Maasom talks about his joy at having seen his friends around his sickbed. He also speaks of his gratitude for the honour of a Royal visit

I am now back home after two weeks at the Pantai Puteri Medical Centre, Ipoh. I am not fully recovered yet – it may take another month or so for me to be my normal self again. But I am such a restless person and have to be at my computer and try to write again.

I want to thank the dear friends from the Kelab Bakti Gunung Keledang who visited me in hospital. Tan Sri Azizuddin came when I was in a very critical condition. I could barely say a word and had to say sorry by sign language from afar. Then the others ... Dato' Syed Azman and Datin, Dato' Ahmad Ismail, Dr Ameen, the Club Secretary, Haris and his family, my great friend Mohamad Hamzah who, together with Razali, our artist, brought a very valuable gift on behalf of the Club – a robotic hospital bed. (I heard it cost the Club a bomb). But I feel that I will not be bed-ridden for long. *Insyah Allah* (God's willing).

The greatest gift of all was the surprise visit of our beloved Sultan, Raja Azlan Shah and Raja Perempuan, Tuanku Bainun.

One quiet afternoon, Tuanku trotted in, affecting a cheerful tone, in jest, asking, "Hey, what are you doing here?" The two doctors present briefed the Sultan.

My chat with the royal couple lasted about 40 minutes. The Sultan queried about my age and compared it with our Tun Bendahara's age. Of course, Tun is about four or five years my senior, I am just turning 83. He then asked me about my College contemporaries.

I rattled off a few names. He then added a few more to see how I would respond.

We rambled on about other matters like my sporting days. I gladly told him that I too was a hockey player like him. Perhaps, wanting to test me, he asked what position I played. I said, readily, 'right wing'. I even added, rather cheekily (I realise this now) that I was quite a nippy player. He asked, "apa lagi cerita?" So I talked about my involvement in the scouting movement. The Sultan was a patrol leader during his school days.

He enquired about my leisure time. I told him of the support I give my daughter, Ju, who works to alleviate the problems of single mothers in Kampong Buai. Ju, who was there during the visit was very articulate in her discourse with the royal couple.

I informed the Sultan that my family had started our own agro-project, planting lemon grass on the land around my house. When I told him that it was only five acres, the Sultan exclaimed that it was big. He asked again, "apa lagi cerita?" I remembered the Ipoh Echo.

I told him one of my articles was published in *Ipoh Echo* Issue 47. It was a story about me and my brothers when we were kids growing up in the kampung. Tuanku prodded me to carry on writing.

My four children, Ida, Lahn, Ju and Shima



Raja Azlan Shah, the Sultan of Perak. His hospital visit, according to the late Dato Sri Rashdi, was "the greatest gift of all".

smartly dressed in *baju kurong* and *samping*, were on hand to provide me support whenever I faltered.

Ida and Ju attended to Tuanku Bainun who was very sweet and friendly. Shima was awed by Tuanku's charm and became speechless.

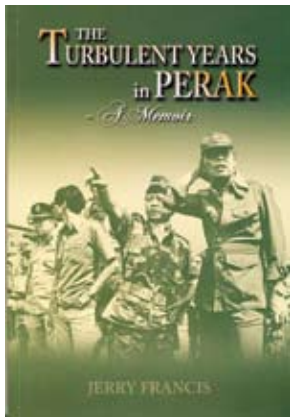
Ya-Ya, Ida's teenage daughter, was assigned to take photos but lost her composure. Let us say she got a bad attack of stage fright – so there went my treasure trove of pictures.

Raja Azlan told my kids never to leave their father all by himself. They nodded in agreement. Ida walked them to the staff car which was parked under the hospital porch below.

What a day it was! Thank you, Tuanku!

Dato Seri Rashdi requested his daughter to forward the above article to the Ipoh Echo. He died on July 3. See our tribute, IE Issue 54.

BOOKS



The Turbulent Years - A Memoir
by Jerry Francis
published by Alpha
Sigma Sdn Bhd
240 pp

The author, Jerry Francis, was a reporter with the New Straits Times Press. He was based in Ipoh and covered the 2nd Emergency (1967 to 1989).

Francis reported events from 1973 until the Peace Accord was signed in December 1989.

Frankly, I was not aware of the activities mentioned in the book. All I recall is an outing with the Malayan Nature Society to Dead Man's Gully behind Tambun Town and we had to register our names before entering the hills. That was it.

The closest I got to realising that the communists were a threat to Ipoh

was when the then Chief Police Officer Perak, Tan Sri Koo Chong Kong, was assassinated in 1975.

The "assassination" sparked off a massive security operation into "notorious areas" among them "Waller Court, Kg Bercham and Pasir Pinji.

OBLIVIOUS

Activities went on in my back yard in the 70s and 80s and I didn't know!

In 1976, for instance, Police Field Force recruits on a training excursion stumbled upon a communist terrorist camp in the area of Kramat Pulai. The

continued on page 7

FROM MY ALBUM

By Quicksilver

SPECIAL VICTORIAN ERA STAMPS

Keen collectors, like myself, are forever pondering and researching the historical environments that produced the stamps we feature most prominently in our albums.

As you will have recognised by now, I am unabashedly "hooked" on the stamps of Malaya – particularly those of the colonial era.

Thus you will forgive any bias I might display. As far as I am concerned, Queen Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom, Empress of India, and the longest ever reigning British monarch left a particularly special legacy, one that retains influence to this very day.

Alexandrina Victoria, the only child of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Princes Victoria Mary Louisa, of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, was born on May 24, 1819. Victoria's grandfather was George III. The capital of Penang, Georgetown, was named after him.

Her long reign, which began in 1837 when she was merely 18 years old, saw many changes to society. Science and technology were encouraged and supported. And don't forget, the modern postal stamp as we know it today had its origins during her reign. Even the British Empire reached its grandest scale during her time on the throne.

