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Oops! Where were all the 'legal eagles' when the City Council needed them? p. 3



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Tribute to an 80 year-old friendship p. 7

THE LAWYER ARGUED THE MAN LISTENED



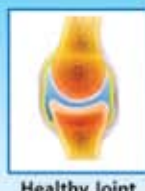
THE RESULT: JUSTICE

Read Fathol Zaman Bukhari's insightful report - page 2

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WHEN FAIRNESS AND JUSTICE FINALLY PREVAILED

377 ACRES OF ANCESTRAL LAND RETURNED TO THE ORANG ASLI

By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

The scrapping of Gopeng's historic water pipeline proved controversial enough earlier this year. What has emerged since – in the wake of the scrapping procedure – points to decidedly questionable related undertakings.

So questionable, indeed, that Perak's Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Mohammed Nizar, felt compelled personally to step into the fray on behalf of Orang Asli villagers.

The result has been a major victory for the villagers, residents of a Gopeng jungle region, and the certain return to them of 377 acres of their ancestral land. At the same time considerable credit must go to the MB for his deft and decisive handling of the matter.

Inexplicably – and most illegally, as it happened – the disputed tract of land had been transferred by the previous state authorities to local commercial interests for logging and oil palm cultivation.

DISPUTE ORIGINS

The dispute between the villagers and Gopeng Berhad, the company originally benefiting from the land transfer, can be traced back to the four-month period from October, 2007 to February, 2008.

During this timeframe, work on dismantling the 14 kilometer-long pipeline was underway, much to the concern of property owners and residents over whose land the steel structure ran. They were naturally disappointed with the destruction of an historical relic. First laid in 1914, the pipeline ran from Sungei Kampar and its tributaries at the foothills of the Main Range to the tin mines outside Gopeng. It had proved an enormous asset to the tin mining industry which thrived in Kinta Valley between 1880s to the 1980s.

But there were other, more important concerns being voiced by the public during that four month period.

Gopeng Berhad, owners of the pipeline, had awarded the dismantling operation to a contractor who, in turn, had introduced heavy machinery to carry out the work. Complaints were that both the machinery concerned and the methods of removal being employed were



Heavy machinery wrecks jungle roads.

causing serious environmental damage.

The Ipoh Echo featured a report on the pipeline's removal in Issue 40 under the headline: "Going . . . Going . . . Gone". This highlighted the strong dissatisfaction being voiced over contractor and company. A court injunction was even sought by Gopeng orchid grower Benedikt Scharzacher. All to no avail. The dismantling went ahead uninterrupted.

When this ultimately began encroaching on the aboriginal settlements at the foothills of the Main Range, the Orang Asli were up in arms. The heavy machinery being employed by the contractor was damaging the road and bridges leading to their settlements. This, in turn, impinged on the settlers' movements and also their livelihood.

The Orang Asli had difficulties bringing out jungle products for sale in Gopeng. School children had to slog barefooted through thick mud and slime that once functioned as firm footpaths. Overall conditions only intensified in the rainy season.

LEGAL ACTION

When Orang Asli complaints fell on deaf ears, they decided to take the issue to the Bar Council with a view to instituting legal action against the perpetrators. Their representatives called by the Perak Legal Aid Centre, Ipoh, in early January 2008.

The team, consisted of Bah Azmi, Chairman of Jaringan Kampong Orang Asli Perak (JKOAP), Bah Ahha, Vice Chairman and Tijah Yok Chopi, Secretary.

All met with Augustine Anthony, head of Orang Asli Affairs Bar Council Human Rights, and M. Gokoolaram Naidu of the Perak Legal Aid Centre.

A. Anthony and M. Gokoolaram were instru-

up capital was a paltry RM25,000. Obviously, the contractor was little more than a "runner" for a much bigger operator.

The 377 acres appropriated by Gopeng Berhad was located precisely



Ipoh lawyer Augustine Anthony explores legalities with Orang Asli leaders.

mental in highlighting the Orang Asli's plight. In addition, the duo managed to get the Adun for Teja, Chang Lih Kang, involved. Orang Asli settlements in the Gopeng jungles come under Chang Lih Kang's jurisdiction and, therefore, it was incumbent upon him to help his constituents.

The trio visited the settlements in the course of their investigations and, to their horror, learned that 377 acres of virgin jungle close to the Orang Asli settlements had been apportioned to Gopeng Berhad for logging and oil palm cultivation. The same contractor engaged to dismantle the iconic pipeline had also been tasked to clear the land and extract timber in the process.

It appeared to be a double whammy for a company whose paid-

within designated Orang Asli ancestral land. It sits atop a hill and, therefore, is a natural water catchment area. It drains unadulterated rainwater into the nearby Sungei Kampar and Sungei Cheroh. Should the area be cleared for crop cultivation its impact on the environment would be catastrophic.

Chemical fertilisers and insecticides used on the crop would also pollute the land and the water system as well. Inevitably, not only the Orang Asli would be affected. Residents of Gopeng and Kampar would also suffer.

This 'cause and effect' factor had been conveniently overlooked by the previous State Government when granting Gopeng Berhad rights to the same piece of real estate. No Environmental



Impact Assessment study had been made although the size of the land far exceeded the required 50 hectares. And neither had expert advice been sought – as required.

The contractor had literally bulldozed his way into the area, first removing the pipeline, then clearing a track to the disputed site. The damage caused by his heavy machinery was unbelievable. The road leading into the Orang Asli settlements was wrecked and commuting between the settlements and Gopeng became difficult to the point of being hazardous.

The matter was referred to Sinavesan, the State Environment, Health and Human Resources Committee Chairman.

On Thursday, June 19, Sinavesan visited the

ging and jungle clearing works would proceed as planned. Revenue for the state was of primary importance, he reasoned.

Sinavesan's complete volte-face surprised Augustine and the Orang Asli. They had never expected such an answer coming from someone who professed justice and fair play for the rakyat. The contractor was jubilant and before an order to renew work could be issued he had moved his heavy machinery back into the area.

Sensing the futility of their effort at getting help, Tijah and her team turned to the Menteri Besar, as a last resort. Augustine, now appointed chief negotiator, together with Gokoolaram and Chang, worked feverishly to get the right message across to Mohamad Nizar. Chang got an appointment with the MB and the trio, along with Tijah and her JKOAP members, met Nizar on Monday, July 14 at his office.

FULL RIGHTS

The MB was all ears. For almost an hour he listened attentively to Augustine's assertion that the 377 acres allotted to Gopeng Berhad belonged to the Orang Asli. According to Section 4 (Native Customary Tenure) of the National Land Code 1965 the Orang Asli exercised full rights over that piece of real estate.

To reinforce his argument, Augustine alluded to the statement made by the Prime Minister about monocrop cultivation in water catchment areas and its impact on the environment. He also referred to Sultan Azlan Shah's dictate at Belum about the need for an Integrated Management Plan should land development for Orang Asli be initiated by the state government. Nizar was aghast. How could his predecessor be so inconsiderate as to condone such action, he questioned. It was a travesty of justice and he was determined to resolve the issue amicably.

The MB immediately issued a stop-work order and froze all clearing activities in the disputed area. Upon receipt of the order another heavy machinery exodus occurred from the

continued on page 11

WALKOUT

When investigations on the issue were completed, Sinavesan called for a meeting with Orang Asli representatives. The meeting on Tuesday, July 1, at Rumah Penghulu Gopeng ended abruptly. The 80-odd Orang Asli present staged a walkout when Sinavesan announced that the land did not belong to them and, therefore, log-

WHAT A WASTE OF PUBLIC FUNDS!

