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IS IT A BIRD?  
IS IT A PLANE?  
NO, IT'S FIREFLY TO THE RESCUE . . .



*Sultan Azlan Shah Airport might come alive soon if the 'relevant authorities' give their approval for national turboprop aircraft operator Firefly, the green light to land. When that happens, Ipoh would finally have a direct link to an international destination.*

Continued on page 2

Mrs  
Echo  
APRIL



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## IPOH-SINGAPORE DIRECT FLIGHT.....SOON TO BE A REALITY?

**E**arly in the year, Firefly Sdn Bhd MD Eddy Leong indicated that it hoped to operate direct flights between Ipoh-Singapore and Malacca-Singapore this year "for its summer season which starts in April". Firefly would be using its recently purchased ATR72-500 turbo-prop aircraft which Ipoh airport can comfortably accommodate. It had applied to the Ministry of Transport and was awaiting its approval.

### Approval Given

At the end of March Transport Minister Ong Tee Keat responded that the Cabinet had given approval for a local airline to operate the Ipoh-Singapore sector and specified the airport as the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport.

This last announcement had the entire Ipoh community, from the manufacturer and hotelier to the Ipoh resident working in Singapore on anticipation alert. Everyone wanted the Ipoh-Singapore route to materialize and some contacted the Ipoh Echo to enquire when would be the inaugural flight.

Earlier interviews with the various Chambers personnel and FMM Perak Branch Chairman Gan Tack Kong confirmed that direct flights to Ipoh is one aspect of the infrastructure that Ipoh cannot live without. It is a known fact that initiating direct flights from Singapore to Ipoh would encourage an inflow of visitors for purposes of trade, investment and tourism, both leisure and medical as well.

### Tourism Boost

The immediate beneficiaries of direct flights would be the tourism related industry players such as the tour agents and hotels.



*Dato' Samsudin Chief Executive Perak State Development Corporation*

Monica Liew, MATTA Chairman, Perak Chapter stated that the start of direct flights is a "long awaited issue" and predicts that when direct flights start, the "influx of visitors could increase by 50%. This will spur the inbound tourism sector which is currently in the doldrums".

Secretary General, Perak Branch of Malaysian Association of Hoteliers, Nicholas Chan has similar views. "The link will open the international market direct to Ipoh. Even now Singaporeans enjoy driving to Ipoh to stay a night, visit friends and to savour the food. A direct flight will make Ipoh more easily accessible".

Both Liew and Chan share the view that a faster start up of the direct flight would greatly benefit their members.

One tour agent who believes that Ipoh and Perak state is a potential inbound destination is Parlo Tours. Since last year its Managing Director Yap Fu Fah has brought in tour

agents from Russia and India on familiarisation trips. "The direct flight will open Ipoh to the world", enthused Yap.

### Facilitate Economic Growth

As can be seen all parties view the direct flight as an impetus that will stimulate growth in their respective enterprises. Indeed Dato' Samsudin Hashim, Chief Executive of Perak State Development Corporation, is fully aware of the expectations of the business community. "I have been working with all the relevant bodies like FMM and MICCI on this issue for some time. It is a benefit for Ipoh to be linked to an International gateway and is considered as part of the state's infrastructure to facilitate economic growth".

### State Investment Commitment

For Firefly to land, the state has agreed to invest RM2.7 million for the first year with an option for a second year. In that time the state has to "properly outline a program to support economic development in Perak in the areas of tourism, medical tourism and trade development beyond the financial support period. Everyone in the business community has to participate in the program".

When asked if the current political scenario could delay the start up, Samsudin responded that "the introduction of the direct flight will be a good service for the rakyat. But of more importance is that Perak's languishing economy needs the service". He added that "already a



*Russian tour agents having a discussion with Dato' Ngeh Koo Ham*

group of Singapore manufacturers have indicated their desire to be on the inaugural flight to Ipoh to explore what investment and business opportunities Perak has to offer".

### Holding Their Breath

A spokesman from the Perak Menteri Besar's office confirmed that "all data relating to the Firefly programme is with them.

A review of the proposal is pending before a decision is announced".

Apparently Perakians are not the only ones holding their breath for a positive announcement. Firefly too has responded that they are 'just waiting' for the 'written approvals'. Their "operations work" have begun and they have targeted June for the inaugural flight to Ipoh.

Since all responses re-


ceived from all the parties have been positive it seems that the possibility of Ipoh finally being opened up to the world will become a reality or as one interviewee responded "99% done already, sure to start".

Ipoh Echo wishes Firefly a speedy commencement of flights and with it the resultant boost to Perak's economy.


JAMES GOUGH



*Parlo Tours MD Yap Fu Fah*



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## From the Editor's Desk

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FATHOL ZAMAN BUKHARI

# NIZAR TRIUMPHS IN DURIAN COUNTRY

*Nizar's victory has plenty to do with the ouster of the PR-led Government in February say many . . .*



Nizar and wife acknowledging well-wishers

**It was an energy sapping campaigning that lasted for ten bruising days beginning from Nomination Day on March 29 to Election Day on April 10. Arch rivals Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Rakyat left no stone unturned to gain the upper hand. The parliamentary constituency of Bukit Gantang became a battle ground of sorts where scores were settled and names smeared for political expedience.**

I took a drive through the constituency twice once on Sunday, April 5, and the other on Tuesday, April 7. Never had this laid-back but picturesque sub-district of over 100,000 inhabitants been so busy playing host to visitors and day-trippers which included an ex-premier, a newly minted premier, party bigwigs and the retinue of cheerers and jeerers. This sleepy hollow where time almost stood still was transformed, in a matter of days, into a simmering carnival where fortunes were made and lost, as a matter of course.

## Promotional Hardware

Flags, posters, banners and buntings were stretched, plastered, placed and hoisted across and alongside roads, on buildings and on utility and bamboo poles. Life-size pictures of Nizar and of Ismail, mounted on billboards, were planted on roadsides, on walls and on arches. Nizar, in his characteristic green baju melayu, and Ismail, in coloured casuals, smiled at motorists and onlookers who cared to look. The were pictures of Najib too but they were

conspicuously hidden for reasons best known to the organisers. Surprisingly pictures, flags and posters of Independent candidate, Kamarul Idris, were visibly absent.

The preponderance of these promotional hardware points to one simple factor – money. Obviously the BN and Pakatan Rakyat political machineries had funds to spare. From day one the poster war favoured Nizar, as the PAS symbol of a white moon on a green background dominated the landscape.

Tents were everywhere. They either belonged to PR or BN. Tents too were erected to accommodate police personnel. A huge tent city in an open field near Kuala Trong was filled with police trucks, motorcycles and patrol cars. The much feared Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) was positioned near the traffic junction at Changkat Jering. Their red-coloured vehicles were parked neatly along the roadside. One vehicle which did not miss my eyes was the fearsome water cannon truck. Chemical-laced water spewing from the truck's hose had doused the enthusiasm of many protesters in the past. The unit's presence in the open was a reminder to mischief makers to keep their tempers in check.

Vehicular traffic came almost to a standstill. It took me a while to get to Kuala Sepetang and a lot longer to get out. The traffic police on duty at the Simpang junction added to the mayhem by allowing VIPs, in gleaming black BMWs and Mercedes, to pass first. Most of them were either on their way



Ismail Saffian casting his vote

to or out of Taiping. Hotels in Ipoh and Taiping were fully booked, including the less savoury lodgings in the back lanes.

Petty traders were having a field day. A middle aged Malay lady who was selling *pisang goreng* at a makeshift stand on the road to Kuala Trong was dismissive when asked of the candidates' chances. "Saya orang luar hanya cari makan," she said coyly. But one youthful Malay trader near Matang was less modest. "PAS mesti menang. Nizar hero kami," he said pointing to a huge portrait of the ousted Perak Menteri Besar nearby.

If Sunday was bad, Tuesday was worse. I left for Taiping at around 4 pm trying to see the tail-end of election day. Polling ended at 5 pm before counting began. My destination was the Taiping Town Hall where the results would be made known. I reached as far as Padang Rengas.