Victoria married Albert, son of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Together they had nine children many of whom married into European Royal Families. These foreign marriages linked Britain to virtually every European monarchy. The current Queen's husband, the Duke of Edinburgh is also a descendant of Queen Victoria.

The Marriage produced four future sovereigns of England – Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII and George VI. I will feature the stamps of these later periods in my coming columns.

Queen Victoria died on 22 January, 1901 at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. She was 82. In a small personal tribute to this Grand Lady and Queen I would now like to feature



Queen Victoria

in this column one of the finest stamp sets from my album.

This particular set originates from 1888 when De La Rue & Co devised a cost saving method of printing stamps for the numerous colonies.

It employed the use of a template – as we would say in today's terminology. In those days, however, they called it a KEY PLATE.

The Key Plate had blank spaces for those sections of the stamps usually occupied by colony names and values.



A Key Plate

By using the Key Plate with an overprint or duty plate with the designated country name and value, any number of new stamps could be produced at effectively very low cost. Many of Britain's colonial stamps were printed in this fashion beginning with those for the Seychelles in 1890.

The Straits Settlements turn began in 1892 when the following stamps were printed in this fashion:

September 1892

1cent green

February 1895

3cents carmine rose

March 1892

25cents purple, brown and green

March 1892

50cents olive-green and carmine

October 1898

\$5 orange and carmine



Ipoh Facts and Fancies

They Called Them Dulang Washers

Thousands of Perak women were daily engaged in this gruelling work

Back in the early 1890's, as F. Douglas Osborne, founder of the famous mining engineering firm of Osborne and Chappel, watched the Gopeng-Kota Bharu road being metalled he made a most significant observation.

After every heavy rain shower, scores of Malay women could be seen with their *dulang* (pans) collecting the concentrations of black sand from ditches at the foot of Gopeng Hill. They then took the sand away to dress for tin.

It was an epiphany of epic importance. Gopeng Hill was obviously full of tin, and if a heavy shower of rain washed so much tin ore down the slopes, then concentrated jets of water might well do the job more efficiently.

Thus it was that Osborne introduced the hydraulic method of tin mining in the country. It was the Malay *dulang* washers of Gopeng who gave him the idea.



Still she manages a smile for the camera.

Mendulang or *me-landa*, the method of panning tin in river beds with a wooden tray or *dulang*, was a favourite employment with Mandailing and



Long hours, back-breaking labour and little money.

Rawa women of Sumatra. An expert *dulang* washer could recover between ten and fifteen katis of ore a day. In the early days of mining, when the price of tin was firm and wages were low, the *dulang* washers found employment in the mines to recover the ore that was still left in the sluice and tailings.

The firm of Osborne and Chappel, for instance, employed hundreds of Malay women to wash the earth brought down into a long ditch by the monitors at night.

PAID BY THE DAY

It is highly skilled work in which Malay women seem greatly to surpass Chinese. These women probably turn out more tin for their numbers than any other miners in the State. They are paid daily wages.

However, all this changed with the severe tin slump of 1907-08. Mines were then forced to resort to more cost-effective methods of mining.

It was recorded at the time:

During the present slump, the small alluvial mines have ceased working, and thousands of

Chinese coolies and Malay women who were employed in them are engaged in enforced rest, while the bigger mines, which have been able to ride through the stress, are rapidly adopting modern methods of mining. Not only the Europeans, but also the Chinese towkays are importing machinery."

Before the slump, the price of tin was so high that people did not bother to adopt practical and economic methods of mining, and went in for a system of alluvial mining of the crudest description.

They just scraped the surface of the ground and, indifferent to the cost of labour - because of the high price (of tin) - had the work done by hand, employing hundreds of Malay women.

To help the *dulang* washers, the Government issued passes to them for a small fee:

"We hear that Government will shortly issue passes to women and boys under a certain age to work on tailings of abandoned mines with dulangs, or lands alienated for mining purposes, in streams of lands belonging to Government, and close to the mines. In the opin-

By Ho Tak Ming

ion of Government, this is a step in the right direction as it will enable hundreds of women and boys to earn an honest living. The lowly dulang washers continue to foster an independent operation and thus survive under changing circumstances."

Several hundred Cantonese and Hakka women took advantage of the Government's offer, and became independent miners earning enough to supplement the household's income, which was important, as the main bread winner, often a mining coolie, might be out of a job during the slump.

They organised themselves into "*dulang brigades*", gathering at a certain location in the morning, and cycling together to their respective destinations, which might be a dozen miles away. They wore a distinctive attire to protect themselves from the hot sun as they worked outdoors all the time.

LIKE A SUMMER CHEAP SALE

In 1910, no less than 6,559 women in Perak were engaged in washing for tin. The Senior Warden of Mines, F.J.B. Dykes, likened the annual issuing of licences to the *dulang* women to a summer cheap sale, so immense was the crowd (of applicants).

He indulged in a glowing eulogy of these nonias, and the British Resident commented that they were the most industrious, most cheerful and most law abiding citizens. He advocated their importation in large numbers to provide a tapping force for the rubber plantations.



THE WAY IT WAS ... 100 YEARS AGO

Perak Pioneer, Established in 1894.
'The oldest and most widely circulated newspaper in the F.M.S'

Sunday Labour

The interference of sundry busybodies at home in the affairs of the Crown Colonies, is becoming more aggressively pronounced from day to day. The proposed amendment of the Sunday Labour Ordinance, has evoked the sympathetic interposition of Mr. T. Summerbell, Labour Member for Sunderland, who put the following question to Colonel Seely, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. -

'If he is aware that the Sunday Labour Ordinance 1892, in the Straits Settlements, giving to the officers and crews on board ships a day of rest when in the ports under the control of the Legislative Council, has proved highly satisfactory, whether it is now proposed to amend such Ordinance by allowing full or part labour on Sunday, and thus calling upon officers and crews to forego the complete day of rest on Sundays enjoyed hitherto; and if so, can he state whether it is his intention to resist such change, especially in view of the hardship such change will entail on the officers and crews of ships trading there?'