All because they didn't understand legalities.

The glitch went unreported and then was swept under the carpet to avoid embarrassment.

But the fact remains that the elaborate Secretariat Banquet Hall ceremony at which 338 councillors were "sworn-in" by Menteri Besar, Dato Seri Mohamad Nizar bin Jamaluddin, on Friday, July 18, has been declared... wait for it... null and void!

How come?

Swearing-in of councillors, according to Local Government Act (LGA) 1976, must be done in front of a designated mayor, in the case of Ipoh, and before council presidents as far as local councils are concerned.

And since the Ipoh mayor and council presidents were all sworn-in AFTER taking their oath of office, collectively, the whole procedure ran foul of LGA 1976.

The legal glitch happened probably due to the time factor. The PR Government at the time had been in office for over four months and had still to resolve the local government issue.



Mayor Roshidi officiates

In the haste to nominate one mayor, 14 presidents and 338 councillors, so as to get the third tier of the government moving, Nizar and Nga unwittingly committed one cardinal sin. They failed to brush up on legal requirements beforehand.

WHERE WERE THE LAWYERS?

The State Legal Adviser is probably partly



At last... legally and officially sworn in

to blame and should take some of the wrap. One might also ask what the legal experts who plunged into state advisory rolls following the March elections were doing. Then, of course, there's all those lawyers involved as members of the state assembly itself and the councils. How could they have possibly allowed such an easily avoidable gaff to occur?

As it turned out, it all amounted to one expensive mistake the state government could ill afford.

The ceremony at the Banquet Hall undoubtedly ran into thousands of

ringgit. Imagine, expenses incurred in the form of claims for travel, messing, allowances and the must-have tea break could easily exceed RM 100,000.

The meeting allowance is set at RM50 per head. On top of this, travel and messing claims, for those residing outside of Ipoh, could easily add up to RM250 per person.

THE SECOND TIME AROUND

The second swearing in of the 22 Ipoh City councillors was made in front of the city's new mayor,

Rashidi Hashim, at a hastily organised full-board meeting on Thursday, July 31, 2008. Among the newly appointed councillors was M. Kulasegeran, the MP for Ipoh Barat.

Kula's appointment to the council has been mired in controversy. Residents have questioned his eligibility and suitability since he is a serving Member of Parliament.

However, Section 10 of Local Government Act 1976 makes no mention of MPs being ineligible for local office.


Kulasegeran raised some pertinent points with

the media after the meeting. These merit consideration:

- Council meetings should be held after office hours and such meetings should be open to the public, especially sub-committee meetings where matters such as financing, budgeting tenders, traffic plans etc are made.
 - These meetings, he noted, should all be accessible via the Internet.
 - The public must have a say in the decision-making process to allow for transparency and accountability.
 - Department heads must declare their assets and the declaration be made public.
- Insofar as the Ipoh City Council is concerned it, too, has incurred cost.

The swearing-in ceremony, although done in conjunction with a full-board meeting, has still set state funds back a few thousand or more ringgit. At very least, 22 councillors must be paid an additional RM50 each in meeting allowances.

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Johnny (seated) and Paul

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EDITORIAL

FIRING UP PUBLIC OPINION

Not unexpectedly, the suggested merger between UMNO and PAS has been the hottest of all topics under discussion lately in Ipoh's coffee shops and social clubs.

It became particularly fired-up when Tajol Rosli, during a press conference on Monday, July 28, informed the media that an UMNO-PAS merger would be forged by Merdeka Day – August 31. This would, he assured, immediately translate into an overturning of the current Pakatan Rakyat-led state government.

Tajol was certain that the unity talks held between top party officials in Kuala Lumpur would be fruitful. He confidently proclaimed Perak would be the beneficiary of a new partnership aimed at fostering Malay unity. In a carefully calculated demonstration of reconciliation, he announced he was even prepared to let PAS take on the Menteri Besar's post. In other words, Nizar would get to keep his job.

If nothing else, it was great fuel for the rumour mill. That the present and former state leaders fail to see eye-to-eye on virtually anything and are not even on talking terms were apparently regarded as irrelevant factors as the rumours flew thick and fast, fanned by the politically controlled national press.

The Opposition in Perak had wrested 31 of the 59 state seats of which DAP won 18, PKR 7 and PAS 6. Should UMNO merge with PAS then their combined total of 34 seats would outnumber the PKR-DAP coalition by eight.

Those involved in the coffee shop exchanges zeroed in on the widely published Tajol quotation: "To develop

and achieve Vision 2020, we must have political stability. It cannot exist without cooperation between UMNO and PAS. Perak will be the testing ground." Interpretations abounded, particularly when it came to the curious reference of Perak becoming the "testing ground".

Forgotten by many in their excitement was the fact that 51 per cent of Malaysians had picked DAP, PKR and PAS over Barisan Nasional in the last general election. Tajol, it seemed, had conveniently overlooked the reality of the rakyat's choice preferring, as he did so, to fall back onto the safety net of political expedience and predictable public confusion. It was the act of a true politician's politician.

Nizar responded by calling a press conference of his own. He reassured DAP and PKR followers that PAS would remain committed to its partners. Hadi Awang's announcement on Wednesday, July 30, ruling out an UMNO-PAS government, had laid bare Tajol's delusion of a Merdeka Day takeover.

Politics, as Bismarck so rightly proclaimed, "is the art of the possible, the attainable and the art of the next best."

So, anything might be possible. And that includes Anwar's claim that Pakatan Rakyat will form the new government come September 16, 2008.

We'll see.

Meanwhile, what IS certain is that the rumour mills of our state, along with those of the nation, will undoubtedly continue their vigorous churnings, irrespective of realities.

OUR CONCERNS

AMAZING ROSE
Four children make her get on, regardless

When I'm tempted to think that the day is giving me a raw deal, I remind myself of Tang Foong Yoke - or Rose as I call her - and end up thinking, what am I whingeing about?

Tang Foong was on TV3's, "Bersama Mu" re-

had arrived. She had been given a month to vacate the flat.

"All I can think of now is my four kids. I have to keep going for their sake," she declared quietly. Rose was drawing on the same strength which helped her



Foong Yoke, or Rose, with two of her four children

cently. That was when I first knew of her. She appeared dishevelled, bald and pale. But she sounded courageous.

Rose is a widow with four children. Shortly after her husband's untimely demise following a road accident, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Having been a housewife all her life, striking out on her own was an uphill fight.

cope with the trauma of widowhood, the surgeries and the chemotherapy sessions that left her bald and exhausted.

She was treated at University Hospital in Petaling Jaya where she took public buses to get to the hospital. The children tagged along.

"Someone has to take care of them," Rose explains matter-of-factly.

Asked how she manages, she has a direct, no-nonsense reply. "I have no choice. The only thing I know is getting on with my life, regardless," declares feisty Rose who shares her story at seminars organised by NGOs.

CECILIA CHAN

EVICTION NOTICE

I met Rose for the first time at her Greentown low-cost flat. She was facing another problem. An eviction order from MBI for non-payment of rent

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CASHLESS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Dear Sir:

Before leaving for South America last year, I had given standing instructions to Citibank, requesting them to settle my monthly credit card expenses from my savings account. These instructions were faxed and then sent by registered mail.

