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ANOTHER DEFICIT BUDGET FOR PERAK



Mentri Besar, Dato' Seri Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin, tabled Pakatan Rakyat's inaugural budget at the State Legislative Assembly on Monday, November 10, 2008.

Photographs by Rosli Mansor



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NIZAR PROMISES GOODIES FOR POOR PERAKIANS REGARDLESS OF THEIR RACE, BELIEFS AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS...

Acknowledging voters' expectations of the coalition's performance, Nizar said that the PR-led government must prove that it was capable of administering the state effectively. It had, therefore, to introduce programmes that were fair, equitable and sensitive to the rakyat's needs.

And coming at a time of global economic uncertainties and diminishing financial returns, convincing the rakyat would be more difficult, he remarked. As such he would direct state representatives and civil servants to work harder. He would endeavour to eradicate abuses such as corruption, cronyism and collusion from festering.

The PR-led government said the MB would administer the state based on the principles of justice, trust, transparency, responsibility and welfare. The budget, he enthused would benefit all Perakians regardless of their race, beliefs and political affiliations.

MEASURES TAKEN

Nizar assured Perakians that measures were being taken to prepare the state for the impending economic downturn. The PR-led government he ascertained was in the process of attracting more investors, both locals and foreigners, to invest in Perak. With investments come job opportunities he enjoined.

The Ninth Malaysia Plan (RMK-9), said Nizar, is in the third year of implementation. Of the RM8.3 billion budgeted, RM1.9 billion had been allocated to Perak. As of September 30, 2008, RM1 billion or 54.39 per cent

of the amount allotted had been expended. A total of 286 of the 1626 projects identified had been completed. At the same time development projects underwritten by the state for RMK-9 amounting to RM448 million had been spent. This is 34 per cent of the total sum of RM1.31 billion earmarked.

GROWTH RATE

The GDP of the state said the MB is closely linked to the growth rate of the nation. The first two quarters of 2008 witnessed a mean rate of 6.7 per cent. This was caused by the buoyant petrol price.

However, when price of the commodity plummeted in October, the growth rate of the nation was severely affected. It now lingers in the 5 to 5.5 percentage range.

Based on current performance, Perak's GDP will stagnate at 5 per cent for the remaining of 2008. As at June 2008 the state received a total sum of RM947 million in investments both from within and without.

Foreign direct investments totalling RM623 million account for over 65 per cent of the total sum. This said the MB would help sustain the state's economic growth rate for 2009, which has been estimated to remain at 3.5 per cent.

ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

One other contributor to Perak's growth is the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) launched by the Prime Minister in July 2007. A sum of RM324.65 million has been approved under NCER, of which

RM135.25 million is allotted to the agricultural sector. RM58.5 million to the tourism sector, RM52 million to education and RM27 million for social developments.

Details of Budget 2009 for the state of Perak are as follow:

a. Estimates of Income and Receivables for 2009 amount to RM711.84 million.

b. Operational Expenditures amount to RM561 million.

c. Development Expenditures amount to RM175.84 million.

A short fall of RM25 million.

The state had undergone four deficit budgets consecutively beginning in 2005 (15.4 million), 2006 (33.59 million), 2007 (34.79 million) and 2008 (39.99 million). Budget 2009, with a shortfall of RM25 million, is the fifth in a row.

The Menteri Besar outlined strategies to implement Budget 2009 after considering the prevalent economic climate. The four strategies proposed are:

a. To make Perak a welfare-orientated state.

b. To be more thrifty in spending and to increase revenue.

c. To improve the quality of life of the rakyat in both urban and rural areas.

d. To prepare an efficient delivery system.

To make Perak a welfare-orientated state, Nizar recommends the following measures. Free

water supply worth RM10 or 20 cubic meters to the poor. Presently some 4,428 households are enjoying this benefit. The number will increase by next year. RM1 million will be set aside for disbursement to the hardcore poor. Allocation of 1000 hectares of land for nine privately funded Chinese schools. Similar methodology will be employed to assist religious community schools (*sekolah agama rakyat*) and Tamil schools.

FINANCIAL AIDS

Poor students, regardless of race and beliefs, will be given a one-off payment of RM1,000 each. Some 6,000 potential college students stand to gain from this scheme. RM 4.09 million will be allocated for the development of Islamic education and this is inclusive of a salary hike for teachers of Islamic kindergartens. RM1 million as funeral expenses for Perakians, regardless of their religious and racial backgrounds. Those who qualify will be paid RM1,000 each for burial expenses.

Allowances for village heads (*ketua kampung*) and secretaries of village development committees will be raised effective next year. A special fund known as *Tabong Khas Kebajikan Rakyat* will be established to provide Perakians with financial aids in times of natural calamities, medical expenses for the chronically ill and assistance for the aged and the handicapped.

One contentious issue, however, is financial aids for dependants of persons detained under the Internal Security Act. The current RM200 monthly stipend for welfare recipients will be increased to RM400.



BN Chief Whip Tajol Rosli

WALKOUT BY TAJOL

Budget 2009, tabled at the latest sitting of the State Legislative Assembly, was debated vigorously by opposing parties before the assembly was adjourned *sine die* on Thursday,

November 14. The three-day session was marked by shouting matches between the Pakatan Rakyat assemblymen and their Barisan Nasional counterparts. It ended in a walkout by the 28 BN assemblymen led by their chief whip, Tajol Rosli.

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IPOH MALI

from Ipoh



by: yu azman b. hamid

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IPOH'S WOEFUL PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

ICW seeks feedback on the viability of the proposed Meru Raya bus terminal

Ipoh City Watch a non-governmental organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life of Ipohites held a public forum at the YMCA hall on Sunday, November 9, 2008. The subject slated for discussion was, "A Totalistic Approach To An Effective Public Transport".

The seminar was organised for the specific reason of seeking public views regarding the state government's fixation on building a new bus terminal at Meru Raya. There has been a groundswell of protests, silent though, over the move which many have considered as spurious and misplaced.

The panelists invited were Victor Chew, an academican, Teoh Ewe Hun, Secretary of the Perak Omnibus Operators Association and Mohammad Zulkarnain Hamzah, from the Association for the Improvement of Mass Transit, Klang Valley.

Victor spoke on public transportation and its impact on the environment. He was in favour of a simple system that serves the



L to R Zulkarnain, Victor Chew, Augustine (moderator) and Teoh

needs of the public like the ubiquitous mini buses of the 1980s in the Klang Valley.

Teoh, however, was more explicit. According to him the problems affecting the industry originated from the government itself. Prior to the mid-1980s the Road Transport Department was the sole authority responsible for managing and coordinating bus services in the country. Today some 13 agencies are involved, di-

rectly or indirectly, in the decision-making process. It is no mean task overseeing the smooth running of the industry, as the responsibility is simply too big to handle. "The Commercial Vehicle Licensing Board, the authority responsible for issuing licenses to operators, don't have the capacity to implement its policies effectively," said Teoh.

Zulkarnain Hamzah vouched for an integrated mass transit system with

a central hub operating at Medan Kidd. "This location is ideal because it is within the centre of gravity of the city," said Zulkarnain. Medan Kidd is well-connected to roads and rail tracks that reach all corners of the city. "The Meru Raya bus terminal," said Zulkarnain, "is more suited to be Ipoh's mass transit gateway for north and southbound intercity commuters".