Traffic was at a standstill. Sensing the futility of my trip, I turned around and headed for Kuala Kangsar instead. My journey ended at a *kopitiam*. I had to resort to my laptop for news on the *dua bukit satu batang* by-elections. The eventual score – PK 2 BN 1. "It's Status Quo" screamed the headlines of two mainstream English-language newspapers. Is that so?

## Referendum On Najib

Umno Deputy President, Datuk Seri Muhyiddin dismissed BN's defeat as a referendum on Najib's leadership. "Najib's feel-good factor has yet to be felt by the people," he told reporters. Political analysts, however, said otherwise. Nizar's triumph, they claimed, had plenty to do with the ouster of the PK-led state government in February.

Chinese support for the PAS candidate this



Najib on his campaign trail

time around was more pronounced. The greatest number came from Chinese voters in Kuala Sepetang. Almost 85 per cent rooted for Nizar. This goes to show that neither the exhortations by MCA and Gerakan leaders nor Zahid Hamidi's scantily dressed dancing girls had an effect on the local Chinese community. Chinese voters constitute 27 percent or about 15,000 of the total 55,471 Bukit Gantang voters. There seemed to be a significant swing in Malay votes for BN. This was attributed to the *derhaka* and the stooge issues leveled at Nizar by BN campaigners. The Malays of Trong were solidly behind Ismail.

One factor which many had failed to notice is the presence of young voters. They had made an impact at Bukit Gantang. There will be some 5 million of them by the 13th General Election in 2013. This young breed of Anak Bangsa Malaysia is standing up and demanding that they be counted. They can no longer be ignored.

## Political Demise

Commenting on PR's victory, Anwar Ibrahim said that unlike Umno Pakatan did not play the race cards to win elections. One analyst, however, dismissed Anwar's claim saying that Malaysia could not rise above racial politics. Racism, like religion, had been institutionalised. "The country needs visionary leaders but even they could not move too far ahead of their followers. If they do they would be sowing the seeds of their own political demise," he said.

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**THINKING ALOUD****G. SIVAPRAGASAM****AS PAK LAH HANDS  
OVER TO NAJIB...**

When things do not work it is reasonable to assume that there is a problem. Recognising the existence of the problem is prerequisite for identifying causes and seeking solutions. However most live in denial, dismissing that a problem exists, leading to no effort to find causes and hence no solutions. The problem continues with futile paths pursued and unsurprising results.

**Pak Lah Admits  
Problems In Umno**

In his farewell address to UMNO Pak Lah in frank and forthright straight talk, admitted that UMNO's glory has dimmed. He identified loss of touch with the ordinary people, neglect of the rural community, failure to reach out to the younger generation, internal conflict, greed and avarice as principal causes for this condition. He arduously set out in great detail the several virtues that enabled UMNO to dominate and how the loss of these values has caused UMNO's recent fall.

Since the causes have been so clearly defined it is now but a simple matter to make a commitment to eradicate them and developing a strategy to get it done. The most difficult thing is to admit that there is a problem and if his message has been imbibed by the members, the stage may have been set for the rejuvenation of the party. It is now for the new leadership to come to terms that all is not well and begin making true reforms. The well being of UMNO is crucial for the nation.

**Umno's 2008 Setback  
- A Good Lesson**

It is a pity that the admission came at the eve of his departure. His tenure ironically witnessed UMNO's greatest electoral success and its greatest defeat. Success was prompted by expectations he created in the people and failure to deliver on his promises resulted in reversal. Maybe he promised too much or perhaps the people expected results too soon.

Evolution is a slow process. History is full of ambitious efforts that failed due to lack of endurance.

But what is undeniable is that Pak Lah has begun the process and needs to be developed by those who come after him. He has made it easier for others to complete the task. But there can be little dispute that the task he had begun has to continue for he warns:

*'Umno is today at the crossroads. The path that we choose will determine whether we continue to remain relevant. Sadly, there are still those who feel that we do not need to pursue reforms. They believe that Umno will regain its glory if we revert to the old ways - the old order, by restricting the freedom of our citizens and by silencing their criticism.'*

*They are of the view that Umno can continue to be in power if they safeguard the interests of certain individuals and give in to the demands of certain groups. There are those among us who gain comfort from these thoughts and are still lulled into a false sense of security.*

*If we revert to the old path - the path will take us to regression and decay and will hasten our demise. If we do not take courageous steps to reform in the face of this dynamic transformation of society and the radical global changes taking place, then we shall live to witness the end of our beloved Umno.'*

Prophetic words that could not have been better put. Pak Lah's liberal policies have been blamed for the 2008 loss but what is forgotten is that it is the promise of the liberal policy that granted him the huge mandate in 2004. Liberalism is the surest guarantee of good and efficient governance.

**New Order**

The responsibility for leading the nation has now passed into the hands of Najib. Admittedly his taking over of the post has not been met with universal enthusiasm. There appears

to be sectors intent on discrediting him. There is also a perception that the new regime will be less liberal.

In the change of leadership Pak Lah had this to say: -

*"The leadership of Umno forms the leadership of the country. Everyone must give him the undivided support to enable him. Despite any reservations we may have, our leader should be given the trust and stability of mind to allow him to continue to remain rational and objective. If we do not give him our support and trust, and if we choose to attack him and assassinate his character, we would be responsible for weakening our party and toppling our leader who sits in the prime minister's chair. We would*

*be responsible for eroding the system that we have built, the system that has enabled us to govern all these years. Heavy is the trust placed in the prime minister, who must fulfil his obligations as leader of the party, of our people, and of our nation. On his shoulders our hopes rest, for he is accountable to secure our future."*

**Undermine Leader  
and We Weaken  
Nation**

Pak Lah's words of warning to UMNO members have equal application to the citizens of this nation. If we as people of the nation do not support our leader we would only be weakening our nation.

Criticism of policy or its execution is one thing but character assassination founded on rumours and unsubstantiated allegations and conjecture is another.

Political rivalry cannot be allowed to descend to a level where the nation gets damaged. He is the leader having attained this position by legitimate means. This is the democratic process. It may not be a perfect system but it is the system we have agreed to be governed by. He represents all in the nation and by attacking his credibility and bringing him to disrepute we only succeed in doing a disservice to ourselves. We are not alone in this world. We need to close ranks. There is only one way to show dissatisfaction - at elections. Any other path is a formula for chaos.

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## MUSINGS ON FOOD

by See Foon Chan-Koppen

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More pics at  
ipohecho on lineSeeFoon Uncovers More Dining  
“Oldies” In Oldtown

Tin Yik Restaurant

The small section of old town as one drives down Hugh Low Street or Jalan Sultan Iskandar Shah, just after Kinta River, is a veritable warren of eating havens, some long established and others, mere stalls or coffee shops each boasting its signature dishes where the food cognoscenti go for good taste and good value.

## ‘Low Chiew Pai’

One such “oldie” is Tin Yik restaurant at 4-B Jalan Koo Chong Kong, nestled amongst a row of heritage shop houses down a narrow one-way alley where a big SUV can barely manoeuvre. This is another old family restaurant, started by Chang Kok Aun’s grandfather over 60 years ago. Like the other restaurant “oldies” which I have reviewed in previous issues, Tin Yik is one of the handful of *chow chiew pai* or “old brands” handed down to successive generations who are committed enough to take on the onerous task of satisfying the demanding palates of its loyal customers. This is quite a rare occurrence in this modern age where the younger generation usually distance themselves from the family business and run off to the big bright lights of the cities to seek their fortunes. My hope is that Ipoh will continue with this culinary heritage, a heritage well worth supporting and preserving.

Now in the hands of the fourth generation, the kitchen is manned by Kok Aun’s son, while he cuts a dapper figure in impeccable white shirt, khaki pants, taking orders and serving food. The walls of the restaurant are lined with photographs of Kok Aun receiving various recognition and awards, the last being the Paduka Mahkota Perak, PMP, for his more than thirty-year service with RELA, intermingled with various framed articles of reviews on the restaurant from various newspapers.