I was in Venezuela, a month into what I had thought was a well-planned trip, when my credit card was blocked. I put through a call to Kuala Lumpur to find out what went wrong, telling them that I had forwarded specific instructions before my departure. My relationship manager and the staff replied that they could not honour faxed instructions. I said there was also the registered letter.

You cannot imagine how terrifying it is to be by yourself in a strange country. To make matters worse, it was a public holiday and the Casa Cambio (money changer) was shut. I had RM20 on my person

and had to beg literally for someone to accept it so I could have some Venezuela pesos. I had to go through a round of shops and restaurants before I met a cashier willing to help me. Of course, he gave me a



Isla Margarita, Venezuela

very low rate.

Due to lack of funds, the trip of a lifetime for which I had prepared for 10 years had to be cut short.

On my return to Malaysia, I raised the blocked credit card issue with Citibank. Again, they said faxed instructions were not good enough. I repeated that I also sent them by registered mail. They claimed they did not receive this correspondence.

I checked with the Post Office who had proof that my letter was received and acknowledged. I faxed this to the bank. Only then did it admit my letter was received and ignored. This is a foreign bank with a supposedly good reputation!

I complained and demanded compensation – after all, their inefficiency caused me a lot of stress and disappointment. Their reply: they credited my account 20,000 points – not even sufficient for me to fly from KL to Singapore!

As a customer, we get charged all sorts of expenses, including fines for late payments irrespective of whether or not we get our statements. In the same, I believe we should be compensated fairly and justly if we are inconvenienced because of a bank's negligence. Bank Negara should look into this.

Very disappointed,

CELINE CHANG

A MECHANIC BEHAVING BADLY

Sir,

In these trying times when prices of essentials are beyond reach of many hard-pressed Malaysians, there are some from among us who see nothing wrong in making a fast ringgit at someone else's ex-

pense. Don't they have a conscience? Don't they empathise with their fellow beings who are struggling to make ends meet? Must they cheat in order to gain?

I wish to highlight

an example of a greedy businessman, operating here in Ipoh.

This rather well known motor shop, deals with motorcar tyres, mostly

continued on page 5

THINKING ALOUD

By G. Sivapragasam

IS THE ELECTION PROMISE TO DELIVER CHANGE BEING FULFILLED?

Looking back in disappointment

The widespread public euphoria that followed March's election results appears to be inexorably contracting. This directly relates to the rapid blurring of the difference the public had justifiably expected in management styles between the incoming and outgoing administrations.

Recent events suggest the new authority is modelling itself on the form of the former government. It appears to be distancing itself from the people with its members seemingly out to become the new elite.

The new government needs to remember that it is not their brilliant ability that put them in power.

Rather, it was promises that they would be a government more open and people friendly, that they would adopt a system allowing wider participation in decision-making.

This 'people power' formula is what got them into power and it is their only hope for sustaining it. If they lose this edge they will lose the plot.

MAYOR, COUNCILLORS FINALLY APPOINTED

After what many considered an 'inordinate delay', the Perak State government appointed Ipoh's Mayor and its 22 councillors on July 18. In the hands of this new administration lies the future fate of Ipoh and its residents. What improvement



The people are watching . . . and waiting. Photo taken at the Municipal Building's public gallery.

the citizens of this city can expect and how these will be achieved still remain guarded secrets. Hopefully all will be revealed in the not too distant future.

Just after the general elections, 37 Non-Governmental Organisations issued a memorandum proposing guidelines for appointing local authority councillors. Appointees, they proposed, should be local residents.

They should be competent with professional qualifications, experienced in state affairs and with the capability of representing the interest of the community.

The NGOs recommended an open nomination system. This would include the listing of criteria for membership, invitations for residents to nominate suitable candidates and the publishing of nominee names along with their curriculum vitae.

It was also suggested that publicly conducted interviews might be employed for short listed candidates.

Apparently, when a memorandum was delivered to the new administration the reception was unenthusiastic.

LITTLE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

While the State government is quite entitled to disregard any or all suggestions made by community representatives, there must be a realisation that it is the community that empowered them and ignoring them may be perceived as betrayal.

It is only good sense to get as much public participation as possible in the appointment process for it would be in the direction of their election promise to introduce local elections.

Finally, getting public participation delivers the community ownership motivating them to support efforts of the authority.

It is still not too late for public participation.

For a start, the Council members can introduce themselves to the community by declaring their

qualifications, what they have achieved and what plans they have to improve the city.

This could take the form of an interview broadcast through the Net. People participation could be maintained through each councillor operating an interactive website. Here councillors could publicise their activities and the community could deliver feedback.

The councillors' task is twofold.

One requires them to execute 'functional duties' that are macro issues involving the city as a whole.

The other concerns 'project management' of micro issues that affect their individual zones of responsibility.

Appointing councillors is not unlike staffing a business organisation.

It is a matter of identifying the tasks that have to be undertaken and allocating them to those best skilled and knowledgeable to execute them. It is matching zones and tasks to the councillors best suited.

As to what needs to be done, there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

Factors that make an urban environment livable are well known and it is a matter of conducting an audit of our current position against these factors, setting goals for each of them and structuring and executing a strategy to achieve them.

THUMBS UP

STEPS TOWARDS A TIDY, EXEMPLARY VILLAGE

Gotong royong at kampong Tersusun Tasek fulfils one of Hashim's campaign pledges

Newly elected village head, Hashim Mohd Ali or Che Gu Hashim, as he is fondly called, has kept his promise to keep his kampong clean.

One of his campaign pledges before being elected the ketua kampong of RPT Tasek last June was to rid the village of mosquitoes.

While the cleaning up was in progress, a member of district health office staff reminded the villagers, over the PA system mounted on a Land Rover, of the importance and benefits of keeping their premises clean and mosquito-free. Firemen from the Fire and Rescue Department helped clear clogged drains. Then,



A breakfast briefing preceded the Saturday clean-up

"I sought assistance from City Council, the Fire and Rescue Department and the District Health Office," he said. "The kampong folks were most cooperative and were eager to help out," Hashim confided.

A friend prepared a banner which Hashim strung at the entrance to RPT Tasek. By word of mouth, text messages and gentle persuasion, he managed to reach the villagers who converged at the local Kemas kindergarten hall one Saturday morning last July. City Hall cleaners came prepared with a dumpster. There was a fogging team from the vector department.

the fogging team sprayed the entire area with insecticide. The morning's job was done with clockwork precision. The *gotong royong* went on for almost three hours and by noon the tired men and women trooped into the Kemas kindergarten hall for their well earned tea break.

A final fogging in the evening put the finishing touch to the day's work.

"Fogging is an easy way to rid the kampong of mosquitoes but that's not the solution," said Hashim. "Educating the villagers on sanitation, hygiene and the virtue of tidiness is ultimately the answer. I intend to achieve this."

Halida

mechanic. . . continued from page from page 4



imported from Japan and some local-made brands. I drove over to the Bercham outlet one day to have my battery changed. Upon opening the boot of my car, the mechanic said he spotted an oil leak at the bottom of the timing belt casing. He told me that the belt needed to be changed or I risked a breakdown. Since I was in a rush, I left the car at the shop after providing the guy with my mobile number.

He called me later with more bad news. The absorbers were weak, the fan belt was bad, the engine mountings were in poor shape and a myriad

other things.

If I wanted my car in a working condition, these items needed to be changed he said. I acceded.

When I went over to the shop to collect my car after work, I was stunned. From a miniscule battery which cost a paltry RM160, the bill had ballooned to RM1,640.