The panelists were of the opinion that the



Teoh giving his side of the story

Meru Raya bus terminal due to its disadvantages would not be the answer to Ipohites' transport woes.

Ironically, none of the present bus operators was invited to join the newly formed bus consortium named Combined Bus Services Sdn Bhd. Said Teoh the RM38-million Meru Raya terminal will be a privately funded project. It will be fully operational by 2010. The consortium will invest RM150 million to purchase 250 air-condi-

tioned buses to ply the city routes. It has three years to fulfill this requirement. A memorandum of understanding was signed by both parties in September.

FATHOL ZAMAN



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EDITORIAL

In his Budget 2009 speech, Mentri Besar Dato' Seri Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin, trumpeted his plan of making Perak a welfare-orientated state by 2009. In simplistic terms it would have meant that the unemployed and the aged would receive cash aid from the state. This, however, is not the case. Those who stand to gain are people at the bottom of the social ladder.

Some of the benefits promised are free water supply, burial expenses, cash for victims of natural disasters and medical expenses for the terminally ill. And this is one true goody, funds for dependants of ISA detainees. This raised the ire of the opposing BN assemblymen who objected vehemently. Dr Wan Norashikin (BN - Kampong Gajah) wanted the Anti-Corruption Agency to investigate.

Tajol Rosli had termed Nizar's Budget 2009 as

GIVE VOTERS A BREAK YBs

"weak, shallow and simple" in spite of a correspondingly lower deficit amount of RM25 million. Tajol, during his tenure as Mentri Besar, oversaw four deficit budgets from 2005 to 2008. The 2008 budget had a short fall of RM40 million. Yet he had the audacity to dismiss Nizar's Budget 2009 as shallow.

The three-day sitting of the State Legislative Assembly was characterised by shouting matches between opposing benches. And the climax was a walkout by the 28 BN assemblymen on the final day of the assembly. Not a day passed without some forms of objections from the floor. It could be in reference to an insignificant passage in the Budget speech or in response to some utterances by Nizar or his colleagues.

The explosive nature of the assembly is food for thought. It makes one wonder whether the Perak State

Legislative Assembly has become an open arena for opposing politicians to pit their vocal strength.

Since PR came to power after the March 8 General Election, the conduct of business in the august house has been anything but cordial. The BN politicians are still in denial mode and behave as if they are still in power. Their opposite numbers, the PR politicians, feel that they are still the Opposition. This dichotomy has come to plague the Assembly. And should it continue in this manner future sittings will be reduced to the level of a school debate. Nothing substantive will come from any discussion.

The maturity of the Yang Berhormats is being questioned. Hopefully, level heads will prevail and our elected representatives will get to do their work of administering the state effectively. Come on YBs, give us a break.



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THINKING ALOUD

By G. Sivapragasam



ICONIC MERDEKA PAINTING

On Friday, September 12, 2008 Datuk Zaid Ibrahim officially unveiled an art piece simply entitled "The Merdeka Painting" at the Petronas Art Gallery. It has been on public display since Merdeka Day on August 31, 2008. To describe the painting as large would be a gross understatement. Spread over 12 panels of 244 cm by 122 cm each when joined together it is approximately 96 feet by 48 feet. A special wall has to be built to accommodate the painting. Set among iconic Malaysian objects are 261 personalities who had in some way or another influenced the making of this Nation. Executed by well known Australian artist, Shen Jiawei, in collaboration with his wife, Wang Lan and his friend Wang Xu, both artists in their own right, the mural explains history through the medium of art. It was commissioned by Dato' Yap Lim Sen who was responsible for the restoration of Sydney's Queen Victoria Building, a masterpiece of Victorian architecture.

Columnist, Sivapragasam, spoke to Dato' Yap about this painting recently.

Siva: *When did you first get the idea of a mural?*

YLS: To pinpoint a date would be quite impossible but if I were to hazard a guess I would say that it would be sometime in 2004. You must understand that an idea for something like this does not emerge all at once. You begin with a vague notion and gradually develop it over time and then an opportunity comes along to make it possible.

Siva: *Then when did the vague notion you talk about begin to crystallise?*

YLS: Sometime in 2002 I acquired a painting by Shen Jiawei called 'The Third World' and placed it in my office in Ipoh. This painting depicting 92 third world personalities never failed to arouse the curiosity of my visitors. This started me thinking: "Why not complete one on Malaysia?"

With this thought I approached Jiawei whether he would undertake a commission for this which he did but only after much persuasion.

Siva: *What was the basic driving force behind the mural idea? What were you aiming to achieve by sponsoring such a project?*

YLS: It is an expression in art form. It encapsulates the history of Malaysia, tracing it from its early colonial past to the present time. Spread over 12 panels the painting endeavours to depict Malaysian history from every conceivable aspect - political, social, economics, sports, entertainment and the arts.

In addition to the aesthetic it is intended to

evoke an interest in our social history. Though every effort has been made to include in the work all who had influenced Malaysian history it is still a 'version' of the few of us who had a hand in the painting. Why some were included and others excluded will be a matter of controversy and will forever remain a source of conversation and debate.

Siva: *Did you canvass the thoughts of other Malaysians, or was it essentially a one-man sponsorship endeavour?*

YLS: Though I initiated the project I must confess that the work represents the contribution of many. These would include historians, politicians, academicians, leaders in society and ordinary people.

Siva: *Clearly, you would have had to direct the content factor as you would have been the main reference point for the artists as far as historic developments of the nation were concerned. Is this correct?*

YLS: Only to an extent. I am not a historian and though my life experience enabled me to make some contribution it was limited. So I got historians and other experts involved in the effort.

When it came to deciding who should be depicted in the painting I sought the help of the late Tan Sri Dr. Noordin Sopiee of ISIS. He was instrumental in putting together a list that covered all segments of our society. Other people suggested additional names, which led me to consult Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Khoo Kay Kim.

More names were added, and finally I myself added a few names of people that I have known as I felt that their quiet and ordinary lives spent out of the limelight forms a significant part the Malaysian story.

The artist, too, played an important role. This work is not merely a collage of personalities. The characters had to be interpreted and presented onto the canvas from an historical perspective. To achieve this, the artist had to familiarise himself with the history of Malaysia, a country that had never previously attracted his attention.

Jiawei addressed this with intensity, reading up on his subject and developing an enthusiasm for the project. When he was ready to begin, he came to Malaysia, accompanied by his artist wife, Wang Lan, and his friend, Wang Xu, who were collaborating with him on the painting. The trio spent ten days meeting and talking to people and getting a general feel of the country.

Siva: *Shen Jiawei is today one of Australia's better known artists. Can you tell us a little about him and perhaps the circumstances that led you to getting him to undertake the project?*

YLS: In May 1998 the art critic, John McDonald, wrote a piece in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper about a subculture of Chinese emigre artists. All had difficulty getting their work recognised and those with poor language skills had to do menial jobs to make ends meet. John arranged for me to meet a number of these artists,

including Shen Jiawei who was regarded by the others as a senior figure.