To the question the Under Secretary of State is reported to have blandly replied that. -

The report of the Committee has only just been received, and the Secretary of State is not yet in a position to form an opinion on it, though it is evident that it raises questions of considerable importance.

The most prominent feature in Colonel Seely's reply is the straightforward declaration of the complete subordination of the Local Legislative Council to the dictation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Labour Member for Sunderland, if he had his way, would perhaps like to invoke the cessation of all kinds of labour throughout the Empire. But he has confined his humane advocacy to the well-being of those employed on board ships calling at ports 'under the control of the Legislative Council' of the Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements. But Mr Summersbell, in endeavouring to secure them the day of complete rest which, he imagines that they enjoy at present, overlooked the fact that the existence of the Ordinance has far from secured the laudable object with which it was passed into law.

The practical outcome of its operation has been that vessels are generally timed so as to arrive in a port of the Colony and be enabled to get away before Sunday. When this cannot be arranged, goods consigned for Singapore or Penang are often landed at a foreign port and sent back, entailing considerable loss in the operation. In these instances the officers and crew are alike compelled to labour on Sundays either during the ship's voyage or in working cargo in another port. It has been an unquestionable fact that many cargo vessels have consistently avoided the Straits and resorted to Dutch Ports, where no such Puritanical restrictions prevail. The effect of the legislation of a paternal Government has been to divert a part of the shipping business of the Colony to the ports of our Dutch competitors, without doing any appreciable good to anybody.

The only persons who have in any sense benefited are the European superintendents and clerks who might have been otherwise engaged during loading and unloading operations. But we venture to hazard the opinion that if the ordinances were amended so as to entitle them to a substantial overtime allowance for Sunday work, many of them would welcome the innovation, the more especially if it is confined to hours which would not clash with attendance at church. As it is, even with the complete day of rest, the cricket and football fields draw more votaries than the churches do on the Sabbath Day.

Even under the existing ordinance, the mail steamers are exempt from its operation, and there is no reason why other vessels should not be likewise exempted during a portion of the day. Nobody engaged on board a vessel can expect complete rest under any circumstances on any day, unless in the enjoyment of shore leave. An arrangement might easily be made between owners and the European officers of a ship for the payment to the latter of an extra allowance for working cargo, on Sundays while in a Colonial port. It is to be hoped in the interests of the trade of the Colony, that the proposed legislation will not be vetoed by the Colonial Office, as it could be enacted with sufficient safeguards to obviate all danger of hardship being imposed on those engaged in it.

TURBULENT... Continued From Page 6

instructor and three recruits were killed.

I googled Kramat Pulai. Just as I suspected. Its location was within the Ampang and Simpang Pulai, Main Range area. My playground where I used to ride my scrambler in those days!

MORE LESSONS

I didn't know either that the area stretching from Sungai Siput, Tanah Hitam and all the way south till Sungai Siput and Kampar was classified as a 'Black Area'. The vicinity of Sungai Siput/Lasah was where the 1st Emergency started when the communists killed three planters in 1948.



Dawn scene at the airstrip in Pengkalan Hulu. Soldiers wait for orders to cross into Betong

I was glad to learn about the 12 forts in the jungle, bordering Perak (6), Kelantan (3) and Pahang (3) that were established by the British as a regrouping area for the orang asli to sever the support the communists were getting. What started out as a regrouping to thwart support

for the communists was subsequently expanded to regroup all the estimated 20,000 orang asli throughout the state of Perak and was successfully completed in later years.

The book's reference to joint Thai-Malaysia exercises is another eye opener on how joint co-operation can quickly and effectively eliminate a common threat.

I asked Jerry if he truly enjoyed covering all his assignments at the time. "Yes", he replied, "every minute of it." Looking back at all those hair-raising situations, however, he feels lucky that he has emerged from it all, unscathed.

JAG



Antologi Haiku 2006 by Lela Hiro, Tabir Alam & Dipinggiran 154 pp

The haiku is a unique form of poetry that follows a rigid formula of "silent-introspective, then action-realisation" movement. This literary adventure by three Malaysians is in three languages - Malay, English and Japanese. The Japanese *haiku* is a demanding discipline that requires sharp perceptions. The trio has produced a reasonable output, especially Lela Hiro who appears to have a grasp of the tranquil philosophy that is supposed to inform the exquisite *haiku*.



See Foon

Musings

by See Foon Chan-Koppen

Shadow Play

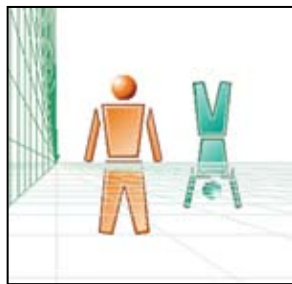
why I'm burnt out.

The Shadow aspects of ourselves that we run from are thoughts like, "I don't want to be selfish like my mother. I don't want to be angry like my father," but the fact is, we are all angry and selfish at times.

UNACKNOWLEDGED FEELINGS

And it's these unacknowledged feelings and emotions that generate our unconscious behaviour and actions. So we learn to point fingers at others and say, "How selfish of Mary." Or, "I don't like John, he's such an angry person". Notice how, when you point a finger at someone, four fingers are pointing back at you!

