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# IPOHecho

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## NEWS

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## IS IPOH READY FOR SLICE OF HEALTH TOURISM PIE?



Malaysia is fast becoming a strong competitor in the global health and medical tourism sector. Given the potential of health tourism as a foreign exchange earner, the government has taken a series of proactive measures to enhance Malaysia as a preferred health tourism destination. Obviously cities like Kuala Lumpur and Penang share the biggest slice of this medical tourism pie but can a smaller city like Ipoh get a piece of this action, in view of the coming arrivals of international visitors via the 4-times weekly Firefly flights from Singapore?

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Cooking(see recipe on  
page 5)

The quality I  
admire most:

Honesty, Ambition,  
Kindness.

Ambition:

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## MEDICAL SERVICES ARE AFTER THE TOURIST DOLLAR

*Hospitals, not patients going for major facelifts.....*

Statistics indicate a strong and growing interest in Malaysia's health tourism industry. According to the online investment news service NuWire Investor, Malaysia ranks third amongst the world's top medical tourism destinations after Panama and Brazil. The Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia states that the number of foreigners seeking healthcare services in Malaysia has grown from 75,210 patients in year 2001 to 341,288 medical tourists in 2007, with revenue of RM253.84 million.

Health tourism consists of two main categories which are medical tourism and wellness programs. Ipoh Echo talked to three private hospitals in Ipoh on their current facilities and services and plans for tapping this lucrative segment of healthcare.

### Ipoh Specialist Hospital

Ipoh Specialist Hospital is one of the 19 hospitals belonging to KPJ Healthcare Berhad, the largest private healthcare group in Malaysia. A new wing begun in 2005, was completed in 2007. Currently a refurbishment and renovation programme is ongoing in the old building and on completion later this year, Ipoh Specialist will be a shining example of a world class hospital.

The premier floor in



ISH Private room on Premier Floor

visitors with an environment not unlike a hotel lobby. The VIP suite in particular is designed as luxuriously as any 5-star hotel and although its current occupancy is sporadic, it bodes well for the future of health tourism.

Luxury and glamour aside, ISH is very much in the forefront of medical care. It boasts the only Linear Accelerator in all of Perak for its oncology department and more than eight new diagnostic tools have been purchased in the last two years. Blood analysis and laboratory studies are handled by a KPJ subsidiary, Lablink, which assures quick and efficient turnaround time for results.

### Emergency Facilities

Ahmad Nasiruddin Harun, CEO of ISH is particularly proud of the new emergency facilities which is situated on the ground floor of the old wing. Using the Triage system of red zone for critical, yellow for semi critical and green for non-critical, emergency

only local anaesthesia, an asthma bay for nebulizer procedures and private rooms for examination of patients complete the emergency facilities.

Alvin Lee, the CFO for the KPJ group spoke of future plans which includes the largest dialysis centre in Perak consisting of 40 beds, an expanded ICU facility and a new Operating theatre complex.

"Special efforts are being made to attract the health tourist", said Nasiruddin, "ISH offers shuttle service from Penang & LCCT to Ipoh as well as free transit service from hotel to hospital. We also arrange accommodations for people coming for our screening packages at local hotels at corporate rates".

### Pantai Hospital Ipoh

Under the dynamic leadership of Dr Dilshaad Ali, physician turned administrator of Pantai Hospital Ipoh, this hospital has been quietly transforming itself into not only a leader in healthcare but a haven of wellness and hospitality. A Health

ers are useful for keeping track of older patients and small children, monitoring them wherever they may wander within the premises. It further eliminates the necessity to rouse patients from their sleep or rest to take temperatures. A second phase for this technology will have patients' blood pressure and pulse rate monitored as well.

### Hospital(ity)

Other pioneering moves by the hospital include the setting up of a Hospitality Service division that functions as a 'hotel division' for the hospital. Surely a 'first' in the medical industry, the hospitality staff are being trained by the Ritz Carlton group, acknowledged leaders in 5-star hospitality. Hospitality envoys will attend to patients' comfort needs, handle luggage, run errands, and discharge from bedside, creating a hospital experience that is less clinical and more like home. Pantai Ipoh looks set to enter a new era in the Hospital(ity) industry.

New additions to Pantai include their Dialysis Centre where 24 patients can be handled at one time. This has been designed to look 'homey' and private areas with TV and comfortable seating made available for carers who come with patients. There are also private rooms for dialysis patients on request. The rehabilitation centre has been totally upgraded with a full gym and equipment.

the Pantai Medical Centre in KL. This will expand their repertoire of Wellness packages on offer even further, taking the physician's role from curing disease to prevention and maintaining health.

Plans are in hand to upgrade their ICU unit, increasing beds from 5 to 7. An oncology and dedicated heart centre are on the

for radiotherapy and the latest linear accelerator on order. Scheduled to be ready in one year's time, a medical oncologist will be headhunted in the meantime and medical physicists and oncology trained nurses and radiographers identified and shortlisted. Following this will be a groundbreaking Nuclear Medicine Centre which is



Pantai Wellness Centre Waiting Lounge

cards, while an aesthetic Plastic and Reconstructive surgery centre with full dental services will further enhance Pantai Ipoh's aim to become the one-stop medical centre of Ipoh.

### Fatimah Hospital

Ipoh Echo spoke with Dr. Lim Chie Kean, CEO of Fatimah Hospital, on their plans for the future and the possibility of tapping the health tourism market.

Fatimah Hospital was started 35 years ago by the Brothers of Mercy. Although the bricks and mortar of the building is showing its vintage, diagnostic equipment and medical facilities are on par with other hospitals in Ipoh. The recognition with an accreditation award by the Malaysian Society of Quality in Health (MSQH), one of two in Ipoh, the other being ISH, is an achievement of which Fatimah is proud.

### Best Orthopaedic Care

Fatimah counts amongst its specialities the best in orthopaedic care, both surgically and rehabilitative. Special equipment is available for joints and spine surgery while post surgery rehabilitation includes sessions in the only hydrotherapy pool in a hospital in Ipoh. Further treatments with Fango (mud packs imported from Germany), again, the only hospital offering this service, further help increase mobility.

Fatimah offers the only 128-slice CT scan in the whole of northern Malaysia and boasts the only geriatric and psychiatric clinic in Ipoh.

An oncology centre is already in the works with bunkers being prepared

scheduled to begin construction towards the end of 2010.

### Share of Tourism Pie?

Given that Ipoh offers world class hospitals with facilities and hospitality to match other destinations, what are its chances of getting a slice of the medical tourism pie? With Firefly flights bringing in a maximum of 280 visitors to Ipoh per week and talks of the runway being extended to accommodate AirAsia planes, how many foreigners will actually come to Ipoh for their screening and medical care?

"Well our prices are 10-15% lower than KL or Penang and we offer the same level of facilities and care" says Dr Lim of Fatimah.

Dr Dilshaad goes a step further, "We're 2.7 times cheaper than other countries like Singapore. It is foreseeable that we can tap the Singapore market especially now that the Singapore Government is allowing Singaporeans to use their MediSave for treatment in Malaysia".

Naziruddin concurs, "Hitherto, we've participated in education trade fairs with the Perak tourism office held in Medan and our efforts have been rewarded by small groups of Medanese who come to ISH. However Riau Airlines have stopped flying and until they start again which according to rumours is scheduled for August, we'll have to tap them from Penang where there are daily flights."

In the meantime, until medical tourism takes off in Perak, Ipohites can help themselves to all the health and medical facilities available at their doorstep.



ISH Reception

the new wing is designed with modern aesthetics in mind, minimising the sterile hospital ambience as soothing touches such as a water fountain greeting guests at the lift lobby and flower arrangements dotting the generously sized reception area with comfortable seating, provide

patients can be handled quickly and efficiently. A decontamination room for infectious diseases such as the current H1N1 pandemic will ensure that cross-infection of other patients and staff are contained. A small operating theatre takes care of minor cases requiring



Pantai Reception at medical mall, 3rd floor

Industry Recognition award from the Ministry of Health recently is verification of the efforts put in.