I protested but to no avail. I had agreed to the changes, he declared.

When I took the car to my regular mechanic at Jelapang, he himself was aghast. He told me that the changes were unnecessary, as the items were still in working order.

I looked silly and vowed never to step into the shop again.

When I told my regular mechanic of the experience, he explained that the motor shop in

question was noted for such practice.

He claimed the workers were briefed to do exactly what had happened when dealing with customers.

I have learned a bitter lesson and I hope others will not fall into the same trap.

There are plenty of cheats out there waiting to pounce on you at the slightest opportunity.

And if you own a car always use your regular guy for repairs - minor or major. At least you are dealing with someone you know.

Exercise prudence. Times are bad.

"Cheated"

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FROM MY ALBUM

By Quicksilver

STAMPS FOR THE NEW CENTURY

Depicting the first signs of nationalism to come

The 25 cent Straits Settlements stamp featuring King Edward VII.



The 30 cent design in the initial set of 13 stamps.



The last in the series - the \$100 stamp.

Upon the death of Queen Victoria, on January 22, 1901, her son, Edward, ascended to the throne of Great Britain. Simultaneously, he became King of the United Kingdom, Emperor of India and King of all British Dominions.

By this time, the population of the Malayan colonial territories had grown to 572,249 subjects. Official statistics revealed much of the population expansion of that time resulted from Tamil and Chinese immigration.

The Edwardian era would herald significant changes in technology, science and society – all of which would impact directly on the Straits Settlements.

King Edward VII's formal coronation took place on June 26, 1902 and, quite obviously, the Straits Settlements required new stamps recognising the transfer of sovereign powers. These printings, naturally enough, would need to bear the head of the newly crowned King Edward.

The period July, 1902, to May, 1903, saw a total of 13 new sets of stamps issued for this precise objective. Last in the series was a \$100 stamp. To do the job, the Crown printers employed the De La Rue Universal Key Plate and duty plate production systems that I described in my last column.

The same two-year timespan I am talking about saw a substantial upswing in the local economy. As a direct result, the most common stamps – 1 cent for postcards and printed papers, 3 cents for local letters, 4 cents for letters to Great Britain and 8 cents for foreign mail – proved to be in great demand.

NEW DESIGNS

It was decided, therefore, that entirely new designs were befitting. These are believed to have been prepared by Mr. W. Egerton – later Sir Walter Egerton, Governor of British Guiana – and Mr. Noel Trotter then Post Master General for the Straits Settlements. (Remember him from the 1884 large 8 overprint? He was the Assistant Postmaster General then, based in Penang).

The 1 cent value, with coconut palms, represented Singapore. The 3 cents Pinang Palms represented Penang. A 4 cents nipah palm design stood for Malacca. Finally, an 8 cents double Malay Kris representation stood for Malaya in general.

The new designs were printed on a single plate, a break away from the earlier printing process.

The first stamp, the 1 cent grey, was released in December, 1903, and the last, the 8 cent purple on blue, in July 1904.

Philatelists and historians recognise that these simple yet symbolic stamp presentations – employing the various palms and the Kris – could well have stirred the very early seeds of nationalism. But it would take more than half a century before these first indications of an historical trend to come evolved into a fully independent country – the Federation of Malaya.

* * * *

I have substantially enlarged a selection of the “new century” Malaya stamps so that you can better appreciate their designs.

The 3 cents stamp depicting the Penang palm



The 4 cents nipa palm stamp for Malacca



The 8 cents stamp featuring the double Malay kris.



Ipoh Facts and Fancies

By Ho Tak Ming

AT THE IPOH POST OFFICE

We have come a long way from the paid letter-writers of old . . .

When the Ipoh Post Office was completed in the first decade of the 1900s, it became the busiest and most cosmopolitan spot in town. Everybody, from the Tuan Besar of the biggest and most prestigious commercial firm to the humble Buddhist priest from one of the cave temples, who had a letter to send, had to visit it.

Anyone standing in the vicinity watching the mass of humanity thronging this busy centre, would discover what an interesting and heterogeneous place Ipoh was.

The scene would be especially interesting at lunchtime. Food vendors would gather under clumps of trees nearby serving food from box-like baskets slung at oppo-

site ends of a kandar stick.

Then there were also the letter-writers, highly-educated men who used high-flown English with bombastic words and queer roundabout sentences to impress their clients. A chronicler noted: *There are three of them – a Kling, an Indian Mohamedan and a Bengali. They will write any letter you like from a letter praying for a rise in your gaji down to a love letter breathing eternal devotion. What a knowledge of human affairs they must have!*

“What pathos, humour and tragedy do they not learn of daily? Yet no comment do they make – down it all goes on cheap foolscap paper and while one hand holds out the finished letter the other hand is also extended for the payment

which ranges from twenty-five to fifty cents according to the length of the letter.”

TYPICAL LETTER

A sample work read something like this: *Honoured Sir, You being by the grace of God my Father and my Mother, I, your humble and industrious servant, Ramasamy, a poor family man with five young souls dependent on me to fill their abdomens, begging of you to increase my small wages which is quite impossible for us to live.*

Hoping this my humble request will meet with Your Honour's appropriation, Your most humble servant, Ramasamy.

Although Ipoh had a modern Post Office, the mail from Gopeng

still came in by pony express. The observer wrote: *“Sometimes I hear a tinkling bell from the direction of the Post Office and, looking out, I find the pony mail has come in from Gopeng and the weary little brown pony is making for the grass plot beside the Post Office.”*

“He is quite an old friend. I have known him for four years and I often meet him toiling into Ipoh while I am on my way home.

“The brown pony draws a dusty, dirty old shandrydan proudly labelled “The Perak Mail” and, whenever I see him, I cannot help wondering when the Post Office authorities will buy a tri-car for use between the Ipoh and Gopeng Post Offices.”



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

THE WAY IT WAS . .
100 YEARS AGO

Local & General

How anxious the Chinese are to enter the forbidden soil of Australia, is strikingly illustrated by a recent incident at Newcastle, New South Wales, where the customs officials made a capture of four Chinamen on the steamer Hallamshire from Hongkong. The Chinese were secreted under the boilers. They stated that they had paid 300 dollars to one of the crew to hide them on board at Hongkong and he was to receive 300 dollars more when they were landed safely in Australia.

* * * * *

The cash on delivery or value payable system is to come into force on the 1st of January next between Post Offices in the Straits Settlements, the United Kingdom, Grenada, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Cayman Islands, St. Vincent (West Indies), Gold Coast, Trinidad, and Nyasaland Protectorate.

The system is made applicable to all registered and insured postal packets not exceeding £20 in value.

We have reason to believe that the F.M.S. will also be included in the scheme before it comes into operation.

* * * * *

ORAL HISTORY

REMEMBERING LEONG MING SEN (1920-2008)

Capt Ho Weng Toh pays tribute to an 80 year-old friendship

“

Leong Ming Sen was born in Ipoh on September 15, 1920, to an affluent family of seven children. We first became friends as eight year-old pupils at St. Michael's Institution.

The Leongs lived on Clayton Road and its proximity to the padang was a big plus. Their comfortable home was a halfway house to a number of St Michael boys who shared Ming Sen's love of games. MS was always free to indulge his whims. He had all the time to spin tops and fly kites, play table tennis, hockey, football and badminton. He excelled in any field he entered.

BROTHER FINAN'S IRE

But his intense love of sports also landed him in trouble when we were 17 years old.

