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Investing in Ipoh's
History
p. 5



No messing with Parking
Places provisions
p. 7



IPSCA's role in a
caring society
p. 9



The search for
champions
p. 12

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE LITTLE GIRL IN THIS DECEMBER 1952 SNAPSHOT?



DO YOU KNOW
WHERE SHE MIGHT
BE LIVING TODAY?



THERE'S A SPECIAL REASON WHY THE
IPOH ECHO IS TRYING TO TRACE HER

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FULL
REPORT
- PAGE 2

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THE LITTLE LADY THEY CAN'T FORGET

CAN YOU RECOGNISE HER? CAN YOU HELP US FIND HER?

By Ipoh Echo staff reporters

The little girl's eyes sparkled. She was inquisitive, chatty and her gentle smile so warmed the hearts of the young soldiers far from home.

Somehow she reminded them of younger sisters, or cousins or children down the roads – all left behind in England when, as teenage national servicemen, they met their country's call to fight communist insurgents in Malayan jungles.

Full of life and optimism, the impish little lady came as a welcome tonic for the soldiers. At such tender ages themselves, they were struggling to confront the reality of combat violence and – though they seldom talked about it – the possibility of premature death.

It was hardly surprising, then, that when the men of 9

duty and has treasured it ever since. It is, indeed, a happy moment captured for posterity. And as the years have rolled on for the onetime soldiers, the photograph has been passed around at regular reunions. It has become an important reminder of a truly unforgettable moment in an otherwise troubled period of their lives.

WHAT WAS HER NAME?

Some memories have clouded. They can't quite remember the little girl's name, for instance. Was she Malay or Chinese? They can't be sure. What they can be sure of, though, is that they would dearly love to contact her again. They hope life has been kind to the youngster who sat so confidently on their laps all those years ago, who



The "white building" – currently the Ranger Corps Officers' Mess

wrote: "She should be in her early sixties now – 61 years old perhaps." Ina's letter concluded: "Hope to hear from you soon."

Immediately her mail landed, the *Echo* phoned Ina at her home in Coldicotts Close, Bretforton. Forty-eight hours later she kindly forwarded further information by email in the hope that it might assist us in our endeavours to establish the identity of "that special little girl".

The camp where the

or perhaps the daughter of a "char walla". There was a large white house in the vicinity of the camp and this was the officers' mess. Hot springs were located by the Gunongs and about half a mile from the camp. At the rear of the camp was a tin mine.

PINPOINTING THE CAMPSITE

Echo reporter, James Gough, was dispatched to try and pinpoint what had been the 1st Worcestershire Regiment's C Company campsite back in 1952.

All indications suggest it was located at what is now known as the Pusat Latihan Askar Wataniah (Puswatan) – or Territorial Army Training Centre. Presently, three army units occupy the position which is about 300 acres in size. Gunong Panjang is in the background. Back in the old days tin was certainly mined behind the location. A large "white house" in the vicinity of the camp once served as an officers' mess. Indeed, by extraordinary coincidence, the *Echo's* editor, a retired

senior Malaysian Army officer, commanded a battalion based at that very site back in 1988.

Adding to the coincidence: he then lived in the same officers' mess building.

Since the "white building" mentioned in Ina's email was reportedly near the 9 Platoon camp section, Editor Zaman Bukhari and reporter Gough both feel the actual campsite was probably behind the current Puswatan multi-purpose hall.

have identified the campsite at which our front page photograph was taken. We now look to our many thousands of readers to help us locate the young lady in question. Of course she won't be young any more. But we are certain she will be just as charming as she was in the days she captured the admiration of so many visiting foreign soldiers.

Please help us in our effort to bring the joy of a unique long distance reunion to so many



The multi-purpose hall (right) probably stands where 9 Platoon camped in 1952.

Platoon, C Company, 1st Worcestershire Regiment, got together to celebrate Xmas, 1952, at their Tambun camp, honoured guest for that occasion was the little girl so dear to their hearts.

One of the platoon celebrants, Albert Camden, was on hand with his Box Brownie camera. He snapped the picture we publish on our front page this issue, took it home to Worcestershire with him at the end of his tour of

laughed with them and brightened their days with her trust, her vivacity, her very presence.

So it was that Mrs. Ina Vernon, from Bretforton, near Evesham, Worcester, wife of one of the former Tambun-based national servicemen, was asked to contact *Ipoh Echo's* editor, Fathol Zaman Bukhari. Perhaps Perak's community paper could help track down the young lady in the picture.

Of the little girl Ina

picture was taken, informed Ina, was on the main road from Ipoh to Tambun – about 2 miles from Tambun town going up the road towards Tanjong Rambutan.

The soldier on whose lap the girl sat is identified as John Hill. He lives in Worcestershire and is a regular at the 9 Platoon reunions.

Albert (the photographer) seems to remember that the little girl was the daughter of a mine worker,



Entrance to Tambun's hot springs today.

The nearby Tambun hot springs have been around for a long time. Situated just after Sunway City's Lost World of Tambun, they are leased out to Sunway City who operate them as a health spa.

So we at the *Ipoh Echo* feel confident we

former members of the Worcestershire Regiment and at the same time achieve full recognition of a very special moment in their soldiering memory.

If you have any ideas that might help us identify the little girl, please contact reporter Gough at *Ipoh Echo*, tel: **05-249-5939**.

UPCOMING EVENT

PSPA is organising Actor Studio's BROADWAY PARODIES LAGI LAH! (based on 'Forbidden Broadway')

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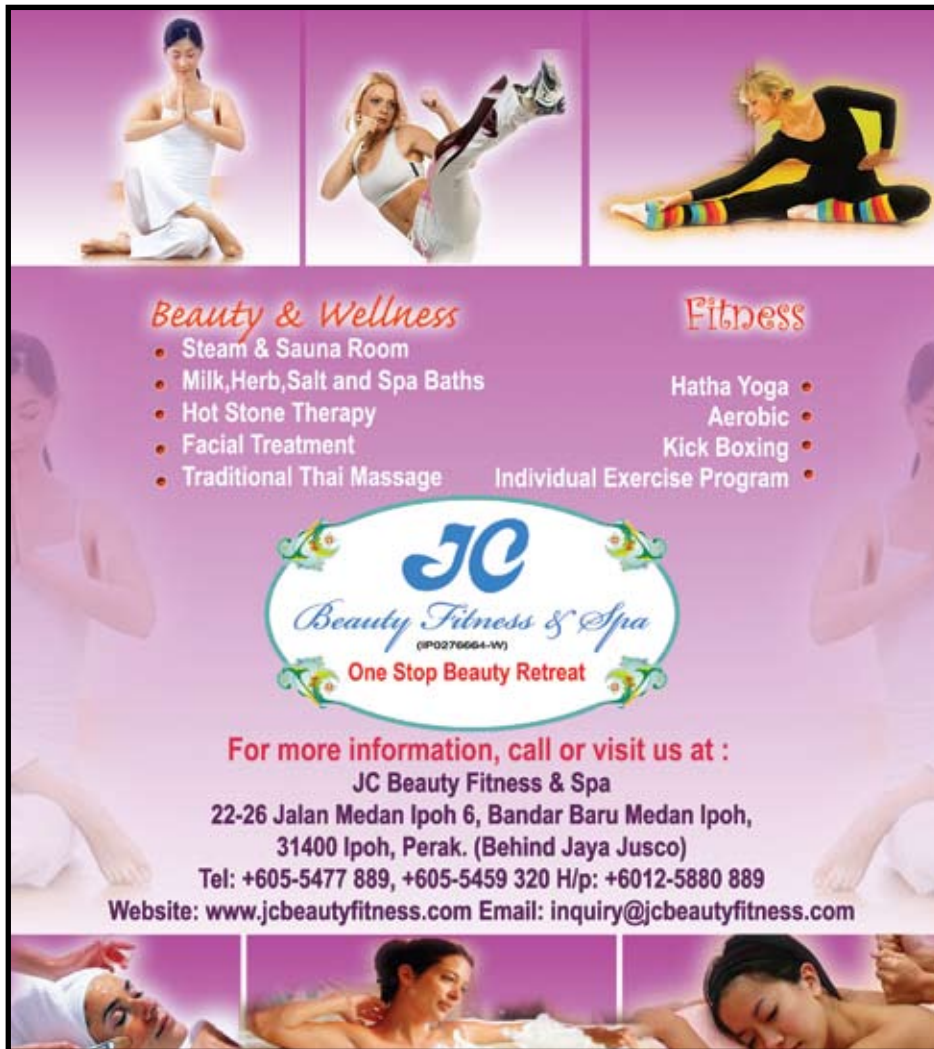
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IPOH'S PERENNIAL BUDGET PROBLEM... ERRANT RATEPAYERS

And there's more of them than you can shake a stick at these days

Ipoh City Council's budget is tabled once every two years. The budget proposal for 2009 and 2010 was announced by Mayor Rashidi Hashim on August 28. In his inaugural budget speech, Rashidi maintained that the council had, in the past, produced a balance budget and the same was envisaged for years 2009 and 2010.