Pantai is a pioneer in transcatheter disc nucleoplasty for slipped and prolapsed discs. A combination of surgical skills and high-end special instruments, results in less hospital time, an achievement of which Pantai is justifiably proud. Another first for the hospital, in fact the first of its kind in Malaysia, is the RFID location tracker and temperature monitor for hospitalised patients. Using radio frequency technology, these track-

### Wellness Centre

A newly opened Wellness Centre manned full time by a physician has opened since February. Looking like a 5-star hotel suite, the Wellness Centre offers tea and coffee, snacks, work stations for laptops, full WiFi, and even secretarial service for the busy executive. Their mission is to help you get a complete medical screening within four hours while enjoying an ambience similar to home. The physician in charge is currently undergoing training in anti-ageing regimes from a leading geriatrician from their sister hospital,



Patients from Medan after their health screening.



**IPOH ECHO**  
Your Community Newspaper  
From the Editor's Desk

## LET'S BE SERIOUS ABOUT CRIME

Fathol Zaman Bukhari

*Don't blame drug addicts only.....solutions offered too simplistic*

The increasing number of break-ins and snatch thefts in Lim Garden, Taman Harmoni, First Garden and areas around Silibin is cause for concern. Realising the gravity of the problem the Adun for Buntong, Sivasubramaniam, raised the matter with the Ipoh Police Chief, ACP Azisman Alias. A meeting was arranged at the Buntong Police station on June 16. Siva's team consisted of residents' representatives from the affected areas, which are within his constituency, and the state assemblymen for Bercham and Mengelembu. The presence of the other two political representatives was obvious, Bercham and Mengelembu are the most crime-prone suburbs in Ipoh besides Buntong and Silibin.

The hour-long discussion centred on crime and vandalism in the affected areas and measures to overcome them. Vandalism at the Sungei Pari flats in Buntong is endemic and needs to be addressed by the authorities.

### Criminals Bolder

"Criminals are getting bolder by the day. They strike during office hours when husbands and sons are away at work," said Namasu from Lim Garden. This changing of strategy by the thieves does not bode well for housewives. They now fear for their own safety. Hanging out clothes to dry or chatting with the next-door neighbour over the fence is no longer practical. In one incident the perpetrator jumped over the gate, snatched his victim's necklace and escaped with an accomplice on a motorcycle. Another woman got a rude shock when she saw her house



ransacked after returning home from the market.

Incidents such as these are common in Mengelembu, Bercham, Buntong and Silibin. Most went unreported. A retiree in Kampong Tersusun Tasek, Bercham returning home from the mosque one afternoon was shocked to see the door of his house ajar. Sensing something amiss he rushed in to confront his unwelcome guest. He got clobbered by the intruder instead and was hospitalised. Sometime ago a businesswoman on reaching home one morning saw figures moving in her house. When she called the Bercham Police Station she was told to hang on as there was no patrol car around. While waiting for the police to arrive she got her neighbours to cordon her house. The delay enabled the thieves to sneak out through the roof and escape.

### Constant Fear

These are no figments of someone's imagination but true events that have taken place over a period of time. Residents, especially in the outlying areas of Ipoh, are living in constant fear. They not only fear for their properties but their lives as well. The current economic downturn is not making things any better. A high unemployment rate translates to a higher crime index, statistics

notwithstanding.

So for Azisman to pin the blame squarely on drug addicts for the heightened criminal activities is a little far-fetched. Drug addicts are opportunists. They strike when an opportunity comes their way. It is like a child slipping his hand into an opened cookie jar. A planned burglary requires keen observation and some deliberation. Thieves work in teams not individually. Azisman should differentiate between the two and make some reasonable assessments rather than to generalise.

### Proper Deployment of Resources

Ipoh covers an area of 643 sq km and has a population of about 630,000, almost a thousand people to a sq km. Granted the city police chief does not have the manpower to cover such a huge area but he could allocate scarce resources to sectors considered crime prone. Bercham, Buntong, Silibin, Kg Tawas and Mengelembu are areas that require more than just a token presence. Mobile and foot patrols should be the preferred options. *Pondok polis*, a common feature in Petaling Jaya and Kuala Lumpur in the 80s, may not be a bad idea. Plainclothes policemen should be deployed to augment those on beat duty. All these require planning, foresight and flexibility.

the roles attributed to this paramilitary force. GOF personnel do not do policing duties like their kinsmen in blue khakis. They are not trained for that. Having them to patrol our roads and back lanes will create an impression that will be detrimental to the country's well being.

Presently, there is a lingering feeling among Ipohites that not enough is done by the authorities to ensure public safety and security, giving the Police

a bad name. Although community policing is a way out this should not be the answer when there is no political will to ensure its viability. The heydays of *Rukun Tetangga* are long gone.

Meanwhile, dialogues such as the one Siva and Azisman had will continue at our behest. These discussions have little or no bearing on the eventual outcome, as the solutions offered are too simplistic.

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**THINKING ALOUD****CULTURE IN BUSINESS**

by G. SIVAPRAGASAM

**What's in a name?**

Undoubtedly among the three main races that reside in Malaysia, the Chinese are by far much more successful in business than the Malays and Indians. A prominent professional turned entrepreneur who is of Chinese origin advances the theory that the dissimilarity may in part be due to the way the three communities organise their social structure. To make his point he refers to the way the three communities name themselves. Whilst the Malays and the Indians limit their personal identity to two generations the Chinese have created a structure where in addition to their personal name it identifies a common ancestor and the generation he belongs to. He argues that the common ancestral identity establishes kinship amongst those who carry the name, enabling a base for not only networking, obtaining support and providing assistance, but also provides a bonding and an identity that members feel honour bound to safeguard. On a serious note, he points out that as marriage between partners who share common ancestral names are discouraged, it avoids inbreeding and promotes genetic diversity. He suggests that the Malay and Indian communities should consider changing the way they name themselves.

**Clan Success**

Undoubtedly this argument has much merit. Throughout the ages, clan organisations have been the mainstay of Chinese social and commercial culture. Ancestral worship or respect has provided the emotional platform for organised common wealth development. It cannot be denied that in this country, clan based organisations have in no small measure contributed to the emergence of the Chinese community as an economic force. What the social structure has powered is the materialization of private economies that has not only enabled self sufficiency and sustainability but sometimes monopolistic commercial structures. The system of grouping has allowed them to act in unison and in concert to achieve success.

However it must be added that such a success has only been possible

where the Chinese community had critical mass. Where they do not, the community does not dominate commercially. This could be observed in countries where they have a presence, but lacking critical mass to support private economies, they are not commercial leaders.

The suggestion, that the pattern of structuring names amongst the two other communities be reformed, merits serious consideration. It must be added that certain non-Chinese communities do have group identification tags with their names. Some have caste or clan and even family names attached to their name. Then there are those who in adopting Christianity have taken Western names with a family name which is carried through generations. Though not supported by any kind of research it is my observation that generally those with identities that continue through generations appear to have attained a higher social level.

**Is cultural bonding relevant in the global world?**

Having said all that, the real question is what is the value of this cultural element in today's global environment? There can be little argument that the extended family and clan structure has in no small part contributed to internalising values of hard work, thrift, patience and tenacity. These values have helped to advance a commercial culture becoming increasingly reinforced over generations. But the world has changed. It has become global. Ironically the evolution of this global platform which has destroyed national borders has empowered the individual in more ways than one can imagine.

**Dangers of exclusivity**

The danger of tribal mindset is exclusivity. There is a natural tendency to interact and work within a group or at the very least favour it. At the foundation of this behaviour is trust. Trust and by extension a feel of comfort within a group also creates distrust and uneasiness in dealing with outsiders.

