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Examining the
melamine mess
p 2



Whatever happened
to the trees?
p.5



Rubber
bounces back
p 7



In the name
of altruism
p. 10



PERAK SAYS FAREWELL TO STEVE DARBY, A TRULY FINE FOOTBALL COACH

*Physical threats, match
fixing controversies,
political interference,
rumour mill skullduggery,
financial shenanigans and
outright corruption – he's
had to face and deal with
them all.*



*Steve can look back with pride on the
paths he's taken.*

*Can the same be said for our nation's
football authorities?*

Before departing Malaysia Steve gave an exclusive
interview to *Ipoh Echo's* editor Fathol Zaman Bukhari.

The interview – Page 3



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An Ipoh Echo enquiry:

COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE MELAMINE MESS

Is enough being done by our local authorities?

Are Perakian families properly protected?

By James Gough



Box'ed up in Bercham and away from customers' reach

The "melamine in milk" scare first erupted in September causing reverberations of anxiety throughout the world.

In China, where the problem originated, more than 52,000 cases of children affected by melamine-tainted infant formula were reported. Of that number, over 12,000 babies were hospitalized. Four have died due to complications.

Since authorities in Perak have had a month to apply themselves to the melamine threat in our state, we feel compelled to ask an important question. Are the Perak state health people up to the challenge posed by melamine tainted foodstuffs?

Ipoh Echo has carried out a survey locally to help Perakians better understand developments as they evolve. Here's our report.

BACKGROUND

Melamine, a chemical used in making plastics, is 60 per cent nitrogen. It has no nutritional benefit.

During quality checks in some foods, nitrogen is used as a measure to determine the level of protein. Unscrupulous manufacturers sometimes mix melamine with milk products to reflect a higher protein content. They do so in order to maximise profits.

Melamine in milk can cause kidney stones which, can lead to kidney failure. Infants are particularly vulnerable to the chemical.

At the center of the tainted milk scandal is China's Shijiazhuang Sanlu Group. The company produces a popular brand of infant formula. It is 43% owned by New Zealand's Fonterra operation, the world's leading exporter of dairy products.

Complaints about Sanlu milk powder were recorded as early as March

this year. But these went unheeded. Chinese authorities only swung into action when New Zealand Prime Minister, Helen Clark, personally alerted the Beijing officials. The problem was simmering during the Beijing Olympics, apparently kept under wraps to avoid any negative implications at a time when China was centre-stage internationally.

So, what is the extent of the problem in Ipoh, and Perak in general?

AT THE MINISTRY

Our first stop was the Ministry of Health office, Ipoh. They received formal notification of the melamine problem in mid-September via instructions from the Federal Health authorities. State offices throughout Malaysia were then ordered to inspect the shelves of supermarkets for tainted foodstuffs from China. The memo required health officials to check manufacturers' names, product origins and material contents.

It is perhaps interesting to note that the instructions received from Kuala Lumpur, in effect, shifted the bulk of responsibilities for handling the melamine scare from Federal to state authorities.

TEN STATE DISTRICTS

According to Mr. Leong Siew Hong, Perak's Assistant Director Food Technology, the operation as ordered covered the state's 10 districts. Inspections, he said, are still on-going. As far as Ipoh is concerned, all major outlets have been covered and the products on the shelves have been declared safe.

Manufacturers like Nestle, Mead & Johnson and Dutch Lady have,

on their own initiatives, submitted statements declaring that their products are safe and melamine-free.

Leong emphasized the Ministry of Health operates a dedicated website highlighting the problem. Names of manufacturers and their products, which have been declared melamine-free, are mentioned on the website. These manufacturers source their milk from Australia, New Zealand and Europe.

We conducted random checks at major hypermarkets such as Jaya Jusco, Tesco, Giant and the Greentown Mall. The managers and supervisors



From China and definitely off the shelves for now.

we spoke to confirmed that health ministry officers had done their inspections.

Ms Irene Ding, branch manager of UO Superstore, said that health officials had visited her premises towards the end of September. During the inspection their shelves were thoroughly checked. Some suspect products were sealed pending confirmation for traces of melamine. Subsequently, it was found that these products were safe. They were returned to the shelves the following day. UO Superstore was the only outlet that was reported to have stocks of White Rabbit candies made in China. They were prompt-

ly removed from sale.

Unlike Singapore, where retail outlets have put up signs declaring that their products are safe, Ipoh stores apparently see no need for customer assistance of this nature. Although a Tesco spokesperson responded that a notice to that effect had been placed at their customer service office.

Ipohites generally appear to have adopted a somewhat *tidak apa* (lackadaisical) attitude toward the current tainted food scare. This is in direct contrast to cities overseas. It has just been announced, for instance, that the Singapore supermarket chain, I-Tec, is to be prosecuted for selling China dairy products, in defiance of the ongoing ban on them by the island's Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA).

It is worth noting that the Singaporean authorities, since imposing specific food-sale bans, have received about two dozen tip-offs from the public about retailers continuing to sell questionable China products. To date it has is-



Made in China and held back from public sale.

and the rest of the state. Confirming this during our checks, the Secretary of Perak's Sundry Shops Guild, Diong Khek Chai, argued that guild members sourced products from credible manufacturers. These goods, he said, could be returned should a problem arise. But surely, this assurance fails to absolve retailers from blame should health problems occur? It certainly offers no protection whatever to the public at large.

Further inquiries revealed that Ipoh's 7-Eleven outlets, too, have yet to be inspected by Ministry officials. This was confirmed to us by Khairy, one of the area managers based at the Jalan Laksamana outlet.

REMOVED

At the 7-Eleven Bercham store, chocolate products such as M&M's, Mars and Glico have been removed from the shelves and kept in boxes. The staff had received instructions from their Kuala Lumpur head office to remove all products manufactured in China pending a corporate final decision. All of the 7 Eleven outlets we visited kept a file with letters from manufacturers declaring that their product were melamine-free and safe for consumption.

On the shelves of the 7-Eleven store in Jalan Yang Kalsom were chocolate products manufactured by Cadburys Malaysia, Hershey USA and Arnotts Indonesia. These products are not on the Ministry of Health's free-from-contamination list. They remain on the shelves, nonetheless. The list, to our mind, is inconclusive. According to Assistant Director Leong, as long as the labels indicate the individual foodstuffs do not originate from China the

product is considered safe for consumption.

We enquired from Leong whether his team would be checking 7 Eleven outlets and other convenience stores in Ipoh. He replied in the affirmative.

The availability of staff, however, poses a different kind of problem for Leong. His office has only three health inspectors and they have to cover not just Ipoh but the entire state! City Council was tasked to help them conduct the inspections. Leong, however, is in the dark as to the extent of the council's involvement thus far.

We called City Council and a spokesperson reported that checking the numerous retail outlets was cumbersome and also time consuming. For a start the council's team had begun checking with the wholesalers.

INDIVIDUAL OUTLETS

Presently, the Ministry officials in Ipoh are concentrating on individual outlets such as petrol stations, pasar malam and those rest areas located along the highway. These outlets do not have proper accounting and communication systems, thus are likely to be abused. Leong's attention will be diverted to these places for the moment.

Since there is a general lack of direction and interest in pursuing counter-measures deemed appropriate to the melamine scare, Ipohites are advised to exercise care and caution when purchasing food items. So, the next time you visit a supermarket or a retail outlet, scan through the information given before making your purchase. A little effort could make a lot of difference.

ONE LAST TIME – STEVE TELLS IT LIKE IT IS

Three years of superb “highs” and some soul searching “lows”

He walks away proudly – still owed wages

A note from Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Perak's outspoken state football coach and manager, Steve Darby, has always told it like it was. Whether it was in his regular column for this paper, in TV interviews, in pre-match, half-time or post-match dressing room instructions for players, his relentless pursuit of form and excellence have become legendary.

Some have criticised what has been described as his “shooting-from-the-hip” approach. But the fortitude and frankness he has displayed throughout his three-year stint with the state team, the longest for a foreigner, has won him widespread recognition and praise. Characteristically, detractors have never bothered Steve. What mattered most was the job at hand; what he was doing and the results he was achieving within the terms of his contract. Steve is a professional. His contract ended this month and he is moving on to hoped-for greener pastures. His departure is, unquestionably, a serious loss to Perak's sporting scene.

He has been offered a coaching job with a team in Vietnam.

Following is the full text of my interview with Steve. This took place at the Ipoh Echo office only days before he flew off to Hanoi.

Ipoh Echo: Steve, you are among the few football coaches in Malaysia listed in Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia. You are reported to have given a lucrative coaching post in India a miss and instead offered your services to Perak FA. What was it that motivated you to come here?