The decor is simple, what I would term, “old shop house restaurant” but very clean, unlike many other coffee shops that dot the Ipoh landscape. Even without air-conditioning to which I’m addicted, I found myself not perspiring profusely as I normally

do in “fan-only” environments. This I attributed to the high ceilings and the copious number of ceiling fans.

## Hokkien Specialities

Tin Yik is a Hokkien restaurant, one of the few in Ipoh, serving specialities peculiar to Fukien province in China. Although the line between the various provincial and regional specialities have blurred in recent years, with restaurants now borrowing from one another, there remain certain signature dishes which are indigenous to the provincial groups. The *Or Jian* or fried oyster dish is one of these.

On the day we were there, there were unfortunately no oysters available and we had to settle for the shrimp (*har jian*) instead. Not a bad thing considering that I always have doubts about the safety of molluscs in our tropical climate. This came in its inimitable style - shrimps nestled amidst a slightly glutinous starch paste, with eggs, scallions and crisped at the edges. This was so evocative of my childhood tastebuds that I could have eaten the whole plate and asked for more! However, for my other friends at the table whose palates lean



Lor Meen

towards the Cantonese, the glutinous starch put them off.

## ‘Lor’ Noodles

Next came two delicious “Lor” noodle dishes, one a yellow noodle and the other the bean thread or glass noodle. “Lor” style is again typically Hokkien, a thick, slightly starchy sauce cooked with the noodles, with kale and a mixture of pork and shrimp thrown in. This soupy noodle dish is often eaten with lashings of black vinegar and as much white pepper as one can handle.

This was followed by the *kwai fa tung fun* (RM8), bean thread noodle fried with egg, pork, shrimp, scallions and again eaten with a dash of black vinegar. Often known as the poor man’s fried shark’s fin, it is similar in taste to its more expensive cousin. Certainly to be recommended.

## Steamed Soup

Tin Yik is also known for their steamed soups. Just like Hung Kee which I reviewed, they have the *heavenly bliss, earthly joy* soup of pig’s brains and chicken feet, a very peppery pig’s stomach with chicken soup and a *Yu Piu*, fish gullet with chicken soup. All of these soups are incredibly good value at RM3.50 per tureen.

Next on the table was the *Sai To Yu Meen*, noodles made from fish paste in a soup with lots of greens. I was delighted to find this here as I know of only one other restaurant (Lucky’s in Pasir Puteh) where I can get this delectable dish. RM10.00.

We again ordered the *Wu Tao Kao Yoke*, taro braised pork which was tasty and redolent of the red fermented bean paste in which it was cooked. RM7.00.

Groaning at the seams after all that food, we had to find room for two of the restaurant’s home-made dim sum dishes (RM2.80), the *siu mai*, pork dumplings, and the steamed, bean-curd-skin wrapped century-egg roll. When asked if all their dim sum dishes which they serve from 7.30 a.m. onwards, were home made as these two were better than the regular street variety, I was disappointed to hear that all the others were from the larger production houses. Nevertheless, these two might just do the trick for me if I’m looking for a small bite for breakfast.

All in all I would recommend Tin Yik for its honest wholesome fare and value for money.

**Tin Yik Restaurant**  
4-B Jalan Koo Chong  
Kong 30000 Ipoh, Perak  
Tel: 05 254 7078

## FOOD

## NASI LEMAK (BASIC)

Nasi lemak has many levels of serving complexity. Nasi lemak is a substantial pre-packed breakfast and may even be the first Malaysian fast-food. Many stalls will sell all the embellishments which will make this simple breakfast dish into a full meal. Here we’re reviewing the cheapest and most basic (*biasa*). Taste is not compromised in this instance.

As the name implies, nasi lemak is rice cooked in coconut milk. What makes a good nasi lemak is the *ikan bilis* sambal. It should be spicy, not too sweet or not sweet at all. Usual accompaniments are: cucumber, fried peanuts, hardboiled egg, and fried *ikan bilis*. If packed well, all of this, except for the egg, should be crisp and crunchy. Many nasi lemak stalls operate from road shoulders along busy roads. The sellers and buyers risk life and limb daily. All in all, it can be a dangerous business and yet so lucrative!



NAME	WHERE	COMMENTS	PRICE (RM)	WHAT DO YOU GET?	
Indian lady 6:30am Everyday	Inside Simee Market, along the fruit & biscuit aisle	Good packing keeps <i>ikan bilis</i> , peanuts & cucumber crisp – <i>sambal</i> is good & spicy but not enough	1.00	¼ egg, <i>sambal</i> , fried <i>ikan bilis</i> , peanuts, cucumber.	★ ★ ★ ★
Malay lady 6:30am Everyday	Coming out from Simee market, across the road on the extreme right.	<i>Sambal</i> is good – cucumber not crisp	1.00	½ egg, <i>sambal</i> , fried <i>ikan bilis</i> , peanuts, cucumber, string beans.	★ ★ ★
Indian lady 6:00am Everyday	Along Leboh Raya Tiga, Simee, 31400 Ipoh	<i>Sambal</i> is spicy but a bit sweet – rice is <i>lemak</i> – cucumber not crisp	1.00	½ egg, <i>sambal</i> , fried <i>ikan bilis</i> , peanuts, cucumber, string beans.	★ ★
Malay lady 6:30am Closed Sundays & holidays	Coffee shop at: 60 Jln Lee Kwee Foh, Canning Gdn, 31400 Ipoh	<i>Sambal</i> is spicy – not salty enough	1.20	½ egg, <i>sambal</i> , fried <i>ikan bilis</i> , peanuts, cucumber.	★ ★

Our next food review will be *Yong Tau Foo* or *Yeong Liu*.  
Email your favourite recommendations to: ipohecho.vw@gmail.com

## Recipe

by CAROL CHENG

## BITTERGOURD AND MEAT

Among the gourds in the vegetable group, the bittergourd is one which is not often cooked to complement a Chinese or Malay meal. It is a shame, as this often neglected vegetable has great medicinal value such as blood sugar control, blood pressure normalization and as a digestive aid. The Chinese believe it has cooling properties – meaning that it cleanses the body system of ‘heatiness’. In Indian menus, they appear frequently in vegetarian dishes. Here is one recipe which has been tried out by a Malay housewife, to the delight of her family – using beef!

Bittergourd with meat – can be lean pork or beef fillet or chicken meat

1 bittergourd, sliced into ½ cm thickness  
Wilt it with 1 teaspoon salt, wait for a minute and rinse off  
Rub in ½ teaspoon sugar and set aside  
1 bowl of thinly sliced lean pork (kap sum) or beef fillet – RM2 worth

## Marinade for this meat:

1 tblsp soya sauce  
1 tsp each of cornflour & sesame oil and 2 tsp wine  
1 tsp minced garlic  
If using beef, add in 1 tsp ginger juice, freshly pounded and a little tapai juice, instead of wine

## Method

\*In smoking wok, sauté garlic till golden, add bittergourd. Stir-fry till translucent, pour in ½ bowl water and cover to soften the bittergourd. Time it for



a minute or two.  
\*Uncover, make a well in the centre of the wok, put in the seasoned meat and push the bittergourds over the meat, re-cover for a minute or two, to cook meat gently. Uncover and stir-fry to blend all the ingredients together. At this stage, the meat should be moist and the gravy thick. Adjust seasoning with soya sauce, if necessary. Dish up and garnish with spring onion. If using beef re-cover the mixture and time it only for a few seconds, then stir-fry. The meat should be medium rare. The whole process should be lightning quick in handling beef, to keep the meat moist and tender.