Or take a child grow-



PRISONER OF SHAME

If, as an adult, I am uncomfortable with this side of myself, I will continue to try to hide, suppress, or camouflage this part of me. I might decide it would be better to become a selfless human being who is always giving. Inside the restrictions of this belief, I can never say no because if I do, someone might discover that I'm selfish. So I'm a prisoner of my shame around being selfish. I have no freedom. Then I wind up being a people-pleaser, a caregiver, giving away my time and my energy, even when doing so compromises my health, my relationships, or my long-term goals. And then I wonder

ing up with perfectionist parents. He could make a decision very early in life like, "I'll never be as perfect as my parents, so why bother", and find himself meandering through life in failure - based situations. The Shadow could also harbour the opposite emotion of "I must be better than my parents so they can proud of me" and the poor man finds himself achieving milestone after milestone to an early grave.

SELF-DESTRUCTION

The Shadow is also at play in national or world events. How often we read

or watch on the television with mock horror at some scandal or another and we judge and condemn people saying things like, "He's an idiot" or "She's immoral". In reality, we're just seeing ourselves. Countless acts of self-destruction and sabotage take place in our families, in our communities, in our circle of friends and in ourselves.

On the local front, if we have to deal with increased fuel prices, perhaps, instead of blaming the politicians we can use the opportunity to look within. Have we abdicated responsibility for our rampant consumerism and our raping of the planet for fossil fuels, thereby leaving the door wide open to the sharks who cash in on the opportunity? Uncomfortable thoughts indeed.

WANTED: ACTION

While protesting and lobbying is one political option, it is realising that rhetoric and talk are empty. It is action that counts, not the act of pointing fingers, but individual action. The idea of "Where does my Shadow come into play in this situation? What have I denied, hidden, buried and not wanted to look at?" Questions like "Why is a big car so important to me?", "How much food, clothes, jewellery, gadgets, status symbols do I need?"

"How big a house is big enough?" will lead us back to the Shadow wherein lie the inadequacies, fears, shame, guilt, and other demons of our darker side.

Shadow work is exhilarating. The suggestion is made that every time you feel uncomfortable is when the shadow is rearing its dark head. It's never about

"out there". It's always about what's going in "in here". When I don't like something about you I need to look at what I have buried inside of me!

Shadow work is not about finding fault with oneself.

It's about understanding where and what we've buried in our psyche and embracing these inadequacies, not in defiance but in humility and with compassion so that they no longer have a hold over our reactions and responses in daily life.

Only then can we hope to reveal our Golden Shadow and manifest the glorious parts of ourselves.

As Carl Jung once wrote: "If everyone would remove his shadow from his neighbour, the world would be a peaceful place."

GLIMPSES OF GLAMOUR

Ipohites meet their favourite stars



Onstage, from left, Lee, Linda, Tavia and Moses

Some 5000 fans, mainly teenagers, thronged Ipoh Parade hoping to catch a glimpse of their favourite stars who currently feature in Hong Kong TVB's drama, Heart of Greed, on Astro Wah Lai Toi.

The visiting celebri-

ties included Best Actor Moses Chan and Best actress Lee Si Kei.

Together with Linda Chung and Tavia Yeung, they enthralled and mesmerised Ipohites.

For the young fans, it was a superb day of charisma when the stars engaged a number of them in

on-stage interaction. There were games and quizzes.

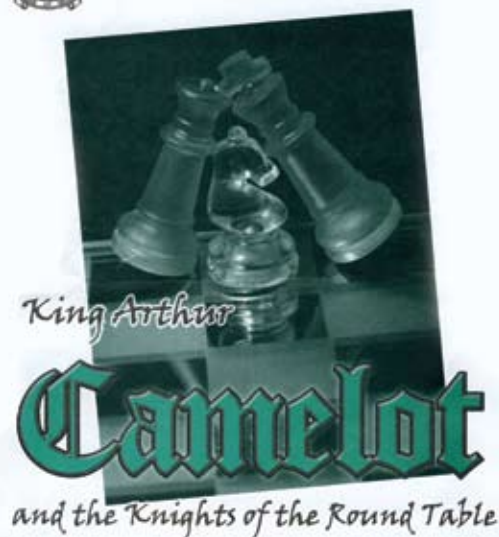
As table tennis is one of the constantly featured games in the drama, a "Star Ping-Pong Match" was held at the Dewan Relas Pasir Pinji, offering the opportunity for locals to join in the fun with the stars. **PK**

UPCOMING EVENT



St. Michael's Institution, Ipoh

presents



Date: 15, 16, 17 August 2008

Venue: SMI School Hall

Time: 7:45 pm

Call: 05-2540418

Ticket prices: RM20, RM50, RM100

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NO-FRILLS COOKING, part 2

THE FRUGAL GOURMET

An easy-to-follow recipe for the harried and budget conscious, from Cheng Sun Mooi's collection

A computer lecturer once asked me for a recipe using only chicken drumsticks. She was tired of recipes that involved frying.

I gave her fuss-free variation. Her feedback: she had never tasted anything so unusual and light.

I suggest serving this dish with a fresh salad (readily bought from the mall) and some bread as staple.

Pan-grilled Nam Yee Chicken Drumsticks

Serves 2



Ingredients:

2 chicken drumsticks, deboned and skinned (ask the seller to do it)

Marinade for chicken:

1 square nam yee (red preserved bean curd, 10 sen a square)

1 tsp. oyster sauce or Maggi seasoning

2 petals pat kok (star of anise)

5 pips garlic

1 tsp. soya sauce

2 tsp. wine (Hua Tiew, dry sherry or rice wine).

A few drops sesame oil.

Method:

Rinse chicken and pat dry. Lightly hammer it with the back of your cleaver to flatten it slightly.

Rub with your hand the square piece of nam yee, oyster sauce, wine and soya sauce all over the chicken drumstick, top and bottom.

Put in the pat kok and halved garlic pieces with skin.

Place on a clean plate and cover it with another smaller plate or plastic wrap. Refrigerate till ready to cook. Normally, I have this prepared in the morning and then pan-grilled in the evening, half an hour before dinner is served.