Steve: I don't know who did the Wikipedia article but I'd like to thank them. It's pretty accurate! I was approached by an official from India but like in most administrations there are factions and the other faction won out! But India later got a great coach in Bobby Houghton who has done a wonderful job there.

Ipoh Echo: Based on your credentials, your coaching stints were mostly in South-East Asia and the Oceanic region. Why the preference?

Steve: Basically its where you are at the time...it's not a personal preference. If it was I'd be at Liverpool or AC Milan. It's where the contract leads. But I have to be honest, I love living in SE Asia and will stay here forever.

Ipoh Echo: You have been with Perak FA as the team coach cum manager since 2005. Can you relate some of your high points?

Steve: The Malaysia Cup final was a great occasion. Over 90,000 people came to watch. The same year we came second in the league. We lost the league to what many people felt was a game that was rigged. Take nothing away from Kedah, though. A great side, and if they weren't around with their top class foreigners we would have won everything for the last

few years.

Taking Perak to the first ever quarter final of the AFC Cup was also a success with such a small squad. If not for a combination of the financial problems and Ramadan I felt we could have done so well in this cup. We lost four players due to non-payment of wages and we didn't have the depth.

On a professional level it was a success also trying to run a club on a budget 75% less than some of the other teams and over the three years we ran at a profit, but couldn't pay back the inherited debts.

Ipoh Echo: You are pretty opinionated and would not mince your words when wanting to drive your points home. Do you find this acceptable with the local football authorities?

Steve: Local football authorities weren't a problem. I had problems with local governments. The state of the facilities in Ipoh are appalling and all I wanted was to improve them for the sake of the game. For example the toilets in the Stadium are disgusting, fans deserve better than this. Also we had no training facilities. But I discovered that telephone calls don't get returned, people pass on the blame and most of all never reply to letters which I found the most discourteous. It's amazing how many times you have to contact the MBI. And you find the person you want is at makan! I also got used to being lied to. A bit like trying to find a taxi in Ipoh that actually offers you the correct fare!

Also a football pitch needs a groundsman, not good hearted, hard working general workers. If trying to set high standards is a

crime, then I am guilty.

Ipoh Echo: The Perak football team had a string of successes under your wings both in the local league and at the AFC level. To what do you attribute these successes?

Steve: It sounds a cliché, but success is due to good teamwork between players, staff and administration. All pulling in the same direction. It sounds so simple but it is in fact so difficult as often people within your own administration put personal gain ahead of team gain. Footballers are people who have problems such as divorces, sick kids, debts; so you must be concerned about their welfare. My current President Dato' Muhiyuddin is also a great believer in this.

I try to research what people like Wenger and Ferguson do and also other sports such as Pat Riley and Phil Jackson from USA basketball.

Ipoh Echo: Often you have been the target of criticisms and rebukes over your handling of the team. Once some fanatical fans even threatened your little daughter. Do you think football hooliganism is a problem in Malaysia?

Steve: If a fan pays his RM10 he can shout what he wants at a game. But some of the greatest abusers at games in Perak are people who have got themselves free tickets! My view is if you don't like what you see, don't come.

It's not in any footballer's contract to be personally abused, spat on or threatened. That's what a small minority get up to. The sad thing is its often grown men who make such a fool of themselves in public and usually people

who have never played at above school level.

I think it's great when I see an obese man with a cigarette in his mouth telling my players they are unfit. It's also interesting to see the people who were begging for free tickets when we were in the Malaysia Cup final suddenly 6 months later wanting us out of a job.

The most amusing incident I found started with the President of the Perak Fan Club, at his AGM, proclaiming I was the best coach they ever had. The same man also led the cheering when we got to the Malaysia Cup final. Three months later he's in the national newspapers demanding I be sacked. Thank goodness nobody

continued – Page 12



Family man Steve with his lovely daughter – the little girl fans chose to terrorise on one occasion.



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THINKING ALOUD

By G. Sivapragasam

BACK TO IPOH BY TRAIN

A journey transformed by time and attitudes

Some weeks back friends from Australia asked me if I could suggest a means of transport to return to Singapore. When I inquired as to how they had arrived they replied that they had made the journey by train but would not like to repeat the experience.

This statement intrigued me. For some time I had been hearing that journeys by Malaysian Rail did not deliver the most agreeable experience. But this was the first time I took notice - perhaps it was because of the way it was expressed. My last train journey was sometime in 1970 but till the mid 60s it was always my preferred means of travel.

My most pleasing memories of overland journeys have always been associated with trains. I remember going by train to Penang when I was very young and to Singapore in my teens. The excitement of going through tunnels, the monotonous clatter of the wheels on tracks, the stops at picturesque small towns, the charming rural scenes that came almost to your carriage and the camaraderie among passengers were my memories of trains.

As visitors from First World countries are often very demanding I decided to see for myself if there was any justification in my Australian friends' grievance. When next I travelled to Singapore I was determined to return by train.

THE STATION

A couple of days before my return journey I went to the railway station in Singapore to make my reservations. As you enter the station you are left in no doubt that you have moved from the clinically organised tidy world of Singapore into Malaysia. No words can adequately describe the dissimilarity; it is a contrast that only personal experience can define. I was told that the station had recently undergone some improvements. I could only imagine how it must have looked before.

There needs to be a realisation that this station is the face of Malaysia in Singapore and if we are to be perceived as a nation of quality, efforts must be made to ensure that the place exhibits, in hardware and management, a class that is equal to what one



A relic of past glory - our railway station in Singapore

experiences elsewhere in Singapore. It is, after all, a small place and would require little resources to put right. At very least we could ensure that the place is tidy, well lit and the rubbish bins have covers.

INVISIBLE CARRIAGE

I purchased a first class ticket which at S\$100 was not cheap. I arrived early on the day of departure and in spite of much effort I was unable to locate the carriage with the alphabet coded on my ticket. I then discovered that I was not alone in this predicament. Several others were also searching for the elusive carriage. After sometime I located a station officer who informed us that, because of some problems with an onboard air-conditioning system in the carriage, it had been withdrawn and cancelled. Surely this information could have been provided to us by a notice when we arrived at the station or someone could have been positioned to assist us instead of leaving us to go up and down the platform searching for a carriage that didn't exist.

SHUNTED

We were then shunted into a second class carriage and allocated seats there. We were told that when we arrived at our destination we would be refunded the difference between first class and second class fares. In the downgraded group were a Malaysian couple with their four year old son and an English couple going to Kuala Lumpur. Speaking to the Malaysian family I discovered that they had arrived by air and had in fact a return flight ticket but had opted to travel by train to give their young son a rail travel experience. I did not speak to the visibly unhappy English couple not wanting to add to their misery.

That the carriage was not in 'condition' would be a charitable description. Many of the trays attached to backs of seats were missing, window curtains were hanging off rails, and the door of our compartment kept opening and shutting throughout the journey giving rise to safety concerns for passengers sitting near it.

At a town somewhere in Johor, some new passengers turned up at our carriage. Among them was an old couple whose ticket was endorsed with the number of the seats that had been allocated to the English couple. Understandably they asked the English couple to vacate their seats. Since the tickets of the English couple contained seat numbers in their first class carriage they had to trot through the train to find the conductor to resolve the problem.

When the conductor arrived he began complaining that the station should not have sold the tickets in that carriage to the old couple. Adjustments were made and seats were found to accommodate all. But for the rest of the journey the first class group travelled in uncomfortable anticipation of problems whenever the train halted to take on new travellers.

A FINAL HITCH

The journey however was pleasant enough and the scenery evoked the same pleasure it had in my youth.

One thing that caught my attention was the vast number of old carriages that lay dumped in the Gemas railway yard. It is a wonder that no one has found use for these magnificent relics.

The train arrived in Ipoh an hour and a half late by which time the ticketing office had closed. I was told that the promised refund of the difference in fare would not be available that day.

EDITORIAL

WILL LAWLESSNESS REIGN?

Bercham tops the list of Ipoh suburbs with the most break-ins. Houses and businesses alike in that area are being burgled at a staggering rate.

The sole 7-Eleven convenience shop in Bercham was robbed early one morning last month. The operator on duty escaped unharmed. But the intruders boldly carted away substantial supplies of bottled and canned drinks, including beer.

Thieves are decidedly less concerned about choosing their targets and planning their raids these days. It is an alarming trend demonstrating an almost indifference on the part of the criminally inclined to the possibility of apprehension. This, they seem to be assuming - perhaps with some justification - as highly unlikely.

Anyone, it seems, can be a burglary victim these days. A local politician fell prey to burglars recently.