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*Heartiest Congratulations*



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Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan**

**on the occasion of  
His Royal Highness'  
Birthday**

**on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

*from*

*The Chairman, Board of Directors, Management & Staff  
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*Sembah Tahniah Dan Ucap Selamat Semoga Allah Lanjutkan Usia Tuanku*



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**Sultan, Yang Di- Pertuan Dan Raja Pemerintah  
Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan serta jajahan takluknya  
Sempena Ulang Tahun Hari Keputeraan Baginda yang  
Ke - 81 Pada 19hb April 2009**

**“Semoga Allah Memberkati Pemerintah Berjiwa Rakyat Duli  
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## IPOH FACTS AND FANCIES by HO TAK MING



# PANGKOR: FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE TREATY

Anyone would have thought that with the signing of the Pangkor Treaty on January 20, 1874, allowing for British intervention in the Malay States, together with the cession of the island and a strip of the Perak coast known as the Dindings to the British, would pave the way for its development. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Dindings became the fourth Settlement of the Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements, after Singapore, Malacca and Penang, and the least important. Administratively it came under the control of Penang, but it was too far away to be well looked after. It became a forgotten and forsaken land.

### Lumut as Sea Port

In 1888 when Frank Swettenham was the British Resident of Perak, he wanted to develop Lumut as a seaport for the state. He knew the magnificent harbour of Lumut, which had been highly praised by the British naval authorities as

the finest harbour east of Suez. Swettenham ordered the trial survey of a railway line from Batu Gajah, which had been made the capital of the Kinta district just four years earlier, to Lumut.

### Plans Rebuffed

The survey work was given to the architectural firm of Swan and Maclaren in Singapore. It started at a point about one mile south of the railway station at Batu Gajah, crossed the Perak River at Bota, and through the Sitiawan district to Lumut. The proposed railway line was duly mapped and drawn up.

In 1891, before he sanctioned the Penang harbour improvements, the Colonial Secretary wanted an assurance from the Governor of the Straits Settlements that he did not see in Lumut a likely rival to Penang. The Governor, however, could not give this assurance. Swettenham's map gathered dust at the Central Drawing Office in Kuala

Lumpur. The proposal by the Perak Chamber of Mines in early 1900s to develop Lumut as the principal port for the Federated Malay States was rebuffed. So was the petition by the townspeople of Ipoh in 1909 to develop Lumut as a seaport for the tin mining capital of the country.

Fifty years after the treaty, Pangkor and Dindings remained as backward as it ever was, in fact, the most backward part of Perak.

### Pangkor the Holiday Resort

In 1924 Pangkor had a population of 7,000, mostly fishermen living on the southern part of the island, with some market gardeners growing a variety of fruit and vegetables for local consumption. There were few roads. The whole island had only one kedai selling tinned provisions to the occasional visitor, and an ice factory. There was no fresh meat, but poultry, eggs and seafood were plentiful. Pangkor was a settlement consider-

ably older than any part of Perak. The old Dutch fort with its crumbling walls was still present.

At the northern end of the island, there is a bay which offers the safest conditions for swimming, being very shallow with a sandy bottom. There were half a dozen bungalows there, mostly owned by Europeans, but one was owned by Leong Yew Koh, the Ipoh lawyer. It was set in an extensive coconut plantation. At Pangkor Laut Kechil, a small islet off Pangkor Island, there was a small leper colony, with about 50 inmates.

### Accessibility Difficult

One could not imagine a more pleasant or more healthful holiday resort for Ipohites than Pangkor Island, but getting there posed some difficulties. The 69-mile journey by road from Ipoh to Lumut took three hours, with an inevitable delay of up to forty minutes at the Blanja Ferry near Parit. There was a daily departure of the small coastal

steamship that plied between Sitiawan, Lumut and Teluk Anson, at 8 am. One needed to get on board this steamship to cross the three-mile Lumut Estuary to Pangkor, or, if there was a big enough party, one could rent the Government motor launch. Thus the visitor to Pangkor had to start his journey well before daybreak, or spend the night before at the Lumut Rest House. Similarly the return journey would last until well after dinner.

### Neglected

Lumut was similarly neglected. This small township of 2,000 inhabitants had a rest house, a little club, a police station, a hospital with an assistant medical officer, and a few government offices along a street dubbed "Downing Street" by a previous District Officer with a wry sense of humour. There were some brick shop-houses while the rest of the buildings were ancient, wooden structures. The town, or for that matter, the whole of the Dindings,

was not even connected by telephone to the outside world, a shocking neglect by the Straits Government. It would be overly optimistic to ask for a railway connection.

Lumut was potentially important as the outlet to the sea for the vast agricultural area between the two principal towns of Perak, Taiping and Ipoh. It could be developed as a major trading centre on the Perak coast. Coastal steamers called at Lumut daily, but facilities such as a decent jetty or wharf, or storage godowns were strangely lacking. Passengers had to board or disembark from these coastal boats by sampan from the coast.

Fifty years after the landmark treaty, the Dindings remained just a strip of coast mostly comprised of fishing villages and some coconut plantations with the inevitable rubber in patches. Any hope of development of Lumut harbour would have to wait until the Dindings was given back to Perak.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### KINTA PROPERTIES' EASY HOME OWNERSHIP CAMPAIGN 2009

Home buyers in Ipoh will soon be able to experience some relief in their financial planning with Kinta Properties Holdings launching an EASY HOME OWNERSHIP CAMPAIGN for their properties at Bandar Baru Sri Klebang, Meru Valley Resort and Halaman Meru Impian. Concurrent with similar campaigns launched in the Klang Valley and Penang, this scheme will be the first of its kind launched for home buyers in the Ipoh region. With this easy home ownership campaign, buyers only need to pay a down payment from as low as RM1,000 and pay the differential sum in interest-free installments of up to 12 months.

For properties under construction, Kinta Properties have negotiated a 5/95 (5% down payment and 95%) loan arrangement whereby the developer will service the interest on the loan taken by the purchaser until the completion of construction of the said property.



Bandar Baru Sri Klebang's Show Village

For recently completed properties with Certificate of Fitness in Bandar Baru Sri Klebang, the developer is offering a bank loan instalment holiday for the purchaser for up to 12 months. Meru Valley Resort home buyers will also be entitled to cash rebates of up to RM10,000 for selected completed properties.

On top of all the above, buyers will also benefit from the free legal fees on Memorandum of Transfer (MOT) & Sales and Purchase Agreement (SPA) and free stamp duty and disbursements on SPA and MOT which the developer will be absorbing during the duration of the campaign.

CEO Bernard Tan

said the Kinta Properties Easy Home Ownership Campaign would be held from 10 April to 15 July 2009. "Our Campaign offers the homebuyer an easy and attractive low entry point to home ownership and buyers enjoy savings of between RM10,000 and RM85,000."

Kinta Properties Holdings has a wide and reputable track record of 30 years and is among the largest property developer in Ipoh. Notable developments include First Garden, Taman Perpaduan Jaya, Club Condominium, Greentown Business Centre, Meru Valley Resort, Bandar Baru Sri Klebang and Halaman Meru Impian.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Food And Fun Fair

St Peter's Church will be having a Food and Fun Fair on Monday April 20, 2009, from 9:00 am-2:00 p.m., on church grounds, to help raise RM100,000 in aid of their community development projects in 23 Orang Asli kampongs around Gopeng and Simpang Pulai, and 7 new villages near Kampar and Bidor. Coupons are available from the church. Call: 05-5460444 (9:00 am-5:00 pm). Assistance in donations and sponsorship in cash or in kind are greatly welcomed.

**Tamilar Tirunal (Tamil festival)** will be celebrated on Sunday, April 19, 2009 Venue and time: Ipoh Town Hall between 3 to 10 pm. Admission: Free. Call: 016-5322444 or 012-5196949 for details.

**Commemorating World Heritage Day** on Saturday, April 18, 2009 with the opening of the Gopeng History and Culture Centre. Venue and time: No 28 Jalan Eu Kong, Gopeng commencing at 10 am. Artifacts on Gopeng will be on display. Call Phang at 017-5785985 for details.

**Holy Cross Lutheran Church** will organise a talk on heart attack on Saturday, 25, 2009. Venue and time: No 211, Jalan Bendahara, Ipoh between 9.30 am to 10.30 am. Free health screening available from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Call Mr Phan at 012-5757504 for details.