In today's world the division of labour is complex and is steadily becoming more and more complex with a lot more

people interacting with a lot of other people they don't know and may never meet. If you want to have a modern complex division of labour, you have to be able to put more trust in strangers.

Thomas Friedman asserts that a cultural trait that is particularly relevant in the 'flat world' is how outward your culture is, to what degree it is open to foreign influences and ideas and most importantly, to what degree there is trust to collaborate with strangers.

He adds that the more you have a culture that nat-

urally and easily absorbs foreign ideas – the greater your advantage in the new world. Cultures that are open and willing to work with anyone have a huge advantage in this world. The cultural exclusivists have a real disadvantage.

**Openness Critical**

Openness is critical for it provides you the opportunity to respect people for their talent and abilities. You are dealing with people on the basis of talent – not clan, race or ethnicity. Today is a talent-based and performance-based world rather than a

background-based world.

I would advance that a social system founded on groups, rather than being an advantage, may actually be a hindrance on the path to progress. Success in today's world is powered not by being insular and tribal but by being an individual, able to understand, deal and work with diverse individuals, groups, nationalities and cultures.

I believe today belongs to those who perceive themselves as individuals in the context of the whole world rather than as part of one group or another.

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## MUSINGS ON FOOD

by See Foon Chan-Koppen



More pics at ipohecho.com.my

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## SeeFoon goes in search of Teochew Porridge



Teochew porridge is a journey of nostalgia for me. In my youth in Singapore, it was an eating experience that always hit the right notes on my palate. But having lived many years in Hong Kong where Chiu Chow (the Cantonese pronunciation) food was elevated to the heights and one's pocket ravaged to the depths, I found myself associating Teochew or Chiu Chow with cold flower crab, soy-braised goose breast, delicate Chinese chive dumplings and many other delicacies that only the HK restaurateur will conjure up. All costing an



arm and a leg and perhaps a mortgage on your new house!

Now that I live in Ipoh, I find myself retracing some early culinary journeys and relishing not creating a deficit in my budget. Recently I was transported back to my childhood memories when I went in search of the quintessential Teochew Muay as I remember it being called in those days.

Teochew cuisine

comes from Canton province in China but with a character all its own. Teochew porridge as it is found in Malaysia is essentially an economical, ready prepared 'fast food' not unlike the ubiquitous economy rice offerings that one finds in just about every coffee shop in town. There is one difference: no genuine Teochew porridge will offer *sambal(led)* or curried accompanying dishes as one would find at the various economy rice stalls.

Teochew porridge is quite different from Cantonese porridge in that it is more watery and the grains of rice, while soft, is still quite distinct. Flavouring is never added to the porridge and the idea is to marry all the different tastes of the accompanying dishes that come with the meal with the bland porridge. The basic ones

are preserved vegetables, braised beancurd, preserved bean curd, peanuts, salted duck eggs and many more. Teochew cooking relies heavily on *tau cheong* or preserved bean paste and their 'Loh' (not to be confused with the Hokkien 'Lor') method....essentially a method of braising in soya sauce and spices like star anise, cinnamon.

I sampled the Teochew porridge at two restaurants recently and these are some of my recommendations:

## Yew Ming in Old Town

Yet another 3rd genera-



tion-run restaurant, Yew Ming has been around for more than 70 years. Comprising 2 shop lots, there is no queue for tables and the restaurant though not air-conditioned is cooled by ample fans. We began with the *ikan kembong* (a type of local mackerel) that comes either fried or steamed topped with *tau cheong* (soya bean paste)



Yew Ming's seaweed soup

– RM3 per fish. The fish cakes or *Yu Pang* was tasty and had the right springy mouth feel. Pig's trotters and large intestines braised in the traditional 'Loh' style could have packed more 'oomph' RM12 as could the Carp fish head *song yu tau*, steamed with garlic and soya bean paste – RM22.

The *Choy Po Dan*, omelette fried with preserved radish had the right degree of saltiness for the bland porridge – RM12 and we finished the meal with a big bowl of Seaweed soup and fish balls *Yu Tan Tze Choy* – RM10. Porridge here costs RM0.80 per bowl. Some of the dishes are pre-cooked but most dishes here can be ordered and prepared à la carte.

## Hung Wang

Operating since 1969, this Teochew porridge restaurant serves very few à la carte and other than their steamed fish, all their accompanying dishes are pre-cooked. The best time to arrive is just after 11.30 a.m. when all the accompaniments are laid out in a cornucopia of abundance.

To go with the porridge (RM0.70) is a dazzling array of dishes ranging from the standard salted duck eggs, fried or braised *ikan kembong* RM3.50 each, peanuts and *ikan bilis*, fish cake RM1.50, braised tofu RM1, to some of their house specialities which I haven't seen anywhere else.

Amongst these are the braised pig's blood – RM0.80, duck's heart, gizzard and livers, RM5.00,

the whole baby octopus RM5, *fu kuah* or bitter melon with black beans – RM2 and *brinjal* in *tau cheong* – RM1.50.

Deserving special mention are their signature dishes, the *Loh Ngap* or braised duck in their special soya sauce and their large and small pigs intestines. It is rumoured that the *Loh* sauce is never thrown away and every day, the chef adds fresh ingredients and braises the ducks, and pig's offal in this sauce which gets intensified over time. Friends of mine who felt squeamish about this idea, are obviously not familiar with the idea of the ongoing stockpot....both in Western and Chinese kitchens....where if the pot is boiled every day, no danger of food contamination occurs. Who knows, may be the sauce in which my duck breast and pig's offal was braised is 40 years old!



Hung Wang's baby octopus

## Hung Wang

7 & 9 Jalan Leong Sin Nam, New Town.  
11.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.  
Thursdays closed

## Yew Ming

Restoran Yew Ming  
81 & 83 Jalan Bandar Timah (Leech Street), Old Town.  
10.00 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.



Hung Wang's cornucopia of dishes

## Recipe JAPANESE SOBA SALAD

by KRYSTLE LEE

## Ingredients:

1 packet Soba noodles  
50 ml tsuyu sauce  
Kewpie mayonnaise  
Roasted seasoned seaweed  
Toasted black and white sesame seeds (optional)  
¼ head of lettuce  
3 tomatoes  
½ cucumber  
1 avocado  
Assorted fruits of your choice

1. Cook soba in boiling water as according to instruction on packet. Set aside in ice-water.

2. Arrange washed lettuce at the bottom of a large bowl.  
3. Slice cucumber thinly.  
4. Remove seeds and cut up tomatoes into bite-size pieces.  
5. Remove seed and slice avocado into bite-size pieces.  
6. Do the above with the fruits of your choice. Fruits used in this recipe were strawberries and a mango. Other recommended fruits are pears, apples,

mandarins and pomeloes.  
7. Place noodles on centre of dish on top of lettuce.  
8. Arrange remaining vegetables and fruits around and on noodles.  
9. Sprinkle shredded seaweed and sesame seeds on top.  
10. Pour in with circular motion the tsuyu and mayonnaise and toss well just before serving.

Serves 8-10 as an appetizer.



## HAWKER FOOD

## HAKKA MEE

Hakka Mee may look a lot like wonton mee but it's not the same. It is served quite dry, tossed with a braised minced pork gravy. The noodles are broader and drier than the wonton's.

It is accompanied with a bowl of *yong liu* (fish balls, fish paste stuffed tofu and others) in soup – and yes, it is the same ingredients as for *yong tau foo*. Fresh chilli sauce and garlic are also the norm for dipping. The ideal noodles are cooked al dente and come with a generous garnishing of bean sprouts (*tauge*) and chopped spring onions.