In a fairly heated non-stick pan, put in 1 tsp oil and slide in the drumstick flats together with the garlic and spice.

Cover immediately. Time it for about one and a half to 2 minutes.

Uncover to check. The underside should be brown

in patches. Flip over and brown the other side. Cover. Lower heat if it is too hot. Give it a minute or two and switch off fire.

Allow residual heat to finish cooking - resting period in pan should be 3 to 5 minutes. If in doubt, prick with fork on the thickest part - if no pink juice oozes out, it is cooked.

To ease the housewife's headache for planning a menu, this can be used as a main dish, supplemented by two side dishes to feed three persons.

Two suggested side dishes - French beans fried with prawns and spinach with ikan bilis.

Total cost for this dinner should be approximately RM10/=, (RM5.80 for chicken, RM2/= for French beans and prawns and RM1.50 for yin choy).

Note: This has been nutritionally apportioned with health in mind.

If you suspect that some diners still may need something more, you can always fall back on fried eggs.



Kafe Paprika's

Apples In Pastry des Bourdélots

The original bourdélots were made with suet pastry wrapped round peeled and cored apples. One method of cooking was to boil them like apple dumplings; another was to place them in a moderate oven on cabbage leaves.

Serves: 6

6 medium-sized apples

1 lb rough puff pastry

Sugar, sultanas, chopped nuts, as desired

1 egg, beaten

Method

Peel and core apples. Roll out pastry to 1/8 inch thickness and cut into 6 squares, each one large enough to enclose each apple completely. Brush uppermost side of pastry with beaten egg to seal.

Place one apple in centre of each pastry square and fill core with sugar,

sultanas and chopped nuts. Fold pastry round apple to make a parcel, sealing the edges with beaten egg and brushing the outside to glaze.

Place in a hot oven, Gas mark 7, 220°C (425°F) for 20 minutes. Serve hot with custard or fresh cream.



CALLING ALL TWINS

Researchers are also invited to join in the study that can help build healthier communities.

By Sue Mah



Twin registries all over the world are providing the foundation for invaluable research into causes of health problems and diseases such as cancer, alcohol and tobacco use, asthma, diabetes, anxiety, stress, depression, osteoporosis and heart disease.

The National Malaysian Twin Registry (NMTR), a non-profit organisation which will facilitate scientific research on twins and their family members, was launched recently by the Royal College of Medicine, Perak, University of Kuala Lumpur.

COLLABORATION

The twin-registry and investigative programme, approved by the Ministry of Health and National Medical Research Registry, is headed by Dr Shayesteh Jahanfar, director and chief investigator of NMTR, lecturer in the Royal College of Medicine, Perak. He is collaborating with Perak Women For Women's president, Dr. Sharifah Halima Jaafar

and Dr Siva Achanna. Dr Sharifa and Dr Achanna are both obstetricians and gynaecologists.

Researchers and twins - identical and fraternal, regardless of age - from all over Malaysia are invited to join in the NMTR



endeavour to educate the public at large on health issues. The initiative is supported by University Kuala Lumpur through a research grant.

ESSENTIAL PARTICIPATION

The success of the exercise totally depends upon twin participation. If you are half of a twin, you are in a unique situation to help researchers to study the impact of genetic and

environmental factors on health and the treatment and prevention of diseases.

CONFIDENTIAL

All information collected would be used for the purpose of medical research and findings will be kept totally confidential.

NMTR has planned various activities to make participants have fun while contributing to the research effort.

There will be twin photos and story competitions, talent shows, conferences, forums, family support campaigns and festivals celebrating twins.

A free newsletter will be issued every three months. More importantly, the project will be able to provide registrants a new network of social support.

Help build a healthier and better future for our communities. Please come and register with NMTR at website: www.nmtr.org.my Or email twinregistry@rcmp.unikl.edu.my

Or sms **05-5469715** or **016-5160224**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Perak Society of Performing Arts International Ensemble "Music of the Night"

"...eight international performers on one stage"

Date: August 15, 2008

For information or enquiries, please contact
PSPA : 05-5487814 Witz: 012-5088818

Meet the musicians and listen to how music brought them together. **August 10, 2008, 3 to 4:30 pm at City Ballet (Greentown)**
Performance invitation card or PSPA membership card only. Book your place; call PSPA 05-547814

Ipoh A.C.S Alumni Association Annual Dinner

Venue: Hee Lai Ton Restaurant

Date: August 9, 2008

Time: 7 for 8 p.m

Guest of Honour: YB Dato' Ngeh Khoo Ham

For information, please contact

Mr. Chooi 016-3845120 Ms. Lim 05-2431715

"The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine"

Venue: City Ballet Blackbox

Date: 7 & 8 August 2008

Time: 8 p.m

Entry: Contribution of RM5 and above

Floor Seating

Limited Seats available per show only

For more information, contact 012-5152075

Restricted to audience 18 years and above only

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0195723590 or 055260245.

Alternatively email us at kubbaen1@time.net.my



YOUNG PERAK

Students from participating schools are invited to write about or photograph things/events outside their respective institutions of learning. E-mail articles to: editorial@ipohecho.com.my attn: Peter Khiew

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PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Something must be done to minimise the number of errant bad users. The best thing is to train the very young about road safety and courtesy before letting them loose.
Peter Khiew on an enlightened Traffic Education Programme

The usually quiet Taman D.R. Seenivasagam in Ipoh was a buzz of expectant activity when some 200 teachers and students from fifteen primary and secondary schools in Perak congregated at the public park for the annual state-level Shell Traffic Games.

The Traffic Education Programme was made possible through the partnership between Shell, the Education Ministry, the traffic police, Road Transport Department and the Malaysia Road Safety Council.

The objective was to create awareness and educate children about road safety from the school level - make them conscious about good road behaviour and road courtesy before they form bad habits.