A talk entitled "Self Motivation In Volunteerism" organised by the Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2009. Venue and time: No. 48 Jalan Dato Lau Pak Khuan, Ipoh Garden commencing at 3 pm. Speaker: Dr Mohammad bin Abdul Rahman. Call PWW Secretary at: 05-5469715 or 012-5212480 for details.

**Carnival Day at OMPH Church** compound Ipoh Garden on April 26. 930 am - 2pm. Good food and games. Activities include antique bikes, dog etiquette class and more. Call 05-5458220 for details



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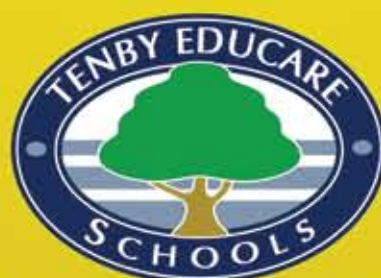
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## COMMUNITY NEWS

MALAYSIA BOOK RECORD HOLDER  
VENTURING OVERSEAS

Deo Govindasamy, is one unusual Malaysian who likes doing things backwards! A long distance speed walker who has the distinction of having the most listings in the Malaysia Book of Records, Deo is constantly on the lookout for new challenges.

Not content with walking a distance of 222 km non-stop from Kuala Lumpur to Ipoh in 1998, and 912 km from Padang Besar, Perlis to Tanjung Puteri, Johor the following year, his thirst for new challenges took on a twist when he started walking backwards and covered 30 km from Batang Kali to Genting Highlands in 7 hours.

Thriving on difficult challenges, he conquered

KL Tower, the world's fifth tallest telecommunication tower in the world, by walking 2,058 steps up, BACKWARDS.

Deo grew up in an orphanage in Ipoh and is an Old Andersonian. Proud of the fact that he shared the same hostel with Dato' Lat, Deo in his school days was good in the long distance track events. Since the age of 18 he has participated in almost 100 half marathons. For him, the slogan 'Malaysia Boleh' is a clarion call for him to pursue his next challenge.

With 5 records under his belt, Deo began to look further afield for fresh territories to conquer and set records.

In 2004 at age 50 with funds from his EPF he attended the Athens



Olympics. He attempted to walk backwards at the Panathinaiko stadium in Greece and again in Singapore at Chua Chu Kang sports complex and at OUB Plaza. However, at all these locations he was prevented from achieving

his goal owing to strict safety regulations which were required when attempting to walk backwards.

This year at age 55 with funds becoming available, he is making an attempt again in a foreign land. This time it is down under in Australia. Realising that walking backwards will have too many safety requirements to fulfil, he will now attempt a long distance forward walk and has chosen the route from Cairns to Melbourne, a distance of 3,000 km and more.

Deo works out approximately 4 hours daily combining walking and weight training. His dog 'Puppy' leads him on his walks. "The main thing is to exercise daily to keep



the body in shape and maintain the rhythm when walking briskly"

Deo will be staying with friends in Australia before starting on his journey. He does not have a time frame for completion. "I just want to complete the journey. I will stop at each county police station to acknowledge I passed through. I know I can do it.

I want to go international and leave behind a legacy for my grand children".

Regarding sponsorship he said, "If I have sponsors well and good. Otherwise I will go it alone". As for his other goals? "Well France and Spain are big countries too".

Ipoh Echo wishes G. Deo all the best. 'Malaysia Boleh!'

MARKET UPGRADES  
GO BACK TO THE  
DRAWING BOARD

News from MB Dato Zambray Abd Kadir that a new split level structure is being planned to replace the existing markets in Simee and Gunung Rapat was given a thumbs-down by the traders at both markets. On a recent visit there, to announce the government's intention to upgrade the existing markets which are more than 50 years old, Dato Zambray was apprised by the traders of the reasons for their negative response. They cited the situation at Bercham market which had the upgraded design where traders on the upper floors complained of poor business. Making a press statement at Gunung Rapat market, Zambray decided to put the project on hold, "If they (traders) do not want it we should not force it on them". He subsequently instructed Mayor Roshidi to obtain their views before coming out with an alternative plan.

Canning Assemblyman, Wong Kah Woh, through his service centre at Simee, subsequently conducted a survey with the traders at Simee market. A summary of the survey showed that only 2 out of 129 participating traders were in favour of an upgraded market. In view of the economic slowdown, the rest preferred to maintain the existing design for fear of upsetting their 'rice bowl'. If changes are to be implemented, they proposed to maintain the existing layout but upgrade the floors, drains and ventilation in specific areas. A survey done simultaneously with the customers of Simee market showed that they shared the same view as the market traders. The proposed market upgrading plan involved 5 markets, the other 3 being Buntong, Pasir Putih and Jelapang. The average cost of each upgrade is RM5 million

## VICTORIAN RHAPSODY



Lynette Tan seated with Dr Lim (middle) and Chong Tuan (far right). Standing: Tham Lai Meng

**The Majestic Station Hotel Ipoh was recently transported back to the Victorian era and Ascot came alive as ladies dressed in Victorian gowns, carrying parasols, enacted the attendance of the lavish Ascot Opening Race. The hotel boasts the longest veranda in Malaysia, and was also a filming location for the renowned movie – Anna and the King. The venue was aptly selected for its colonial ambience and to raise awareness of the many neglected heritage buildings in Ipoh.**

Called A Victorian Rhapsody, it was a nostalgic afternoon as guests sampled scones, cucumber sandwiches and tea cakes in a scene out of one of Jane Austen's novels. Violin music filled the air and the attention to detail to replicate the ambience of a bygone era was painstaking. Specially-ordered old portraits of that era adorned the wall of the veranda, and light pastel colours were used throughout on the cakes, table cloth, flower posies and scallops

along the balustrades on the veranda.

There were even Renoir and Monet reproductions, painted in oils to create more authenticity and other impressionist art popular in the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1903. Monet's "Water Lilies" in a gilded frame, took pride of place in the promenade near the fountain area.

In this surreal setting, Adrian Fu, the driving force and organizer of the event, enacts the role of Mr Darcy, the main protagonist in the Jane Austen classic, Pride and Prejudice. In the invitation he espouses the "importance of being a Gentleman – a true gentleman is a true noble, a man fit to command, upright, impartial, capable of exposing himself and even sacrificing himself for those he leads, not only a man of honour, but a man of conscience and generosity."

More activities ensued after tea as guests dined in the Dome room which was transformed into a lavish banquet hall, where



Violinist - Kent

a 7-foot sculpture commanded attention while lavish red drapes adorned the windows and a profusion of palms, ferns and candelabras added the final touches to complete the look of Victorian elegance.

The evening ended with the type of formal dancing reminiscent of the Debutante Balls of the Victorian age. Extra proceeds from the event will go to tobacco-free wellness workshops and animal welfare.



Adrian Fu (standing and making speech) aka Mr Darcy



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### YOUNG PERAK

by PETER KHIEW

Teachers and students from schools are invited to write about their respective institutions of learning.

E-mail articles to:  
ipohecho.pk@gmail.com

## SPORT

### YMCA/PICA INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT 2009



Aamir Bashir receiving his prize from Wong

The YMCA/PICA International Chess Tournament 2009 which entered its 6th edition this year had successfully attracted a total of 89 players. More than half of the participants were students, clearly reflective of the growing popularity of the game among school children as many feel that chess, known as a gentlemen's game, should be introduced more aggressively in schools among

youngsters. It promotes an analytical mind and trains one to solve problems systematically. A new category was created this year for the Under-15 boys and girls to encourage more participants of students below Form Three.

Aamir Bashir was crowned champion at the end of the tournament. Mr Stephen Wong, vice-president of YMCA gave away the prizes.

### SM SAINS RAJA TUN AZLAN SHAH, TAIPING



Kashwiniy and Rossharizal

There were smiles all around when the SPM 2008 results were announced recently to the students, parents and staff of SM Sains Raja Tun Azlan Shah, Taiping. The school has once again managed to maintain its fine performance with no failing grades in any subjects taken. Subjects like English, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, History, and Engineering Drawing have shown improved results.