When she and her husband arrived home one morning they spotted two strangers on their premises. One was inside the house, the other on the rooftop. The woman telephoned the Bercham Police station to report the intrusion. She was informed the station was unable to respond due to a lack of staff. The officer on duty recommended she call the Tambun station. Tambun provided a similar response: no officers available. When police finally arrived on the scene, the thieves, not surprisingly, had departed.

Clearly, the force is desperately short of personnel and this is not confined to the Perak contingent. The problem is nationwide.

The days of the *mata-mata* of yore are gone. Back then the sight of the *mata-mata* with his trademark *chota* (truncheon) riding a bicycle was enough to deter any would-be delinquent. Today it's an entirely different environment. Seldom do we now see policemen on foot patrols.

Dato' Zulkifli, the CPO of Perak, in a recent interview with *Ipoh Echo*, alluded to three lines of defence in place. Prominent there was the Mobile Police Vehicle (MPV) with its assured mobility.

But is it being effective in reducing crime?

The answer is simple enough. It can indeed be effective providing there are adequate numbers of MPVs patrolling crime-prone areas. Which raises a further question, the answer to which is somewhat obscure. If Perak's police force has recently acquired 168 new patrol cars, why do the crime figures keep climbing?

Criminals throughout Malaysia are getting bolder each day. The recent killing and robbing of wives of politicians in Penang is indicative of this trend. A sense of hopelessness pervades on that island.

It is a feeling now being shared by all in Ipoh. Women especially, no longer feel safe in the streets. A wrong move may cause them more than just bruised pride. They could well end up in hospital. Snatch theft in the city is on the rise. Although bag snatching is not the number one crime in Ipoh, the escalating numbers represent added cause for concern.

Making the streets of Ipoh safe should be our community's number one priority. There are several means available to achieve this. Having more foot patrols is part of the answer.

But with a manpower shortage this, it appears, is impossible. There have been plans to deploy all able-bodied officers to the streets but administrative work is keeping many in the office; or so it is said.

There has been talk in the past of installing close-circuit television.

Such plans, though, have remained on the drawing board. Other plans were afoot to build railings along busy streets. Here the intention was to separate pedestrians from motorcycle riding bag snatchers. Again, no action had been taken to implement these ideas either.

Revitalising the stalled Rukun Tetangga is a way forward. However, the programme is fast running out of steam due, in part, to apathy and a lack of commitment on the part of the authorities.

Community policing must quickly evolve as Ipoh's No 1 priority.

The rot must be stopped and stopped quickly. Otherwise, Ipohites will be left at the mercy of the criminals.

We are not being alarmist. Tough policies and punishments are long overdue. Do we want lawlessness to reign?

OUR CONCERNS

RESIDENTS DEMAND ANSWERS AND ACTION OVER OUTRAGEOUS TREE FELLING SPREE

Authorities adopt predictable “head in the sand” postures

Just a glance at our accompanying photographs reveals why Ipoh's Canning Garden residents are angrily demanding to know why the much-loved trees that once graced the slip-road in front of the local post office have been wilfully hacked down.

They want the authorities to name who gave the order to remove the trees and, in addition, the motive for their destruction.

Four Angsana trees, each well over 30 years old, along with 13 other smaller trees, have been chopped down – for no readily apparent reason.

Over the years the lush foliage of these trees provided much welcomed shade relief from the harsh tropical sun, particularly for the many customers of the post office and nearby shops.

What is more, the now treeless slip-road has, for some time past, been doubling as a fruit and flower market on

Sundays. As such it has proved a great hit with Ipohites and the trees, on these occasions, served subliminally to enhance the overall environment.

So incensed are the local residents that they are demanding formal enquiries be instituted to establish where the blame for the butchered trees lies. Equally important, if laws have been broken with their removal, they want to know whether adequate prosecutions are to be undertaken to prevent recurrence.

During question time at Ipoh City Council's Full-Board Meeting on Friday, September 26, MP/Councillor M. Kulasegeran raised the tree-felling issue and demanded more details be provided. Kulasegeran explained that trees functioned as natural air filters, absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. The more trees, he argued, the better the air quality.

Kulasegeran went

on to observe: “It could be a private arrangement between the department and the owner of the newly built building nearby.”

Mayor Roshidi assured the meeting he had no knowledge whatever of how the trees came to be chopped down. “I did not give any orders to chop the trees,” he asserted.

Enquiries by the *Ipoh Echo* have established that trimming and cutting of trees within council boundaries comes under the jurisdiction of the landscape department.

But it is imperative that the matter not be left unresolved. If laws have been broken or unlawful arrangements negotiated to expedite the elimination of the trees, action should immediately be taken by the authorities and the result of any enquiry made public.

Without such an approach, the denuding of Ipoh's treelines will proceed unabated.

FZB



Top photo: The stretch that is now bare and unshaded. Bottom photo: Sorry remains of what used to be a glorious tree.



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ENTICING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE SEEKING AERONAUTICAL CAREERS

Loans available for those wishing to join courses



The Advance Aeronautics Training Academy (AATA) located at the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport has become a major avenue for youths – particularly from rural areas – to get into

Malaysia's aircraft maintenance industry.

Established in 2000, over 300 trainees have since graduated from the Academy.

The courses offered are accredited

by the Department of Skills Development of the Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry of Education.

A number of the youths have proceeded to become aircraft maintenance engineers.

LOANS

Loans of RM10,000 each are available to those in need of financial assistance to take up AATA courses.

“This is an opportunity which many parents and guardians are una-

ware” said AATA's principal and proprietor, Chief (Nig.) Dr Tharma Dorai Ratnasingam.

Chief Dorai is the Chief Executive Officer of a number of firms including Executive Jet Bhd, Executive Jets Charter Sdn Bhd, Air Ipoh Sdn Bhd and Aero Skills Technologies and Advance Aeronautics Training Center.

The activities of these operations range from aircraft insurance, sales maintenance, spare parts and training aircraft mechanics and maintenance engineers with flying experience and

education.

AVENUE FOR OTHERS

Chief Dorai spent his early childhood in a rural kampong in Negeri Sembilan and is one of the successful pioneers in the aviation industry in the country.

At age 17, he started work as an apprentice with Malaysia Air Charter Company before graduating as an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer from Air Services Training (AST) in Scotland.

“My aim is to create an avenue for the youths like myself from the rural areas to get into our country's aviation industry.

I am proud that many of the Academy trainees have qualified as aircraft engineers and hold a B.Eng (Hons) in Aircraft Engineering.

They are employed by various airlines locally and abroad. AATA is proud that one of its students Ismadi, now an aircraft engineer, has been trained by Air Asia to maintain maiden Airbus A330 long haul aircraft.



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

THE WAY IT WAS ... 100 YEARS AGO

Occasionally, says the Hongkong Telegraph, the Siam Observer gets really humorous. Speaking on the evil habit of spitting at large our contemporary remarks: 'The cuspidors now established at the Custom House are merely old oil drums. If the people can only be persuaded to use them, it will doubtless make for both comfort and sanitation.'

* * * * *

In connection with the trouble at Lahat, it was asserted both by our Ipoh contemporary and ourselves that the men were egged on to defy the authorities by their women folk. But according to other advises it would seem to have been quite the other way. It would appear it was the 'dulang' women who refused to pay the assessment while the 'mere men' stood behind and egged them on and enjoyed the fun. No wonder the whole thing fizzled out as it did.

Editorial

The Rinderpest

We often see notifications in the Gazette, or otherwise obtain information that rinderpest has broken out in a particular locality, and that all movements of cattle within a certain area has been prohibited, and that these should, pending further orders be kept confined to their sheds.

This is all that transpires so far and the general public is concerned.

But is any serious thought given as to the unenviable position in which the unlucky cattle owner finds himself?

He generally owns a large herd, the feeding of which is confronted with almost insurmountable obstacles.

Being unable to let them out to graze, he is compelled to supply them with sufficient fodder to keep them alive.

But where is he to procure the same and how to transport it to the shed when draught bullocks are likewise placed under similar quarantine restrictions?

* * * * *

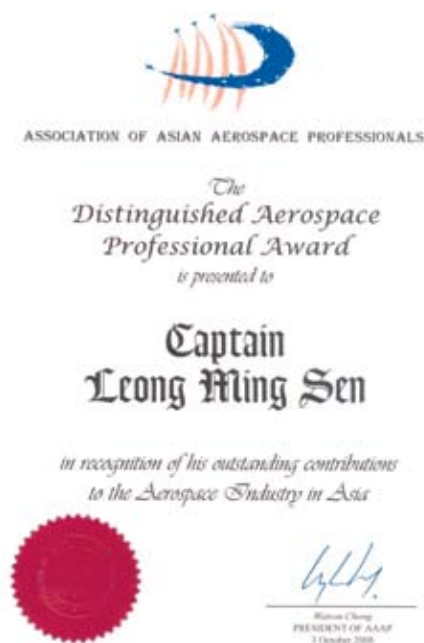
On the arrival at Hongkong of the steamer Kutsang from Singapore, on the 16th instant, a Macao Chinaman was arrested by the Water Police on a warrant.