However, expenses had increased due to reasons beyond the council's control. He said that the increases were inevitable because of recent developments such as the fuel price hike, salary adjustments, cost of living allowances, privatisation of rubbish collection and others.

a smaller allocation for development was due in part to the larger amount earmarked for operational expenses.

The council currently has 2,436 staff on its pay roll. This huge number of personnel necessitates an increased spending. Personal emoluments alone account for almost 60 per cent of the budget.

Contrast this with the sum allocated for 2008. For year 2008 the amount budgeted was RM116.7 million for operations and RM4 million for developments. To date more than half of the allotted amount has been expended. The RM11 million increase for 2009 goes to paying the council staff.

The council's main source of revenue is derived from rate payers in the form of assessment rates, business licensing and processing fees, parking fees, fines and a myriad other taxes and commissions. The timely collection of fees, fines, commissions and taxes is thus essential to ensuring the functioning of Ipoh City Council.

PROJECTIONS

Revenue projected for 2009 is estimated at RM130,787,370 while for 2010 it is pegged at RM133,012,920.

The bulk of the income will be sourced from taxes – RM89,674,300 for 2009 and RM71,253,500 for 2010. The figures represent almost 70 per cent of the projected income for both years.

Operational Expenditures for 2009 and 2010 are estimated at RM127,287,370 and RM129,512,920 respectively.

Development Expenditure for 2009 and 2010 is fixed at RM3.5 million in each case.

These amounts are not commensurate to the size of the municipality, which has ballooned to 643 sq km from the original 347 sq km effective 2003. According to the mayor

manipulated to show an improvement. The propensity to exaggerate figures is a practice peculiar to the public sector and Ipoh City Council is no exception.

Bercham, one of the four areas with the most number of defaulters, has many empty premises. These unoccupied houses and factory lots are on the council's radar screen. Still, despite repeated warnings, owners seldom respond. Sealing would be meaningless as the premises have no moveable items of value to impound. Moreover, without the owners' cooperation there is little the council can do to recover its dues. The only recourse is taking errant owners to court. But how many cases have been resolved through litigation? It is a tedious process which is far from cost effective.

UNCERTAINTIES

With a dithering global economy bordering on gloom, the number of defaulters is bound to increase next year. A depressed property market and political uncertainties on the home front will serve to compound the problem further. It is disheartening but that is the truth. There were times in the past when the council had to borrow in order to pay its staff and keep dumpsters on the road.

Realistically speaking, it is a rough ride ahead and the signs are not too good despite the mayor's expressed optimism. The alternative is to dip into council savings. These stood at RM37 million as at end July 2008. But is this a viable option?

BONE OF CONTENTION

However, getting property owners to pay their dues on time and in the required amount has been the bane of the council. As of August 2008, a sum of RM50 million remained still in arrears as many property owners were reluctant to pay up.

Although a dedicated task force has been formed for the sole purpose of debt recovery, the progress is anything but smooth. Statistics can be

LATEST HEARING AID TECHNOLOGY

Imagine being unable to listen to your favourite songs or hear what your loved ones are saying. Those suffering from hearing loss and who fail to seek professional advice face such handicaps every day of their lives.

Thankfully, relief is available for hearing loss problems – those conditions which are professionally defined as “the inability to perceive or interpret sound”.

At the forefront of those handling audiological problems is the organization known as Gnosis Professional Hearing Services (Gnosis).

Managed solely by audiologists, Gnosis is a nationwide establishment, wholly owned and operated by qualified audiologists. All are dedicated to providing top class serv-

ices for the hearing impaired.

University-trained professionals, the Gnosis people specialize in the assessment, prevention and non-medical management of hearing impairment and disorders of communication.

Employing expert diagnosis techniques, they are quickly able to determine the nature and degree of hearing defects. Thereafter they work to provide unsurpassed personalized services for clients, both adult and children.

Indeed, a special aspect of the Gnosis operation is the attention its staff is able to direct towards children. Strangely enough, audiological care for youngsters is not always available at private hearing centres.

As far as children are concerned, say Gnosis



experts, it is best to have hearing diagnosed as early as possible – even from as young as newborns.

They emphasise that early detection of hearing impairment in infants can greatly improve the language ability of affected children in later childhood.

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EDITORIAL

IS PUBLICITY
A CRITERION ?

They say habits die hard. Never is this more apparent than on those occasions when senior government officials go courting publicity. Their propensity for spotlighting an intended presence at a special occasion, or even during an informal gathering, is becoming boundless.

Why, it is valid to ask, is there a requirement to announce one's appearance when the objective is to investigate and to decide on a course of action? When the boss wants to check on his subordinates, must he appear with a pre-announced bang?

Stealth, or in army parlance, cover and concealment, might well prove a far more appropriate strategy to adopt. You can either come incognito and at the most inopportune time, or stay at a distance and watch.

The ethics of your subordinates can be observed from a point unseen and unknown to them.

Some may argue that publicity is essential. It keeps people on their toes. But when that happens both visitor and the visited have had time to prepare and are likely to be on their best behaviour.

Why the need to get the media into position before a VIP's arrival? The officer's duty is to inspect. He's not on an ego trip – or at least we hope he isn't.

Mayor Rashidi Hashim broke tradition by making a "surprise" visit to Buntong recently. But the element of surprise became lost when his intentions were made known to the media well in advance. So when he dropped by at the appointed time council workers, residents and even politicians were on hand to receive him.

The council workers, as expected, were prim and proper and so were the residents. Complaints of clogged drains, uncollected rubbish, criminal activities and the myriad other problems, so often associated with this notorious backwater of Ipoh City, seemed to dissipate into thin air.

It is time a more impersonal approach be adopted by senior government officers in fulfilling their responsibilities to the rakyat. A degree of soul searching is in order now that a new state government is in power.

Is publicity the all-important criterion for the job of a mayor? It may be good for a frayed ego. But does it best serve Ipohites?

ZONE RE-ASSIGNMENTS

There might be a need to revise your list (IE 57, September 1-September 15, 2008) if your zone is affected.

Zone 4 Kinding, Tg Rambutan, Putra

New Councillor:

Dr Ngiam Swee Keat Mobile: 012-5199 472

Zone 10 Kg Simee, Taman Ipoh, Taman Canning

New Councillor

Encik Liu Then Tui Mobile: 016-5383 423

Zone 11 Perpaduan, Ulu Kinta, Tambun

New Councillor

Cik Cheah Poh Ting Mobile: 012 -5010 130

Zone 13 Green Town, Pekan Lama, Medan Kidd

New Councillor

Encik Ding Poi Kooi Mobile: 012- 5173 361

Zone 14 Cempaka, Taman Golf, Lumba Kuda

New Councillor

Encik Yip Mun Chien

Mobile: 012- 5173 361

Zone 16 Pekan Baru, Tebing Tinggi, Pasir Pinggi

New Councillor

Encik Ng Lai Hoong Mobile: 019-5722 323

Zone 18 Pasir Puteh, Seri Kinta, Kuala Pari

New Councillor

Encik Wong Yoon Choong Tel 05- 538 5555

Zone 20 Gunung Rapat, Rapat Setia, Taman Song

Choon

New Councillor

Encik Liow Yeong Lih Tel 016-5375 703

THINKING ALOUD

By G. Sivapragasam

DITCHING TRIBALISM AND
EMBRACING REAL CO-EXISTENCE

*Making racial tolerance a fact
- not just a convenient phrase*

Most Malaysians reminisce a golden age, now apparently lost, when all races in this country lived together as one. Sadly, I believe this to be more fiction than fact.

Reality was that the masses of the three races led lives isolated from each other with little more than formal, limited and occasional contact between them. One or two members of other races, residing in the midst of a community dominated by a single race, do not really qualify even as a minority let alone a noteworthy identity.