School principal Puan Rahimah bt Mohd Sura said the good per-

formance was the result of effective learning and teaching strategies applied by the teachers and the students.

She said this was supplemented with the moral and financial support from the Parent-Teacher's Association and the Ex-Pupils' Association to ensure that academic programmes drawn up by school and the Ministry of Education are carried out without any difficulties.

Ten percent of the students obtained straight A's. According to Rossharizal b Rasdi, one of the students who scored straight

A1's, his success story is strongly based on consistent hard-work, paying full attention in class and the unwavering support from his parents.

Kashwiniy Naidu a/p Satupathy Naidu, who also scored straight A's, believes that one can succeed if he or she possesses a positive attitude towards studies. The extra attention from the teachers too helped to motivate her to achieve excellence. Being an active student in extra-curricula activities did not hamper her studies. Kashwiniy was a member of the school basketball

team, which managed to reach the national finals in the competition for Residential Schools last year.

Ipoh Echo congratulates Puan Rahimah and her teachers for their untiring efforts and commitment in producing excellent students.

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**Ramesh Kumar**  
Marketing Manager

**016 5531092**

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THERMO-SHIELD R products were developed in America by General Industries Corp, a chemical specialty company with over 25 years of experience. The company spent seven years developing THERMO-SHIELD R into a roof coating that could solve all the problems common to roofing systems.

The roofing system is designed for a tougher kind of environment and is suitable for use in Metal Roofing, RC Roof, Exterior Wall and water proofing.

This innovative roofing technology is considered a Space Shuttle technology. It combines strength, lightweight protection and integral insulation.

The THERMO-SHIELD R Roof System when in place becomes a seamless, continuous smooth surface that is able to withstand bad weather conditions, airborne contaminants and extreme temperature fluctuations.

### OTHER IMPORTANT THERMO-SHIELD R ROOF SYSTEM BENEFITS INCLUDE:



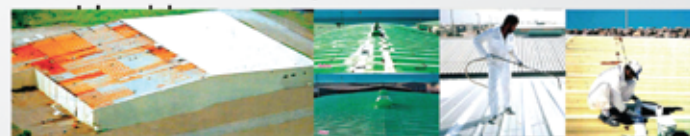
*Waterproofs roofs, even low sloped*  
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*Absolute bond ability to a wide variety of substrates*  
*Stability under an extreme range of temperature fluctuations*  
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THERMO-SHIELD R Roof System is considered a Space Age technology, in its own class. The materials used are similar to those applied in the insulating and reflective tiles found on the NASA space shuttle. It functions to effectively dissipate and reflect solar radiation back into the atmosphere.

The polymers used expand when wet, offering protection against damaging moisture penetration and shrink when dry, facilitating moisture evaporation that helps prevent blistering.

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- Noise reduction. The materials used make for a reduction of noise from outside, especially on metal buildings.
- Lightweight. The weight factor on a new roof design is minimized. Apparently, the THERMO-SHIELD R Roofing System eliminates the need for ballast which significantly reduces structural deflection.
- Superior flexibility at extremely low temperatures. Its ability to retain its properties at extreme temperatures.
- Excellent elongation and recovery properties. THERMO-SHIELD R Roof System creates a protective barrier with proven high resistance to extreme weather conditions. The elastic coating also seals hairline cracks and prevents new cracks. Assembly and installation are professionally conducted by certified and trained THERMO-SHIELD R experts. Other THERMO-SHIELD R Products available include
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## LETTER FROM ULU KINTA

writer's email: [letterulukinta@yahoo.com](mailto:letterulukinta@yahoo.com)

The newspapers recently filed a pitiful report on an elderly couple, in their seventies, living in a remote kampong. The picture showed the disabled husband lying helpless on the floor, being fed by his wife, Mek Jah Semail. She is a picture of tenderness and patience. Their daily diet is rice. Possibly, as a rare treat, some salted fish. Rubber tapping was her only income, which stopped after a tiger attack. The Welfare Department visited once – after the attack.

Raja once roamed the streets with his older sister. Both were products of an absent father and an alcoholic mother, who died tragically in a lorry accident. Raja's sister, traumatized after being raped by one of his mother's clients, consumed weed killer. It was a painful, agonizing death. Her age? She'd just turned thirteen.

I knew a housewife who would cross the street when she saw friends approaching. She wasn't unsociable but was ashamed at being seen with thick make-up and dark spectacles, which masked her battered face. Her husband would fly into a rage when

the food was not to his liking, his shirts were creased, when she spent money on the 'wrong' things or was late returning from shopping. Once, her son tried to intervene, to prevent her from being hit with a hockey stick. It ended with a punch to his face. But Wati couldn't walk away. Family and religious pressures. Moreover, her father asserted, "No one in our family has ever been divorced." Her mother's final words, "He is a Tengku. He is 'high-up' in the company. Sabar". Wati flinches at the touch of her husband. She lives for her children, who fear their father. They exhibit behavioural problems like bed-wetting and hide upstairs when he returns from work.

If every wrinkle etched on Mek Jah's face could tell a story, it would fill volumes. We fail to understand why social services were unreceptive to her needs. What happened to moral and civic duty? It only lends credence to tales that government aid isn't forthcoming, is poorly advertised and that public servants seem high-handed and unapproachable. All these must change.

## WHERE IS THE PERAK AMAZON?



## Where Is Social Services When We Need Them?

Lives have been ruined. Lives could have been saved. Abused women and women in crisis do not know where to seek refuge or who to turn to. Some may approach family members for help, only to be met with silent disapproval. The family name and place in the community are paramount.

We are a relatively developed and rich nation but our social & welfare services and the department for women's affairs, appear disjointed, incompetent, incoherent and short on compassion. Various programmes (such as the halfway house project for women in crisis e.g., Rumah Nur project) were launched with fanfare. But when it came to delivery,

they were short on substance. In Perak, few, if any, were aware of its existence.

Any junior civil servant would feign ignorance about assistance for single mothers. Maybe it isn't ignorance. Possibly, he hasn't been informed – a common failing in our civil service. The left hand doesn't tell the right hand what it's doing. Moreover, the top think it unnecessary to filter information down the line, and vice-versa.

## NGOs' Role Crucial

Without the existence of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), more women will be neglected and possibly die. The role of NGOs in society is both crucial and important. Besides being dependent on government funding or private dona-

tions, they also rely heavily on us.

I despair when I see politicians offer freebies, and promise the earth come election time. Ang pows, green packets, food parcels, saris and school bags predominate just before a festival. But for the rest of the year, the poor barely subsist and are conveniently forgotten. The gap that separates our poor and rich is wide and growing wider. The discrepancy between aid for urban and rural areas is also large. Unsurprisingly, the election machinery which costs money, time and effort, can be mobilized at the push of a button. Whilst the poor may marvel at such immediacy, they must dread being touted as political pawns and be thrust into the limelight simply to serve someone's political agenda. With the fuss over, the underprivileged are again forgotten and discarded, their usefulness resurrected only at the next electioneering.

## Search For The Perak Amazon

But I reserve my best for last. Where is Perak's Amazon? Where is she? Who will champion wom-

en's rights in Perak? We have women scholars, professionals and academics. But who will lead when it comes to women's issues? Malaysian women hardly make it to the top in politics. Women comprise about half the total population, yet representation in parliament is a paltry 10%. In the Perak State Assembly, the figures are even more disturbing. An embarrassingly miniscule 5%. Of Perak's 1,002,000 women, only four speak on their behalf?

The best person to fight for women's issues, to highlight these in directives and policies, to make their voices heard in terms of their interests, personal welfare, development, employment rights, education, health and social needs, can only be another woman.