He is suspected of the murder of Mak Ling within the jurisdiction of the Settlement of Penang. Evidence of arrest and identification, having been given at the Magistracy before Mr Kemp, the prisoner was remanded.

* * * * *

POSTHUMOUS AWARD FOR GREAT IPOH SON

In Ipoh Echo's August 16-31 number (Issue 56), we highlighted the extraordinary 80 year-old friendship between Captains Ho Weng Toh and the late Leong Ming Sen – true aeronautical ioneers of their day. In Singapore earlier this month, Capt Ho accepted a glowing citation on behalf of his life-long friend. The event, followed by a reception, was held at the Singapore National Library. We here proudly record the occasion.



ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN AEROSPACE PROFESSIONALS

For The Late - Captain Leong Ming Sen (1920 - 2008)

The honorary membership of the Association of Asian Aerospace Professionals is given to members who have brought credit to the profession and the nation.

This evening, the Association honours posthumously one such prominent personality, the late Captain Leong Ming Sen or M.S. as he was fondly known to his many colleagues and friends.

We live in deeds not words; in thought not breaths; in results, not in figures on a dial. He most lives who thinks the deepest, feels the noblest, acts the best. These words aptly reflect the life and time of Captain M.S. Leong who departed from the glory of this world in the early morning of 28 June 2008.

The late Captain Leong was the first Asian to attain the distinguished rank of Flight Captain in Malaya. Before that, he was the first local pilot to attain the rank of First Officer in commercial aviation.

He was mentor to over 200 commercial pilots; he made his flying debut in wartime missions.

Interestingly, Captain Leong's first choice of a professional career wasn't that of a pilot. He had enrolled at Lingnan University, Hong Kong in 1941, to pursue an Economics degree. That would most probably have kept him on 'terra firma' or firm ground. The war changed his life. After Hong Kong fell to the Japanese in 1941, he, at the age of 21, escaped to China's wartime capital, Chungking, where he answered a call for pilot trainees from the China National Aviation Corporation, then China's only commercial airline.

The late Captain Leong could rightly be deemed an "accidental pilot". He cut his teeth as a pilot by flying on delivery missions over "the hump"; a treacherous route that spans, to this day, the foothills of the Himalayas.

The Late Captain Leong was a member of the Flying Tigers, a volunteer squadron of wartime Chinese and American pilots, bravely engaged in anti-Japanese aerial combats. When the war ended, he joined Malayan Airways or MAL, where in 1951, he became the company's first Asian pilot to hold the rank of First Officer.

A year later, he left MAL to do "newspaper runs" which were flights that delivered editions of the Singapore Standard from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh and Penang. After becoming the first local to achieve the top rank of Flight Captain in the Federation Air Services, he went on to teach trainee pilots with Malaysian Airways in 1963.

Malaysian Airways then morphed into Malaysia-Singapore Airlines and when the company split in 1972, due to the unfortunate political separation of Malaysia and Singapore, he chose to join Singapore Airlines or SIA where he became a Training Captain on Boeing 737 aircraft.

When he retired in 1975, he held the rank of Deputy Chief Pilot, a lofty position within the management echelon of the Flight Operations Division.

The late Captain Leong clocked a total of 23,600 flying hours, the day before he formally ended his illustrious career in commercial aviation.

The lives of great men, and such as that of the late Captain Leong Ming Sen, showed us that we should live our lives sublime and in passing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time.

This evening, the Association of Asian Aerospace Professionals is honoured to confer, posthumously, its Honorary Member status and its Distinguished Aerospace Professional Award to the late Captain Leong Ming Sen. I now invite the Association's President, Mr Watson Chong, to present the accolades.

03 October 2008

Top left: President of the Association of Asian Aerospace Professionals, Mr Watson Chong (L), presents Capt. Leong's posthumous award to his great friend of 80 years, Capt. Ho Wing Toh (R). Top right: the award certificate. Below: the accompanying citation.

Ipoh Facts and Fancies

IPOH – CINDERELLA OF THE FMS

It all traces back to Sir John Anderson

In the 1910s, Ipoh could be said to be the most discontented town in the Federated Malay States (FMS). Her petition for the transfer of the district capital from Batu Gajah, and for the development of a seaport at Lumut, with the extension of the Ipoh-Tronoh railway line to the port, had been rejected.

She had been told by the High Commissioner that the state capital would remain in Taiping. Ipoh was the town that contributed the most to the Federal coffers, but the bulk of the money was being spent to

aggrandise Kuala Lumpur, the Federal capital. Many Ipohites must have been wondering if Federation, the formation of the Federated Malay States in 1896, was what it was cut out to be.

Even the supposedly small things that the town wanted, a Town Hall and a modern hospital, were given to her grudgingly. A deputation had to meet the British Resident to put up the case for a town hall. The new hospital would only be a Pauper Hospital, with just third class wards, first and second classes (paying) not being ap-

propriate for Ipoh as the European Hospital was at Batu Gajah.

In November 1912, a correspondent wrote a piece about Ipoh's "divine discontent" in the Singapore Free Press.

Ipoh is a great believer in the saying "they that ask shall receive" and it is in virtue of these two phrases "divine discontent" and "ask and ye shall receive" that I venture to use the term Importunate Ipoh. The great feature about the importunities of Ipoh – apart from their never ceasingness – is the entire belief in the reasonable-

ness of their askings and the faith they put in a successful result. Anybody in Ipoh, almost, will bet you that in six years Lumut will be a bigger port than Singapore. And attached to that belief is a magnificent energy, which, without a sigh, much less a night of pensive discontent, turns immediately to doing for themselves what they have in vain asked others to do for them.

CINDERELLA-LIKE

Ipoh was like Cinderella, begging the Wicked Stepmother, Kuala

Lumpur, for things that would never be given to her. Little did Cinderella realise that, in her vanity, the Wicked Stepmother wanted all the glory for herself and would do everything in her power to crush the ambitions of her rivals, especially the winsome and deserving brat up north.

What logical reason could be given for the fact that KL refused to develop the fine, natural harbour of Lumut and instead poured twenty million dollars into developing the mud creek at Prai in Province Wellesley as a port for

ocean-going steamers, only for it to turn out to be a colossal failure?

Ipoh was situated at the heart of a wide and very rich mineral and agricultural district, and to be given her own seaport would make her second in importance to no other town in British Malaya, barring Singapore. But then the dignity of the Federal capital, Kuala Lumpur, would be compromised.

A correspondent wrote perceptively in Ipoh's newspaper, the Times of Malaya, in 1912:

"The erstwhile 'mush-

continued – Page 9

Singapore on line

RUBBER BOUNCES BACK

From Andrew Symon

An analysis of resurgence in interest and demand

Natural rubber production – like many other commodities – has bounced back on world markets. While price rises may not be as spectacular as petroleum and mineral commodities, prices now on the Malaysian Rubber Exchange in Kuala Lumpur are more than three times what they were in 2000.

This is good for Malaysia's – and Perak's – rural sector where output is almost entirely from small holders (mainly Malay) – a contrast to the colonial times and first years after Malayan independence when large scale, British-run plantations dominated. Part of the reason for the price increase is the usual one these days – a booming Chinese economy pumping up demand for rubber for motor vehicles tyres and for other industrial and consumer products.

China consumed about 2.5 million tonnes of the 9.7 million tonnes of natural rubber produced worldwide in 2007, according to the Kuala Lumpur based Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC)

But there are some other interesting factors at work.

High oil prices have worked in natural rubber's favour by making synthetic rubber more expensive. Presently, natural rubber meets about 43 percent of world demand for all rubber.

Epidemics – SARS and the Avian Flu – along with efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS – have also helped rubber as they have raised demand for rubber gloves for medical/hospital/public health use, and, dare I say it, for condoms.

Malaysia itself is a major consumer of natural

rubber, having quite a strong industrial rubber product industry.

In 2007, Malaysia consumed 450,000 tonnes of natural rubber. And this industry contributes to the Perak and Ipoh economies as there are manufacturers here of household and surgical rubber gloves, and other surgical rubber products, and manufacturers of rubber thread, tube lines for commercial vehicles and additional industrial rubber products.

PAST DRAMAS

As with tin, the rubber industry is a key actor in Malaysia's history – and it has been at the centre of some of the country's major dramas.

The rubber tree was introduced into Peninsular Malaya by the British in the late 19th century via seeds taken earlier from Brazil and germinated in Kew Gardens, London.