WATCHED AND MONITORED

In a simulated traffic environment, the participants took part in "driving properly" on pedal cars, and cycles. They also pretended to be pedestrians.



Wan Hanafi Nirwan

Their movements were watched and monitored by traffic police personnel who evaluated them on



Pupils and teachers from SK Seri Manjung celebrate after being judged champions in the primary school level under the traffic category.

road discipline and behaviour. How they handled particular road situations were rated accordingly.

Other organised events included traffic road signs, written tests, colouring competitions and drawing.

CLEAR FAVOURITES

Sketches by the traffic police personnel were a clear favourite. These showed motorcyclists who rode their machines without helmets, licences and registration number plates. Erring "motorcyclists" rode by the grand stand and those in the audience were asked (and they named) the offence being committed.

CHAMPIONS

SMK Seri Manjung Sitiawan emerged champions in the secondary school traffic road safety category while the primary category was clinched by their juniors, SK Seri Manjung.



The winning students from SMK Seri Manjung Sitiawan.

Wan Hanafi Nirwan, a Form Two student from SMK Seri Manjung, walked home with the top prize under the Highway Code written for the secondary school category.

Teachers Sarah Sabarina and Junaidah Hassan, both of SK Seri Manjung, were very excited.

Their charges not only walked home with the challenge trophy but mountain bikes, medals and food hampers as well.

"Looks like the pupils' preparations for the past two months have borne fruit. I am sure their schoolmates and teachers

will share in their happiness when they are back in school next week," said Sarah Sabarina.

IMPROVED TURNOUT

Shell Malaysia (Trading) Territory manager Omar Attan said the programme serves as a platform to mould young people to become responsible road users.

He added that the campaign attracted more schools this year.

The national-level competition will be held in Kelantan in September, 2008.

LEARNING A POWERFUL DISCIPLINE

Sue Mah notes how Master Khoo reiterates the old basics integral to the practice of tae kwon do



Master Khoo (centre) with his latest batch of ITF certificate holders

Kelab Tae Kwon-Do Ipoh, an affiliate of the International Tae Kwon-Do Federation (ITF), marked its launch recently by organising a seminar on "The Power and Discipline Behind Tae Kwon-Do". It was held at its gym at Jalan Chung Thye Phin, Ipoh. It was attended by 50 student members, The majority of whom are below 12 years old.

The seminar was conducted by Master

Mohd. Azwan Khoo, the Chief Instructor of the Tae Kwon-Do Association, Perak. Khoo is also the Deputy President and Technical Chairman of the International Tae Kwon-Do Federation, Malaysia, the national governing body.

The discipline behind the practice of tae kwon do was discussed. It was pointed out that this aspect is sadly missing nowadays and is hardly being emphasised. "Discipline is an

ingredient which is so integral to the practice of Tae Kwon-Do without which the power of the Art cannot be fully appreciated," said Master Khoo. He has 38 years of experience teaching the martial art behind him.

After the seminar, ITF 1st degree black belt international certificates were presented to five junior black belt student members of the club. They were Wan Xiang Wei, Goh Tze Han and Alexander Joseph

of the Ipoh International School, Bryan Choi Pei An from SMJK Yuk Choy and T. G. Yap from S. M. St. Michael, Ipoh. The ITF international certificates give the students international recognition of their seniority and standing in the ITF Tae Kwon-Do throughout the world.

For more information please contact:

Mr. A. Ravichanthiran (012-5153691) or Mr. Wan Koon Seng (019-5134242).



Perak's football team in dire straits . . . continued from page 2

are now beginning to appear out of nowhere.

"These bills are piling up. We get bills for stadium hire. Notices from the Income Tax



Perak captain, Ahmad Sharul, a family man with 15 years behind him as a footballer, points out that more than three quarters of his fellow team members have families to support

Department. Reminders of non-payment of deductions from EPF and unsettled bills from various service providers. It's killing us," said the dejected coach.

To minimise its liabilities, the association contemplates selling off its properties - lands under the association's name. "But offers are few and far between because the lands are not the kind that buyers want," Steve sighed.

Team captain, Ahmad Shahrul, was more blunt, "I have been with the state team for over 15 years, of which four were spent with the national side. This turn of events is most unfortunate," he said. Shahrul is a family man and has a family of five to feed. "I am the sole breadwinner," he added. "I have not been paid since March and this is beginning to affect me both physically and mentally."

More than three quarters of the players are married and this is a particularly worrying aspect of the crisis.

Steve's immediate fear is bookies influencing both players and games.

"They have yet to make an appearance but they will if the situation

"I have written a formal letter to the MB... I have yet to receive a reply..."

continues," he said.

This fear should be shared by all, especially the fans of which there are substantial numbers. The state team has been building in direct proportion to its expanding match successes.

Being the only team in the country that has never been relegated to a lower division, the financial

crunch is impacting hard on the players, coaches and officials alike. "We persevered in spite of these setbacks but how long can we keep going? We can't go on like this forever," emphasised Shahrul. "FAP should do its part to overcome these problems and not let them fester," he added.

There is widespread recognition within Perak's football fraternity that our state team should never be forced to beg for survival. That would not only be most unbecoming for the team itself, but would amount to a regrettable stain on the state's reputation; a stain that would spread way beyond Malaysia's fields of professional sport.

The Pakatan Rakyat-

led government must never be allowed to dismiss FAP's problems as something alien and fobbed off as a responsibility of the old regime.

The team's success in the Malaysian Super League will enhance the good name of the state and, with it, the government of the day. It cannot, therefore, remain reticent and non-committal.

Moreover, the huge following the team has will translate into votes for the coalition party. Football transcends politics and this has been used to good effect by another PR-led state government - Kedah. Perak state must respond to the clarion call for help and come out with guns blazing.