In 1937, Brother Finan Ryan was Brother Director of St Michael's. He expected us boys to follow his rules one hundred per cent. For example, nobody should play in the padang at particular hours – say, right after the lunch hour. Probably he didn't want us to be sweaty when we returned to the classroom, something like that. To violate this rule was to invite expulsion from the august institution. MS and another friend, Teh Khoo Chuar – (another colourful character; he migrated to the US and passed away a few years ago) – just could not stay away from the padang and broke Brother Finan's law. They were expelled. No compromises. We were all shocked and saddened. MS took it on the chin in his usual quiet, unflappable way. He moved on and finished at the Anglo-Chinese School.

Perhaps my friend was consoled by the fact that he played for Perak in both hockey and football.

UNIVERSITY DAYS & THE WAR

In those days, if you wanted to pursue a university degree, you had to get out of Malaya. I went to Hong Kong and in one of my visits to Ipoh prodded Ming Sen to join me. In Hong Kong, MS immediately shone. Again, his natural talent for sports made him as popular as ever. He enrolled in economics.



Young pilots Ho Weng Toh (left) and Leong Ming Sen are photographed in the 1940s. They were living the time of their lives: their career paths were being clearly defined. More importantly, they survived a war where they had played active roles.

We were 21 when the Pacific War broke out. Together with some of our peers, we staged a daring escape to "Free China". Our goal was to reach Chungking. MS reached Chengtu. There, at the West China Union University, he decided to resume his studies.

Around this time, he became troubled by the heightened need for medical personnel. He thought he should be a doctor and for more than two years studied to be one. Once more, fate would intervene. The more urgent demand for pilots during the last stages of the war decreed that MS should also be one. He was to excel in this field. I had by then finished my pilot training and become a bomber pilot.

MS attended what essentially was a "crash programme of the "you either make it or you don't" type. As a start, he went on flying missions over the "hump", averaging 120 hours a month. The DC-3 flights would take off from Kunming, loaded with tin ingots for an airstrip in the Assam Valley (for transshipment to America). They would return to China loaded with aviation gasoline. Sometimes they would carry food supplies which they dropped to Nationalist Forces fighting in the plains and valleys

below.

His superiors were impressed with his natural aptitude for flying and MS undertook nine months of training in Calcutta before



Eight decades of friendship. Ipoh boys Winkie Ho (left) and MS were always amazed at the speed at which the years flew, leaving them with "several lifetimes to remember".

taking up a new post at the China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC) main base in Shanghai where he remained even after the Japanese surrender. In Shanghai, he married his first wife, Ann.

In 1947, barely four years after his first flight, MS was made captain. This was a rare feat.

CAREER MOVES

He declined to move to Formosa (now Taiwan) during the Nationalist retreat in 1949 and instead returned to Malaya with his wife. It was 1950. He

did not see himself having much to contribute to the burgeoning rubber and tin industries.

He joined the fledgling Malayan Airways, a company controlled then by expatriates.

before he could finish the course there, he returned to Malaya to take up a lucrative offer with Federation Air Service (FAS) – the first local man to be named captain in the company that had a fleet of five Beaver aircraft.

For FAS, MS flew a route confined to the smaller towns in the peninsula. It was the of the

his credit. He was a leading light in the SIA pilot training programme. He was F27, DC-3 and B737 Training Captain.

We were colleagues and worked on the same programme. MS was a natural pilot and a natural teacher. He always made things easy and somehow passed on this air of confidence to his trainees.

I was always in awe of this gift. If there was a particularly difficult case and I was at the point of giving up, I would pass him on to MS. He would take over without fuss and somehow matters improved. MS never pulled rank or showed off; he was never insulting. He always remembered the time when he himself was learning and till the end held that it was pointless to berate anyone for something the fellow did not know.

When MS died in June this year, three months shy of his 88th birthday – he is survived by his second wife Diana, three grown children and three grandchildren – countless pilots gathered at his wake. There they exchanged anecdotes of MS's legendary talents and generosity of spirit.

I had a long list to contribute. We had been friends for 80 years after all. Through youth's uncertainties, adult involvements, marriages, fatherhood and grandfatherhood, bereavement and health concerns, MS and I always managed to reach each other.

Our friendship was one long, lively, protracted conversation. ”

Excerpts from taped conversations with Capt Ho Weng Toh. A recipient of an Outstanding Michaelian award, Capt Toh is a widower with three children and two grandchildren. The active retiree resides in Singapore. He turns 89 next March.

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Malayan Emergency. MS stayed with the group until it was taken over by Malayan Airways in 1958 when he was transferred to Singapore. In 1962, he was appointed acting Captain of a DC-3. It was the command MS had long wanted. He stayed on – as I did with the airline – through the various changes – Merger and Separation, re-naming exercise, all that.

TRAINING CAPTAIN

At the time of his retirement from Singapore Airlines in 1980, MS had 23, 600 flying hours to

MS was the first Asian to be signed up as co-pilot.

Limited promotional opportunities at Malayan Airways made him move to Singapore Standard newspaper company in 1952. That was also the year of his divorce. At the Standard, MS flew a DC-3 aircraft, making sure the papers landed in KL, Ipoh and Penang before the rival dailies hit the stands. From the Standard he transferred over to a Chinese daily, doing the same job for a brief spell before leaving to study for his Airline Transport Pilot's Licence in Southampton. However,



See Foon

Musings

by See Foon Chan-Koppen

TAKING THE 'T' OUT OF CAN'T

You can forge ahead only if you are armed with the essential CAN-DO-IT attitude



The rule was simple: for the entire span of our fourth grade year, we were not to use the phrase "I can't."

There are many essentials to creating a prosperous life, but the one essential you simply must have is the feeling that no matter what it takes, you can be, do and have what you want. This **CanDoIt** attitude is vital because the more confidence you have in your own abilities, the more eager you will be to forge ahead, while the less confidence you have, the less you'll willingly apply to this project. Things halfheartedly attempted rarely succeed.

'REMEMBER-ERS'

Every single day each of us is thinking somewhere between 12,000 and 70,000 thoughts, and about 90 percent of those are repeats of the thoughts we entertained the day before. The other ten percent are bits and pieces that run in and out of our minds with neither rhyme nor reason whatsoever. When you stop and consider how much of your thinking is repeated, however, you realise we humans are not the thinkers we believe ourselves to be. We are *remember-ers*.

I recently watched a show on the Science Network about a woman who had suffered total amnesia after an auto accident. One of the more interesting "side effects" of the amnesia was that she became quite successful in her "new" life, pre-

cisely because she had no past memories to fall back on. Her mind was like a blank canvas upon which she could paint the life she wished. So she painted a successful one.

I'm not suggesting we all need to develop total amnesia, but I do believe we need to consciously develop selective memory, making certain that those thoughts we choose to play repeatedly are positive, empowering thoughts that will help create and maintain a prosperous life.

SETTLE FOR THE BETTER SCRIPT

As long you are repeating thoughts of lack and pain and struggle, prosperity is impossible. If you are frequently thinking about money, or how terrible the state of the economy is, even you are just remembering an old thought, you are placing yourself in a position where you will always have to worry about money and the state of the economy.

If you frequently feel the need to "vent" by repeating to your friends, family and co-workers what a lousy bum your ex-husband is or how worried you are that you will be in the next wave of layoffs at work, you may as well be on the Universal Studios payroll - you're writing a script that will most defi-

nately become the movie of your life. And, oh yes, you'll also be given the starring role.