NAME	WHERE	COMMENTS	PRICE (RM)	
THE PARIS RESTAURANT 7.30am-12 noon	164 Jln Sultan Iskandar Shah, New Town	Homemade noodles are al dente. Meat gravy very good.	Mee: 1.80 Mee 1½: 2.40 Yong liu: 0.50	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
YIK SUN 7am-1pm; 7pm-9.30pm	74 & 76 Jln Bandar Timah (Leech St), Old Town	Noodles are al dente but could do with a bit more gravy. The gravy is tasty. Unusual because it serves a good sliced beef soup as an accompaniment.	Mee: 1.50 Yong liu: 0.50 Beef soup: 5.00/6.00/8.00 S/M/L	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
RESTORAN CATHAY 7.30am-12 noon Saturdays off	17A Jln Dato Tahwil Azar (Osbourne St), New Town	Noodles are al dente. Minced pork gravy is tasty. Noodles are homemade.	Mee: 1.30 Yong liu: 0.50	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
STALL #4 8am-12 noon	Pusat Makanan Majestic (behind the old Majestic cinema), Jln Dato Tahwil Azar (Osbourne St), New Town	Gravy is tasty. The meat is not minced but cut into small pieces. Noodles have more gravy and is not al dente.	Mee: 1.50 Yong liu: 0.40-0.50	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Our next food review will be **Chinese Roast Pork**  
Email your favourite recommendations to: [food@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:food@ipohecho.com.my)



## IPOH FACTS AND FANCIES

by HO TAK MING

## THE SQUATTERS OF PASIR PINJI

## Part 2 of The Market Gardeners of Kinta

In the early years when there were very few squatters, the Colonial Government was sympathetic to them, and tried to help them to acquire the land where they were cultivating their vegetables, by legal means. However, during the great tin and rubber Slump of the early 1930's, when thousands of out-of-work mining coolies turned to vegetable gardening for a living, and in the process, occupied Government land illegally, the indignant landlord looked upon them as a nuisance. It imposed taxation on them, sometimes a bit harshly.

In the depression era of the early 1930's, Pasir Pinji was where Ipoh's slums were. The area was just outside Sanitary Board limits, and was occupied by several hundred squatters growing vegetables for the townsfolk. However, in December 1930, the Chairman of the Kinta Sanitary Board, Major G.M. Kidd, enlarged the boundaries of the Board, and, by a mere stroke of the pen, brought the area within the ambit of his powers. The squatters were taxed the same rate as the rest of Ipoh folks, but without the benefit of any amenities given to them. In early 1931, 107 of the squatters wrote a petition to the Chairman of the Kinta Sanitary Board requesting him to lower the assessments as they were hard-pressed to meet the demands in the present depression.

Major Kidd sent back a most unsympathetic reply. He said that those living within the Board's limits must pay a rate of 10% assessment, 2% for

water rate and 2% for education rate on the value of their houses. Landlords were charging their tenants more than the Government proposed to charge them. If they did not want to pay their taxes, they could live outside the municipal limits.

The petitioners sent a copy of their petition and the Chairman's reply to the Managing Editor of the Times of Malaya, J.A.S. Jennings, who was also an Unofficial Member of the Sanitary Board. At the meeting of the Kinta Sanitary Board on 18th March 1931, this matter was not put up for discussion. Jennings asked why not, as it was a matter that the Board should know about, since the petition was signed by over a hundred people. The Chairman replied that it was within his discretion to decide what should be placed before the Board. In this case it was a matter for the Resident to decide, since the Board did not have the power to decide anything. The Unofficial Members were only there to advise. Jennings said that he had every confidence in the sympathy and understanding of the Resident, but the correspondence should be sent to him with the Board's recommendation after discussion. What had the Sanitary Board done to improve the Pasir Pinji area to charge the same assessment as other developed parts of the town? Roads? Lights? Water? Scavenging? The Government could not copy some greedy landlord or cruel private landowner. How could the squatters leave the Sanitary Board's

limits in these hard times, to pull down their pitiful little huts and rebuild at some other location outside town? They had developed their vegetable gardens by the sweat of their brows.

Jennings appealed for sympathy for the poor squatters in the present hard times. The Board's recommendation to the Resident in the matter of the extra taxation should be "That all squatters on State lands should, in the present hard times, be treated leniently." Dr. C.Y. Wu, a medical practitioner, seconded the motion. The proposal was put to a vote and carried by a majority.

At the subsequent meeting of the Sanitary Board in April 1931, the Chairman's statement that it was within his absolute discretion to decide what matters should be placed before the Board, was not put in the minutes. Jennings asked Major Kidd whether he had made such a statement, and if he had, it should be in the minutes. Major Kidd asked Jennings where in the minutes the statement should be placed. Jennings replied that he did not care as long as it was in the minutes, and asked the Chairman if the ruling still applied. Kidd said yes, whereupon Jennings left the meeting, saying that he was going back to his office and tender his resignation. His position as an Unofficial Member of the Board was intolerable under such a ruling.

To find out if what the petitioners had written was true, the newspaper commissioned a senior member of the staff to visit the Pinji squatters and write a

report on their conditions.

#### "The Pinji Squatters Report

How These Poor People Live No Lights, Roads or Water Huts Made Out of Packing Cases And Patched with Pieces of Tin Claims in Petition to Chairman, KSB, Only Too True

Blissfully ignorant of the storm their petition to the Chairman, Kinta Sanitary Board, has raised, the signatories to the petition from the squatters continue their daily tasks, striving and struggling hard to earn a few cents in order to keep the wolf from the door.

Where is the place that is the abode of the Pinji Squatters? How do they live? Are they really as poor as they claim to be in the petition?

My task took me into an area which I never imagined had existed before and I am quite sure very few of the members of the Kinta Sanitary Board, official and unofficial included, have personal knowledge of.

#### Three Hundred Huts

There are about 300 huts scattered all over this area which was recently included within the town boundary so as to provide for the expansion of the town in the years to come.

To get to this area I turned in from Chamberlain Road into Pasir Puteh Road, which road was completed and opened to traffic last year.

#### Huts Made from Old Packing Cases

Only a few huts are built

of plank and they have used the boards of packing cases for the purpose.

Others have walls of flattened out kerosene oil tins and odd bits of corrugated iron sheets. A few have bamboo walls.

The majority of the huts, however, have mud walls, which is unusual. Each hut has a vegetable garden. Now these gardens, in nearly all cases, present a neglected appearance. On enquiry, I learned that the demand for garden produce is now poor, that the prices offered for such produce do not pay for the cultivation and the marketing of the produce.

#### Little To Be Got For Labours

Fowl-rearing is common, but prices for eggs and poultry have come down tremendously and anything like large scale poultry raising is out of the question. The same is true with pig rearing. Fish, too, is not paying, and there has been no restocking of the fish ponds for some time.

#### A Scandalous Imposition

Except for the land they live on, there is nothing that these people receive from Government and it is simply scandalous that they should be charged a water rate and an education rate.

Not a single child living in the huts I visited attends a State-aided school and is not likely to do so for two reasons.

Firstly, the parents cannot afford it. Secondly, there is no accommodation in the schools receiving Government aid for them.

The education rate, however, must, it seems,

be imposed on these poor squatters."

The British Resident, Andrew Caldecott, ruled that the Pinji Squatters had a genuine grievance but since the Government could not discriminate between squatters in different localities, in view of the present difficult circumstances, all squatters on State land would be given twelve months' grace to pay their 1931 assessments.

At the 16th December 1931 meeting of the Kinta Sanitary Board under a new Chairman, the previous Chairman, Major Kidd, having retired and gone Home, an Unofficial Member, W.J.B. Ashby, said that since the Slump was not over, the Sanitary Board should follow on the act of grace by the Resident. He proposed the motion, seconded by the Hon. Col. Cecil Rae, that "The arrangements for collecting assessments in Pinji area in 1932 be the same as in 1931". The motion carried by a big majority, giving the Pinji squatters reprieve for another year.