Having said that, there was one sector of society where the three races were truly comfortable with each other. Most of that group came from liberal families. Against this background, cultures blended.

AT SCHOOL

My experience was substantially within an urban environment. My association with non-family members came when I attended school. In my class there were a couple of classmates who shared my origin. There was one Malay student and the rest were Chinese. Without a critical mass to sustain a social group the Indians and the Malay became assimilated into the dominant Chinese student community.

I am still in contact with many of my classmates, some by email and others at fortnightly brunch meetings. They are all Chinese.

However, when I was eight and nine my school holidays were spent with my aunt in Kampar. Here I was not only exposed to a rural environment but to the Malay community as well. My aunt's house was the only Indian household in a village that was completely Malay. My cousin who was a few years older than I had become part of the dominant community. And so did I while I stayed there.

Oddly, save for members of my family, I have never really been part of my own community. It is not that I did not have friends from my race; it is just that I have never belonged to a group that was traditionally Indian.

There is this belief that emotional stability comes from the security of one's

racial-cultural heritage. I, on the other hand, believe that it is possible to attain emotional stability by creating your own identity with values and cultural facets derived from a variety of sources.

The only time I experienced Malaysians – and I must add Singaporeans – of different races, each with a critical mass capable of sustaining separate racial social groups, living and socialising without differentiation was when I was in London during my tertiary education.

This was in the 60s a time when student political thought was moulded by the likes of Tariq Ali and Rudi Dutschke. It was a time when socialism was fashionable and phrases like 'anti people people' were giving law professors sleepless nights trying to figure out what they meant.

REDUCING
DIFFERENCES

It was also the time of the Vietnam War, confrontations in South Africa and Rhodesia, problems in Greece and East Pakistan. Possibly these global issues and our shared culture in an alien multi-cultural environment reduced our socio-cultural differences to insignificance. Probably, they enabled us to identify ourselves as individuals with values, views and beliefs some shared while others did not.

The point I am making is that perhaps true harmony is not going to be achieved by trying to mould a single Malaysian identity out of our three different cultures. I think the way to unity is to go the other way - identifying and seeing each other as individuals, recognising the distinctiveness in us and evolving social groups on an intellectual as against emotional platform.

This unfortunately is not going to happen so long as we continue to be tribal.

Since returning home I personally have never been conscious of the special position of the Malays. Nor have I ever felt discriminated. But I know that the Malays have special rights and they are enshrined in the constitution. During the course of my life I have

met many privileged non-Malays and numerous Malays with no privileges. One question is what proportion of the Malay population is able to use these privileges and what proportion of the non-Malay population loses out by its existence.

Two further questions arise. To what extent has the country provided wealth to the people and to what degree have the people created wealth for the nation? The truth is these privileges have had little impact on the masses and the country has provided more wealth to the people than the people to the country.

NATIONAL
OBSESSION

A capitalist system engenders inequality. In such a society some members are more privileged than others. This issue of privileges has been politicised so much that it has become a national obsession. Perhaps we need to expand our vision to global issues that would have a critical bearing on our lives. Possibly the way forward is to cease complaining of the rights we don't have and, instead, begin exercising the privileges we already possess. In today's world, dictated by knowledge, information and global networking, socio-economic engineering by nation-states is losing significance against the creativity, boldness and industry of individuals.

NATIONAL SURVIVAL

Malays make up 60% of the nation's total population and a discontented majority race in a democracy is a certain formula for strife. It is in the interest of all that there is general contentment. Malaysia is a member of a rapidly evolving global village dependent on and competing with other nations. Its survival, let alone progress, is dependent on using its resources effectively and efficiently.

In this new world human resources have emerged as the most decisive factor for social and economic progress. It is in the interest of the nation as well as every citizen that this resource is optimised.

THUMBS UP

INVESTING IN IPOH'S HISTORY

Lam Look Ing Bazaar acquires a new owner



Soon to be restored to its former glory

The Lam Look Ing Bazaar is 75 years old. Built in 1933 "in early international style", it is not difficult to imagine the splendour it enjoyed in its heyday.

A fire damaged the structure in 2005. Since then, people have been wondering what would happen to what was, once, a favourite haunt among Ipohites. The good news: Sew Cheong Medical Group of Companies has bought over Lam Look Ing, ensuring the future of an Ipoh landmark.

"I'm acquiring a part of Ipoh's history," declared new owner Desmond Loh. "When else would one be given this chance?" The investor added: "The best part is that I shall be utilising all the space therein for my business."

He has promised to restore the Lam Look Ing Bazaar to its

previous glory. This is partly in answer to the state government's call to rebuild Ipoh's reputation as a historical city. One steps into Lam Look Ing and, even without the overdue face-lift, the visitor has to agree that it is a worthwhile investment.

From the top floor in the Western direction, it provides a magnificent view of the Kinta River running through the heart of the city and the Hugh Low Bridge, into Old Town. In the Northern direction, Ipoh New Town can be viewed as far as the Coronation roundabout.

RANDOM HISTORICAL NOTES

My father who is in his 80's, informs me that during the Japanese Occupation, the Lam Look Ing Bazaar's top floor housed, the only cabaret

licensed by the Japanese Military Administration in Ipoh. There was a strict prohibition slapped on entertainment centres during the war years. It was called "tin yin" in Cantonese or "celestial leisure" in English.

The recollections I have are comparatively flighty. In the 1970s, when I was a youngster, Perak Emporium occupied most of the first and second floors of the building. For me, as it must have been to many of my generation, Perak Emporium was the mega mall of the 70's. All sorts of luxurious goods could be purchased there.

But frivolity is far from Lam Look Ing's new owner's plans. The Sew Cheong Medical Group of Companies itself has carved for itself a niche in the Perak business community. Desmond's father, Mr Loh Voon Meng, a first generation Chinese businessman, founded the company in 1946. In 50 years, the group has grown from strength to strength. A decade ago, Desmond became the company's biggest shareholder. He has since expanded the business all over Southeast Asia.

His latest acquisition, the Lam Look Ing Bazaar, fill him with understandable pride.

WAN KOON SENG

ISSUES TO WATCH

A CALL FOR LESS TALK AND MORE ACTION

Councillors must also be ready with suggestions

During the recent City Council full-board meeting, the newly appointed councillors spent over an hour deliberating on problems and issues affecting Ipohites. The mayor, however, spent only a few minutes answering their questions.

Most of the issues raised pertained to the public transport system, garbage collection (especially in Menglembu), usage of plastic and solar power.

City folks expect more from these recently sworn-in councillors. In the past, a position in the Council was a form of reward for politicians. Although the same applies today, a third of the councillors, have been picked from members of the public. They applied and were interviewed. The best must have been selected for the job and, in these early days, they should be given the ben-

efit of the doubt. Instead of just complaining these new councillors must come up with suggestions how the problems they raise can be solved.

IDEAS, IDEAS

The councillor who complains about public transport must have suggestions. He can get feedback from his zone's residents.

The councillor who complains about garbage in Menglembu should also come up with solutions. He can consult the residents and the business community in Menglembu since they are dealing directly with the problem on a daily basis.

As far as the usage of plastic is concerned, take a leaf from Singapore for a start. The island republic has embarked on a scheme which requires department

stores not to provide shoppers plastic bags once a week. This encourages people to start using proper bags to carry things. A similar scheme can be started in Ipoh on a modest scale.

There must be adequate appliances in the market that use solar energy. Solar rice cookers are available, but how practical are they? The councillor who raises this matter should be more explicit rather than just stating the obvious.

There is a marked improvement in Council meetings now. In the past-councillors were merely present to make numbers. This new batch of decision makers are more vocal but they are aware that they have to channel their energy towards making Ipoh a more liveable city.

A. JEYARAJ

COMMENTARY

SUDDENLY IPOH'S PROJECTED BUS TERMINAL AND NEW BUSES HAVE BECOME HOT POTATOES. WHY?

Chelvi Sreethararaj has the following comments to make about the burgeoning controversies.

She writes;

“What will be the routes plied and at what time intervals? Our students at Sunway have been so tortured over the years with the current public bus services that those who rely on these buses end up coming in late for class. That is the normal state of affairs.

Where the bus terminal is centralised is not of major concern. Actually, the new location may encourage spread of facilities out of the main city and encourage more 'movement' in new developing areas.

Good for the growth of Ipoh; but, the question is this:: will the new public bus consortium serve to provide more Ipohites with improved and reliable public transportation? Our present transportation is deplorable.