Jiawei had by then already completed a painting that depicted Quong Tart, a 19th century Chinese migrant who operated a legendary tea house in the Queen Victoria Building. I was then running Ipoh Limited in Sydney, the firm that restored this elegant monument of Victorian architecture.

In the years that followed, Jiawei would take part in various art competitions in Sydney and regularly have his work hung in the annual Archibald Prize competition for portraiture at the Art Gallery of NSW - which is Australia's oldest and most prestigious art award. He has also won the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize.

In more recent times he has become so well-known for his portraits that he was commissioned to paint Princess Mary of Denmark-Tasmania's contribution to the world of European royalty.

Despite his talent for capturing a likeness, Jiawei's chief ambition as an artist is to create large-scale history paintings. In 2000, Ipoh Limited commissioned him to do a mural-sized history painting, incorporating many of Sydney's most famous figures of the past and present. The work was installed on the first floor of the Queen Victoria Building, where it remains today.

This was, however, only a prelude to Jiawei's most ambitious history painting, The Third World, which he completed in 2002. Jiawei has long had a fascination with history,

and many of the 92 heroes and villains of so-called "Third World" politics depicted in this work are interacting with each other in subtle ways that only someone with a passion for history might notice.

Jiawei was proud of this work and I think he hoped it might be acquired by an Australian museum or public gallery. This, however, did not happen. As I said before I acquired this painting.

Since my inspiration for the Merdeka Painting came from Jiawei's 'Third World' who better to realise my painting than Jiawei.

Siva: *There are a number of prominent Perakian figures in the mural. Can you name them? Why were these particular people chosen to be represented? Who chose them?*

YLS: These days, when origin and identity have become somewhat contentious issues, it may be prudent for me to explain how I define a Perakian.

There is no ambiguity in respect of those who were born, bred and made their whole life here. But then there are those like Wang Gungwu who was born in Surabaya, Indonesia, grew up in Ipoh and has spent most of his life elsewhere. And then there are those like Michelle Yeoh who was born and grew up here but made her mark elsewhere. And again, there is Wu Lien Teh who was neither born nor bred here but made his life here. And yet again, there are those like Karim Raslan who was neither born, grew up or made his life here but considers

continued on page 9

Musings



See Foon

Tucked away at the foot of the beautiful limestone hills of Tambun, on a sprawling 4-acre plot of land is a healing haven of peace and tranquility with the simple sign of AYUR Centre. Horses graze lazily in an enclosed area to the right of a modest bungalow house cocooned by rambutan trees as bird song fill the air.

Here Dr. Shiva Prasad. B.A.M.S. administers to people from all over Ipoh, Malaysia and overseas who come to rest, recuperate and recover from both physical and mental stresses and disease. An Ayurvedic Physician from the Ayurveda College in Coimbatore, India, a qualification gained after 6 years of intensive study similar to an allopathic medical degree, Dr. Prasad waxes lyrical when speaking on his favorite subject.

WAY OF LIFE

Ayurveda, known as the Art and Science of Living, claims to be the world's oldest system of healing. Its origins can be found in the Vedic texts which were written in India over 6000 years ago. Ayurveda deals with the totality of the human being: body, mind and spirit, and its focus and treatment modalities all aim to achieve balance in these three aspects by strengthening the body's natural healing abilities.

The uniqueness of Ayurveda lies in its util-



Front entrance

ity. It is useful in preserving the healthy person. It is also useful in treating disease when a person succumbs to illness. In treating the person as whole, acknowledging the interdependent nature of body, mind and spirit, and not as a group of individual body parts, Ayurveda is essentially a way of life that incorporates healthy diet, natural herbal remedies, exercise and meditation.

BALANCING ENERGIES

When it comes to the physical body, Ayurveda believes in balancing the three **Doshas** or Energies which are **Vata** (Air Energy), **Pitta** (Heat Energy) and **Kapha** (Liquid Energy). When these three energies are in balance, the person is healthy. It is only when imbalance occurs as a result of the stresses and strains of modern life, that "disease" occurs.

DIAGNOSIS IN AYURVEDA

In Ayurveda, diagnosis and treatment is always individual and extensive. The 3 main causes of disease are related to 'overuse', 'disuse', and 'misuse' of faculties and influence of seasonal changes.

At my consultation, Dr. Prasad took a very

HEALING HAVEN

An Ayurvedic Centre right at Ipoh's Doorstep



Dr. Shiva Prasad

gently cleaning out one's system but unless one combines it with diet as recommended by the physician, the results are not as significant.

OIL TREATMENTS

Oil treatments at the Ayur Center are not your everyday oil massages. First of all you lie on a wooden bed carved out of one solid block of Neem wood which is known for its antiseptic properties. Then one or two gentle therapists anoint you with warm herbal oil and work in synchrony as they soothe your aching joints and bones. This treatment, known as **Abhyangam** helps in maintaining youthfulness, alleviates arthritic pain, lubricates joints, improves sleep and gives luster to complexion and skin. For reducing fat and water retention in the body, the massage is given using herbal powders. The interesting feature to note is the use of Mung bean powder for removing the oil after the massage. Unlike soap, this does not dehydrate our skin and instead leaves it smooth and glowing.

Other oil treatments include **Shiro Dhara** a treatment to which I am partial, where herbal oil is dripped on the forehead in a continuous stream.

This helps in relaxation, effectively fighting stress as well as treating stroke, Parkinsons, Paralysis, Cervical Spondylosis, Migraine and other neurological disorders. **Pizhiicil** involves the pouring of the herbal oil on the body, a rejuvenative therapy helpful in musculo-skeletal conditions, like lumbar spondylosis, low back pain, arthritis, paralysis, sciatica and **Kizhi** are warm fomentations which consist of cloth wrapped parcels of either medicated rice and milk, herbal leaves or herbal powders patted over the entire body. Kizhi helps in nourishment of cells and degenerative conditions.

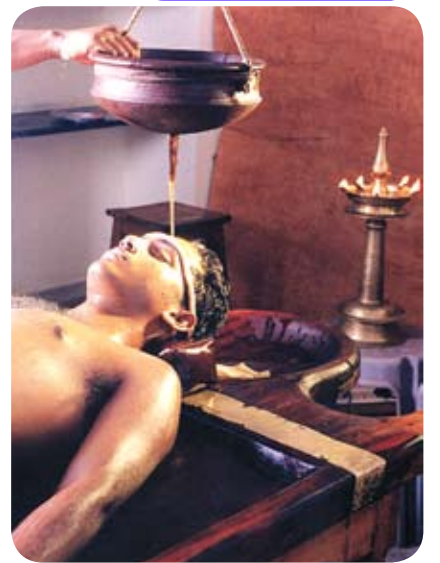
HEALING PROGNOSIS

While Ayurvedic treatment does not promise quick and instant cures for all disease and herbal medicines take time to work its gentle healing, anyone wishing to get off the allopathic treadmill and look for alternative solutions to their health issues would do well to give Ayurveda a try. They have

very promising results with stroke victims, arthritic issues, hypertension and the current scourge – diabetes – has a healing prognosis of 80-85% stabilization without the need for medication, if treated within 3-6 months of medical diagnosis.