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## TAKING THE TENBY BRAND FROM IPOH TO THE WORLD

### State-of-the-art Setia Eco Park campus the latest addition to Tenby Schools

Tenby Educare Sdn Bhd is making inroads into the private education industry in Malaysia with its fast growing Tenby brand of schools. With integrated schools already in place in Ipoh and Penang offering both the International and Malaysian National Curriculum, this not-for-profit Perak-based enterprise recently spread its wings to the Klang Valley with the opening of a brand new 14-acre campus in Setia Eco Park.

HRH Raja Nazrin Shah Ibni Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah, Crown Prince of Perak Darul Ridzuan, officially opened Tenby Schools Setia Eco Park, accompanied by Raja Puan Besar Perak, HRH Tuanku Zara Salim, recently.

#### Occasion of Significance

In his speech, HRH Raja Nazrin described the official opening as an "occasion of significance", as the school was the result of vision and foresight of its founder, prominent Perak entrepreneur and philanthropist, Dato' K.K. Lim, now retired, and the fact that Tenby had its roots in Ipoh.

"The rise of this home-grown Perak brand

is inspiring and something to be proud of", the Prince said, adding that he was pleased to hear of Tenby's plans for further reach domestically and regionally.

Plans are already in the pipeline for new Tenby Schools to be opened in Johor Baru in 2010 and in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam in 2011. A brand new Tenby campus in Ipoh is also in the offing, thus reinforcing the Tenby brand in Perak.

#### Importance of Pluralism

HRH Raja Nazrin Shah stressed the importance of pluralism being an integral part of the curriculum. In this regard, he was impressed by Tenby's unique advantage over other schools of its kind, in that they bring together the best traditions of Malaysian schools with the highest standards of modern International education.

"I am heartened to note that a key differentiating factor of the Tenby Schools is its philosophy of integrating not just the diverse Malaysian cultures with each other but with those of their international counterparts.

"The world has no shortage of knowledge but



it could always do with more understanding", he said.

The Crown Prince emphasised the crucial role of educators to be visionaries, motivators and mentors to raise the young to achieve their full potential.

"Educators must take up the challenge to seek out improvements and motivation in curriculum. An education system would not be comprehensive unless it has the ability to cultivate strength of character", he added.

HRH Raja Nazrin Shah also congratulated SiWu Education Trust, which owns and governs Tenby Schools Malaysia.

"It is extremely laudable that all profits from the schools are ploughed back into the Trust and used to establish international schools and Malaysian private schools, to provide teacher training development and grant

scholarships to deserving students."

#### No Better Investment than Education

"I am a firm believer

that there is no better investment than the investment in education of the highest possible quality (as) it will determine the future success of our nation", HRH Raja Nazrin Shah added.

SiWu Education Trust is anchored in its noble Vision of "A United World at Peace - Through Education". Believing that the gift of Education is the key to a better world, the Trust has three primary objectives, namely to fund

and establish International Schools and Malaysian Private Schools wherever needed, to provide teacher training development, and to provide scholarships to deserving students.

The not-for-profit SiWu Education Trust was founded by Dato' K.K. Lim in loving memory of Lim Si Wu, youngest son of Dato' K.K. Lim and his wife Datin Stella. Si Wu succumbed to leukaemia in 1993, aged 20.

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## NATIONAL SPELLING COMPETITION

**K**uala Kangsar – One hundred and thirty thousand (130,000) students from 817 primary schools in Perak flexed their mental muscles to break the Malaysia Book of Records for the biggest participation in a single spelling event.

The spelling competition was held to enhance spelling skills and strengthen the vocabulary of primary school students to develop correct English usage among them.

According to CCM Bhd Group MD, Dato' Dr Mohd Hashim Tajudin, spelling competitions offer a platform for students to compete in a positive, friendly and sporting rivalry.

"Children who are good in spelling tend to read and write more effectively enabling them to acquire a higher level of competency in comprehension and achieve excellent academic results.

"In addition to that, students can experience the benefits of spelling competitions beyond mastering the English language. Standing in front of the crowd can be intimidating but it will promote the students' self-esteem and confidence as they compete", said Dato' Dr Mohd Hashim.

All ten districts in Perak participated in the "Perak Spelling Day" which involved teachers attending training sessions conducted by Knowledge



*WE DID IT!...CCM Bhd Group Managing Director, Dato' Dr Mohd Hashim Tajudin admiring the students' achievement in breaking the Malaysia Book of Records for the biggest participation in a single spelling event.*

Discovery magazine and the Perak State Education Department on how to manage the competition at their schools.

All participating schools and students earned a mention in the Malaysia Book of Records.

The "Perak Spelling Day" is part of the third "Knowledge Discovery-CHAMPS National Spelling Competition" jointly organised by the Ministry of Education and Knowledge Discovery magazine with CHAMPS as the main sponsor.

The "Knowledge Discovery-CHAMPS National Spelling Competition 2009" grand final will be held from October 13 to 14 this year in Ipoh, Perak.

## IPOH IN BRIEF

### PAKATAN RAKYAT POT LUCK



**T**he Pakatan Rakyat Leaders Representative Spouse Association (Persatuan Isteri-Isteri Pemimpin Pakatan Rakyat) recently held a family and Fathers Day pot luck gathering on July 5 at the Chin Woo Hall. It was an easy and informal affair and was attended by Dato' Seri Nizar, Dato' Ngeh Koo Ham, Nga and Yee Siew Kai together with their families among others. The coordinator of the event, Jessie Loke, wife of Loke Chee Yan (Kempayang) contributed a most refreshing *Laksa* dish. Nga Kor Meng contributed 'chee cheong fan' all the way from Taiping. *Halal dim sum* was on the menu too. Jessie explained that the get together was a good way to unwind as their husbands were always busy attending to their responsibilities as the peoples representatives. This was also an opportune time for them to gather as one big family. Towards the end of the night the team cut a cake and sang the 'birthday' song for all fathers present. Even the media took a break that night.

## YOUNG PERAK

by PETER KHIEW

Teachers and students from schools are invited to write about their respective institutions of learning. E-mail articles to: [ipohcho.pk@gmail.com](mailto:ipohcho.pk@gmail.com)

## PROM CON D'AMOUR



**O**rganised by students from Sam Tet School but opened to outsiders, the Prom Con D'Amour was held at the Tower Regency on June 19. The aim

of the Prom was to foster fellowship among youngsters between the ages of 15-20. Two hundred and seventy turned up instead of the 200 expected which

made the Prom a great success. Extra tables and food were added to cater to the crowd. Everybody came in their Sunday best – the ladies in their gowns, and the guys in their coats. The crowd was more interested in dancing than watching too many performances so towards the end of the function, the organising team decided to dim the lights in the ballroom and put on some techno music. The dancing went on for 20 minutes before the function ended.

## SOLAR STOVE

**W**ith recycled items like CDs as reflectors, some discarded egg trays and one cent coins, three students from SMK Dr Megat Khas, Ipoh invented a solar stove which had the capability to boil a pot of water in less than 45 minutes. Their invention, which took about three weeks and RM18 to construct, managed to beat ten other schools at the North Kinta inter-schools Solar Stove competition held recently here.

The students, Roshnee Devi a/p Dev Ram, Siti Norfatimah bt Simali and Nor Azira bt Khalid, who walked away with certificates of excellence and prizes, will represent the district in the state-level competition.

Roshnee said the basic principle of a solar stove is to collect the heat by letting the sunlight pass

through a clear plate into a well-insulated enclosure, in their case, a plastic container. The sunlight which turns into heat is absorbed by the black cooking pot.

She said the secret of a good stove is to have good insulation with no air gaps and a good lid reflector to get the most light into the box.