Has the plan been studied to show to what extent Ipohites will benefit from this project?

Public transportation should not be only for the lower income.

Its services should be seen as reliable and worthy of use by the other social classes, too ... it is the onus



Perak's Menteri Besar, Dato Seri Mohammed Nizar (third from left), and executive councillors, ponder a model of the intended new bus terminal

of the service provider to change mindsets with effective awareness drives.

No change no growth!

Changes to current systems, ultimately create development - however troublesome this may appear at present.

Let's not encourage 'stability' of the present public system.

Better public services

will encourage other layers of society to become commuters. That's city development.

We CAN work with the resources in hand.

So are we, Ipohites, getting better public transport services in the near future? ”

Ipoh Echo's editor invites commentaries from our readers on these and any other subjects.



A section of the bus terminal model.

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THE WAY IT WAS ..
100 YEARS AGO

While some Chinese were quarrelling in front of the Wayang Kassim in North Bridge Road, Singapore, on Sunday night, one of them was knocked down by a tram. He died in the hospital later from a fractured skull.

* * * * *

Owing to competition among the manufacturers of ice in Singapore, the Kallang Ice Works have reduced their rate to two and a half cents for 10 lbs. instead of 5 cents, as formerly. It is believed that other manufacturers are also reducing their rates.

* * * * *

Writing from Penang, the correspondent of our contemporary The Times of Malaya, states that the new building of the F.M.S. Railway there has at last been completed. The edifice is described as palatial, and the clock situated in its tower, is also stated to be a beauty, its harmonious chimes being distinctly heard at Sepoy Lines, over three and a half miles away.

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FROM MY ALBUM

THE STAMP LOVING KING

Straits Settlements stamps - part of the British royal collection

Born George Frederick Ernest Albert, June 3, 1865, King George V reigned from 1910, through World War 1 years (1914-1918) and on to his death in 1936.

The Coronation of King George and Queen Mary took place at Westminster Abbey on June 22, 1911. The King was instrumental in relinquishing all German titles and changed the name of the Royal House from Saxe-Coburg & Gotha to the House of Windsor.

Why am I giving you this history lesson?

The answer is simple. King George V was one of the most famous philatelists of his day. In 1893, as Duke of York, prior to his ascendancy to the throne, he was elected honorary vice president of the Royal Philatelic Society of London.

WORLD RECORD

His purchase of the Mauritius 2 pence stamp for £1,450 (Sterling) in 1904 set a world record for a single stamp sale. It is said that a certain courtier asked the Prince if he had heard that "some dammed fool had paid as much as

£1,400 for a single stamp" "Yes" replied the Prince, "I was the damned fool"

The King's love of stamps played a large role in the creation of what we know now as the Royal Philatelic Collection of United Kingdom and Commonwealth Stamps.

This truly wonderful collection was kept at Buckingham Palace until it was moved to St James Palace. I have read that King George spent three afternoons a week with his personal stamp collection whenever he was in London - and was very rarely interrupted on these occasions.

The Royal Philatelic Society regularly exhibits Royal Collection stamps for the general public.

THE DIFFERENCE

New stamps of the Straits Settlements with the head of King George V were exactly the same in design and colours as those of the last issue of his late father, King Edward VII.

BUT there had to be a difference or it just wouldn't be pukka . . .

The change in this new issue was the \$100 stamp. This ultimately

appeared is recognised as the "Nyasaland" design. The same design was employed for the \$25



The large Nyasaland Design for the \$100 stamp.

value and the \$500 dollar value as well.

A smaller version of the Nyasaland design was used for the 21 cent and the 45 cent values.

Accompanying my column this time are examples of these design and stamp values.

I have many more exciting examples of stamps and covers highlighting the Straits Settlements during the reign of George V. I look forward to sharing them with you in columns to come.



The smaller design type.



Some stamps from the first issue of George V.

By Quicksilver

Here's a little poem about stamps that I happily dedicate to all Perakian stamp collectors . . .

Ode to the Common Stamp

*It's just a small piece of paper,
 Clean, worn, crumpled, or stained,
 But the joy that the sight of it gives me
 Has never, no never, been named.*

*As I look at it, I wonder
 Of the strange sights which it has seen.*

*And I cannot help but ponder,
 On whose letter it has been.*

*Perhaps it's helped join two lovers,
 But of that, who could be sure?
 Surely, it is just as likely
 That it was written from boor to boor?*

*Is it a man or a lady that placed it
 With hands either firm or fine,
 On this old well-kept envelope
 The color of Burgandy wine?*

*I can never know, but what difference
 The stamp is, of course, the main thing,
 It's just a small piece of paper
 But joy upon joy it does bring.*

- Anonymous

Ipoh Facts and Fancies

A Tropical Paradise Reassessing Ipoh's special offerings

By Ho Tak Ming

What was Ipoh like before the First World War, that is, before the architecturally-splendid iconic buildings that are today associated with the city - the Railway Station and the Town Hall - were built? There were then no imposing Government buildings.

This official neglect was, however, compensated by the vitality of the private sector. The commercial heart of downtown Ipoh was as majestic as any modern metropolis. There were the offices of the Chartered Bank, Straits Trading Company, Oldfield's Dispensary, the Medical Hall, Messrs Whiteaway, Laidlaw and Co Ltd, etc, all situated there. A visitor wrote of Ipoh in 1911:

It reminds me most strongly of an American town - it is so active, clean and prosperous-looking. Taiping is very pretty, but,

if you asked me to compare the two, I should say that Taiping is the town of yesterday and Ipoh is the town of today. At first I was much struck by the total absence of Government buildings in Ipoh and it was with surprise that I learnt that quiet little Taiping is still the official capital of Perak.

LOW DEATH RATE

The cleanliness and bustling health of the town was what attracted another visitor in 1912:

Ipoh, it may be remarked, possesses a reputation throughout Malaya for the lowness of its death rate, its general cleanliness, the width of its streets and the attractiveness of its view as a tout ensemble. But to the visitor it is something more. It is fast growing daily in importance as a business centre, new

buildings are going up and in many instances have replaced old ones. Its principal streets possess cement drains that are easily flushed of street impurities and though fish - salted and otherwise - forms the staple food of both Chinese and Malays, the malodours that prevail in the streets of Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Klang, etc, are conspicuously absent. They must exist somewhere, but in Ipoh this industry is carried on in the by-ways of the town.

Deprived of such official endowments as an ornamental lake or botanical garden, Ipoh still managed to make itself attractive by the lush greenery that its citizens planted around their houses.

It was the refreshing greenery of Ipoh, with no ugly factories and workhouses nearby to mar the scenery, that attracted

visitors. One wrote admiringly in 1913:

If Ipoh and its immediate environs were transplanted as a whole and set down say, in the middle of the Black Country in England, it would speedily become famous as the garden city par excellence. Wherever the eye wanders in Ipoh it is bound to rest on a patch of green somewhere in the landscape.

Ipoh is set amidst really impressive scenery, for have we not on the west the Kledang range, the north the limestone hills, and on the east those of Gunong Rapat and Sungei Raia, with their stalactite caves and Buddhist temples. We have to the south the flats of the Kinta valley ploughed with tin mines, teeming with industrious Chinese coolies, delivering the mineral which amounts in the aggregate to an export from this country of

nearly £7,000,000 worth. To the north we find fertile rubber plantations, padi fields, bound in on the east by mighty mountains, in whose fastnesses dwell a primitive people untouched by the bustling West and indifferent to the objects of our lives in this busy little town of Ipoh.

But how many Ipohites appreciated this fact? One of them wondered, "If we were not so taken up with money-making or playing golf we might pause occasionally to realise that there must be few towns in the East with such a scenic setting. Look out of any window in a building with an unobstructed view and your eye lights on a panorama that is satisfying to the most exacting artistic taste. Take a motor ride or cycling jalan along any of the main arteries out of Ipoh, barring perhaps the Lahat Road, and one is struck by the beauty of



Ipoh - gateway to caves

lofty mountains, limestone cliffs, and cameos of Malayan life."

EXCELLENT FOR RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

Ipoh was able to keep its old-world charm, thanks to the benign neglect of the Government, which preferred to develop the Federal capital, Kuala Lumpur. However, the High Gods in KL were not blind to the serene beauty of their Cinderella up north. In 1915, the Chief Secretary to the Government, Sir Edward Brockman, declared that Ipoh was the healthiest place in the FMS, and said that it was the ideal place for retired civil servants to live.