## Difficult Task

This Amazon will have a difficult task. She has to lead in a male dominated society. She must be prepared to go against convention should she detect any injustices. She has to fight for the rights of all

Cont. on page 16

*Daulat Tuanku*

**Heartiest Congratulations**

**Duli Yang Maha Mulia**  
**Paduka Seri Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah**  
**Ibni Almarhum Sultan Yussuf Izzuddin Shah**  
**Ghafarullahu-lah**  
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## IPOH IN BRIEF

More pics at  
ipohecho on line

## IPOH CITY WATCH AGM



Augustine flanked by Andrew (L) and Jeyaraj (R)

Ipoh City Watch (ICW) held its 6th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday, March 29 at the Old Andersonian Club. The objective was to elect new office bearers for the period 2009-2010.

Out-going President, N Sreetahararaj thanked the members, including past presidents Fathol Zaman and Chan Kok Sun for their presence.

ICW organised two public events during 2008. Some 200 participants attended the first forum on the restructuring of the local councils. The findings were submitted to former executive councillor for local governments, Nga Kor Ming, who was not receptive to the wishes of the public.

The second forum was on an effective public transport system. The panellists were of the opinion that the Meru Raya bus terminal was not the answer to Ipohites' transport woes considering its location and distance.

The new office bearers elected for the period 2009-2010 are: Augustine Anthony – President; A. Jeyaraj – Vice President; Dr P Rajeswaran – Secretary; Andrew Anthony – Treasurer; and Steven Lee – Asst Secretary.

Newly elected president, Augustine, thanked the members for their confidence. He promised to bring ICW to greater heights. One area the society should concentrate on is crime. Augustine, a practising lawyer, will endeavour to get the authorities involved in crime fighting.

## HOW TO JUDGE A JUDGE

"The whole duty of the judge is to administer justice according to law" so said British lawyer, judge and jurist, Lord Devlin in his book, "The Judge".

These words were by echoed by retired Court of Appeal Judge, N.H. Chan, during his talk entitled, 'How to judge the Judge' organised by the Perak Bar Committee recently. The talk was opened to members of the Bar, guests and chambering students.

N.H. Chan's views were quoted liberally by popular on-line news portals such as Malaysiakini and Malaysian Insider for his remarks on Ipoh High Court Judicial Commissioner Ridwan Ibrahim. Chan described him as "an arrogant novice judge" in his handling of high profile cases involving senior Perak politicians recently.

He repeated the same views at the talk. Quoting Lord Chief Justice Hewart "It is not merely of some importance, but is of fundamental importance that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done".

Chan provided an example by highlighting Article 72, Clause (1) of the Federal Constitution. "The validity of any proceedings in the Legislative Assembly of any state shall not be questioned in any court." He made this in reference to Dato' Zambry's application to declare Speaker Sivakumar's decision to suspend him and his executive council as unconstitutional and unlawful. "Anyone who can read knows the application by Zambry cannot be sustained," he pointed.

The talk was attended by over 60 members and guests. Although brief, it was a refreshing clarification of the events that had taken place in Perak recently.

Judicial Commissioner Ridwan Ibrahim on March 24 recused himself from hearing one case involving Speaker V Sivakumar. The decision was made after the Federal Court decided to return the suit filed by three former Pakatan Rakyat assemblymen against the Speaker to the Ipoh High Court.



## HOMESTAY EXPRESS



Removing the husk: (r-l) Ambassador Sangaland, Homestay Chairman – MD Mukhlas and Assemblyman Sharani

Swedish Ambassador to Malaysia Helena Sangaland recently visited the home stay villages at Kg Sungai Lanchang and Kampung Pasang Api both of which are located at Bagan Datoh district. The ambassador and her entourage were on their way to Pangkor Island for their staff outing and were invited to share brunch with the villagers.

"They (Tourism Malaysia) told us to expect just a cultural dance but it appears the whole village turned up to welcome us" said Jenn Lew the embassy's Promotion Officer.

Sangaland was met on arrival by Rungkup Assemblyman Sharani Mohamed and Bagan Datoh Homestay Chairman MD Mukhlas Ismail. A *kompang* group greeted the guests followed by a *silat* demonstration and cultural dances. Wide areas of Bagan Datoh are planted with coconut trees hence the guests were also shown how to pluck, dehusk a coconut and then grate it. Sangaland then planted a tree to commemorate her visit. The guests joined the community for lunch, *kampung* style, seated on floor mats and eating with their hands. "I only knew about 'Kuala (city) living but now I have just experienced *kampung* life too" said Sangaland before proceeding to her next destination.

## JUNK FOOD GENERATION



The Perak Consumers Association celebrated World Consumers' Rights Day on March 15 by organising a 3-day exhibition highlighting the problem of obesity and children's health.

Adopting the theme, "Junk Food Generation", the exhibition showcased the issue of poor nutrition and obesity in children. Judging by the increasing number of obese children we see daily, obesity, if left unchecked, would lead to more serious health problems in the future. Hence the theme which was aimed at creating awareness of what constituted a healthy diet.

The exhibition was held at Cold Storage Supermarket in Parkson Grand. An awareness activity held during the exhibition was to have children pick any five food and drinks of their choice within a budget of RM30. The items were then presented to nutritionist Ng Wei Wei and dietician Kong Woan Fei. Ng and Kong found that the items picked contained either too much fats or sugar. The experts agreed that everyone should consume home prepared meals as they were far healthier than ready-to-eat and processed foods.

The association also organised a dinner with emphasis on "slow food". The goal was to rekindle interest in consuming food cooked the traditional and healthy way. Those present agreed that food cooked the traditional way was far more nutritious and healthier than the "fast food" that the junk food generation craves today.

## ONE GOOD DEED



Harold Kong (L) with Chee Kok Hin (R)

Harold Kong was unaware that he had dropped his wallet after having his meal at Woolley Food Centre recently. He was pleasantly surprised when a stranger turned up at his house with his wallet. All the contents were intact. The stranger was Chee Kok Hin, the manager of the food court where Harold ate. One of Chee's workers found the wallet and passed it to Chee. Upon checking the contents, Chee found a calling card with a Singapore address. He thought of going to the press. However, the identity card in the wallet showed a local address. Chee drove immediately to the said address and the rest was history. Cases like this are a rarity today. People like Chee and his worker are living proof that honesty is still being valued by some although not all. Kudos to you, Chee. Like they say, one good deed deserves another.

## STATE LEVEL POLICE DAY CELEBRATION



The 202nd Police Day celebrations in Ipoh was held at Ipoh Police Contingent premises on March 25 with a parade attended by all uniformed and civilian staff. State Deputy CPO Senior Assistant Commissioner (1) Dato Hadi Ho Abdullah led the ceremony by reading out the message from Inspector General of Police (IGP) Tan Sri Musa Hassan.

DSP Haji Azman bin Haji Shahrin later led the contingent in reciting their pledge of service. Excellence awards were also presented to nominated officers from various police stations. Various members of NGO's and representatives from the Chinese and Indian Chambers of Commerce were present at the celebration.

## NEW DAP SERVICE CENTER IN JELAPANG



A new Service Centre has been set up by the Democratic Action Party (DAP) at Jelapang. The previous centre had been closed ever since its elected representative Hee Yit Foong defected to the BN party and brought down the government in the state of Perak. The address of the service centre is 9A Jalan Besar next to the Magnum outlet. Ex Councillor, Frankie Wong Yoon Choong will be in charge of the center. In his opening address he thanked the Jelapang service team and especially the "residents of Jelapang for making the set up of the centre a reality is such a short time. They voted for us in 2004 and 2008, we are not going to run away" he added. Also present at the opening ceremony was MP for Ipoh Barat, Lim Kit Siang and MP for Ipoh Timor M. Kulasegaran, Keranji Assemblyman Chen Fook Chye and NGO Lawyer Augustine Anthony.



@

mail /email

## LETTER TO EDITOR

Send your letters to the Editor Ipoh Echo 1, Jalan Lasam, 30450 Ipoh or fax to 05-2552181 or email to [ipohecho.fzb@gmail.com](mailto:ipohecho.fzb@gmail.com). Letters must have writer's full name, address and phone number. A pseudonym may be included.