The timing was good. From the turn of the century a new and seemingly unlimited market took off with the revolutionary appearance of the internal combustion engine and the motor car – and its need for rubber tyres.

And the driving force behind the growth of Malaya's rubber industry were the big British agency or trading houses: Guthrie's, Sime Darby, Harrisons & Crossfield, and Boustead-Buttery, R.E.A – Cumberbatch, to name the leaders.

They fashioned, as historian Thomas Lindblad writes, an oligopolistic system that "smoothed a rapid enlargement of output and secured comfortable profit margins."

The agency houses secured finance from the London capital market, ran or had equity in almost

all the estate plantations, and ran much of the international trading and transport of the rubber from headquarters in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Somewhat on the side lines were also US planters – Dunlop and the Malayan American Plantations – and the French, Socfin.

Plantations under rubber grew from 19,000 hectares in 1905 to 750,000 by 1932 with the large European owned estates accounting for 560,000 hectares. The rest were made up of smaller ethnic Chinese-owned properties.



Malaya became the world's largest supplier of rubber.

The great British managing agencies held at least 40 percent of the total equity in Malayan rubber, either directly through shareholdings or indirectly via other rubber firms. The five leading agency houses alone, Harrisons & Crossfield, Boustead-Buttery, Guthrie, R.E.A – Cumberbatch and Sime Darby, controlled 229 rubber firms and 324,000 hectares of estate land before World War II. A group of 25 individuals sat on the board of some 200 rubber companies.

Arguably their most profound impact on Malaya

was the importation of Indian labour, mostly Tamil, from the south, to work the plantations. As the tin industry attracted Chinese immigrants, so the creation of a large ethnic Indian/Tamil community has fundamentally shaped modern Malaysian society and continues to impact on politics of the country to this day.

For the labourers, cutting the trees, tapping the sap, weeding around the plantation and digging drainage ditches, life was very hard, and poorly paid, if not exploitative.

"The rubber plantation was one of the most all encompassing labour regimes on earth," write historians Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper in their brilliant history of Britain's return to post 1945 Southeast Asia, *Forgotten Wars*. As they quote contemporary Selangor trade unionist, C.V.S. Krishnamoorthi: "Ours is a life of meek suffering, toiling from sunrise to sunset like an automaton... We toil draining our lifeblood to produce that alluring commodity latex rubber..."

But as tough as working on the estates may have been, Malaya

was not the Congo, and bigger European run plantations did work to improve workers' conditions. Nevertheless, the story was not an even one, and the government did not intervene to enforce standards. Worker dissatisfaction grew and the estates were targets for the growing union movement after 1945.

And not surprisingly, the British planters and their estates were among the targets of Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) insurgents in the Emergency years from 1948 to 1960. How much this followed from the estates being at the centre of labour dissatisfaction and being obvious symbols of "imperialist capitalism" is a moot point. Isolated estates also made easier targets.

Certainly when Malaya did become independent in 1957, the commercial life of the managing agencies went on much as before. There were no sudden and forced nationalisations.

It was only in the 1970s and 1980s that the local operations of the agency houses were "Malaysianised." The government took them over by purchasing the British held shares of the companies on the London Stock Exchange. This smoothed transformation into wholly Malaysian-owned companies.

Today the most prominent of these is the government linked conglomerate group, Sime Darby. This is the largest listed company in Malaysia with a market capitalization of more than US \$20 billion. Rubber is only a small interest. Apart from palm oil it has business groups, property, heavy equipment, motor and power and utilities and operations in more than 20 countries.

And while all this was going on, the government was also promoting small holder participation in the rubber industry through rural development schemes. As a result, of the 1.20 million tonnes of natural rubber produced in 2007 by Malaysia (the world's third largest producer), 1.13 million tonnes was produced by small holders compared with just 67,000 tonnes by estates.

SMALL HOLDER CHALLENGES

But if the old image of vast rubber plantations – where regiments of labourers toiled for British estate managers – may be long gone, being a small holder rubber grower is also not an easy life.

Earlier years have been tough for small holders with sharply falling prices until the first years of the 2000s forcing them to turn away from rubber and switch to palm oil and other crops, or just leave their properties and look for other work.

A recent study by Aziz Fikry Mohammad and Yatiham Sarjiman of the Malaysian Department of Statistics shows a high incidence of poverty among small holders along with an ageing population.

Compounding their difficulties is the often very small size of their holdings which means they have little protection from the vagaries of the market through scale of production or enough land to shift to other crops.

So the hope is that if the price rises can be sustained, they could break out of this trap by having funds for investment in new trees, better plantation technology and the development of cooperative networks enabling the consolidation of tiny properties into more productive units.

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Musings

by See Foon Chan-Koppen



See Foon

If I have one regret in life, it is that I didn't become a professional singer or dancer. Of course I would have discovered soon enough that I'd be singing back-up for pittance or, as a dancer, be in the chorus line, forever auditioning for the lead role. But I did have fantasies.

Family and parents have a way of dealing with such fantasies. "Stop singing and get on with your school work", my grandmother would shout from the kitchen. "Will you get on with your maths and stop pirouetting around" my teacher Uncle would admonish. "Why do you want to take ballet lessons? We can't afford them and they're useless", my mother would say. So what is a young person to do?

In my case, it was buckling down to the boring task of homework, excelling at maths, reading, writing and enunciating

phonetically perfect Mandarin. I was pretending to be the perfect student that I was not, living up to parental dreams of my eventually becoming a medical doctor.

My family had very predictable ideas of what were "acceptable" professions, what constituted respectable jobs and what were frowned upon. Doctor, lawyer, were top of the scale followed by lecturer (not just a teacher but preferably a University professor) dentist, pharmacist, in that order.

SHORT-LIVED RESULTS

The problem is, when one performs to someone else's expectations, the results achieved are often short-lived, regardless of whether we may or may not have the required capabilities. Oh I got As, all right. And my written and spoken Mandarin was as good as any resident in Beijing.

But came my late teens and rebellion set in. No way was I going to spend the next six glorious years of my youth cramming and "book worming" my way to a medical degree, not to mention the years of housemanship and



further on, specialisation! So amidst the outrage, uproar and pandemonium of turning my back on parental guidance, I opted for, in their eyes, a "useless" Arts degree.

Not only did I disappoint the family but, horror of horrors, during my undergraduate years, I was quite sought after as a catwalk and photographic model.

In those days, modelling was tantamount to or equated with working in the "world's oldest profession"! As one can imagine, relations with my family were rather strained. I was staying at the university hostel at

the time and was able to keep family reunions to a minimum to avoid the pain of suffering their disapproving looks and comments.

Once I graduated, the freedom was heady. No more daily homework, studying and cramming for exams. I could get on with life, which I did with gusto.

Along the way, it was easy to lose most of my mathematical skills, forget all my Mandarin, and embrace the very hedonistic ways that my family frowned upon. I probably went out of my way to seek out the very professions that my family

either abhorred or had no clue about, as in modelling, journalism, advertising, and hotels.

On looking back, I now understand that a fairly large part of my life was about rebellion. I rejected the traditional views they had and chose my own paths. Not that I have any regrets. I loved what I did, the jobs I had, and the lifestyle I led.

I can always pick up my Mandarin again either with private tuition or spending three months in China. I could work on my maths but why bother? Calculators and spreadsheets make light work of such tasks.

TOO LATE FOR OUR CHILDREN

They say that we pass on what we've learned in our lives to our children but I advocate that our life lessons are too late for our children. It is our grandchildren who may benefit.

When my children were growing up, I was busy building a career, and living life to the hilt, had no time for reflection. I too, like my parents before me, parroted the usual admonitions for them to study hard and focus on

academic qualifications. It worked for one but not the other of my two children.

Today, if I had my life to live again I would do things differently. But since I don't have that opportunity, I have a checklist of "things I would teach my grandchildren".

This would include looking at their gifts and talents and encouraging them to explore the wonders and mysteries of this world. Allow them to decide what they want to be when they grow up. I wouldn't push them to do their homework or have remedial tuition to pass exams. If they love jazz dancing versus classical ballet, I would encourage them. If they prefer to play the drums instead of piano, I'd build them a soundproof room. I'll skip in the rain or sit up and nurse their sick dog with them. I'll read poetry or great novels, go to museums and art galleries, walk in the park, hold their hand when they're frightened, hug and kiss away their tears when they are hurt, in short, love them just the way they are. They won't have to succeed or prove themselves.