Dubbed the plane that won the Battle of Britain, this legendary aircraft even carved out a name for itself in Perak

By Wan Koon Seng

Only 19 squadrons of the Supermarine Spitfire were available to the Royal Air Force (RAF) at the outset of the Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940.

Pilots of the Spitfires could boast tight turning manoeuvrability and superior airspeed. Together with 35 squadrons of the Hawker Hurricane, they faced the onslaught of the mighty German air force, the Luftwaffe.

Only a month earlier, the German pilots had steam-rolled the combine air defences of Belgium, Holland and France. They had done this within a matter of four weeks.

Viewed in a broader context, the Spitfire experienced substantial transformation from its original Mark 1A airframe to its Mark 24 design. This, though, occurred over a period of 12 years between 1936-1948.

Fitted initially with Rolls Royce Merlin engines and only Browning machine guns for defence, it ended up with Rolls Royce Griffon power units.

These were almost twice the weight of its original engines but provided sufficient power to thrust the aircraft from an original maximum speed of 365mph to an astounding 472 miles per hour.

By then it came equipped with cannons, light weight bombs and rocket projectiles.

Up to that point, no other airframe in aviation history had seen such extensive modifications within such a short time span. After World War II, the Spitfire served in various theatres and, eventually, was introduced to Malaya.

THE SPITFIRE COMES TO MALAYA

The Malayan communist insurgency in Malaya which erupted in June, 1948, caught the British Military Administration by surprise.

Of the aircraft available to the British at the time, few were capable of conversion to low level strafing and close support duties.

Owing to the preponderance of Malaya's thick tropical jungles, this was the inescapable nature of the airwar that had to be fought. Ultimately, the responsibility fell to the Spitfire.

The Malayan campaign would be the last time the Spitfire was flown in anger.

No 60 Squadron would have the honour of flying these final operations in a campaign entailing suppression of enemy activities with bombing and strafing at tree tops in the Tg Malim region of Perak and the Kota Tinggi area of Johore.

Group Captain Wilfred Duncan-Smith or "Smithie" as he was affectionately known to his friends, would lead these last operations. His exploits were later documented in his book, "Spitfire into Battle" published in 1981.

No, no, you can't do that

Not when it comes to messing with Parking Places provisions, you can't

By Dato N. H. Chan

Former judge in Malaysia's Court of Appeal

In 2005, Ipoh city council gazetted the Road Transport (Provision of Parking Places) (Ipoh City Council) Order 2005.

This order, made pursuant to section 72 (1) and (3) of the Road Transport Act, 1987, made provisions for parking places and the charges to be levied for their use.

All, up to this point, was within the council's powers.

However, within the Order, the Council has proceeded to create offences and provide punishment for them. Such creations and provisions are quite beyond the powers of the Council.

Paragraph 57 of the 2005 Order states: 'Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of this Order shall be guilty of an offence, and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding three hundred ringgit and in addition there shall be paid to the Council any excess charge due and payable under this Order.'

NO POWER

More than a quarter of a century ago the Federal Court in the case P.P. v Rajamah held that the Municipality of Ipoh had no power under section 62 of the then Road Traffic Ordinance 1958 to create offences and punishment for its breach as it had done under paragraph 27 of the Road Traffic (Attendant Parking Places) (Ipoh Municipal Council) Order, 1969.

Chang Min Tat F.J. (deceased) who gave the judgment held that under

section 62 of the Road Traffic Ordinance, 1958, the Minister appoints the appropriate authority and empowers it to create and provide for parking places and stands, to prescribe and to charge for the use thereof but does not allow the Minister to delegate to the appropriate authority any power to create an offence and to provide the punishment for such an offence.

The provision to punish an offence against any of the provisions of



Dato N. H. Chan

the Order made by the Municipality of Ipoh under its powers as the duly appointed appropriate authority is under section 62(7) Road Traffic Ordinance.

LIABLE TO A FINE

This states: 'If any person without lawful excuse contravenes or fails to comply with an order made under this section, he shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars.'

Since then, the Road Traffic Ordinance 1958 has been replaced by the Road Transport Act 1987. This embodies similar

provisions to the 1958 Ordinance

Where the Ordinance had its section 62, the Act has its section 72 which empowers the local authority to create and provide for parking places and stands, and to prescribe and to charge for the use of them.

Just as in the Road Traffic Ordinance, nowhere in the Road Transport Act does it enable the Minister to delegate to the local authority any power to create an offence and to provide the punishment for it.

PUNISHMENT PROVISION FINES

Similarly where in the Ordinance the punishment provision was section 62 (7), the Road Transport Act has its punishment provision in section 72 (7) which states 'If any person, without lawful excuse, contravenes, or fails to comply with an order made under this section, he shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding three hundred ringgit.'

Punishment for the parking offences is in subsection (7) of section 72 of the Road Transport Act 1987 and not paragraph 57 of the Road Transport (Provision of Parking Places) (Ipoh City Council) Order 2005.

The Order has no power to create offences or to provide the punishment for the offences.

Furthermore, paragraph 57 of the Order has increased the penalty to more than RM 300 maximum for such an offence which the Council has no

power to do. There is an apt proverb for this kind of incomprehensible behaviour by the local authority - "Wise men learn from other men's mistakes; fools by their own."

The Ipoh City Council does not seem to have learned from the mistake of its predecessor the Ipoh Municipal Council. It has ignored the ruling of the Federal Court in P.P. v Rajamah.

In my judgment in P.P. v Rajamah at the High Court, I even suggested a way out for the Council "Perhaps at this juncture, a few words of advice may not be inappropriate."

The Municipality of Ipoh can still deal with the infringements of articles [paragraphs] 7, 9 and 10 of the Order.

PROSECUTE OR COMPOUND

The proper thing to do is for offenders to be prosecuted under section 62(7) or to have the offence compounded under the amended section 147 of the Road Traffic Ordinance, 1958."

Update this to the present and you get sections 72(7) and 120(1) of the Road Transport Act 1987.

After the recent general and state elections, Perak has a new state government and Ipoh now has a new mayor.

It is time to take steps to punish infringements against the 2005 Order under section 72(7) or to compound the offences under section 120(1) of the Road Transport Act.

Heed the proverb, "a wise man changes his mind, a fool never".



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Musings

by See Foon Chan-Koppen



See Foon

Today, as I gaze out my bedroom window in Meru Golf Resort, I am struck by the lush greenery everywhere and how this soothes my spirit. I am also conscious that the crowns of the tall palms of the tropical jungle which I call a garden are edging ever upwards.

As I begin to ponder how to deal with this impending obliteration of sunlight and view, I am reminded that this is the result of my instruction for my landscape gardener to give me an "instant jungle". Now the jungle, as jungles are wont to do, is taking over! And I will need to take action to prevent this from happening.

I begin to think of the garden and our living space, as a metaphor for life. How we plan, plant, water, prune, fertilise, weed and protect from bugs. How



we furnish, maintain and care for our living space. How the things we do as gardeners and interior designers reflect the way we live our lives.

Some of us have large gardens and large expensive houses. We may spend our lives acquiring the means to afford one. Or we may have the good fortune to have inherited it. Others may have small ones and for a large majority, no gardens whatsoever. No matter. What matters is, what people do with what they have.

Walking into people's gardens and homes give you many clues as to their characters and dispositions. These are some of my own observations:

Is their garden open with larger pockets of open space than trees and shrubbery? This reflects a mind given to spaciousness, rational, open and extroverted. If the garden is filled with an abundance of trees, shrubbery, pockets

REFLECTIONS ON MY 'INSTANT JUNGLE'

The garden as a metaphor for life

of flowers, interesting objets d'art, chances are the occupant is more introverted, and likes his or her privacy.

CLUES

Whether the garden is well maintained, pruned or otherwise, belies the person's need for order or not. In other words, whether the person is a neat freak or has an untidy mind. Can the person make decisions? After all, to prune or not to prune is a big decision! Or can this person follow through with his promises if he cannot weed his garden?

Is her house full of clutter or one of those "everything has its place" environment? Do you as a guest have to "walk on eggshells"? Is the house furnished for show or comfort? Has there been a total disregard for anything aesthetically pleasing with the whole emphasis on practicality? Or is the upholstery on the sofa torn, the curtains stained and faded, the general look and feel, unkempt and untidy?