An equally impressive design was invented by students from SMK Ulu Kinta, all Form Three students. They came up with an aluminium covered satellite dish to reflect light and a magnifying glass which probably would act as a factor to speed up the water boiling temperature. The school was represented by Muhd Nur Al Amin, Mohd Taufik Mohd Kamal and Noor Safwan Hilmi Zulkifli.

SMK Seri Ipoh took home the second placing.



The school was represented by Lee Yoon Kai, Thoon Kai Yin and Mohd Safwan Abu Hassan, all

Form Three students. They took two days to build their stove.

## POLICE ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAMME



**A** joint effort by the Perak Police Contingent and the State Education Department saw the adoption of 10 secondary schools in Perak by the Police. The programme was formally launched by the Deputy Chief Police Officer of Perak, SAC 1 Dato' Pahlawan Hadi Ho Abdullah, at SMK Methodist, Sungei Siput, Perak, recently. Hadi in his opening remarks said that such a programme was essential as it helped instilled a sense of responsibility and security in students. "Crime involving students in Perak is on the decline but we have yet to achieve a zero-sum level", said Hadi to the audience. The ten schools are placed under the jurisdiction of the police district chiefs where they are located.

## NEW PRESIDENT OF IPOH ROTARY CLUB



**T**he 79th Installation of the President and Board of Directors Year 2009/2010 of the Ipoh Rotary Club took place at the Royal Ipoh Club and the event was attended by some 200 Rotarians and friends. The Guest of Honour was PP Leslie Salebuddin, District 3300 Governor. During the luncheon programme, Immediate Past President Edwin Seibel installed Wu Chee Thutt as the new President of the Club. President Wu introduced and installed his new Board of Directors.

The event ended with presentation of certificates to representatives of the press, including Ipoh Echo in appreciation of assistance extended to the Club.



## IPOH IN BRIEF

More pics at ipohecho.com.my

## A ONE-STOP KNOWLEDGE CENTRE



The book\_sale@library programme by Perbadanan Perpustakaan Awam Negeri Perak on Saturday, July 4 was a huge success judging from the response by Ipohites. The event started at 9 a.m. and ended at 3 p.m. Visitors, numbering over 1,500, dropped by the library along Jalan Raja DiHilir (Tambun Road) to enjoy the numerous activities organised for the day. They included a jumble book sale, a physics and astronomy exhibition, quiz on general knowledge, a drawing and colouring contest and many more. The primary objective of the programme, said Puan Wirda Mohd Arsad, an assistant librarian, was to inculcate the reading habit among Perakians. "It is also aimed at promoting the Perak state library to the general public and turning it into a one-stop centre for knowledge enhancement." The programme will be held on the first Saturday of every month.

## ENJOYING WINE AND FOOD



The Ipoh Wine and Food Society held a dinner at Kizuna Japanese Restaurant recently. The society which was established in Ipoh in 1996, is a branch of the International Wine and Food Society which has chapters in 28 countries around the world. The International Wine & Food Society is the world's oldest and most renowned gastronomic society. The Society's mission is the promotion of a broad knowledge and understanding of both wine and food, the enhancement of their appreciation, and the nurturing of camaraderie among those who share the pleasures of the table.

## IPOH INTERNATIONAL RUN



Ipoh International Run 2009, an annual sporting event held in conjunction with City Day, was flagged off by the mayor, Dato' Roshidi Hashim, on the morning of Sunday, July 5, in front of Indera Mulia Stadium, Ipoh. This year the number of participants almost reached the 10,000 mark. Foreign participants too had increased from a handful a decade ago to over 300 this year. The presence of Kenyans and Cubans made the run more competitive. Prize money too had been increased to attract better runners, said the mayor to media representatives covering the event. "Winners stand to win over RM100,000 for a placing in all the categories." Kenyan Robert Kiplagat Kosegi won the Men's Open 21 km Category recording a time of 1 hr 9 sec. The Women's Open 21-km Category was won by another Kenyan, Catherina Kamboka, with a time of 1 hr and 10 minutes. The mayor gave away the prize money to the winners.

## ORPHANAGE GETS A LIBRARY



The Darul Hikmah Orphanage of Sg Itek, Gopeng was the proud recipient of books and equipment for a library courtesy of Islamic Relief Worldwide, an international relief organisation dedicated to caring for the world's poor regardless of their race and religion. The donation consisting of three air-conditioners, three sets of children's encyclopedia and library equipment was worth well over RM20,000. "We sourced the funds from individuals and corporate bodies", said Iskandar Syah, project development head of Islamic Relief Worldwide (Malaysia). The manager of the orphanage, Hj Akbar Din, thanked the organisation for its generosity. "We plan to build a library since inception 19 years ago. The gifts will contribute towards realising this aim" said Akbar. The library has been appropriately named 'Assadah', Arabic for happiness. Receiving on behalf of the centre was Hajah Embun 94, co-founder of the Darul Hikmah Orphanage. Embun and her late husband established the orphanage in 1990. Today her children have taken over the management.

## HIGH TEA WITH PAS



Party PAS and Kelab Penyokong PAS (KPP) recently organised a 'Hi-Tea' Ceramah as part of its activities to reach out to the non-Malay and non-Muslim rakyat. The speakers present at the ceramah were ex-Perak Speaker V. Sivakumar, KPP Chinese Community Chairman Richard Wong, Zairul Azrun (PAS Youth Head Tambun), S.Thanamulai of Party Keadilan and V. Shanti of KPP Batu Gajah. KPP Perak currently has 22,000 members and plan to have similar ceramahs regularly in preparation for the 13th General Election.

## ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE STARS



PSPA recently staged the Teenage Black Box, a series of 3 monologues and 4 short stories. The Idea was sparked from the Junior Associate Conference (JAC, a workshop for Junior members pertaining to all aspects of the arts) and The Teenage Black Box was born to give

## UNDERSTANDING HOLISTIC HEALING FOR CANCER



Dr Chris K.H. Teo PhD, the founder of CA Care Centre in Penang gave a talk on holistic healing for cancer recently. Organised by the St Peregrine Support Group of Our Mother of Perpetual Help Church, Dr. Teo told the more than 90 attendees that only 25% of traditional cancer therapies are effective. He said, "The general method of treatment for cancer is surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, etc. There won't be a single breakthrough cure because cancer is not a single disease and the 'one size fits all' treatment may be obsolete". Dr Teo advocates the use of herbs and a more holistic way of healing, encompassing both the physical and spiritual. Nutrition also factors into the treatment. He stressed that, "1) you and you alone are responsible; 2) take positive steps to heal; 3) take time to BE – to evaluate options; 4) beware of disinformation and misinformation; 5) listen to our inner voice; and 6) wholeheartedly listen to our bodies". While under cancer therapy, Dr Teo stresses the need to give total commitment; see a proper medical advisor, but know their limits; take herbs; and eat right.

Those interested in finding out more about Dr Chris Teo and his centre can visit: [www.cacare.com](http://www.cacare.com).

## COMBATING CRIME



"One way to eradicate crime in this country and, in particular, Perak is to get our youths to hate crime," said Perak Chief Police Officer, DCP Dato' Pahlawan Zulkifli Abdullah at the launching of the Perak Rakan Muda Health Carnival and Anti-crime Campaign at the Teluk Intan town padang recently. "It's achievable if all concerned corporate with the Police in ensuring a safe and secured environment." The Rakan Cop programme, said Zulkifli, should be actively pursued by Perakians. "We are second to Selangor in terms of number. We have 63,000 registered members on our list."

The day-long carnival was aimed at promoting a healthy living style among the state's youths. Numerous health-related activities such as mass aerobic, line dance, self-defence, flying fox and a host of other physically demanding activities were organised. The spectators were entertained to unarmed combat by the much vaunted VAT 69 squad and a display of dexterity by the canine members of the Police dog unit.

these young talents a head start in the world of acting.