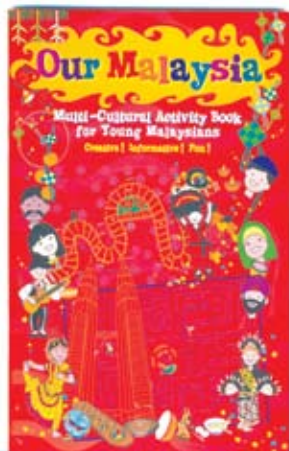
These are some of the things I want to teach my grandchildren.

BOOK REVIEW

OUR MALAYSIA

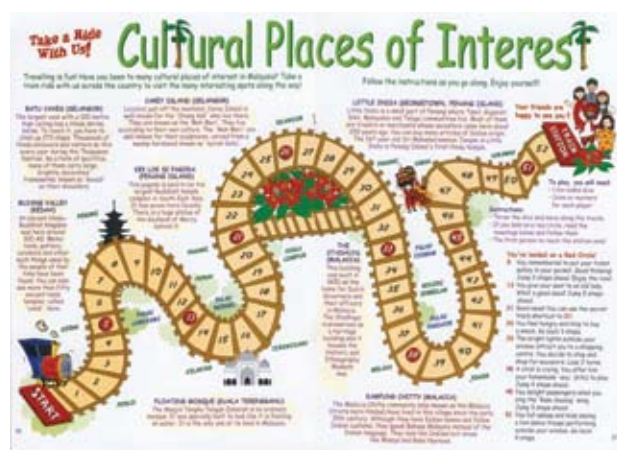
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An "activity book" aimed at helping foster a better understanding of the country's cultural diversity



The credits at the bottom of the back page say it all: "This humble book is aimed at enabling our children and parents to experience our rich cultural diversity. We hope it motivates our future generations to move beyond knowledge and tolerance to understanding and reverence for each other's culture..."

The bottom line is the nexus between understanding of and reverence for



varying cultures. This is what the government has been harping on. However, without political will, the kind of integration between races and between cultures, as envisaged in Bangsa Malaysia, is difficult to achieve.

The book's subjects cover aspects of rich Malaysian culture, language and heritage.

It is written for and addressed to the uninitiated

who wish to have a basic understanding of anything Malaysian. The work is most suited for children between 10 to 15 years old.

The soft cover is priced at RM12 and is available locally at AFS Kinta Chapter.

For details, please call Pak Peter at 019-574 3572. Email: pakpeter@tm.net.my

HALIDA

SUNWAY COLLEGE GOES GREEN

Continuing campaign to make people aware of the environment



People are encouraged to sort out the items they throw away

Sunway College, in collaboration with Brunswick Industries, launched its inaugural green earth programme late last September.

The project was aimed at creating awareness among students of the importance of recycling and its impact on the environment.

The day's guest speaker, Lau Wai Hong of Brunswick Industries, ex-

plained the 3-R principles which call for Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.

For a start, said Lau, the students could help reduce wastage by switching off lights, fans and air conditioners when not needed. He also gave examples of materials that could and could not be recycled.

A fashion show followed. Six models, dressed in designs made of recycled materials, took to the

stage. This segment was organised by the Marketing and Business students.

The student designers briefed the audience about their creations.

The launch ended with the introduction of three-coloured bins.

Each bin was (is) meant for different waste items - plastic, paper and metal.

A. JEYARAJ

NO-FRILLS COOKING

“BULKING UP” THAT HALF KILO OF PRAWNS

Carol Cheng suggests two easy-to-prepare recipes

When prawns are cooked as a main or side dish, there never seems enough of them for everybody. But when they are served in a spicy sauce with other vegetables to bulk them up, it becomes a different story. The enjoyment of prawns can be stretched when they are cooked with other marrows or seeds like petai in a spicy sauce – dry or wet.

Nyonya Cucumber Sambal Udang



Ingredients:

1 cucumber, cut into 4 quarters (length-wise), de-seeded and cut into 1cm slants
1 bowl medium-sized prawns, shelled and deveined
Spices to be ground:

3 fresh chillies
thumbsize fresh kunyit
6 shallots
1 pip garlic
1 stalk serai, use only the white part
1 teaspoon shrimp paste
1 tbsp assam paste, mixed with a bowl of water to extract juice
2 young kaffir lime leaves
Salt and sugar to taste.

Method:

Heat 1 tbsp oil in moderately hot wok and put in ground spices to slowly bring out the “fragrance”, adding more oil if it sticks to base of wok.

Throw in cucumber slices and stir fry till they are coated with spices. Add assam water. Stir fry and top up with more water to barely cover the mixture. Cover the wok for a minute or two for the cucumber to lose its raw crunch. Season with salt and sugar to taste. Put in prawns and blend evenly, allowing them to be just cooked.

Serve with white rice.



Prawn Sambal Petai

Ingredients:

1 bundle (3 strands) petai, or bowl seeds – split the seeds
12 medium-sized fairly big prawns, shelled and deveined
Spices to pound finely or blend:
3 fresh chillies and 2 dried chillies
6 shallots
1 pip garlic
1 tsp belacan or thumbsize knob
2 inches serai, white part only, sliced fine for easier blending
1 tbsp. dried prawns, to be coarsely pounded.
1 tsp assam paste, dissolved in water for sour solution.

Method:

In moderately heated wok, put in 2 tbsp. oil, add ground ingredients, together with dried prawns. Sauté till fragrant. Control the wok heat, do not burn the spices.

Add prawns and stir briskly, just to turn them pink. Tip in the petai (*chow tow* in Cantonese); stir fry quickly to turn them into a translucent colour. If contents stick to wok, add in assam solution in moderation to preserve the aroma of this fried mixture.

When it turns really aromatic, add in all the assam water and the seasoning – 1 tsp (more or less) salt and pinch of sugar. Give it a few more stirs and serve. If thinner gravy is required, just add a couple of tbsp. hot water to dilute it in wok. To have the petai coated in its spicy mixture, allow the gravy to dry in the wok a little while longer.

PHASES & FACES

PERAKIANS IN WORLD TAEKWON-DO TOURNAMENT IN UZBEKISTAN

At the recent 3rd Veterans International Taekwon-Do World Tournament held in Uzbekistan, two of the three Malaysian participants were Ipoh residents.

Wan Koon Seng and A Ravichanthiran are from Ipoh while Jacqueline Lian is from Wilayah. All three participants were entered for the silver event category.

A total of 55 countries participated in the tournament. The three Malaysian contenders came home with medals. Ravichanthiran, who was also the coach, earned two bronze medals for pattern and sparring while Jacqueline earned a silver medal for pattern and a bronze for sparring.

This was the first international outing for Wan. He didn't return with a medal but the ton



Jacqueline and Ravi wear their medals while Wan gets to hold the flag.

of memories and good experience would suffice. He was entered for the free sparring event under the weight category 64-69kgs. At Tashkent, the weight category was increased to 73kgs. His weight was 67 kgs. It didn't help his confidence much when he saw his opponent was bigger,

sported a GI cut hairdo and had a “snarling smile”. All those concerns vanished once the match started.

For a free sparring event, full body contact does not occur. For the championship this year though the “rules seemed relaxed”.

Both Ravi and Wan

confirmed that this year's championship saw competitors from Australia and Greenland – to name just two – going home injured. Our three Malaysian competitors came home without a single injury.

Ravi and Wan attributed their injury free return to the specialised training they had for three months prior to the tournament.

The outing to Uzbekistan (Tashkent) was most timely. The Perak Taekwon-Do Association will be organising the national championships this December.

All 13 states have confirmed their participation. Wan will be the Organising Chairman and Ravi the Technical Chairman for this upcoming national competition.

JAG

TORTOISE BUN TIME!

The Tow Boo Keong Temple was bustling with life, not only with devotees offering prayers and partaking of vegetarian diets. The crowd included Ipoh folks who were looking forward to the pink and yellow tortoise buns, known for their exceptionally fine texture and taste. It was the Festival of the Nine Emperors.

Annually, during the, celebrations, the roadside opposite the temple comes alive with makeshift stalls all fully of stocked with bamboo steamers and thousands of “tortoise buns”. The festival lasts nine days (ending October 7) and is accepted as time to pray for good health and prosperity. It is also meant for the renewal of faith and a pause for reflection.



Vendors work non-stop catering for tortoise bun fans



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Ho Tak Ming . . . continued from Page 6

room town' (Ipoh) seems to be in a fair way to try a fall with the great Federal capital city of Kuala Lumpur. It is quite on the cards that speculation in building lots contiguous to KL is almost at a standstill, whilst in Ipoh similar lands are in comparatively high demand. The injunction to “keep your eyes on Ipoh” is apt, for businessmen in both the Straits and States are keeping a very effectual eye upon the thriving Commercial Capital of Perak to the somewhat unpleasant exclusion of Kuala Lumpur.