You may argue that some may not have the means to put in the repairs necessary for upkeep of a house in pristine condition but I maintain that it is a reflection of the mind of the occupant that speaks to you when you observe with awareness.

SOLUTIONS

Torn upholstery can be mended by hand or if that is not possible, to save on re-upholstering, fabric can be wrapped around the sofa or simpler still, draped with insouciance for effect, while hiding the need for repair. Neatness and cleanliness can go a long way.

Can you walk into the house with shoes or do you have to balance uncomfortably at the front door while trying to slip off your sandals?

So what about the rest of those who have no gardens, live in high-rises, or are simply happy just to have a roof over their heads?

My premise is that if you pay attention, you can read volumes by what people create for themselves. I have seen high-rise herb gardens (a serious foodie), zen balconies (need for tranquillity), and most

touching of all, in the midst of squalor and filth in a slum in India, a tiny patch of dirt that had been transformed into a blazing glory of glorious flowers.

Someone had the mind to see beyond their poverty to create some beauty in their lives. A splash of colour in an otherwise desolate landscape. Such is the human spirit.

If you had attended the "Five Eyes Seeing Blind" Concert, you would have been awed by the skill and professionalism of the performers from Taiwan and started believing that the loss of one faculty need not mean loss of talent or intelligence.

The highly talented musicians known as the "Five Eyes Musical Ensemble" are part of the Chinese Five Eyes Association of Taiwan. The group was started by the Master Venerable Lien

BOOKS

OUT OF THE TEMPURUNG

edited by Fong Chin Wei & Yin Ee Kiong

This book of 12 essays by twelve well known and respected socially conscious citizens is indisputably a book that every Malaysian should read.

Though the twelve contributors are of different racial descent and come with different life experiences, there is little doubt they all share a common belief – a multi-racial nation united in form and substance as the only way forward for a better and more progressive Malaysia.

The essays cover a broad spectrum of social and political issues all of which have been dealt with candidly and in some depth. Each commences with a brief historical background highlighting some significant milestone events, their interpretation of why they happened, the decisions that followed and the impact they had on the Nation's evolution.

All the articles express a certain anxiety at the manner the politics of this nation has and continues to mould our society.



They all convey pessimism at the possibility of a change in direction. However in the light of certain recent events they may want to revise their stand.

G. SIVAPRAGASAM

LISTENING IS BELIEVING

"Look beyond and realise the spirit beneath . . ."



Proficient and professional . . . inspiring too

Chan to nurture the musical talents of the visually impaired. 'Five eyes' is a Buddhist reference to the

need to look beyond and realise the spirit beneath.

The concert in Ipoh, held recently at the Town

Hall, was organised by the Malaysian Buddhist Association Perak Branch led by Mr Tai Foo Lowai. The Ensemble shared the stage with other locally talented 'seeing performers'. One could not tell one group from the other.

During a number performed by the Ensemble, the lights were blacked out for approximately two minutes. In the darkness, the "seeing audience" got to fully appreciate the privilege they were enjoying.

JAG

CONVALESCENCE FOOD

Exercise prudence: consult your doctor and hospital nutritionist too

Recently, I met a retired Chinese teacher whose tenacity after cancer surgery led her to re-search suitable diets.

I have recorded here a sample menu and a couple of her tested recipes. Please do not follow the suggestions blindly. Prudence should always be adhered to, especially when your own health is at risk.

My acquaintance has been cautioned to avoid, or use salt and oil sparingly. She devised her diet after carefully researching through her Chinese medicinal books. Regular follow-up checks at the hospital proved she was on the right path – convalescence was smooth. Of course the regular provisions (mostly organic) used to create her meals were based on the advice of the hospital nutritionist.

It has been four years since she underwent surgery but she remains careful with her diet. She has become less rigid but her daily intake still comprises at least five colours of vegetables and fruit of various types.

The perishables are lightly cooked or eaten raw, if possible. Juicing is highly recommended. Snacking on fruit is ideal.

She advises that patients who wish to place themselves on stringent diets should first check with their own doctors and hospital dieticians. Her caution is that no two persons' internal system is alike – the yin-yang balance is different in each person. Featured here are the recipes for nourishing soup (which helps when one has no appetite) and the medley of sautéed vegetables which meets the required intake of five veggies of different colours.



Nourishing soup:

Ingredients:

½ the length of a medium turnip with green shoots
About 6 inches from a medium carrot
About 1 foot in length of

mountain yam,
scrubbed and skinned
6 dried shitake mushrooms,
pre-soaked and cleaned
Pinch of salt, to taste
Lean pork.

Method:

Chunk all the vegetables and cut the shoots into 2-inch lengths.

Place everything in a pot with 1 ¼ cups of water and boil for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Season lightly to taste.



Sautéed Vegetables

Ingredients:

A small handful of dried cloud ears (*wan yee*), soaked, rinsed and cleaned of grit
2 leaves of purple cabbage, cut into bite sizes
½ red and 1 yellow capsicums, cut into rough dia-

HEALTH

mond shapes
½ rice bowl broccoli, snipped into florets
For seasoning (she used 2 tsp. abalone sauce, from Australia). Soya sauce is served beside it.

Method:

In a slightly pre-heated wok, put in 1 tsp olive oil, sauté cabbage sections for a few seconds, followed by broccoli, dried cloud ears and the capsicums.

Toss gently, add in the seasoning and 3 tbsp water mixed with ½ tsp. cornflour. Stir.

Cover just for a second, then uncover and serve.

Note: The vegetables can be any type of dark green, orange and of various hues.

Marrows, gourds, squash, melons and tubers like sweet potatoes, beetroot, etc. would suffice.

Her final advice to readers is to have very simple meals and to take them as raw (organic to be safe) as possible, but be cautious.

CAROL CHENG

ON ISPCA'S PRINCIPAL WISH

Animal welfare is also part of a caring society's agenda

If the Ipoh Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ISPCA) were to be granted a wish, its president, Dr Goh Hue Lang would have this: roads and streets in Ipoh and throughout the state free of strays. She would add: The need to keep Ipoh City free from strays is very much the responsibility of everyone, but especially the Ipoh City Council.

"We are working hard to make the authorities realise that ISPCA and the council should work together for the welfare of the animals," she declared at the ISPCA fund-raising annual dinner recently.

Dr Goh said the society is working towards realising its mission of creating a community in which people would respect and live in harmony with other members of the animal kingdom.



All geared up for an ISPCA fund-raising... loving it

She said the society always tries to rescue, neuter, 're-home' and rehabilitate unwanted and abandoned animals. "The sorry sight of hungry and homeless strays foraging for food in the streets and public places affects everyone," she added. She announced that the society aims to give talks in schools to instill awareness among the young about the importance of caring for their pets.

The creating awareness mission will also be carried out in other towns of Perak. This will be done with the help of the Perak Malaysian Kennel Association (MKA) obedience team. A well-received

campaign has already been concluded in Bidor.

The next destinations, according to the ISPCA president, are Taiping, Teluk Intan and Kampar. Dr Goh thanked the Perak MKA obedience team for its support.

Dr Goh told her audience that just one unsterilised female cat and her offspring can produce an astonishing 20,000 kittens in just 4 years, while a female dog and all of her offspring can produce 67,000 puppies in 6 years. Responsible ownership, she continued, means less strays and unwanted animals on our streets.

She mentioned the ISPCA having approached the Perak Rotary Club to sponsor the neuter campaign.

The ISPCA shelter is located at Lot 38642, 4 1/2 Mile Stone, Jalan Gopeng, 31300 Ipoh. Call 016-5608905

PETER KHIEW

UPCOMING EVENT

NASAM FUN & FOOD FAIR, OCTOBER 12

The National Stroke Association of Malaysia, Ipoh Centre (NASAM) will be holding a fun and food fair on October 12, 2008 from 8am until 3pm at their club premises in Lorong Pinji.

A NASAM centre is where stroke survivors get assisted during convalescence and their rehabilitation. There, they also interact with fellow survivors and gather information about lifestyle adjustments and how one can return to reasonable routines after their ordeal. The group support for themselves as well as for their carers has proved essential.

NASAM's chairperson, Surine Chan Sow Kheng, said the target of this year's fun and food fair - RM60,000 - will help fund its activities for stroke victims.

NASAM conducts rehabilitation sessions which include physiotherapy and occupational and speech therapy. These sessions are conducted by therapists assisted by trained volunteers.