The night was calm and everything well played. No nervous breakdowns or tears – straight acting. The youths pulled together a remarkable evening portraying the detailed lives of each character. From cats, to 10,000 cigarettes, to our knight in shining armor, Prince Charming who complains about his wives. All is well as the world of stage portrays reality in comedy.

As to what we can say of the evening, Perak has some true, young talent destined for the limelight. In years to come, if PSPA keeps up with its productions, many of these young talents will grow to be aspiring actors and actresses with confidence and flair and perhaps take to the world stage.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Century Ride 2009** starts at 7a.m. on July 19. A 160-km non-stop event for road bikes only. Starts from Bkt Kinding to Kuala Kangsar, Sayong and back. Limited to 500 riders. For details visit [www.kricycling.com](http://www.kricycling.com) or contact **Michael Beh** (018-500288), **Choy** (018-9500226) or **Alice Chim** (012-5068369).

**Perak Academy Dinner Lecture:** China & the Asian Century Part II. Speaker: Bunn Nagara. Date, Time and Venue: **Friday, July 24**. Commencing 7.30 p.m. at Meru Valley Golf and Country Resort. Call **Wai Kheng** at 05-5478949 for reservations.

**Mayor Roshidi Visit Programme:** July 22 - Zone 22 (Sengat/Rapat Jaya/Changkat Larang) assemble at Spg Pulau Community Hall. **July 29** - Zone 18 (Pasir Putih, Sri Kinta. K Pari) assemble at Kg Sri Kinta Community Hall. **August 5** - Zone 5 (Buntong / Silibin/Teluk Kurin) assemble at Buntong Community Hall. **August 12** - Zone 21 (Lahat/ Bkt Merah) assemble at Bkt Merah Community Hall.

**PPCS Food Fair** - Sunday, 26 July 2009, 11.00am - 3.00 p.m. at No. 14 Lebu Woods, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh. Tel: 05-5464732.

**"Stroke Prevention"** a public forum by Dr Zakaria Kadir. Date, Time and Venue: Saturday, August 1 at 3 p.m. Ipoh Specialist Centre Conference Room (5th floor). Admission: Free. Call Mdm Teoh/Cik Aziera at 05-2408777 Ext 8111 for details.

**Prayer and Motivation Sessions:** By Sri Murugan Centre for students and parents. Date, Time and Venue: Sunday, August 2. Commencing 8 a.m. at Sri Subramaniam Temple, Kg Kerpayang, Simpang Pulau. Call Sri Murugan Centre at 05-2554176 for details.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## NEW FOH SAN OPENS



Ipoh welcomed a new dining icon recently with the opening of the long-awaited Foh San

dim sum restaurant. At the same time, nostalgia set in for others who said goodbye to the old premises on the corner of Jalan Dato Tahwil Azar and Jalan Mustapha Al-Bakri.

Opening day saw cars totally blocking Jalan Leong Sin Nam and people were lined up waiting for tables from 6.30 a.m. onwards. Comprising 4 floors with a seating capacity of 450, the new Foh San is

impressive in its design and decor. Commissioned to local interior design company Catilia, 05-2492189, the new Foh San began construction in 2008. It has a contemporary Chinese flavour with colonial influence. Beautifully crafted wrought ironwork with a faintly Chinese motif and impressive ceiling lamps complement the ambience of a contemporary Chinese Teahouse.

## FRANCIS MARTIN - VETERAN IPOH FOOD CATERER "I Did It My Way"

Francis Martin the owner of catering business Martin Food Caterers recently celebrated his 50th birthday on the same date as the 25th anniversary of his business. The auspicious celebration was held at the Ipoh Town Hall and a total of 1,500 invited guests attended his birthday bash.

Francis Martin has a thing for the colour red. His car, vans and even his operations premises is painted red. His company logo is that of an afro-haired waiter in a red coat upholding a serving tray. Hence the theme for the night was 'A touch of red' whereby all the guests who attended that night came appropriately attired.

The evening began with Indian costumed



dancers on stage. As the curtain rose, Francis was seen sitting on, what could be described as a 'throne'. Interestingly at fifty years of age his afro-head of hair still looked thick and healthy. He assured me it was the real thing.

Francis in his dinner speech to his guests paid tribute to his mum Philomena who took on 4 jobs a day working as a domestic helper to bring up their family. He got his break in the late 70s while working as a waiter at the Royal Ipoh Club when he was asked to cater for a function. For his first catering job, he confessed that he had borrowed a full dining set from the club. The rest is history. His speech was long but he named everyone that had helped him along his road to success.

Through the many ups and down he has encountered in his 25 years in business has emerged

a stable and established catering company that has catered for over 13,000 events ranging from small groups to large ball room events.

I waited impatiently for his speech to end as I

was eager to tuck into his delicious briyani rice, mutton curry and fish cutlets just to name a few. As with any of Francis Martin's functions, one helping was never enough. I stand guilty. I had seconds. **JAG**

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## 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.

@  
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## STAKEHOLDERS' INTEREST IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Nga Kor Ming, former Pakatan state executive councillor had asked Perak MB, Zambry Abdul Kadir, to implement the Ipoh terminal hub project which was launched by the previous state government in August 2008. Zambry is receptive to the idea based on his statement to the press recently.

The Association for the Improvement of Mass Transit (TRANSIT) wonders how serious these two politicians are about improving the public transport system in Ipoh.

Our observations since 2008 have shown that the PK-led governments are not receptive to the issues we raise. Although the Penang government

has taken some positive steps, the other governments have done little. In Selangor and Perak commitment to improving public transport is limited to providing space for new terminals.

Although building new terminals is good, experience has shown that new terminals often create more problems. A case in point is Klang Sentral, a suburban terminal located outside of Kuala Lumpur, which was intended to replace a popular urban terminal. In Ipoh, the Medan Gopeng terminal was built to replace Medan Kitt, an urban bus terminal that was popular with commuters.

Klang Sentral has turned into a white elephant because it cannot attract urban bus operators to stop there. The same may

happen to the proposed Meru Raya bus terminal.

TRANSIT does not accept the idea that public transport services can be improved by private companies or by the government alone. That is why we propose the '4-Stakeholders Model' which brings together the 4 stakeholders - the transport authority, the bus operator, the public and NGO and the people's representatives.

The authorities can only institute changes to the public transport system provided they are prepared to work with the other stakeholders. We at TRANSIT are ready to do our part.

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## MEANDERING WITH MINDY

### Paintball!

Finally, Perak has something interesting to do other than the same old visits to the cyber café. With Xtreme Paintball, those who are fans of Call Of Duty and Left 4 Dead can at last put their gaming strategies to a real life test. Situated just after the Gopeng toll exit, this paintball place definitely offers a fun time for all who decide to play. A game for a team of four people, with all equipment provided costs only RM100.

For more information on how to get there call Zukie at 012-5602245 or Matnor at 013-5150806. For more about paintball and pictures of how the game can be played, visit their website at: [www.perakpaintball.blogspot.com](http://www.perakpaintball.blogspot.com).



### Station Café Big A

About the one and only 24-hour contemporary kopitiam in Ipoh, Station Café offers a wide range of food on its menu. From light snacks, choice Malaysian dishes to Western food, this place has something tasty for everyone. With internet access (computers provided!) this is the place to go if you just want to chill out, or if you need to get some work done. Either way, this place is available 24 hours, seven days a week! Call Mr Ong at 016-3104999 to find out more, or you can just visit this peaceful café at:

219, Jalan Gopeng, 31350 Ipoh.