So how do we get rid of this negative and obsessive thinking that is showing up in our minds on a daily basis? With a blessing, of course. (Come now, you didn't really think I was going to send you a message without mentioning blessings, did you?)

For me, releasing repetitive thoughts is really quite easy when I take a few minutes to apply the Blessing Way Process.

WISH UNTO OTHERS...

As you are already aware, the way we think, feel and act molds our perceptions of the world we see. The same thoughts, mental images and emotions we entertain daily and play repetitiously become the habitual thoughts that colour and shape our world.

Once a habit is impressed upon consciousness, whether it be positive or negative, it takes over, and both body and mind react accordingly. Anyone who has ever driven a familiar route on a daily basis, for instance, knows how easily the route can be followed unconsciously. Once a habit is formed, we tend to follow it without thinking, the same way we

breathe in and breathe out without being aware we are doing so.

One easy way to become detached is to simply give what you desire away with your blessing. If it is financial gain you desire, don't just imagine yourself becoming richer, but also spend time visualising others prospering financially. If it is more happiness you seek, visualise others being imbued with joy. When we are willing to give to others what we want for ourselves, we not only bless the world around us, we open the flow of good for everyone, including ourselves. And what goes around comes around. That's the way the world works.

Whether you have an immediate need for money, a health concern, or are confronting a relationship gone awry - no matter what the difficulty may be - it will not be solved by your worry. In fact, the more you worry, the farther you will remove yourself from the solution you seek.

So add a splash of colour to whatever bleak thoughts you're entertaining, and change the shape of your current mindset. Look for a more joyful way to approach life and you'll soon find life to be more enjoyable. Life, after all, is a wonderful game of infinite potentiality.

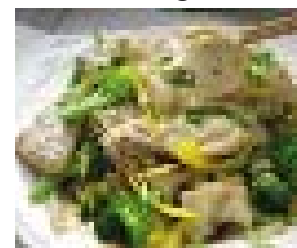
NO-FRILLS COOKING, part 3

SO MUCH GOODNESS IN A SERVING

Cheng Sun Mooi has concocted a dish that can make children eat vegetables without being coaxed...

A young couple wanted something simple and inexpensive to prepare for two primary school boys who visit and play with their son. The wife thinks the boys are tired of sandwiches and dumplings. At the same time, she wants to serve them a nutritious dish. This recipe should do it.

Fried Hor Fun with Fish Slices & Vegetables



Ingredients:

1 ½ sheet hor fun (frying texture), roughly cut into 2-inch strands
1 bowl broccoli florets
1 plate pea shoots, about 100gm
2 slices garoupa fish fillets
½ yellow capsicum, julienned
2 fresh shitake mushrooms, sliced thinly
2 pips garlic, minced
1 finger fresh ginger, sliced thinly.

Marinade for fish:

½ tsp salt
1 wedge of lemon for juice
A few drops of Maggi seasoning (optional)

Method:

Marinate fish with above and set aside for about 20 minutes or so.

In hot wok put in 1 tbsp oil to smoke. Lay in fish slices to sear just for a few seconds. Turn over and do the other side. Dish up on a plate and set aside.

Throw in minced garlic and ginger slices to

saute till fragrant, adding in another tbsp oil if it is too dry. Slide in hor fun strands and stir fry slowly - to loosen the clumps and separate the strands. This is a technique which has to be mastered through experience. Use your ladle to train the strand to lay flat on the wok, ensuring that the hor fun is in contact with the smoking surface. It is to absorb the smoking heat or wok breath (known in Cantonese as wok hei). Watch the strand - if tiny bubbles appear on the surface of the hor fun, then it is properly fried. Of course not all the strands! Just a few.

Push aside, and shake in a tsp of sesame oil or drizzle in 1 tbsp oil and put in mushroom and broccoli. Stir quickly, then cover the vegetables with the hor fun. If you tried the chicken and potato braise (Ipoh Echo, July 16-31, Issue 54) you would have set aside ½ bowl of left-over gravy. You can now pour this in. Salt to taste, sprinkling more water to keep the contents moist. Wait for a minute or two and toss with ladle to mix up evenly.

Put in capsicum and pea shoots. Stir fry a few seconds, just to blend in.

Make a well in centre and push in the fish together with the juice, if any. Cover with hor fun and vegetables.

Season with a splash of wine, Maggi seasoning and sesame oil and salt or soya sauce to taste. Dish up.

Note: This is a very nutritious meal as it has all our daily requirement of the various vitamins, protein and carbohydrates. It is a real health boon, according to our nutritionist consultant.




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MERU VALLEY RESORT BAGS CNBC'S 5-STAR AWARD for BEST GOLF DEVELOPMENT

Shortlisted to represent Asia Pacific at the CNBC International Property Awards 2008



The Resort clinched the top prize, beating other golf developments around Malaysia.

Ipoh's Meru Valley Resort won Malaysia's only 5-star award for Best Golf Development at the Asia Pacific CNBC Property Awards Gala Dinner held in Singapore recently.

Meru Valley was also judged the overall winner in Asia Pacific, topping entries from 10 Asia Pacific countries for best golf development. It will represent the Asia Pacific region in the global CNBC International Property Awards 2008 ceremony to be held in Florida in November.

A panel of over 50 professionals judged the entries. Chaired by Eric Pickles, British Shadow Secretary of State, this year's judges included Helen Shield, editor-in-chief of International Homes magazine; Peter Bolton King, chief executive of the National Association of Estate Agents; Phil Spencer, property expert and presenter of British TV Channel 4's Location and Relocation TV shows and Imtiaz Farookhi, chief executive of the British National House Building Council.

The competi-

tors for the 'Best Golf Development Category - Asia Pacific' were judged on five criteria - location, appearance and architectural designs, safety and innovation elements, mar-

proud to be recognised as a world-class golf development and are delighted to be able to put Ipoh on the international map."

Dr Tan Chin Yong, Director of Kinta

Properties which is the project developer for Meru Valley, received the award on behalf the Resort. He said, "This prestigious win gives us an edge in attracting foreigners to settle down in Ipoh under the Malaysia My Second Home programme. Ipoh is the ideal retirement destination as it has the modern amenities of any Malaysian city, excellent standard of living, virtually traffic and congestion free, and, best of all, property prices are fantastic value for money when compared to those in KL or Penang and the rest of the region."

Meru Valley Resort, representing Asia Pacific in the 'Best Golf Development' category, will be competing with other CNBC Property Award winners from the European, American, African and Arabian regions for the Global Award. The final presentation will be held in Florida this November.



Dr Tan Chin Yong (right) receives the prize on behalf of Meru Valley Resort.

keting and public relation strategies and golfing and membership details.

IPOH ON THE MAP

Dato' Lim Keng Kay, Director of Meru Valley Resort said, "The win came as a pleasant surprise as we did not expect to win Malaysia's top award, let alone being chosen to represent Asia Pacific in the International Property Awards. We are certainly

UPCOMING EVENT

CALLING OLD MICHAELIANS



This new building, in memory of Brother Ultan Paul, became a reality when old boys got together to replace a derelict structure was posing imminent danger to students. (See Ipoh Echo, Issue 39, Dec 1-15, 2007)

The Old Michaelians Association will be holding its annual reunion dinner at the Red Crescent Hall on September 27, 2008 at 7.30pm.

Some 500 old boys, including those from Australia, UK and United States are expected to join in the celebration.

Members from Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore are also expected to attend.