The Ipoh NASAM centre at Lorong Pinji, off Jalan Pasir Puteh.



A stroke patient (left) undergoing a counselling session at the IPOH Nasam centre.

It aims to help stroke survivors regain their confidence and independence by motivating and encouraging them to help themselves.

NASAM operates at seven centres - Petaling Jaya, Ampang, Penang, Perak, Malacca, Sabah and Johor.

PK

PHASES & FACES

LANTERN FEST DEVIATES FROM USUAL PATH

Moon cakes are shared by children from various communities

Hospital Pantai Puteri recently organised a lantern festival with a slight difference. Traditionally, the Lantern Festival or Mid Autumn Festival is a Chinese tradition celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth month. The usual custom during the festival is to eat moon cake under the moon light.

This year, for the first time and in collaboration with the Lost World of Tambun, Sunway



Off to walk the 'Unity Trail'

City and Cryocord, Pantai Puteri Hospital decided to celebrate this age-old tradition with children from

the local community.

Specially invited were 49 children from two orphanages in the area: Precious Gift Home and Rumah Maahad Daru's Salam.

The objective of the event was to foster multi-cultural activities among the communities.

A meal was part of the outing. It naturally included moon cake.

There were other activities planned like the Trail of Unity Lantern Walk.

The event was a success.

AMY ALIFF

INTRODUCING SENADA

Legal implications of existing policies will be examined

The primary objective of Sekretariat Pembelaan dan Pemereksaan Wanita Islam (SENADA), declared Datuk Seri Sharizat Abdul Jalil, is to provide protection for Muslim women. Its secondary objective is to champion the welfare of Muslim women. Problems relating to Muslim women would be channelled to the government through SENADA.

Sharizat, the Prime Minister's Special Adviser



Datuk Seri Sharizat Abdul Jalil (right) handing out a cash donation

for Muslim Women and Social Development Affairs, made the announcement at the Kampong Tersusun Tasek mosque last September. The event was organised by the Perak Women and

Family Development Council.

The newly formed body is under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Department and will, therefore, get the attention it deserves. The Secretariat will delve into problems confronting Muslim women, especially those relating to policies already in place and their legal implications.

Sharizat later gave away cash donations to single mothers and the aged from the 24 parliamentary constituencies in Perak.

AMY ALIFF

COUNTRY-WIDE RELIEF EFFORT

Relief body also arranges free medical check up for lucky 50

Islamic Relief Malaysia (IRM) launched the first of its "Feed The Fasting 2008" programme in Perak by distributing food packages to 50 recipients who were picked based on their needs.

They included single mothers, old folks and orphans. The package

contained food stuff that could sustain a family of five for the month of Ramadan.

IRM travelled the length and breadth of the country to distribute the goodies.

The relief body also inaugurated its library project for orphanages

in the country, beginning in Perak. The Yayasan Nur Maisarah Orphanage, Chemor became IRM's first beneficiary. The food parcel distribution was held at the Yayasan Amanah An-Nur Maisarah Orphanage, Chemor in early September. It was officiated by Zawahir Abdullah, IRM's country manager.

Before the ceremony, free medical screening was given to the 50 recipients, courtesy of Hospital Pantai Puteri.

The programme, according to IRM, was being conducted world-wide by its affiliates. For 2008, the charity body had planned to distribute 10,000 food packages to the poor and the destitute throughout Malaysia.

HALIDA



A doctor from Hospital Pantai Puteri conducts his medical screening

YOUNG PERAK

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WELL-EARNED RECOGNITION

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Principal Cheng Sai Lak receives his AMN from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong

SMK Methodist (ACS) principal Cheng Sai Lak was conferred the Ahli Mangku Negara (AMN) by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin last month at the Istana Negara. The conferment was in conjunction with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's 46th birthday.

Mr Cheng, who has been in the teaching profession for 31 years, started his teaching career in Raub, Pahang in 1977.

EXEMPLARY

His years of committed and exemplary service as a teacher did not go unnoticed by the Ministry.

LIGHTING MORE CANDLES, SHARING HAPPINESS

... When 20 youths remembered 83 others

Some twenty members of the Buddhist Club of SMK Methodist (ACS) had planned to have at least one outing for a charitable purpose before the year ends.

tain the children would enjoy – heart-shaped balloons, sweets and small lanterns.

They also carted with them packets of rice, fruit



One of the charges does his own entertaining

When their, adviser Mr Chow Fook Loon, heard that the inmates at the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Cacat (Disabled Children Welfare Organisation) at Housing Trust in Ipoh were looking forward to celebrating the mid-autumn festival (lantern festival), he knew exactly what to do.

Chow immediately mobilised his charges for a mission to cheer up 83 residents there.

The members brought along items they were cer-

and other provisions. For more than two hours, the children were also kept busy with story-telling sessions and games. They were entertained with songs and jokes.

PRACTISING THE MOTTO

So 83 children were made happier when able students went out of their way to demonstrate what they believe – “thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will



Establishing rapport



Recording moments of their mission

not be shortened. Just as the candle won't be shortened, one's happiness never decreases by being shared”.

The September programme was co-organised with Batu Gajah Anak

Malaysia

It was aimed at instilling the caring society concept among youths and create awareness that many people in our society still need assistance and help.

PK

He was promoted and became principal of SMK Sungai Pari in 2001.

Four years later he was appointed principal of SMK Methodist (ACS) in Ipoh.

A graduate of Universiti Sains Malaysia, Mr Cheng, 55, excels in Chemistry and Biology, subjects he greatly enjoyed as student in SMK Anderson.

Mr Cheng has an advice for teachers: Self development is essential for,

as individuals, we impart knowledge to the younger generation. Teachers must continue to improve themselves and strive hard to excel.

For students, Mr Cheng has this to say: Always work hard to better yourselves. Be good communicators and look to education as a powerful platform from which you can move forward.

Congratulations, Mr Cheng, from us at *Ipo Echo*.

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Singapore Online

By Andrew Symon

“Monaco in the Tropics?” – “South East Asia’s Zurich?”

But where does all this leave ordinary Singaporeans?

“Monaco in the tropics” came to mind as I pondered Singapore’s Formula One Grand Prix result and all the party frenzy organised around it by the government’s tourist agency these last few weeks.

Just like Monaco, the tiny principality between the French and Italian Rivas, the cars flashed through the veritable heart of the city. In Singapore’s case, they roared along a five-kilometre circuit on the edge of the core CBD area. They traversed the Esplanade, Raffles Boulevard, Marina Square, Nicoll Highway, St Andrew’s Road, the Padang, and Anderson Bridge near the Fullerton Hotel.

GAMBLING FACILITIES

But comparisons with the Mediterranean enclave don’t stop there. Like Monaco, long the home of a luxury casino complex that provides added attractions for the world’s elite, Singapore, too, will soon be able to boast equivalent gambling facilities.

Two complexes – what are being termed “integrated resorts” – will target high rollers in the region and beyond. One of these is being established by Las Vegas Sands of the US. This is fast emerging at Marina Bay on the southern central tip of the island where associated offices, a hotel, and an exhibition and convention centre are also under construction.

The other, on Sentosa Island tucked in close to Singapore’s south-western coastline, will be operated by Malaysia’s Genting group.

Each are costing about US\$3.5 billion and are scheduled to open in mid 2009 and 2010 respectively.

It’s all a long way from the puritanical image

as a festival and holiday playground.

Other elements of the plan include luring the privately wealthy to put their money into Singapore banks and property assets and, indeed, attracting them to come to live in Singapore itself and use it as a business base.

One of the latest to take the bait is India’s

with him. In August, Spice Global announced it would set up its international headquarters in Singapore. The group’s businesses include finance and retail lines as well as telecoms, information technology and entertainment.

Helping to reinforce the drive to attract wealth are the government’s efforts to promote Singapore as a world class education centre. Thus, Singapore is not just a place to live, play and invest, it also offers the best of education for children.

PRIVATE BANKING EMPHASIS

In the finance sector, there is an increasing emphasis on private banking for regional and international clients. There are now some 40 private banks with regional operations in Singapore. Both US Citigroup and UK’s Standard Chartered maintain their headquarters for all private banking in Singapore.

The government has also strengthened bank secrecy laws to such an extent that one foreign banker half jokingly told me they were tighter than Switzerland’s. So maybe it’s not just the Monaco parallel that is valid. Could Singapore also simultaneously be evolving as “Southeast Asia’s Zurich”?