FZB

Scrap metal theft Down Under

By Ipoh Echo's Perth correspondent

Ipoh is not the only place where the theft of scrap metal is making headlines.

In Perth's District Court last month, 28-year-old tradesman Dale Austin received court approval to sue Western Power following an incident which resulted in both his legs being amputated after receiving a massive electric shock while standing on a power transformer.

COLLECTED BEFORE

The plaintiff's lawyer, Martin Cuerden, said Austin and a friend had twice before collected scrap metal from the old quarry, 60 kilometres from Perth. On this occasion, they had entered the site at night time by cutting a padlocked chain around a gate and then proceeded to collect scrap metal which they put in their vehicle and intended selling. The lawyer disputed the pair were stealing the metal, arguing that it had been abandoned when the mine was closed four years earlier.

NO LEGAL CLAIM

Western Power countered that Austin had no legal claim and his "collection" of scrap metal amounted to stealing. A warning sign on the fence where they had entered the property clearly stated "no unauthorised entry beyond this point."

The fence had two signs which read "Danger High Voltage". Inside was

a transformer used to convert 22,000 volts from the mains power to lesser voltage for the mine's use. It was while standing on the transformer and pointing a pair of pliers to a power line above that Austin received the shock.

Lawyers did not dispute what actually happened. The thrust of the plaintiff's legal approach was concerned with Western Power's "duty of care" and its failure to make the sub-station safe. His lawyer argued that the utility should have disconnected the power supply, or replaced old signage with new warnings at the site that the power was still alive.

TIME LIMITS

Austin had to seek the court's permission to sue because at the time of the incident any action against a statutory authority normally had to be taken within one year of it happening, or otherwise be subject to a judge's decision within six years.

In handing down his decision for Austin to proceed, District Court judge John Wisbey commented: "Although I am of the view that the plaintiff is entitled to be pessimistic about the proposed claim, it's not possible at this stage to determine whether the claim is merely speculative or absurd."

The plaintiff was ordered to pay Western Power's legal costs.

Singapore on line

By Andrew Symon

SMALL CITIES AND HAPPY PEOPLE

The development of Ipoh can be carefully - and innovatively - managed to avoid the pitfalls of fast growing mega urban regions

More than 700 city mayors, planners, architects, public and private sector officials and managers, leaders of various non-government organisations and an assorted crew of gurus from around the world descended on Singapore recently. The somewhat disparate group gathered - beneath the "World Cities Summit" banner - specifically to discuss how population centres tick. More particularly, they wanted to explore how to make them work better.

As the world's population becomes increasingly urbanised, the challenge of making cities places where ordinary people can live fruitful and happy lives becomes ever more pressing. This is especially so in Asia where the rate of urbanization is probably the fastest in the world.

The big problem, as the Summit underlined, is that much urbanisation in Asia is through further expansion of already big, long established cities into giant congested and polluted mega urban conglomerations of ten million or more people stretching across vast distances.

DYSFUNCTIONAL EXPANSES

These endless urban expanses can become dysfunctional in terms of economics and business - as anyone en route to a meeting and stuck for hours in a Jakarta "macet" traffic jam can readily attest! I like Indonesia, but I find my patience stretched struggling around Jakarta.

And the problems of large cities can weigh heaviest on lower income earners who commonly commute hours to and from work each day. Then there are the very poor. Inevitably they inhabit sub standard housing, cheek by jowl with concrete freeways and factory sites, and all the exhaust fumes, noise and industrial pollution.

Somehow, there has to be some sort of sensible spreading out of urbanisation in Asia in the form of a large number of smaller cities designed to enhanced development scales. And this is where it seems to me that a city such as Ipoh must have a lot going for it.

Small enough with a population now of somewhat less than 1 million in the greater Ipoh region, the city's development can be carefully and innovatively managed to avoid the pitfalls of the fast growing mega urban regions.

Ipoh is big enough to have the necessary economies of scale. It has the potential to create the supporting infrastructure necessary to promote 21st century business, industry and jobs. Furthermore, it could offer the social diversity necessary to make the place not only a vibrant and interesting setting for those who live in Ipoh, but also an attractive destination for visitors.

At the Singapore "Summit" meeting, held at the end of June, there were several main themes. There were the

basics - how to ensure good transport and water supply and sewerage and waste disposal systems - including using methane gas from rubbish dumps to fuel power generation plants - provision of low cost but good quality housing, and parks and greenery.

Transport was one of the critical areas examined by the experts. Mounting fears over climate change and concerns over the contribution of motor vehicle emissions to greenhouse gas accumulation, combined with ever higher fuel prices means that planners need to make strong changes to traditional transport assumptions. City expansion cannot be built around the car.

SMALL CITY ADVANTAGES

Again, smaller cities such as Ipoh have advantages. Pointedly, we don't need to be talking about expensive underground or above ground rail subways. Nor need we consider electronic vehicle road transport charging, such as in Singapore. Good bus systems can be an effective answer. Governments simply must have the will to reserve road lanes as dedicated bus ways to enable rapid movement around the town. Similarly, they must be prepared to outlay funds on good quality buses.

The Summit made a strong case for good and honest government, management, policy development and programme implementation. But while government might lead and carry a lot of the weight, it was well recognised that an absolutely critical factor in shaping good cities were the partnerships established between public and private sectors.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAPPINESS

Somewhat more subtle was the argument of American psychologist, Ed Diener, that "city leaders need to think of citizens' happiness as a very important goal."

Dr Diener, the Smiley Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the US University of Illinois, presented an enthusiastic version of the "quality of life" argument for smaller, well managed cities. "Good cities can go a good part of the way to making people happy", he said. "Happy people are more productive people and so their cities are more attractive places for business to invest and operate in. And happy people make better citizens who contribute more to their local communities. Socially their cities are kinder and safer places in which to live. Crime is lower. They pay their taxes. They are friendlier to their neighbours."