Guest of honour: Brother Vincent Corkery

Prior to the dinner, the official opening of the new St Michael's primary school, built in memory of Brother Ultan Paul, will be held at 3pm on the same day.

The Guest-of-Honour is Brother Vincent Corkery.

For more details about the two events, call Adrian Tsen at 012-5089191 or Yip Chee Thong at 019-5567913.

FOR THOSE WHO DIDN'T MAKE IT TO SYDNEY

In conjunction with the World Youth Day Celebration in Sydney, the Penang Diocese Youth Network in collaboration with the Central Perak District Youth Council and the Parish Youth Ministry of Our Lady of Lourdes, Silibin, is organising a ONE DAY celebration for all the youth (between 13 and 35 years) in the diocese.

Venue: Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Ipoh

Date: Saturday, August 23, 2008 (8.30 am - 7.00 pm)

Cost: RM10 only. Get your registration forms from respective parish office.

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YOUNG PERAK

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editorial@ipohecho.com.my
 attn: Peter Khiew

CARRYING ON A GREAT DRAMA TRADITION

SMI's CAMELOT is packed with many shining moments

The photos that appear below were taken during dress rehearsals for *Camelot*, St Michael's Institution's latest stage offering. Curtains up for three days, from Aug 15 to Aug 17, 2008 at 7.45pm. Venue: the SMI Hall. Tickets are priced at RM20 and RM50.



Twenty seven Michaelians, mainly Sixth formers, lead the cast with 12 musicians, also from SMI.

The story is about a boy raised in the woods by a magician. He grows up to be king of all England. King Arthur dreams of a "civilised" world. His ideal is *Camelot* where law and compassion reign supreme.

Camelot is SMI's 47th drama production. Throughout the years, beginning with the 1955 stage presentation of *Poet of Ispaha*, the institution has maintained a strong drama tradition. Among its many successes are *The King of Sherwood* (1966), *OLIVER* (1977), *WIZARD OF OZ* (1984) and *Justice Pao* (1999).

Principal Mr Phoon Chong Chee said the proceeds from *Camelot* would help upgrade the school's facilities. Funds would also be allocated to defray expenses of professional guidance and experienced coaching for academically weak students.

For more details, call 05-2540418 (during office hours).

COULD PHILEAS FOGG HAVE GONE FOR THE HULA DANCE?

Innovative format makes every teacher a drama coach and transforms every student into an incipient actor. By Peter Khiew

Sit tight! Fasten your seat belts and enjoy your trip around the world, emcee Master Looi Kian Sing, Year 9, Ipoh International School, told the 1,600 spectators gathered at the Polyteknik Ungku Omar Ipoh.

He added unabashedly, "all for RM20!"

Looi thundered his enthusiastic invitation as the curtains parted for the school 2008 Musical Production, *Around the World With IIS*, a superb spectacle of music, drama and dance in a truly enjoyable adaptation of Jules Verne's novel, *Around the World in 80 Days*.

More than 490 students performed on stage in this year's production. Jonathan Loke played the globe-trotting Phileas Fogg.

"It was certainly worth much more than the RM20 we paid to see it," said Nur Ellianna Zainal, a former student of IIS. She made the trip with family members from Kuala Lumpur specifically to enjoy the show.

This year's IIS production enhances Ipoh city's standing as one of Malaysia's most celebrated niches for school drama. St Michael's Institution and the Anglo-Chinese



Adaptation makes children perform while imbibing lessons in geography

important as the product, says Mrs Agalya Devy Balaguru, Principal and Drama Coordinator. The drama training sessions

are integrated within the school timetable, making every teacher a virtual drama coach.



Attractive addition to Phileas Fogg's itinerary: the Hawaiian hula is a definite crowd-pleaser

While the story of Phileas Fogg's travels was the basis of the IIS production, much poetic licence was employed to accommodate student creativity and innovation. Exciting new sites and places were featured and the drama was spiced richly with dances, from salsa and the tango to the Hawaiian hula.

The school devoted an "incubation period" of three months from March to June 2008 for classes to identify and develop their ideas for the Grand Finale.

School Ipoh have traditionally led the field as two of Malaysia's best drama schools. St Michael's has produced plays and musicals almost every year since 1955, a feat few schools in the world can equal. The Ipoh International School is set to muscle in on this creative field. It is offering a unique format of "total drama" wherein the annual school production mobilises and engages the whole school enrolment. The IIS format involves the full participation of every class in stage productions.

The process is just as



Korea gets represented



IIS Chief Operating Officer Mrs Lai Kong Wa presents a bouquet to drama advisor Charles Pooley

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14-09-2008
(9.00am-4.00pm)

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

It will be held in YMCA, Ipoh.
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PERAK ORCHID SOCIETY
CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2008
Orchid Nite '08

The Perak Orchid Society will hold its 42nd Anniversary dinner at the Ipoh City and Country Club on Saturday, October 25, 2008. The event will precede with an orchid show and followed by dinner. Visitors and guests can purchase orchids from stalls erected specially for the occasion. The event is being appropriately named *Orchid Nite '08*.

Agrofest Perak 2008

The Perak Orchid Society has been given the honour by SADC Perak to organise *Agrofest 2008* at Ladang Infoteknik Sungai Siput beginning November 25 to November 30, 2008. Visitors and guests can view and purchase a variety of orchids on display from 14 booths built for the occasion. The society expects some foreign participation at this year's fest.

Clearwater Flora Fest 2008

Clearwater Flora Fest 2008, the annual flower festival, will be held from December 18 to December 21, 2008 at Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort, Batu Gajah. Two of the festival's major attractions are an orchid show and a koi (Japanese carps) display. Other events of equal significance include a children art competition, pony rides and many more. Ipohites are cordially invited to the savour the festive atmosphere amidst the lush greenery.

For details please call CK LEE at these numbers:
 605-5462 261 (office) 019-5575 571 (mobile)

Continued from page 2

*Sinavesan's apology triggers instant acceptance.*

Gopeng jungles. As it happened, this second withdrawal of heavy vehicles caused even further damage to road and tracks in the area. The aborigines were incensed.

JUNGLE WORKPLACE

The Orang Asli living in the Kampar-Gopeng Jungle Complex are from the Semai tribe of the ethnic Senoi group. Some 2,000 of them live in the five kampongs within the region.

Like other aboriginal tribes in the country they live off the land. The jungle is their workplace, their playground and their orchard. It is where they gather fruits, vines, rattan, shoots and similar jungle produce. Denying them access to their traditional "marketplace" is akin to denying them their right to live.

On Friday, July 31, the State Executive Councillor, at a gathering in front of the Party Keadilan Rakyat office in Gopeng, announced to

*Orang Asli settlers celebrate justice and their victory.*

the media that the State Government had formally recognised the Orang Asli's rights to their ancestral land and that Gopeng Berhad would have to do

their clearing work elsewhere.

Significantly and properly, Sinavesan apologised for his oversight. He openly admitted his

earlier statement had been a mistake.

According to lawyer Anthony, the entire episode should go down in history as one great vic-

tory for the Semai. They fought tooth and nail for their rights.

Nizar's empathy was the deciding factor - indeed, another feather in his cap.

Singapore online

By Andrew Symon

GREEN AND CLEAN POWER

The plans of a neighbouring nation

Once a policy decision is made by the Singapore government, the machinery revs up amazingly quickly to implement it. One good example is the current push for alternative energies, energy efficiency and conservation.