The Ayur Center is a collaboration with Arya Vaidya Pharmacy, Coimbatore, South India and has branches in Petaling Jaya, Seremban and Butterworth. The centre in Tambun have in-patient facilities and provides stay-in or day-visit rejuvenation packages for 3-7 days. Longer stays for intensive detoxification programs are also available. Charges for oil treatments vary between RM85-RM120 per session depending on the complexity of the treatment involved. All treatments are preceded by a free consultation with the Ayurvedic physician.

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FACTS ABOUT DEMENTIA

*Some sobering facts about Dementia, a disease that affects about 50,000 Malaysians.
The local chapter requires your help to build a care centre for care-givers.....*

Dementia is a progressive brain dysfunction which results in a restriction of daily activities and in most cases leads to long term care. Many diseases can result in dementia, the most common one being Alzheimer's disease.

The probability of suffering from dementia increases with advancing age. Dementia predominantly occurs after the age of 65. Prevalence of dementia is reported as 5% among 65 years old, and doubles every five years thereafter. World Health Organisation estimates that 18 million people suffer from dementia worldwide. About 50,000 Malaysians are affected by this condition says the Alzheimer's Disease Foundation of Malaysia (ADFM).

CAUSES

The slow progressive destruction of nerve cells in the brain, leads to the symptoms of dementia. As a result the patient's brain ceases to function normally. The most common cause being the Alzheimer's disease followed by vascular (mini-strokes) dementia. There are many other causes such as Lewy-body disease, Parkinson's disease, HIV, vitamin and thyroid deficiencies, genetic, head injury, alcoholism and so on. In most cases the exact

cause remains largely unexplained. Everybody is at risk of developing this disease as they grow old.

People with dementia, suffer from poor memory and orientation, limitations of concentration; impaired planning, judgment and activities of daily living. It will later develop to personality changes.

Some of the early warning symptoms of Dementia are memory loss; affecting skills and activities, disorientated to time and place, repeatedly asking the same question, changes in mood and behaviour and loss of initiative.

HOW TO DIAGNOSE

Patients affected by dementia are usually not able to visit a physician on their own. This is where the support of the relatives

is important - their output can make the diagnosis easier. The physician will conduct a general physical and neurological examination in addition to detail medical history.

TREATMENT

Dementia is a progressive condition that cannot be cured. Medicines are available to slow down its progression and to improve brain function.

The majority of dementia patients are being cared for by their spouses or relatives. The disease makes high demands on the relatives because it affects diverse aspects of patient's as well as care giver's life. They would need further information and advice on how to cope optimally at different stages of the disease.

SUPPORT GROUP

The Alzheimer's Disease Foundation Malaysia (ADFM), a non-profit organisation registered in July 1997, caters for this need. In Ipoh ADFM - Perak branch was started in November 2006. The patients and their care givers meet up every third Saturday of the month between 2 and 4 pm in Ipoh Specialist Hospital. The primary aim of ADFM is to provide an opportunity for the care givers to get together to share their pleasant and painful experiences.

We require a day care centre to cater to the needs of victims of Dementia. In conjunction with this, we are organising a fund raising dinner on Saturday, December 20, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at Dewan Banquet, Bangunan Perak, Darul

Ridzuan. With a dedicated care centre it would help ease the burden of the care givers. And conversely it would help improve the quality of life of patients with Alzheimer's Disease.

Dr Esther Ebenezer

Anyone interested to help in any possible ways please contact the writer at these numbers:
05- 243 2635,
013-520 1220 (Mobile).
e-mail:
esthergunamy@yahoo.com



Care givers getting together for support and encouragement

TWIN REGISTRY LAUNCHED

Hoping for more twins to register.

The National Malaysian Twin Registry (NMTR) celebrated its official launching recently. On the registry's first anniversary, ten families with twins, ranging in age between 2 to 12 years turned up.

There to greet them were Hovid's Manager, Mr Andrew and Dr Shayesteh Jahanfar, the NMTR director.

Dr Shayesteh gave a talk on the biological aspects of having twins. The parents participated actively in the discussion that followed. Every parent related their experience of bringing up twins and the challenges faced by them.

While the parents were enjoying the rapport and bonding, the kids were given snacks and goodie bags filled with party poppers. They then proceeded to show their



talents by participating in a drawing competition.

The drawing was judged and the winner was Justin Leuk. Who drew a portrait of one of his twin sisters. After the drawing competition, the kids had a good time playing an old fashion game of "passing the parcel". It was won by Selina, also a twin.

At the end of the event, NMTR officially celebrated its launch with the cutting of a cake. The registry hopes to organise more activities for its members in the future.

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HELP! MY KIDS ARE TV ADDICTS!

In many homes, the TV is perpetually turned on the whole day. Our columnist finds out how much is too much TV and shares tips on how to curb TV viewing in a positive way



My sister who lives in Brunei was lamenting to me over a month ago about her sons' severe addiction to the idiot box. They were apparently getting out of control with their Ben10 and Pokemon DVDs, playing the same few videos numerous times a day. She was at her wits end with them and told me of a new TV schedule she had just devised in order to curb their TV addiction.

Her plan was to keep TV to a maximum of one hour daily and everyone in the family would take turns to choose their preferred programme. Their

new TV Schedule went like this:

Mon: Daddy's choice
Tues: Kids' Music Class CDs
Wed: Second son's choice
Thurs: Ben 10 day
Fri: NO TV DAY!
Sat: Older son's choice
Sun: Mommy's choice

I caught up with her recently and she was proud to report that after 5 weeks of keeping to the schedule, her boys had gotten used to the routine and actually turned the telly off after an hour of viewing! (I told

her I will be sending my kids to Brunei to live with her for a couple of weeks!)

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH TV?

Of course, television, in moderation, can be a good thing: Preschoolers can get help learning the alphabets, primary schoolers can learn about wildlife on nature shows, and secondary schoolers can learn about current events on news channels. No doubt about it — TV can be an excellent educator and entertainer. So how much is too much TV?

The American

Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that kids under 2 years old should not watch any TV, and that those older than 2 watch no more than 1 to 2 hours a day of quality programming. It advocates that the first 2 years of life are critical for brain development, and TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and basic human interaction which encourage healthy physical and social development.

Too much television can be detrimental, as advised by the AAP, and here are some reasons why:

- Children who consistently spend more than 4 hours per day watching TV are more likely to be overweight.
- Kids who view violent acts are more likely to show aggressive behaviour and also fear that the world is scary and that something bad will happen to them.
- TV characters often depict risky behaviours, such as smoking and drinking, and also reinforce gender-roles and racial stereotypes.

TEACHING GOOD TV HABITS

Children's advocates



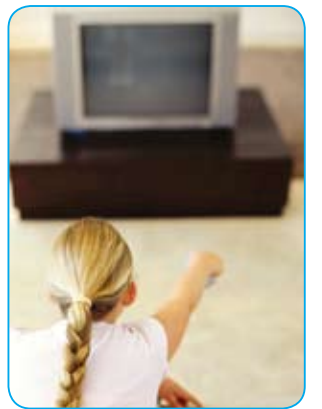
are divided when it comes to solutions. Many reckon more hours dedicated to educational programming is fine, while there are those on the other extreme who assert that absolutely no TV is the best solution. The latter, in my opinion, is an outdated view.