In the meantime, though, where does all this leave ordinary Singaporeans?

Accompanying the

drive to make Singapore one of the world’s top platforms for the wealthy has come a sharp rise in property prices, rentals and the general cost of living over the last two or three years. According to international human resource consultants, Mercer, Singapore is now one of Asia’s most expensive cities, coming just behind Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong.

Now while Mercer prepares its surveys for expatriates, there can be no doubt that many Singaporeans are feeling the pinch. Ask any taxi driver. And the risk in all the hoo ha and development geared for the wealthy is that it will fuel discontent and resentments.

LOWER INCOME STRESSES

Certainly stresses being faced by lower income Singaporeans are being acknowledged by the government and it is channelling more funds into assistance schemes. While still shying away from introduction of universal unemployment benefits and old age pensions (for those whose compulsory central provident fund savings are not sufficient), a principle that the PAP government has long

held to, there are an increasing array of special government financial aid, fee concession and training programmes.

NEW PHASE

There can be no doubt that Singapore is moving into a new phase in its very successful economic development story.

Alongside the touted Singapore as “Asia’s Monaco/Zurich” thrust, the republic is putting increasing emphasis on attracting high-tech manufacturing and other sophisticated services alongside its traditional strengths in shipping, refining and the like.

But the social challenges now are arguably greater than ever before.

In past decades, all were rising on a general wave of growth.

But now there are people clearly being left behind.

As one local academic has written, Singapore also faces problems common to the mature OECD countries in the West and in Japan: structural unemployment, the disappearance of low-skill jobs, the economic marginalisation of the old and less educated, and the widening income gap between the haves and the have-nots.



The racing machings roared past some of Singapore’s iconic landmarks - the Supreme Court, City Hall, The Padang

established by Singapore in earlier decades. While Grand Prix races are not a new thing – they became a feature of the republic’s sporting calendar in the 1960s – the current extravaganza with its celebration of wealth, glamour and luxury certainly is.

The casinos, a reversal of four decades of opposition to them by the PAP government, and the Grand Prix (lauded as the first F1 to be held at night anywhere) are just two of the more obvious aspects of Singapore Inc’s clear strategy to make the island state a haven for the world’s rich. And it’s not simply Singapore

telecommunications and entertainment magnate, Bhopendra Kuma Modi, who a few weeks ago purchased a US\$10 million luxury penthouse at Marina Bay’s The Sail complex, a towering 70 storey condominium. Due to open next year, the development is touted as being one of the 10 tallest residential buildings in the world.

Modi, founder of India’s Spice Global, owns other luxury condominiums on the island. In August, he became a permanent resident of Singapore, deciding that Singapore, rather than Beverly Hills in California, would be his main future home base. And he is bringing business

THE QUEST FOR PERSONAL GLORY

There are no shortcuts to success; occasional failures must be used as challenges to spur us on

I spent three weeks ‘parked’ in front of my television, watching in awe at the sporting spectacle that took place at the Beijing Olympics.

As I was watching these world class athletes perform, I could not help but come to the conclusion that what we saw was just the tip of the iceberg viz. we saw the performance but not the gruelling training regime that they must have undergone to ensure that they were in peak condition during the Games.

Michael Phelps stood out. At 23, Michael Phelps has become an international sporting icon by winning eight gold medals and smashing seven world records in the process.

He is also the first athlete ever to secure first place so many times at a single Olympics.

ROCKY PATH

At age seven Michael was diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. This is a childhood condition characterised by constant activity, impulsive behaviour and the inability to focus one’s attention on anything for a short span of time. To help release his pent-up energy, Phelps took up swimming.

At age nine, Michael’s parents divorced. His mother brought up all three children (two sisters) single-handedly, encouraging them to

follow their dreams at all costs.

In 2004, Phelps, then 19, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. He pleaded guilty

from this mistake for the rest of my life.”

Setbacks are part of life and winners get on with it. In spite of the many setbacks early in his



Undeterred by the sceptics, he swam the dream

and was sentenced to 18 months’ probation, saying in court, “I recognize the seriousness of this mistake and will continue learning

life, Michael bounced back every time and used these setbacks as building blocks to achieving more success. He never ever allowed

these setbacks to become obstacles or excuses in his quest for swimming success.

Dream big! Don’t let anyone tell you your goal is impossible. Imagine if Michael had told people a few years ago that he wanted to win eight gold medals at the Olympics. What do you think would have been their reaction! If he had listened to cynics, we would have been deprived of seeing his world class performances. He not only had big goals; he was totally focused and committed to them.

Use failures and cynicism to motivate you. At the Athens Olympics in 2004, Phelps was beaten by teammate Ian Crocker in the 100m butterfly.

Instead of allowing this loss to demoralise him, he used it as a source of inspiration to become even better. He put up a poster of Crocker winning the event in his bedroom to motivate him constantly to train even harder in the event. Ian Thorpe’s (the great Australian swimmer who won five gold medals at the Athens Olympics) statement that winning eight gold medals was impossible, was another factor. Michael stuck a note with Thorpe’s statement on his locker to remind him of this challenge.

We all need to be inspired and Michael Phelps’s success is inspirational indeed.

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LOOKING OUT FOR MORE CHAMPIONS

Renewed interest in badminton tournament augurs well for the game, says Peter Khiew

The recently concluded 31st Perak Indian Badminton Association championship game proved one point. The community showed renewed interest and passion for the game when a record number of 282 entries from eight states turned up for the tournament.

The organisers were naturally thrilled. With the enhanced response this year, there were more chances of additional talent being tapped. After organising the championship for 14 years, the association was hoping to discover at least one Indian player to represent the country in the Thomas Cup. A tall order but not impossible.

Its president R. Narayanan said the increased number of entries, particularly in the U-12 and U-15 categories, greatly reflected the confidence and trust the participants have in the championship.

There were 34 entries under the U-12 and 50 for U-15 this year. Seventeen categories, included the U-18 boys and girls, senior veterans and super senior veterans doubles, were included in this year's tournament.

Narayanan said the championship has served as platform for the young to prove their skills since

1982 when the U-12, U-15 and U-18 categories were formed to cater to these age groups.

During the early years, efforts were doubled to scout for talents. The association sent out letters and notices to school heads of Tamil schools and to estates through the National Union of Plantation Workers. It was through one of the tournaments that two stars were discovered – K. Murali Desan who played his way to become the world Junior Singles Champion in 1990. He and D. Jivehinthran became the world Doubles Champions in Birmingham, England.

REWARDS

Both, despite being dropped from the national squad due to constant injuries, were awarded scholarships to pursue their tertiary education. Murali did his studies in England and Jivehinthran attended a local university.

Narayanan, who himself was the veterans' doubles champion in 1986,



PIBA President Narayanan



U-12 champion R. Satheistharan (right) with 1st runner up V Roobenraj

1987 and 1988, said the most outstanding of all Indians in the state was A. Gopal Krishnan who was drafted into the Thomas Cup squad in 1975.

Narayanan called on parents to involve their children in sports. His favourite adage: a healthy body produces a healthy mind. Narayanan said K. Murali Desan has returned home from the UK and now works as investigating officer at the Securities Commission in Kuala Lumpur. D. Jivehinthran, on the other hand, is now an electrical and electronic engineer in Melaka.

RESULTS, 2008 GAMES

U-12 Boys Singles- Champion: R. Satheistharan – Selangor
U-12 Boys Doubles-R. Satheistharan & R. Thavabalan – Selangor
U-12 Girls Singles- M. Thinaah- Selangor

U-15 Boys Singles-V. Puvanesan (Kedah)
U-15 Boys Doubles-V. Jeeva & V. Puvanesan (Kedah)
U-15 Girls Singles-Sri Vaisheeni (Johor)
U-18 Boys Singles-G.V. Dinesh (Selangor)
U-18 Boys Doubles-R. Ganesan & R. Sargunesh (Selangor)
Men's Singles-G.V. Dinesh (Selangor)
Men's Doubles- Aaron & Saravanan (Perak)
Ladies Singles-S. Premalatha (Selangor)
Ladies Doubles- S. Premalatha & S. Linitha (Selangor)
Junior Veterans Singles- M. Puspanathan (Perak)
Junior Veterans Doubles-K. Anbarasu & Thiraviasamy (Perak)
Senior Veterans Singles-N. Loganathan (Perak)
Senior Veterans Doubles-R. Morgan & Jeganathan Rao (Perak)
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