THE WIND BLOWS

It would be foolish to conclude that Ipoh will ever wrest away (or even seek to wrest away) the Federal prestige enjoyed by Kuala Lumpur; but, as straws show which way the wind blows, so such indications as those just quoted tend to emphasise the fact that Ipoh bids fair to be not only the Commercial Capital

of Perak but of the entire Federated Malay States.”

At the height of her tin mining prosperity, all roads led to Ipoh, but Kuala Lumpur would have none of that.

The marginalisation of Ipoh began with the Ipohphobic Sir John Anderson.

ANDERSON'S REJECTION

Anderson rejected her petition to be made the district capital (of Kinta) and to develop Lumut as her port.

He also pooh-poohed her aspirations to be state capital. Anderson vetoed the build

ding of a new railway station and of a general hospital with first and second-class wards.

Later, succeeding High Commissioners had little choice but to abide by his decisions, although Sir Arthur Young threw in a sop to indignant Ipohites by promising to build a new railway station as big as Kuala Lumpur's.

YOUNG PERAK

Students from participating schools are invited to write about or photograph things/events outside their respective institutions of learning. E-mail articles to:

editorial@ipohecho.com.my
attn: Peter Khiew



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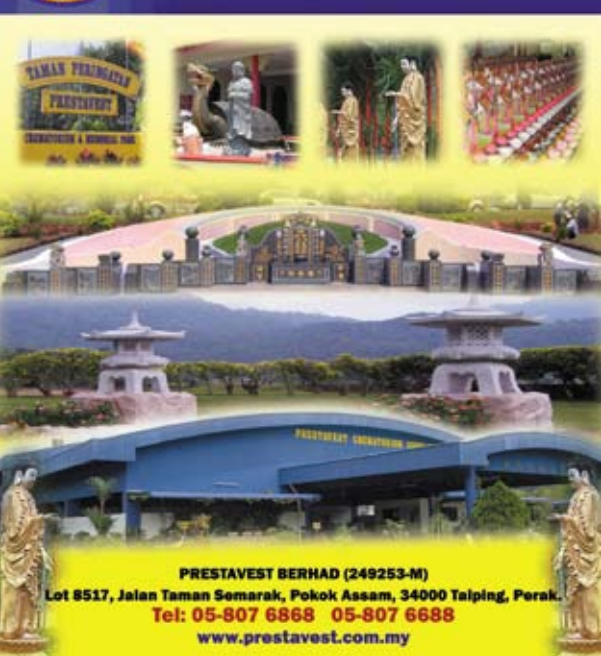


Ipoh Toastmasters' Club will be organising a workshop for students. It will be held at YMCA Ipoh on Monday, Oct 27, from 10am to 4pm. Themed "SPEAK CONFIDENTLY!!", the workshop is aimed at improving your communication skills.

Learn the techniques and approaches to becoming an effective public speaker. Deadline for registration is Oct 24. For details, call Anne Cheah at **012 459 0377** or Joshua Tan at **016 512 7635**.



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ALL IN THEIR DAY'S WORK

Apart from their classroom schedule, these girls do something extra special, observes Peter Khiew

My recent visit to SMJK Ave Maria Convent Ipoh was truly an eye-opening experience. Besides the many outstanding academic and co-curricular achievements the school has accomplished, the premier institution can also be proud of a group of students who quietly do their fair bit for the school community.

Welcome to the AMC Clinic. This is one clinic with a difference. It has no doctors, no nurses, no life-saving paraphernalia but it has the ability to alleviate discomforts, to stop bleeding, to treat burns and scalding. Once, it had even attended, rather expertly and calmly, to an office worker who had fainted.

Serving more than 2000 members of the school community is not a problem for a group of diligent and highly-skilled altruistic girls in white. Yes, they are the St John Ambulance members who have served selflessly since the clinic's inception three years ago.

Two years ago, a mishap befell a Form One girl who unwarily placed her little finger near the gate. Shouts of panic and horror filled the air as her finger was severed when the sharp edge of the gate cut right across her little finger. The St John Ambulance girls who were at the scene knew exactly what to do. They rushed the girl to the clinic, applied first aid to stop the bleeding. The few who had remained at the scene calmly retrieved the finger. The amputated finger was placed in a clean plastic bag, sealed up and the bag was then placed inside a larger plastic bag containing ice and a little water.

When the casualty was rushed to the hospital, the doctor was astonished by the girls' excellent methods in handling a highly delicate case. The finger was still in such a well-preserved condition, it was successfully re-attached!

AMC St John Ambulance chairlady Chim Wei Wen, a Form Five student, was filled with excitement when she shared with *Ipoh Echo* another success story her charges had dutifully fulfilled.

Recently, a motorist was injured when her car overturned just outside the school. Passers-by, instead of notifying the ambulance, took the casualty to the AMC clinic. Members were immediately mobilised to assess and treat the



From right: Chim Wei Wen, Tan Yi Xuen, Liew Yui Ann and Lim Bee Yee



A member showing the "tools of the trade"



Attending to a gastric case injured woman.

Chim, who has been a St John Ambulance member since Form One, said the common cases among students who frequent the clinic are period pains, stomach ache, headache, dizziness and gastric problems.

Other cases referred to them involve sprains and muscle strain suffered during physical activities.

"Sometimes we also attend to those stung by bees and injury resulting from cuts and burns – these from activities in the art room and workshop," she volunteered.

Looking smart and neat in her uniform, Chim who was elected head of the division a year ago, said members are on standby everyday from 12pm to 5pm.

This requires the morning session girls to take charge of the clinic after school and the afternoon girls to be on duty before classes start for the day.

There are no sophis-

ticated equipment similar to those found in a hospital. Chim and the members make do with a bed, a wheel chair (rarely for a school to have this), a stretcher and medications for external applications.

Teacher adviser Miss Tan Pei Nee praised her highly dynamic girls. Besides being very independent and resourceful, the students are continuously bettering their first aid and clinical skills by regularly attending home nursing classes, first aid classes and training camps.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

They also enroll themselves in medical related examinations and participate in first aid and home nursing competitions. They also enter flag signaling and cooking competitions in the area, state and national level.

Miss Tan added that the girls have adequately equipped themselves with fire fighting and survival skills. They have also been exposed to casualty simulation like making simulated blood and make-up wounds.

St John Ambulance girls from SMJK Ave Maria Convent made headlines in 2006 when they represented the state in the Annual First Aid & Home Nursing Competition under the Nursing Adult & Nursing Cadet Category. They repeated the feat this year af-

ter the members brilliantly rolled out their flawless performance in five areas – uniform test, foot drill test, home nursing (long case) test, first aid (short case) test and highest individual (written) test.

The school's St John Ambulance cadet team was the state champion in the Cooking Competition 2008 jointly organised by the Hilir Perak Education Department and the Perak St John Ambulance held at SMK Horley Methodist, Teluk Intan last August. Thirty eight teams from throughout the state took part in the competition.



Mss Tan Pei Nee

Also in August, the team emerged champions in the state-level Annual March Past Competition held in Taman D.R. Seenivasagam in Ipoh. A number of 210 members, from the Remove class to Form Five students, represented the school.

The selfless St John Ambulance girls at Ave Maria have achieved much by remaining faithful to and passionate about their desire to serve – just as advocated by the motto of the organisation.

From a handful of members when the division was first started, it now boasts a membership of 250 adult and cadet members, with three active divisions – NA 17 (which was registered in May 1976), NC 21 (July 1976) and NC 33 (Dec 1986).

Miss Tan stated that over the years she has been with the uniformed body unit, she has observed the strong enviable camaraderies among the student members.

The girls have also developed and maintained healthy living habits and a respect for structure, rules and responsibilities.

They exercise leadership, *esprit de corps* and citizenship skills.

From *Ipoh Echo*, thumbs up!

The administrators, teachers and members of the SMJK Ave Maria Convent St John Ambulance should be highly commended.

YOUNG PERAK

GENTLE DYNAMIC SKILLS TO THE FORE



A wu-shu performance is just one of many demonstrations

It was a dynamic and inspiring occasion. No wonder everyone is still talking about "action day" after nearly a couple of months after the event.

Teachers and students of SMK Methodist (ACS) Ipoh spiced up the last National Day celebrations by showcasing martial arts. Karate, taekwon-do, wushu and boxing exponents showed off their boxing, kicking and chopping skills and contributed to a

truly vibrant and energised outing.

"This is one gifted day for the people of Malaysia," declared Fourth Former Krizun Loganathan.

"We must celebrate and rejoice in the independence of our nation," he added.

The school choir started the ball rolling with the singing of the national anthem, followed by a splendid poem recital on the harmonious

and colourful living of the communities in the country.