Some practical ways I have found helpful to make TV-viewing more productive are:

- Keep TVs out of bedrooms.
- Turn the TV off during meals.
- No TV while doing homework.
- Treat TV as a privilege to be earned — not a right. Eg. TV is allowed only after chores and homework are completed.
- Impose a Sunday ban.
- Set a good example by limiting your own TV viewing.

• Come up with a family TV schedule that you all agree upon each week. Then, put up the schedule in a visible area (my sister's recommendation!)
 • Watch TV together and use it as bonding time with them.
 • Talk to kids about what they see on TV and share your own beliefs and values.
 • Offer fun alternatives to television. Suggest playing a board game, reading or working on their favourite hobbies.

WERN SZE GILL



Malayan Railways Berhad will inaugurate their KL-Ipoh-KL Shuttle train effective December 1 2008. The journey will begin from

IPOH – KL SHUTTLE TRAIN HAS ARRIVED

KL Sentral to Ipoh.

There will be five shuttles per day for each destination operating from Monday to Friday only. The departure and arrival times from Ipoh are as follows -

- 1) 5 am/7.56 am
- 2) 9 am/11.56 am
- 3) 1 pm/3.56 pm
- 4) 5 pm/7.56 pm
- 5) 9 pm/11.56 pm.

The departure and

arrival times from KL to Ipoh :

- 1) 5am/08.00am
- 2) 9am/12 pm
- 3) 1.30pm/04 pm
- 4) 5 pm/8.00 pm
- 5) 9.45 pm/12.45am

According to Encik Sabri Muhamud KTMB's Marketing and Operations Intercity Executive Ipoh, the shuttle service has four coaches.

One coach is catered

for the Economy Class and consists of seventy four seats costing RM10 each. The other three coaches with 54 seats per coach are for second class. Fare costs RM18. There are no concession fares for senior citizens or children. Bookings can be made 60 days in advance.

According to Ipoh Station Master Encik Nur Anuar effective December

1 the ticket counter will be opened from midnight to cater for the 5am passengers. The journey to KL will stop over at Batu Gajah, Kampar, Tapah Road, Sungkai, Slim River, Tg malim, K. Kubu Baru, Sg Buloh, Kepong Sentral and KL Old.

December 1 to 31 there will be a promotional one way fare of RM1 offered for the first and last train services. The offer is only available at KL Old and Ipoh stations and is on a first come first serve basis for 100 passengers.

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SECOND BEST IN THE COUNTRY

It was worth the hours of training and practice for the debaters from SMK Methodist (ACS) Ipoh. They had to stay back at schools, and at times skipped meals, to prepare and to sharpen their oratorical skills in preparation for a tough national-level competition.

The debaters from ACS Ipoh represented Perak at the finals of the Dato Wira National Level Debate which was held at Perdana Resort, Kota Bharu from November 1 to 4. They proudly walked home as the 2nd best debating team in Malaysia! They thrashed Terengganu and Negeri Sembilan before crossing swords with debaters from Selangor in the finals.

Perak was represented



The winning ACS team posing with their mentor, Ms Foo Suit Mooi

by fourth formers Krizun Loganathan, Jagraj Singh Dhillon and fifth former Mohd Nor Adlan. The reserve speakers were Choong Wai Keong and

Wong Mun Choong.

The motion debated in the final was, "This house believes that good things come to those who wait". Krizun Loganathan was

awarded the "Best National Debater". The young orators attributed their victory to adviser cum coach, Ms. Foo Suit Mooi.

Lower-Sixth Formers

SPORTS

MALAKOFF POWERMAN MALAYSIA 2008

Malakoff Powerman Malaysia is being regarded as a premier dualthon event in South East Asia. It has succeeded in attracting many world-class athletes...

South African, Jason Spong sprang a surprise to beat favourite and world number 1, Andy Sutz of Switzerland, to capture the Malakoff Powerman Malaysia 2008 Men's Elite title in a very fast time of 2 hours 43 minutes and 13 seconds (2:43:13). Sutz could only manage third place in 2:55:48, behind Anthony Le Duey of France (2:47:42). Sutz, who trains and races in Europe and North America, was unprepared for the draining effects of the weather.

Spong, a past winner of Malakoff Powerman Malaysia Men's Elite race in 2005, took the heat and humidity to advantage leading from start to finish. He said he had focused on winning from the word go.

"The weather here is similar to South Africa and with Joerie Vansteelant out of the race, I was confident that I had a definite edge over the rest. I set my mind on winning," said Spong.

Vansteelant was champion at last year's meet also held in Manjung. The 26-year-old Belgian bagged top prizes at the Powerman Ohio (USA), Powerman Weyer (Australia), second placing at Powerman Geel (Belgium) and at Powerman Horst (Netherlands) he was third. He is currently ranked second in Powerman World Duathlon and ITU World Duathlon rankings.

Malaysia's Sharom Abdullah did the country proud by coming in 6th with a respectable time of 3:00:34 against a strong in-

ternational field. Shahrom, currently the top Malaysian runner in the Powerman series, was pleased with his achievement. He was seventh last year.

The gruelling 11km run-64km bike-10km run duathlon race saw its highest participation with 673 participants. It was held at Seri Manjung on Sunday, November 9.

The Malakoff Powerman Malaysia's women's elite race was dominated by Rebecca Preston of Australia. She has won numerous Ironman triathlon titles and her supporters were thrilled that she could also shine in the duathlon. Her time of 3 hours 9 minutes and 41 seconds (3:09:41) was a full six minutes faster than second-placed Victoria Beck of New



Flagging - off the run

Zealand (3:15:52).

The top three finishers in the Men's and Women's Elite race of the Malakoff Powerman Malaysia received USD5,000 (1st), USD3,000 (2nd) and

USD1,200 (3rd) each.

Malakoff Corporation Berhad's Managing Director Ahmad Jauhari Yahya said that the growth in the number of participants and the quality of

the field has confirmed Malakoff Powerman Malaysia's place as the premier duathlon event in South East Asia. **P K**

More pics at
[ipohecho on line](http://ipohecho.online)

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Hot and Cold

continued from page 4... **ICONIC MERDEKA PAINTING**



himself a Perakian because of his family roots.

Employing a somewhat liberal formula, I would consider the following in the painting to be Perakians.

His Royal Highness the Sultan of Perak Raja Azlan Shah, the Raja Muda of Perak Raja Nazrin, Tun Mohamed Suffian, Panglima Bukit Gantang Haji Abdul Wahab, Raja Mohar, Wang Gungwu, Lee Loy Seng, Chin Peng, Wu Lien the Karthigesus - AC and Sybil, Aminuddin Baki,

Ultan Paul Rosario, Lau Pak Khuan, John Thivy, DR and SP Seenivasagam, Ling Liong Sik, Khoo Kay Kim, Lim Keng Yaik, Lee Lam Thye, Lim See Yan, Michelle Yeoh, Marina Chin, Jeffery Cheah, Lat, Tan Yee Khan, Ng Boon Bee, Karim Raslan, V Jeyaratnam, Yeoh Jin Leng, M Rajamani, Lee Oi Hian, Rashid Maidin, Abdulla CD, Mohd Hanif Omar, Ahmad Azizuddin, Nawawi Mat Awin and myself.