## THE LANGUAGE OF TOURISM

While most people will only visit a particular museum or gallery once, unless a special exhibition is made known to them by wide publicity, the avid enthusiast for heritage and social history will return time after time in the hope that something new has been added to the collection. In Ipoh this burning desire to learn more about our past is a rare commodity, indeed there are many long-term Ipohites who do not even know where Ipoh's Darul Ridzuan Museum is!

Those few souls who do return regularly to the our museum in Jalan Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab, have, for the past three years, been mainly disappointed as, apart from a handful of short-run exhibitions from the public, the ground floor has been empty and in darkness with little or no change to the exhibition on the first floor.

But now, there has been a great improvement for around the walls of the ground floor is a series of



well-produced posters, professionally mounted, which tell the story of Ipoh's history. Entitled "Ruang Galeri Bandaraya Ipoh" this is a great step forward from the old black-framed A4 size faded photographs that were there in 1995 and of course streets ahead of the blank walls that have reigned for much of the intervening three years.

Having said that, it was disappointing to see the same old exhibits in the show cases. But let us be charitable and accept that Rome was not built in a day and it could well be that a new set of artefacts

are actually being prepared as you read these words.

So at last, tourists can pop up to Ipoh by train and with a short walk visit the museum and learn about Ipoh's fascinating history. Sure they can, but only if they can read Bahasa Malaysia. Would you believe that, after all that has been said about encouraging tourism to Perak, they have printed this new display solely in the national language?

Protecting the national language is one thing, but at the cost of tourism dollars is taking that protection too far!

WR

## WHERE IS THE PERAK AMAZON? ...continued from page 14

women as a whole – not just of her own particular race. She must surmount all the cultural, social and religious prejudices in our society. Equally important, she needs to reassure the men, who currently hold sway the balance of power in Perak (and Malaysia) that there is nothing to fear but all to gain from power-sharing, by working alongside a female colleague. She must help other women overcome their traditional tendency of taking the back-seat when it comes to decision making. And she has to convince them that they can conquer their innate fears.

Women realise that a substantial percentage of them will fall victim to domestic violence at some point in their lives. With this economic recession, the violence, abuse and discrimination will increase. The vulnerable women (and children) need protection. It is the collective voice of women, especially at the senior levels of society and establishments that will make a difference.

Hence, the Perak Amazon has to double her efforts for probably half the results. She must possess nerves of steel and give

as good as she gets. Some men in parliament have gutter-standard manners, have expressed disparaging and coarse remarks, for which none of them have been effectively and decisively reprimanded and punished.

## No Support From Women Politicians

I am also disappointed by the lack of support and commitment offered by our women politicians when it comes to women's issues.

At the Musawah global meeting on 'Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family' held recently,

Senator Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, newly appointed Minister for Women, Family and Community Development in Najib's cabinet, succumbed to comments by the Malaysian Ulama Association that it was wrong to challenge Syariah principles on women and family.

As a result of this, her subsequent absence to chair a session of the foreign Islamic scholars and professionals was highly embarrassing. This is without doubt a barometer reading that women's issues in Malaysia are subject to pressure by others, that the

ministry that deals with such matters lacks teeth, that the discussion and interpretation of women's issues are easily prevented from being aired, that the implementation of rules pertaining to women can be unduly influenced. This leadership is seriously flawed.

Men on the rungs of the political ladder have always made use of the powerful mobilising force of women in elections.

Thus far, women have been content to remain as bottom feeders and participate at the lowest levels of this effort. Maybe it is time we swam away from this diminished perception of ourselves.

If our votes count, then our issues should also take precedence.

What would it take to alter the status quo? Who will bring women's interests to the forefront? We know we have the spirit, determination and conviction to strive for a more just and equal society.

Let us commence the race and search for the Perak Amazon.

YMM

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Paduka Seri Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah  
Ibni Almarhum Sultan Yussuf Izzuddin Shah  
Ghafarullahu-lah**

**D.K., D.K.M., D.M.N., D.K.A.**

**Sultan, Yang Di- Pertuan Dan Raja Pemerintah  
Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan serta jajahan takluknya**

**Sempena Ulang Tahun Hari Keputeraan Baginda yang  
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**“Semoga Allah Memberkati Pemerintah Berjiwa Rakyat Duli  
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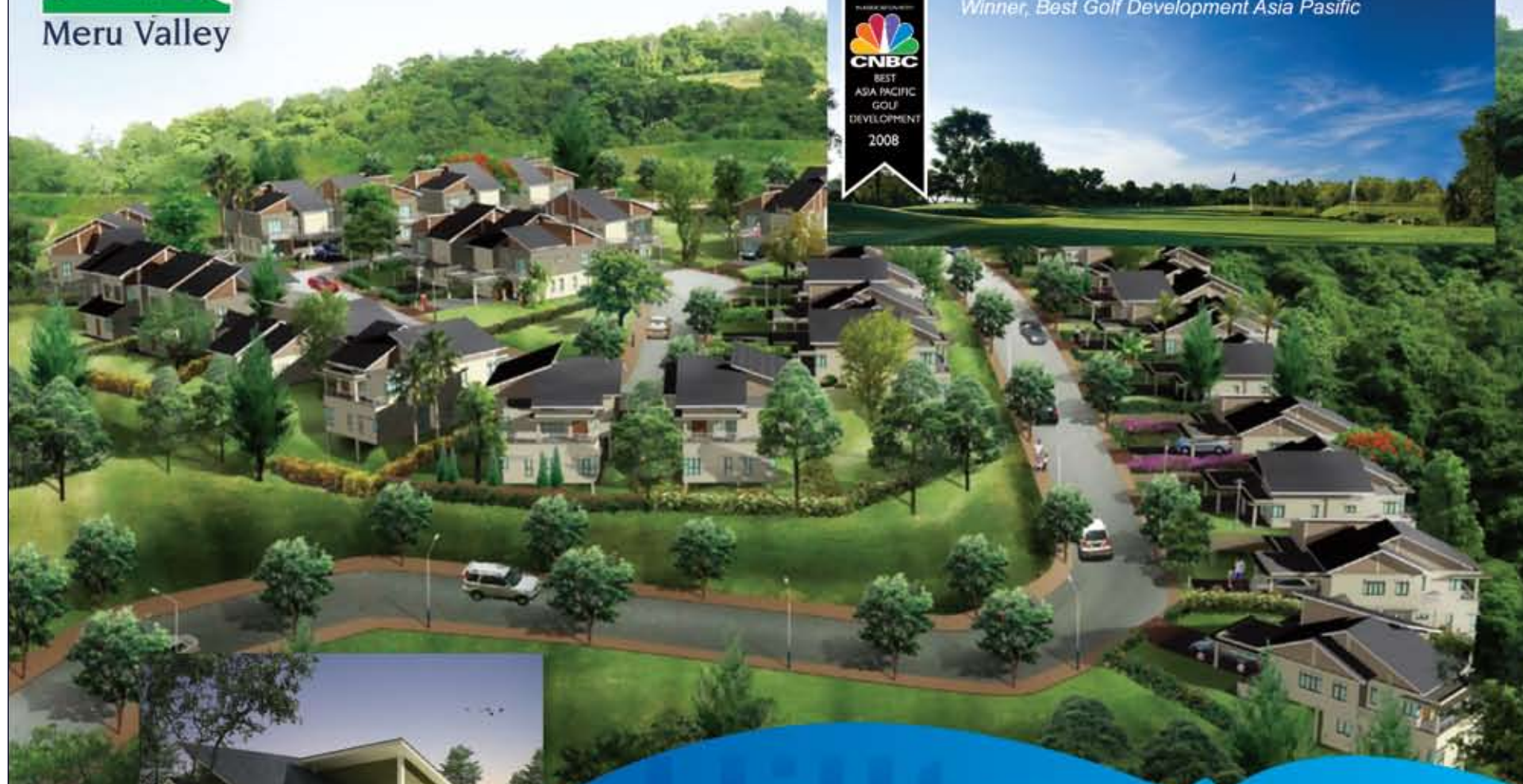


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