### Beloved Sculpture & Gift Gallery

Beloved Sculpture & Gift, a one-of-a-kind gift shop in Ipoh, offers a unique and personal side to gift giving. You can now capture you and your family's precious moments by having your hands or feet sculptured and then beautifully framed with inscriptions. Beloved Sculpture and Gift also provides DIY sculpture kits, as well as the training needed for you to make the perfect gift. All materials are non-toxic and non-allergenic. For more information, call Patrick Hoo at 012-5880887 or Caryna Chan at 012-5380887. You can also drop by at the shop itself at: 48, Jalan Medan Ipoh 1E, Medan Ipoh Bestari, 31400, Ipoh, or visit



the website at: [www.belovedsculpture.com](http://www.belovedsculpture.com).

### Lavender Food and Ice Cream House

Lavender offers a range of dishes from chicken chop to tom yam mee hoon, there is definitely a lot to choose from. The beef rendang rice is an absolute must try. With all sorts of creative beverages and the all pleasing ice cream,

Lavender is a place that will satisfy. Situated on the way to Sunway Ipoh, Lavender's address is: 7, Jalan Bandar Baru Tambun 18, and opens daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., except on Tuesdays.



### ONLINE...

### Glampot

And as always, for those who are just too busy to go out and shop, there's Glampot. Set up by young Gabriela Lee who hails from Ipoh, you can find

preloved designer labels, unique vintage designs, fashion accessories and of course fashionable clothing here. Though their main shop is in USJ Subang, Glampot sells their stuff online. Just log on to [www.glampotboutique.com](http://www.glampotboutique.com) to have a look at their latest clothes, bags, and accessories.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## DIGNIFYING DEATH

*Highlights of a talk given by palliative care volunteer Judy Chua*

“As a palliative care volunteer, I have seen much emotional pain suffered by the dying. It is almost always the emotional mind pain that does not get resolved unlike physical body pain which can be eased with pain medication and management. I see that when emotional pain is eased, the patient seems to be able to better endure his/her physical pain. However, even when a patient does not suffer body pain, he/she still suffers enormously when there is unresolved mind pain. It has become clearer and clearer to me in recent years, that in order to avoid or minimise mind pain at death's door, we need to train our minds early in life whilst we are still physically well. It is a paradox that whilst we care and train our bodies meticulously for health

and physical fitness, we have not done the same for our minds.

### Mind Training

Mind training requires a paradigm shift in our thinking and attitude to life. We have to learn to accept and embrace 'death' as part of life. This is needed to lift barriers and open up holistic communication with loved ones. For generations, discussing death or dying has been considered 'pantang', taboo or tempting fate. I have seen how difficult it has been for patients when family members have denied them the space to talk about their dying and impending deaths or even refuse to let the patients know of their cancer. To die well, death and dying has to be talked about more freely and frequently among family members

as an everyday topic well before any impending deaths in the family.

### Life's All-inclusive Package

Next, we need to acknowledge life as an all inclusive package of birth, ageing, sickness, death and loss. With birth, there will be sickness from time to time. There is also ageing and dying every single moment. Each passing moment brings us one moment closer to our death. At some points in life, we will lose loved ones. This is the truth of life and reality. I have seen patients & even family members unable to accept the cancer and impending death, choosing to deny the inevitable, hence suffering in confusion, despair and anguish. When we can accept sickness, death and losing loved ones as

inevitable, we no longer live in denial and hence live life more fully.

### Letting Go

Finally & most importantly, we need to learn and consistently practice the art of letting go. The inability to let go of being separated from one's loved ones, possessions or past grievances is a cause of much emotional pain and suffering for the dying. Learn to observe the mind now. How at ease is it in letting go of views, possessions, anger or grievances? If there's resistance, train it to be at ease. A mind that is trained to be at ease with what is, will know firstly, how to live at ease whilst alive, and secondly, how to let go with ease when dying.



With practice, letting go becomes second nature and becomes a fait accompli for the final act. When one can let go completely, there will be complete peace. I believe that this is how we can live and die well with grace. This is how a dream death can be realised, whether from cancer or otherwise.”

The Perak Palliative Care Society is a registered charity providing care to people with terminal illness irrespective of age, race or religion. Their core team of trained palliative care nurses operate from Canning Garden providing free medical and nursing assessment and review of symptoms; education for the client's care in simple nursing procedures; loan of equipment, emotional, psychological, social and spiritual support for the client and his/her family/care-giver; assistance from support volunteers; and bereavement support.

### PPCS

14 Lebuhr Woods, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh. Tel: 05-5464732  
<http://www.ipoh-online.com.my/Charity/PPCS/index.htm>

## PERFORMING ARTS



## MALAY BANGSAWAN - A DYING ART?

The Malay Bangsawan (stage play), thought to have receded into history, enjoyed a timely revival due to the efforts of a few within the theatre circle.

“Siti Zulaikha” a popular Malay bangsawan was staged at Taman Budaya Ipoh on Tuesday, June 30. The response was totally unexpected. All available seats were occupied leaving only standing room for a capacity crowd of over 500. Many left disappointed. This goes to show

that Malay bangsawan, forgotten by some and thought outdated and out of sync with modern times by many, still has a hold on the Malay community.

A crew of 70, performers and stage hands included, was involved in the staging of “Siti Zulaikha”. They were members of the Purtubuhan Teater Klasik Perak and students of Universiti Industri Selangor (Unisel). The play was endorsed and sponsored by the Perak state govern-



ment and the Department of Arts and Culture Perak. They underwrote the bulk of the production cost of RM90,000.

Kamarul Airi Ariffin, popularly known as Jebat

within the Malay theatre circle, directed the play. He was ably assisted by Mohd Zainal Yaakob (Aduka) of Teater Klasik Perak and Norsuhada of Unisel.

“It's a blend of the old

and new. The Unisel students provided the raw and untapped talents that we're looking for,” said Kamarul to Ipoh Echo. “By doing so we believe we could breach the generational gap and get our youths to appreciate bangsawan. It was the right choice,” he exclaimed.

The success of “Siti Zulaikha”, a play about a warrior princess who fought to free her husband, Sultan Zainal Ulung, from the clutches of the evil

Sultan of Panji Kayangan, is proof that the once popular bangsawan is still being coveted by theatre lovers. Its appeal, fortunately, transcends all ages - young and old.

“I hope our Malay leaders take cognisance of these developments and come forward to support our efforts at reviving a dying art,” said Kamarul without mincing his words. He has a point there.

ROS LI MANSOR



## HEALTH

## SPINNING YOUR WAY TO HEALTH

Indoor cycling or spin classes have been around for a while. They are intended for people of all fitness levels and ages. A typical one-hour workout will burn anything between 600 to 1,000 calories, depending on a person's level of fitness.

The structure of a spin class is much like any other aerobic class. There is ample time to warm up, reach peak workout levels and cool down. The main goal is to reach a level of exertion called the fat burning



zone, which is dependent on age and heart rate levels. During a class, the levels are closely monitored, which is helpful to know how hard we are (or aren't) working.

You will be cycling on a specially formatted stationary contraption, known as a spin bike. You are able to adjust the bike according to your height and comfort level. And just like other aerobic classes, you will be working out with music accompaniment.

"The beauty of spinning", says Suraya Yusoff, owner of Fitness Junction

Gym, "is that it burns calories, offering an awesome workout to just anybody – beginner and experienced alike".

Classes are performed in an interactive and motivational group environment. Participants dictate their own level of intensity and pace by adjusting the resistance knob on their bicycles.

With the combination of low impact and effective cardiovascular work, these classes are ideal for those who want a higher level of fitness. It also does not involve a lot of coordi-

nation, making it easy for participants to concentrate on their form.

The primary consideration, however, should not be on weight loss but rather on physical well being. Individuals who join an exercise programme usually do so with the intention of losing weight, which should be the long term goal.

Spinning classes are taught 7 times a week at Fitness Junction Gym, Jalan Kelab Golf.

Call: 05-254 6232 for details.

## KNOW YOUR COUNCILLORS

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