They were chosen by the same people and, ex-

cept for me, for the same reasons the others in the painting were selected - for having played a role in the history of this nation. I am in the painting in the role of an observer.

Siva: Chin Peng appears twice. Historically, were you at any time concerned about Government reaction on the matter of Chin Peng's inclusion? After all he has been banned from entering the country. So far nothing has been said officially about his inclusion in the project. Is it because nobody has spot-

ted Chin Peng yet? Or if they have, what has been the official reaction?

YLS: I think it would be quite difficult not to spot him in the painting.

The painting is neither political nor intended to make any kind of judgment.

It is a depiction of the many people who lived and made an impact on the nation's history.

I must, however, add that Chin Peng played another role in so far as this painting is concerned. The artist was originally from

Communist China and had little knowledge of Malaysia, its history or its personalities.

But he had heard of Chin Peng and this provided a starting point in his research for the project. He met him and this meeting probably provided him a sound base to begin his work.

Siva: What has been the general response to the painting?

YLS: Generally enthusiastic. But it also revealed that many, especially among the youth, have no

knowledge of the personalities in the painting.

Siva: Have you considered a nation-wide tour of the work along the lines of the sort of programme often undertaken for art shows in Australia?

YLS: At this moment there is no plan for such a tour. This is a huge painting and exhibiting it would require suitable venues.

Unfortunately there are not many locations in this country with appropriate facilities to exhibit a large work such as this.

It is food for thought.

PHASES & FACES

ROTARY CLUB'S "PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARD"



Samasivam (center) with fellow recipients Mazlan Zainal (l) and Fauzal Saari (r) posing with their meritorious awards

The Rotary Club of Greentown presented their annual "Pride of Workmanship Awards" to 21 members of the Perak Fire and Safety Department recently.

Selection for the award is based on the club's "four-way test" criteria towards promoting the qualities of honesty, fairness, bringing about social benefits and promoting goodwill between the government and community.

The Greentown Chapter has been presenting the award for the last 15 years to deserving de-

partments and individuals in recognition of their contributions.

Perak Rotary Club President Dr Fauziah Khairuddin, in her opening address, declared that the club recognised the challenges that the fire department's staff faced when saving properties and lives of fire victims. Other than an excellent work ethic, they also needed a strong sense of courage.

According to the Director of Fire and Rescue Department, Dato' Hamzah bin Abu Bakar, the twenty one recipients

were selected from a total of 1,500 statewide. Public expectations of the department he said, were high.

One of the recipients, A Samasivam 51, had been with the fire department for 30 years. His most memorable operation was in the 80s at Jalan Raja Laut Kuala Lumpur when he rescued four Indonesian workers from a waste water sump. "The attempt had a time limit and was dangerous but all four were saved".

JAG

More pics at ipohecho.com

PEDIGREE DOGS FOR SHOW

A fitting finale for show dogs at Yuk Choy School

With some 220 dogs under one roof, one would expect a dogfight or plenty of barking but it was not the case at the 268th and 269th MKA All-Breed Championship Show held at SMJK Yuk Choy recently.

The canines, from the fierce-looking Doberman to the calmer Miniature Bull Terrier and Boxer, were a picture of good behaviour. No barking and no biting. All were in complete silence. The dogs on show, in their respective groups, were focused and they seemed to know what to do to impress the judges and their owners.

It was a lesson for all - that patience, training and handling do bring out the best even from sheep-dogs and cattledogs like Belgian Shephard Dogs and Shetland Sheep Dogs.

For toy and companion category, dogs like Chihuahua, French Bulldog, Pekingese and Shih Tzu, were given first class treatment. Besides talking and whispering to their dogs, the owners lovingly pampered their "toys" by having their fur groomed and tied into knots. And to ensure that the fur stayed in place, a hair dryer was used.

For Rafaella, the



Taiwanese Mr Alex Yu-Feng Zee, an experienced All-Breed Judge, looks for a winner.



Look at how dogs are pampered.

French Bulldog owned by Franky Kang, it was an uncomfortable day as the high humidity made the dog restless. Kang sprayed water onto his body. The breeder from Kedah told Ipoh Echo that all the bull-

dogs he has stay in air-conditioned rooms which are switched on 24 hours. He feeds them with premium dog food directly imported from the United States.

More pics at ipohecho.com

PK

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Time : 7pm till 11 pm
Price : RM 100.00 nett per adult (Inclusive of Wine) / Live Band & Strollers

Note: There will be a surcharge of RM 50.00 nett per room per night during Super Peak Period (20th-31st December 2008)
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LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Sir,

WHY THE DOUBLE STANDARD?

I am a pensioner and suffer from hypertension. Being a former civil servant I am eligible for health-care provided for by the Government. Presently

I am on medication. I get my usual supply of Micardis 40mg tablets from the Poliklinik Komuniti Greentown. Usually, the attending medical officer would prescribe me a month's supply or more depending on my need. However, during my last visit on

November 12, I was only given a 14-day supply. I returned to the clinic three days later to enquire about the balance but was rudely told off by the dispenser. He said that the clinic had run out of Micardis 40mg. He told me to buy it outside. Such rudeness is uncalled for.

Several questions come to my mind. Can the dispenser tell patients to buy prescribed medicines themselves outside? Don't the clinic stock up enough medicinal supplies for dispensing? Must senior citizens be treated so shabbily by those in authority?

The conduct of offic-

ers at the clinic is questionable. One day while waiting in line for my husband's medicine I saw a patient receiving several strips of the said medicine prescribed for my stroke-stricken husband. Earlier on I was told that the particular medicine was no longer in stock. I was

shocked.

Does the community polyclinic practise double standard? You have one set of rules for the rich and influential and another for the aged and the underprivileged.

Jennifer Chan
Ipoh

ACHIEVEMENTS

NATIONAL UNDER-16 CHAMPION

SMJK Sam Tet Ipoh did the state proud by emerging champion three times in a row



Perak (black) and Pahang (white) posing before the final

The National Under-16 Softball Championship was held at the Universiti Teknikal Malaysia,

Malacca from November 16 to 18.

A total of 23 teams, consisting of 12 boys' teams and 11 girls' teams,

participated. Perak was represented by boys from SMJK Sam Tet, Ipoh.

The Perak team wrestled the boys' championship

title for the third consecutive year. They won it in 2006 in Ipoh and again in 2007 at Jitra, Kedah.

In the preliminary rounds they beat Pahang B 17-0, Penang 5-2 and Johor A 5-1. In the second round, they trashed Johor C 6-0 and Terengganu 2-0.

In the final the Perak boys trounced Pahang A 7-6 after a hard fought match. The team is coached by Choo Weng Yeen who is also the Secretary of the Perak Softball Association. Perakians take pride in the team's achievement.

CHOO W. YEEN

PERAK CHESS CHAMPION 2008

Ahmad Fadzil wins chess laurel

Every year around this time, Perakians all over Malaysia would pack up their bags and head for home. This singular question would bug them... Had I done and learned enough to be the next chess champion of Perak?

Many would have played in numerous tournaments throughout the year. Some would end their journey in disappointment. A few would relish in having been placed among the top 10. One, however,



Winner-Ahmad Nayan

would return home as the state champion for 2008.