Around the start of 2006, the government decided that climate change was a serious problem and that the island state had to look at ways of reducing general emissions, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases seen to be responsible for global warming.

Before then, government officials seemed to be lukewarm towards the issue.

HARNESSING FAILURE

I remember at one conference when a German expert argued that Singapore was failing in not harnessing solar energy, despite having very good climatic conditions for it, certainly better than Germany where solar was well established. In reply, one former senior official joked about the need perhaps for Singapore to develop personal air-conditioned suits - maybe powered by individual solar energy sets (or maybe he envisaged little hats with propellers to catch the breeze - personal wind power?)

This remark harked back to comments made by Singapore's founding Prime Minister, and now Minister Mentor, Lee Kuan Yew, in an Asian Wall Street Journal article at the end of 1999 when he and other famous people were asked what they thought the great inventions of the last hundred years had been and what the future might hold.

AIR CONDITIONING

Lee said that the air conditioner had been a great break through as it enabled workers' productivity to increase in tropical climates and that maybe the next breakthrough could be the air conditioned suit.

Certainly now, though, there is a much greater seriousness and enthusiasm about green and clean energy technologies, and energy conservation.

And the policy shift is understood to owe a lot to the still very influential Lee Kuan Yew, who, it is said, takes the climate change challenge very seriously indeed.

Spotlighting Singapore's new position was the government's ratification, in April, 2006, of the 1997 Kyoto Accord to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While Singapore does not face

any mandatory emissions reduction targets under Kyoto, as it is still classified internationally as a developing country, it is an important action.

While most other Southeast Asian countries have ratified Kyoto (all except Laos and Brunei), as have India and China, Singapore is liable to be much closer to having to accept international obli-

veloped countries, according to research by the Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre in Tokyo.

NATIONAL TARGET

Longer term, it is very possible that the island nation will face international targets of some sort. Foreseeing this, the government has set a self imposed national target to re-

duce carbon intensity to 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

PLANS WORKING

Already there are signs that this is working. Conergy of Germany, the largest solar company in Europe, has set up its Asia Pacific base in Singapore in a bid to expand its business in the Asia-Pacific region.

Vestas of Denmark, the world's largest supplier of wind power systems, is making Singapore a regional base and R&D centre.

Two Norwegian solar energy component manufacturers, NorSun and Renewable Energy Corporation, also recently announced plans to build plants in Singapore.

As far as alternative transport fuels are concerned, a 200,000 barrels per day bio diesel plant is being developed in a venture between Holland's Van Der Hoors and Nanyang Technological University.

The plant is to be operational by year's end on Jurong Island, off the southwest coast, where Singapore's oil storage, refining and petrochemical facilities are located.

The venture also plans

a 200,000 barrels a day operation in the neighbouring Malaysian state of Johor.

The raw input is jatropha curcas, argued to be better than palm oil as it is a hardy plant that can grow on semi arid land and therefore does not compete with land for agricultural crops.

This will be supplied from Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia.

HYDROGEN CELLS

Hydrogen fuel cells to power motor vehicles are also being tested by DaimlerChrysler and BP, and also by Rolls-Royce with a Singaporean consortium, Enertek.

In power, Singapore has shifted in the last eight years from almost total reliance on oil for generation to natural gas supplied by pipeline from Indonesia's Sumatra and offshore fields in the South China Sea on top of pipeline supply from Malaysia. Liquefied natural gas is also to be imported by the end of the decade.

Climate change concerns, reliance on fuel imports, and increasing fuel prices are all driving the government's push for greater power efficiency and fuel diversification.

And solar as a means of diversifying power supply is also now firmly on the government's agenda!

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Sport

FACILITIES AND FINANCING

There may be strong social and moral arguments against paying footballers the earth, but Steve Darby insists they should always practise on decent pitches . . .

Recently, I commentated for Astro on the Malaysia v Chelsea game. Before the match, I had stated on air that Shah Alam is the best football stadium in Malaysia and has the best playing surface.

I was delighted when the Chelsea manager, Luiz Felipe Scolari, roundly criticised the pitch saying it was impossible to play good football on and was, in fact,, dangerous to his players!

VINDICATED

So, perhaps, the sceptics who criticise me for saying that Ipoh stadium is an appalling pitch will realise now that the standard of surface is something that is vital to the game. It is something that is not economically out of reach.

Sun and water are abundant in Ipoh, perhaps a little care and attention may also be needed! This would also apply to Ipoh Padang, which was destroyed as a public facility by a private function. It has been almost a year since the field was playable. All right, it is playable but only for recreational use. It's basically dangerous, with the bumps and lumps in the surface, surface that is neither like concrete nor a swamp. Again, we have to care and maintain facilities if we want the best.

Pitch maintenance is



One secret Frank Lampard cannot hide: he is Chelsea's RM 143,000 a day man. And we're talking basic wage.

within economic reach, but another factor from the game that emerged was the vast economic status of the players.

Frank Lampard of Chelsea is about to sign a new contract with Chelsea which will give him a basic wage of approximately RM143,000 a day. *Yes! A day!* He was up against a Perak player in that match who was proudly representing his country. The game was beamed to 17 countries and yet, it

will take the Perak player two years to earn what Lampard earns in a day. On this issue we cannot compete and maybe there are strong social and moral arguments that we should not even try.

My first wage as "pro" at Tranmere Rovers was RM56 a week and if I complained there were 100 players in the queue behind me who would have taken my job. That was in the 70s so the game at the elite level in Europe has made

massive strides, both on and, more importantly, off the pitch.

The revenue streams that supply these amazing wage bills are:

- TV rights
- Gate receipts
- Sponsorships
- Marketing sales

Where Malaysian football has to improve is in its drive to obtain corporate sponsorships and, in turn, to service that sponsorship so that the sponsor gets value for their ringgit.

Again this is obtainable and hard work and care and attention are the ingredients.

Sounds a bit like pitch maintenance!

THANK YOU

On a separate note, the response to the *Ipoh Echo's* front page exposé of the lack of funding for the state team has had a tremendous response with many people voicing their concern.

On a practical note, a true fan, Hajj Mohtar bin Ngah, funded our trip to Kuala Lumpur to play in the Malaysian Cup.

We have now qualified for the Malaysia Cup Quarter Finals, despite not being paid for four months. Perhaps we are the most professional "amateur" side in Malaysia!!!

PHASES & FACES

EASY FAVOURITE



Cheah Poh Ting, is pictured above receiving her certificate from Mayor Roshidi. She is the only female city councilor in Ipoh.

An observer told *Ipoh Echo*: "She certainly was a

refreshing sight in the sea of male city councilors."

There are a total of 22 city councillors.

Cheah is a civil engineer. She was one of seven NGOs who took their oath of office recently.

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Kevin Coetzee was co-owner of *Sid's Tavern*, a popular pub located at Ipoh Garden South offering live music six nights

a week. For over a year Kevin would be behind the bar cheerily serving his customers their brew. He enjoyed himself.

MOVING UP



They've been promoted. (L to R) Sgt Rohani, Sub-Inspector Zakaria, Sub-Inspector Hakimudin and Sgt Kasmah, all from IPK Jabatan Siasatan Jenayah. Of the 585 recent promotions in the Perak Contingent, 72 came from the Police Contingent Headquarters.

However, effective this August, he gave up his share of the business.

The reason is fairly simple: Kevin's day job. He is a horse trainer and is currently ranked Number 1 in the circuit. Kevin was 'moonlighting' at Sid's. Late, late nights and early morning work just don't mix.



Kevin