As Dr Diener urged the world gathering: "Your challenge is to produce cities that create happy, engaged citizens."

Sport

FAM BRAINSTORMING

Steve Darby attends a session that could, hopefully, result in a brighter future for football and footballers' lives in Malaysia

The Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) held a "brain storming" session recently in an effort to plan the future of the game. This was not a unique experience, but for the first time in the history of FAM there was a wide variety of "brains" invited to provide input.

Normally, only the secretaries of the state associations were invited, hence the input was rather limited and insular. This time the media were invited and, for the first time, professional coaches were also asked to attend. This is an intelligent move. Often the decisions made at such gatherings impinge greatly upon the job of the coach. And the coach is the first person to be sacked if things go wrong.

Indeed, the seminar showed that there were vast disparities in the thinking of coaches and administrators.

The seminar was a sounding board for ideas. These ideas are to be presented to the Executive Committee who will either ratify or reject them.

A number of key issues were discussed.

These included the question of should foreigners play in the Malaysian Super League?

FOREIGN PLAYERS

Do foreigners increase crowd attendance? Are they helping raise the professionalism of local players? In the Perak perspective, it doesn't seem to matter who plays for the state as long as they win! The culture here is that the crowd follows a winning team, not the individual

player. So, if Perak are ever at the middle or bottom of the League, expect the stadium to be empty! There would be no repeats of the EPL scenario where even if the team is losing, the players get massive encouragement.



This winning culture, I believe, is impossible to change and sadly is fraught with danger. An example of this negative nature of a crowd is that the rules of the Malaysian Super League demand that a player who is Under 21 must play for the full 90 minutes. If he is injured he must be replaced by another Under 21 player. A sound philosophy for development.

The reality at Perak is that often these young players are abused unmercifully if they make a mistake and the abuse is vindictive, personal and sometimes racial.

I have tried to give a number of young players an opportunity to play. Often, if we are winning by a high score, I will bring a new young player on in a situation where there is less pressure. But the abuse still comes down if they make a single mistake (and they will make mistakes as they are young). Also, sadly, it is young men who are the culprits and bullies.

Another issue that was

discussed was the role of clubs in Malaysian soccer.

ROLES OF CLUBS

Clubs such as UPB MyTeam, Johor FC, Kedah, Naza and KL Plus have emerged through private sponsorships. There seems to be an inherent and strong opposition to the development of these teams from the state federations.

The clubs have sold their product to sponsors and are not reliant on political goodwill. Surely there is room in the game for both types of football teams. If a player is not quite good enough for Perak surely he should not be lost to the game but can find a living playing in the club system.

It's a battle that is uniquely Malaysian as the norm in the rest of the world is for club football.

ECONOMICS

The final major issue which is linked to the above is based on economics. This is the rationalisation of playing staff. In the next season there will be a first team squad with a maximum of 25 players and a second Under-20 squad. This means that a young player will have to have made it into the first team by the age of 20 or he is not offered a contract. Welcome to the economic reality of football. It's going to make it harder to be a professional but it will set the standards higher.

Will these ideas be ratified? Will they be good for the game? We shall see in one year.

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A CANDLE FOR ONE'S DEEPEST THOUGHTS

"It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness"

— Mother Theresa

The line from the revered missionary inspired Perak Women For Women (PWW) to organise an Interfaith candlelight vigil last July.

In the midst of the political, social and economic turmoil the country is facing, PWW decided that praying as a group of concerned Malaysians was better than complaining, grumbling and cursing.

It was encouraging and profoundly touching to witness a mixed group responding to PWW's invitation. The vigil saw Christians, Brahma Kumari, Hindus, Bahai, Muslims, Taoists and Buddhists coming together as concerned citizens with one common passion -

their love for Malaysia.

The vigil started with the lighting of the main candle by the oldest attendee. The Malaysian tradition of respecting one's elders was upheld.

THEIR WAY

Participants took turns coming up, to light up their candles from the main one as they expressed their thoughts.

Here, everyone respected one another's beliefs.



The oldest attendee (right) lit the main candle.

People began to pray in their own way. Some chanted prayers; a few recited poems; many simply uttered their deepest wishes and desires.

The group was then led in silent contemplation. This was dedicated to the victims of injustices and oppression. A calm descended on the gathered, trusting flock. A PWW member ended the session with a very meaningful poem.

It was a magical evening of peace and joy. If a small group of diverse backgrounds and faiths, come together as Malaysians to pray as one, perhaps there is hope that, one day, Bangsa Malaysia will be a reality.

Cecilia Chan

YSIS TURNS OUT ANOTHER BATCH OF CAREGIVERS

And there are plans for a diploma course

One hundred caregivers from all over the country who completed the two-month training course sponsored by Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah (YSIS) received their certificates at a ceremony held at the YSIS Bercham compound last July.

The caregivers were provided free accommodation, travel and meal allowances while undergoing training.

YSIS set up the Skills Training and Development Centre in 1998 to provide

training for staff and caregivers working in community and charitable centres throughout the country.

The centre plans to offer diploma-level courses effective 2009. Dr Mitchell Clark of Mount Royal College Canada is presently at YSIS to see to its implementation.

YSIS Board Chairman Tan Sri Jeyaretnam and Director of the Perak Welfare Department Ms Chong Phaik Chee gave away the certificates.



Ready and qualified to serve: a few of the caregivers who received their certificates from the foundation.

Pranayama Workshop

31-08-2008
(9.00am-4.00pm)

This workshop is being conducted by breath specialist and respiratory expert, Dr Dhillip Kumar Phd from Kevala Centre Sdn. Bhd.

It will be held in YMCA, Ipoh.
Course fee : RM 80.00 inclusive of lunch and tea breaks.

Call Theva at 017-579 0575 to book in advance.

Closing date to register 22-08-2008