This grueling battle of the mind takes nine rounds over two days. Each round over an hour to complete.



Players pitting their wits on the chess boards

This year's event took place on November 8 and 9 at Jabatan Belia dan Sukan opposite Stadium Perak. It was organised by the Perak International

Chess Association.

Ahmad Fadzil Nayan was the winner. Runners up were S. Subramaniam and Fong Yit San.

RAYMOND SIEW

SPECIAL OPERATION TO NAB CRIMINALS

Seven criminal gangs crippled in Perak

Chief Police Officer of Perak Dato' Zulkifli, at a press conference recently, announced a string of successes in the fight against crime in the state.

The police chief said that three murder cases had been solved with the arrest of three gangs and their members. One of the gangs was involved in the recent murder of a cashier at a Petronas petrol station along Jalan Kuala Kangsar. Three men were detained. A parang and a helmet

were seized from a house in Bercham.

In another case, the burnt body of a victim was found in a mining area at Batu Putih, Kampar. Two suspects were apprehended while another two are still at large.

Zulkifli confirmed the arrest of another four gangs which were responsible for 91 robberies, snatch thefts and house breakings. Their activities had been crippled.

The success was the result of a special operation

launched in early October.

One of the gangs had 13 members comprising 11 Indians and two Chinese ranging in age between 16 to 21. This gang was active around Ipoh and Sungai Siput. Of the 13, two were students who were sitting for their SPM examinations. They were released under police bail.

According to the CPO the Police had resolved 13 criminal cases that occurred in Ipoh and Sungai Siput. A total of 36 people had been apprehended.



Perak CPO Dato' Zulkifli displaying photographs of two suspects in the Kampar murder case.

The two-month special operation had netted a huge number of bad hats in the

state. Kudos to the Perak Police.

JAG

IPOH DIARY
(DECEMBER 1 TO 16)

Community Weight Loss Challenge.

Educational classes to provide participants with nutritional information. Most suited for those who want to lose weight and lead a healthy lifestyle. Proceeds from the challenge will be awarded as cash prizes to winners. It is a new concept in fighting the bulge and obesity. Class held once a week on Mondays between 8.30 am to 9.30 am. For details please call Ei Lynn at 012-523 1640.

High-Tea Talk. Talk on "Self Imaging and Grooming To Enhance Your Better Future" by International image consultant, Carmen Loh. Participants will discover their "colour" for next year - Year of the Ox.. Date/Time: Tuesday, December 2 at 2 pm. Venue: Syuen Hotel, Ipoh. For details please call Rain at 013-9863808, Shirllay at 012-5107330 or Kolej Syuen at 05-2548486.

Ipoh International Veteran 9 A-Side Soccer Carnival 2008. Organised by Ipoh City Council. Carnival will be held at Ipoh Padang from Saturday, December 13 to Sunday, December 14. Strictly for male players above 40 years old. Entrance Fee: RM500 per team. Closing Date: Wednesday, December 10. For details please call Mohd Syahrir at 05-2442335/012-4700470 or Syarifuddin Helmi at 05-2442212/019-4761206

Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2008. The 1st Asian Indoor Hockey Tournament will be held at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh from December 10 to 14. Teams from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Iran will be participating. Come and witness some high-calibre matches involving the various teams. Admission: Free.

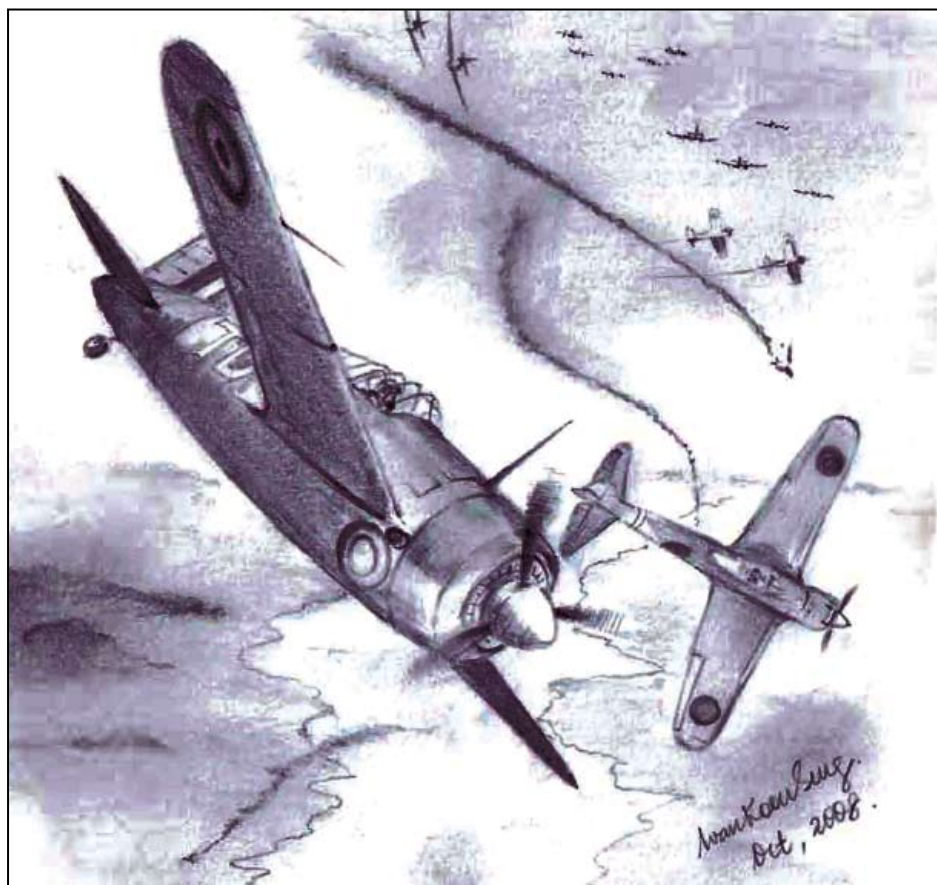
National TaeKwan-Do (ITF) Competition 2008. The competition is jointly organised by the Perak TaeKwan-Do Association and the Ipoh TaeKwan-Do Club. Date/Time: Saturday, December 13 to Sunday, December 14, 2008. Venue: Ipoh Parade, Ipoh. Admission: Free. For details on competition please call Mr. Kang at 012-5289935.

THE ALLIED AIR FORCE BASE IN IPOH

The strategic role played by the RAF and the RAAF in resisting the Japanese advance into the western side of the Malayan Peninsular during the Second World War

The heroic deeds of the men of the Royal Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force based in Ipoh airbase during World War 2 were recorded in history. Volume 1 of "Bloody Shambles" written by Christopher Shores and Brian Cull (with Yasuho Izawa) made mention of this fact. In praise of these brave men in the RAF and the RAAF, and for the pride of the residents of Ipoh, I felt it worthwhile to highlight as follows.

After Pearl Harbour, the Japanese armed forces expanded their territories into China and South East Asia. When Thailand negotiated peace with Japan, the Allied forces in Malaya suddenly found the Japanese war machine at their doorstep. The Japanese's advancement into the Malayan Peninsular was swift. Owing to this, the Allied Forces felt no longer safe to defend their ground positions in Malaya by air from the forward airbases in Kedah, Terengganu and Penang. The northernmost airbase in western peninsular, far enough not to be overrun and near enough to launch defensive air strikes, was Ipoh.