Krizun of the *Voyager* (ACS's school magazine), said the school chose to hold its celebrations on August 29 this year at the assembly ground. The short but significant event proved one thing – the administrators, teachers, staff and students of ACS Ipoh showed their appreciation for freedom and independence by happily working together.

28 SWIMMING EVENTS YIELD MORE PROMISING CHAMPIONS



Off to prove who is the fastest

SMK Methodist (ACS) Ipoh held its 53th Swimming Gala recently at its famous ACS pool. All four stroke events were held in distances of 25m, 50m and 100m.

Both boys and girls took part in 28 swimming events.

It was a tough fight between two swimmers. Tan Theam Aun from the Aziz House and Tan Meen Seong of the ETS. Both were later jointly awarded the Best Swimmers of Class 1.

Bryan Lim was named the 'Best swimmer of Class 2', while Ng Guo Ming was adjudged Class 3 Champion. Both Lim and Ng are Oldham "patriots".

After bagging six gold medals and three silver medals, Bryan Lim emerged Overall Champion of the Gala.

Balakavitha Balaravi of ETS was awarded the Overall Champion (Women) after winning gold in all her events. Balakavitha, a Sixth Former, reports that although this year's Gala was held on a "moderate scale", the "ACS swimming spirit lives on in the hearts of all these athletes".

She said more events are planned for the next Gala and that, hopefully, there will be inter-school relay events too.

Letter to the Editor

A MUCH WELCOMED PAT ON THE BACK

To the Editor,
Ipoh Echo,
Ipoh Malaysia.

Sir,

Congratulations. Your newspaper is a breath of fresh air amid all the gloom and doom reflected elsewhere these days. It's informative, eye-catching and thoughtful and it gets better every issue.

That is not to say you don't report the bad things in your community, or have an opinion.

Positive is probably the best word to describe the underlying strength of your publication, the very antithesis of the direction and content of so many other newspapers.

We live in a changing world in difficult times. There is no denying that. But the human spirit of

optimism is the always reachable light at the end of the tunnel.

As someone who has visited Ipoh several times and enjoyed the experience, I am thankful to science that I can continue to revisit it every fortnight via cyberspace.

It is said newspapers reflect the community they serve. That being so, the people of Ipoh and Perak clearly are not weighed down by the introspective negativity that pervades so many other communities.

I wonder what other readers think?

David Webb
Perth, Australia

From the Editor, Ipoh Echo.

Dear Mr Webb;

We derive great encouragement from your observations and we thank you for them.

My staff has tried, and we will keep on trying. That's a promise.

Please give us feedback from Down Under whenever you feel so inclined. We know there are a significant number of former Perakians who have moved permanently to Perth and, as a community newspaper, we hope they will follow the online version of our publication. We hope they, too, they will keep in touch.

The online address for the Ipoh Echo is: www.ipohecho.com.my

Kind regards,
Fathol Zaman Bukhari
Editor, Ipoh Echo

THEME PARK MANAGEMENT TEAM DECIDES ON SPECIAL OUTING

Orphans go on a shopping spree and get to choose their Hari Raya outfits



Supervised by members of the Lost World of Tambun management team, the children from the Maahad Daru Salam Home line up to be photographed with their choices

For children, new outfits, including the "songkok", are among the little things that do make for a merrier Hari Raya Aidilfitri. And when the clothes are gifted to orphans and children from poorer families, these "little things" cease being "small".

This year, the management team from Lost World of Tambun made Hari Raya a really special day for the inmates of the Maahad Daru Salam Home in Tambun. Four days before the celebrations, the team took the children (among them 25 orphans) for an exciting round of shopping at Jusco in Kinta City.

Theme park general manager Calvin Ho, who initiated the project, said the Maahad Daru Salam was chosen because of its proximity to the park. The decision to focus on a charitable deed was spurred by the desire to do

something constructive in the spirit of reconciliation and renewal during the month of Ramadan leading up to Hari Raya

traditional delicacies.

Apart from getting the children something new for Hari Raya, the team also allocated funds to



Members of the press and Lost World management at the "Majlis Berbuka Puasa"

celebrations.

Prior to the shopping expedition at Jusco, Mr Ho and his team of committed employees spent three days selling "lemang" and "rendang" at a stall they set up on the road leading to the theme park. They managed to raise RM9,000 from the sale of 300 packages of the Malay

have a special Hari Raya celebration with them at the home. "We are sure they will remember this Raya for a very long time to come, said Mr Ho.

The management of Lost World of Tambun also organised a "Majlis Berbuka Puasa" for the press at the theme park. Some 30 reporters joined.

continued from page 3

— Steve Derby interview

listens to people like that and it's a great example of perceived power going to somebody's head.

Ipo Echo: Match fixing?

Steve: Let's be honest. Match fixing in Malaysia goes on. People within the game know it. But I am proud to say that in my time here no Perak player was ever accused of match fixing. Especially significant when they are 3 months behind in wages.

The catalyst for match fixing is desperate players being approached by intelligent bookies. If a man has 3 kids, no income and somebody offers big money, the black and white issue suddenly becomes gray! The players were approached and we reported it to the ACA and FAM. But there needs to be stronger political will at these levels to stamp it out. It's a disgrace and an insult to the game.

Ipo Echo: Football in Malaysia is being politicised and that explains why politicians scramble for positions in FAM and its affiliates. Do you think this is an unhealthy trend?

Steve: Key to the future success of Malaysian football is a massive injection of corporate finance. I have seen in many parts of Malaysia how politicians use the game as a vote gaining mechanism. Not all of them, of course, but there

are classic examples which everybody knows about.

Ipo Echo: Finance is a major consideration in professional football. This was not a problem when the Malaya Cup, and then the Malaysia Cup, was played for by amateurs back in the 50s up to the 80s. Why was it less problematic in those days?

Steve: I think there is mythical nostalgia about the "good old days". Reality is that there was no EPL on TV showing superb highlights on great pitches. Neither were there marketing drives and other options to attract fans to other areas.

People often say football was better in the old days. I think that's rubbish, Football is faster and far more physical now.

The best way is to watch the old classic European Cup final between Real Madrid and Eintracht Frankfurt. The players were walking, overweight and the ball was like a cannon ball. Tactically that game was a shambles. Let's stop harping on about the old players. Let's encourage the new ones.

Ipo Echo: Does professional football have a future in Malaysia?

Steve: Yes, absolutely. You're sitting on a goldmine. There's plenty of raw talent out there



Steve's Vietnamese wife who, despite all the problems faced by her husband, still looks back in pleasure on her stay in Ipoh

waiting to be tapped. It's how you optimise it. There must be a massive injection of finance. With money we can look after the players better.

But if you continue to do what's being done today you'll never come out of the rut. You can't expect players to perform well on the kinds of fields we are playing now. It's commitment on the part of the authorities and the association.

Yes, there should be an evolution but you should not change too much. Look at Arsenal.

I wish them well. It's a profession for me so I will always move on but there will be people here for ever.

There are some great people involved in the game here and I hope they are not lost to the game in political change. The great clubs in the world have continuity and they evolve teams, developing young players at an appropriate pace. To quote Shakespeare's, The Tempest – a "sea change" can often be a recipe for disaster. I hope Perak do well in future for the sake of the many genuine fans and young footballers in the state.

They have to look at the training facilities available. The conditions of pitches should be improved. MBI has to play its role. And most importantly the FA should ensure that the players are paid in full and on time.

There are many rich people in and around Ipoh. Corporations like MK Land, Sunway City, KKK etc., can play a big part in the game. However, it's better if the state is involved directly. At least responsibility and commitment are ensured.

Ipo Echo: What is your greatest regret?

Steve: Well, my greatest regret is that we didn't do as well as we could have done. There are several factors. I can't blame the players alone. It is the whole environment.

If it were a lot better we could have gone on to big things - the Asian Football Championship. The office guy was excellent, the president was excellent and the players were excellent. Yes, we could have done better had it been better organised.

Ipo Echo: What are your plans after this?

Steve: My initial move is to Hanoi where I live now. I had talks with teams from Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore and a national team program. One of the exciting things about the game is you cannot predict what is going to happen next. At the beginning of this season I turned down a club in Vietnam that offered double my wages.

But I believe in contracts. I turned the Vietnamese down because I was still with Perak.

I felt loyal to my President. The last few months, however, really tested my loyalty and resolve. In the end you have to do what is ethically correct.

Ipo Echo: So you are taking up the offer from a club side in Vietnam?

Steve: Yes, it's final. I will have left for Hanoi by Wednesday, October 8.

Ipo Echo: Thank you, Steve. We wish you all the luck in Vietnam. Your departure is Vietnam's gain, Perak's decided loss.

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