Dogfight over Ipoh

Even before December 12, 1941, it was increasingly apparent that the Ipoh airfield was to be the mainstay of the Allied Air Forces. At 0900 hrs, on December 13, the second batch of the reinforcement Brewster Buffalo fighters of 243 RAF Squadron (code WP), led by Flight Lieutenant Vigors, reached

Ipoh from Singapore. They were immediately ordered to defend Penang.

In the ensuing skirmish over Penang, Vigors (flying in AN 213) together with Flight Sergeant O'Mara (WP8192) and Flt Lt Grace (WP8159) engaged a formation of 30 Japanese Army Air Force (JAAF) 97 bomb-

ers, escorted by the same numbers of JAAF Ki 27 "Nate" and Ki 43 "Oscar" fighters. Vigors was shot down after he had inflicted damage on the bombers and escaped by parachuting. Flt LT Grace reported shooting down one of the fighters while O'Mara escaped with minor damage. Both pilots made it back to

Ipoh.

The following day saw the arrival of 453 RAAF Squadron (code TD) which was to replace the other 21 RAAF Squadron (code GA). However, due to heavy flight operational losses on the latter, the two units were retained in Ipoh under combat readiness. Flt Lt White and Flg Off Montefiore of 21 RAAF Squadron led Flt Sgts Seagoe, Board and Scrimgeour of 453 RAAF Squadron, strafed Japanese army column at Alor Setar to assist the hard pressed Allied troops which was withdrawing to Penang. They also attacked three Ki 51 light bombers with reasonable success. Flt Sgt Board claimed a Ki 43 Oscar shot down while Flt Sgt Seagoe damaged another.

Operations on December 15 fared better. Flt Lt Vanderfield with Flt Sgts Board and O'Mara intercepted 19 Ki 48s of 90th Sentai and destroyed a pair without any losses to themselves. On December 17, aerial bombardment on Ipoh by the Japanese began to intensify. Ipoh airfield was strafed continuously. On one such occasion three Ki 43 from 59th Sentai attacked the base. The two Allied squadrons

resisted. Flt Sgts Clare and Fummerton claimed to have damaged two of the Japanese fighters while sustaining damages themselves.

By December 19, Ipoh airfield was deemed no longer tenable. Over the week of endless activities, ground crews of the RAAF worked rigorously to keep the Buffalo fighters airworthy but the appalling conditions of the aircrafts and the shortage of spare parts put paid to their efforts. The JAAF HQ had also admitted to the losses of 53 of their planes. These losses severely hampered their efforts in supporting the advancement of the Japanese Army into Perak. The delay offered valuable respite for the Allied ground troops, which were reeling under constant enemy onslaught. It helped them to prepare their defences prior to the three epic battles in Taiping, Kampar and Tanjong Malim.

Eye witness accounts, from elderly relatives and friends alike, said that during this troubled period, Ipohites rallied around the civil defence in the most orderly fashion expected of civilians.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

THE HEARTACHE OF HERITAGE

*It's baffling why property owners refuse to respond.
The lone philanthropist intends
to soldier on nonetheless.*



Heritage is a word that stirs up all sorts of emotions depending upon who you are. For the property owner, antipathy and fear of massive expenditure. For the author, satisfaction of a job well done. For the schoolchild, boredom. For the tourist, fascination. For the devotee, anger and despair as heritage is lost, elation when it is

saved. But for the average citizen, heritage is often simply ignored.

But what is heritage, that emotional word that is so often misunderstood? Well, simply put, heritage is our inheritance from the past, the things we live with today, and whatever we pass on to future generations. It includes the natural and built environment, artifacts/docu-

ments, customs, the arts, languages and beliefs. It is an irreplaceable resource and once discarded is lost forever.

In Perak there are a number of different groups who, by virtue of their mission statements, have an interest in heritage. Foremost, is the Perak Heritage Society (PHS), a group of like-minded individuals dedicated to

making people aware of the State's interesting and valuable history and heritage, with the aim of encouraging its preservation and archiving its history. Across Perak there are also some other less well-known groups; the Taiping Heritage Society, for example.

So, taking Ipoh as our measure, how are these heritage enthusiasts faring against all the other requirements for development and advancement in this world of ever increasing technology and rising costs? If you look around you, the answer that will almost certainly spring to your lips will be, "badly". To be fair there have been two rays of sunlight that have broken through recently. The Federal Government will restore the old Post Office while the new owner of the Lam Look Ing Bazaar has pledged to restore his recent possession. Great news! But what about the

remainder of our historic town which continues to deteriorate?

Unknown to most, there has been a move over the last 18 months, sponsored by a well known philanthropist, to do something about a small, historic, part of the town. But this was knocked back by the refusal of the property owners to even respond. Other proposals have been made, but none has succeeded.

This same philanthropist has provided financial support to allow one group to permanently record local history so that it can be made available to all who are interested. However, despite the number of people who are unemployed locally, finding suitable staff with an interest in doing this work seems impossible. Consequently, this not-for-profit project struggles on with occasional short-term temporary staff.

But in reality, is the

preservation of heritage important to Perak or are these enthusiasts wasting their time? Well, that is up to you to decide. For without your support our heritage will disappear.

A dedicated heritage buff would probably answer the question along the following lines:

"Heritage preservation is essential! It is a resource that can be harnessed to work for us. It provides important reminders of where we came from; the physical evidence of the past, our family history and the origins of our community, linking it with past attitudes and values that shaped our environment. It helps us to feel proud of where we come from, and to reinforce the identity we have in relation to the outside world. Heritage belongs to everybody and each generation has a responsibility to protect it for future generations."

But what do you think? **WR**

PERAK TURF CLUB HONOURS THE SULTAN

Tan Sri Jeyaratnam entertains the racing fraternity and Ipohites to dinner in honour of the Sultan

In conjunction with the 23rd anniversary of the installation of HRH Sultan Azlan Shah as Sultan of Perak, the Perak Turf Club hosted a dinner at the Syuen Hotel, Ipoh on Friday, November 21. Some 1200 guests consisting of the Who's Who of Ipoh were present.

Dignitaries invited to grace the occasion were MIC President and former Minister, Datuk Seri Samy Velu, senior executive councillor Dato' Ngeh Koo Ham and officials from the Selangor and Singapore turf clubs.

Club Chairman, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Jeyaratnam, in his welcoming speech apologised for the absence



Tan Sri Jeyaratnam flanked by Datuk Seri Samy Velu and Dato' Ngeh Koo Ham

of HRH Sultan Azlan Shah who was abroad. He thanked the guests and representatives from the

various charity bodies for their presence.

Perak Turf Club is one of the biggest donors in the

country and has in the past given millions of ringgit to charity. The club said Tan Sri Jeyaratnam would

honour its pledge to give more to the needy and the destitute.

Diners were

entertained to dances and songs by professionals specially picked for the occasion.

A one-hour show by a local comic pair had the audience in stitches. Their jokes and innuendoes revolved around current issues dominating the Malaysian political scene.

FATHOL ZAMAN

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