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# IPOHecho

Your Community Newspaper

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ISSUE 83

October 1-15, 2009

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## NEWS

Branding Ipoh

4



"Best Wishes" to Malaysias Tae Kwon-Do National Team.

6



Tin Gallery

12



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*What does one Malaysia mean to me?*

With so much being bandied about 1Malaysia, Ipoh Echo took to the streets and asked people of different ethnicity and different ages what 1Malaysia meant to them. Here are some of their comments grouped in two according to whether they were born pre-Merdeka or post. In this issue we feature post-Merdeka comments:



It means one spirit, one vision and one dream. It also means the dismantling of political and ideological differences that separate us. We are Malaysians who proudly uphold the principles of Rukun Negara and work hard towards achieving Vision 2020. The objective of 1Malaysia is to strengthen our resolve and sense of purpose in facing future challenges as a nation.

**Rosli Mansor Bin Ahmad Razali, 39**

Graphic Designer

*continued on page 2*

# TRANSPORT WOES



Jalan Kidd Bus Station

***The current bus system set up almost 50 years ago is outdated and was suited to the time when Ipoh was a municipality. Ipoh is now a city and its boundaries and the suburbs within have expanded and grown. Unfortunately, the city's public transport system has not kept up with its growth.*** *continued on page 2*

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## Think Pink – Five Instead of Thirty Launched

If you ever notice a pink coloured bus along Kuala Kangsar Road take note that this is the colour of a bus belonging to a bus consortium known as the Combined Bus Services Sdn Bhd. The consortium which was announced last September 2008 by then MB Dato' Seri Mohammed Nizar Jamaluddin consisted of 14 bus operators most of whom had been providing bus services throughout Ipoh and the state for over 50 years.

The PR government then had entered into an agreement with the Consortium whereby the consortium would provide 250 new buses costing RM150 million over a three year period thus replacing the current old fleet. Additionally the consortium would construct a new integrated bus terminal at Meru Raya called Ipoh Central Transportation Hub, at a cost of RM38 million. The state on its part would provide a 3.5ha site for the project. This site has been identified and broke ground last year but at present remains a vacant lot.

During the launch it was also announced that the consortium would commission 30 new buses

for service early in the year 2009. However since the change of government, the schedules have been delayed. Hence a year on and all we have are 5 new pink buses on the road and not 30 as had been envisaged.

### Vital For Liveability

Public transport is a requirement for cities to be liveable and sustainable. It benefits a wide segment of the population and makes the amenities of the city accessible to all and at affordable cost.

Ipoh Ratepayers Association (IRATA) Deputy President, Victor Sankey, strongly stated that, "the lower income group are totally dependent upon public transportation and they are rightly entitled to an efficient bus service".

### Broken Promises

Ipoh Echo was informed earlier that 10 buses for the Ipoh-Kuala Kangsar route was to start in August this year while another 10 buses plying the routes around Ipoh was to start in September. Of the 10 buses for Ipoh 5 were to be configured 'handicap-friendly' and to be named as 'Bas Mesra'. All the buses are to be air condi-



Pink – the colour of Combined Bus Services

tioned. Yet towards the end of September only 5 new buses took to the roads, none of them handicap friendly.

Dato' Hiew Yew Can, the Corporate Director for the company, confirmed the number of buses to be launched in August and September but said that it would be delayed pending the approval of the revised proposal which was submitted in July.

### Revised Proposal

A check with an official of the State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) confirmed that the proposal had been revised and was currently being reviewed. This has turned out to be a master plan involving the whole of Ipoh and linkages to all of Perak. He anticipated that any new bus launches would only happen once all the proposals were agreed upon.

Some of the points in the master plan included the following:

- The current hubs at Jalan Kidd and Medan Gopeng will remain and will be linked by feeder

buses to Meru Raya.

- Ipoh Airport too will be linked with a feeder bus.
- The current bus terminal at Jalan Kidd will be upgraded once the terminal at Meru Raya is completed.

### Strategic Location

Mention must be made about the strategic location of the Jalan Kidd bus

station. Due to its proximity to the Ipoh Railway Station, it would make an ideal integrated transit hub whereby tourists from Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, commuters from Sungai Siput or Kampar coming to Ipoh by train could get to their end destinations by simply using the bus. This scenario, which was brought up

the Casuarina Hotel to get to Bandar Sunway would require a passenger to use 2 buses. The request was to revise the route whereby passengers need take one bus to get to their destination without the hassle of changing buses. This upgraded service could be used as a tourist shuttle route passing through tourist landmarks.

Dato' Mah Hang Soon, the senior executive councillor in charge of local government when asked about the progress of the master plan, responded that the proposal was being studied and would be "finalised before the end of the year if not sooner". Regarding the suggestion of the Jalan Kidd station and the railway station being an integrated transit hub, he stated that it should be looked into as it "provided a seamless connectivity for passengers". As for the request to have a tourist bus route he responded, "it was possible but would work with MBI and the relevant authorities on this".

### Time for Improvement

The residents of Ipoh have long had to live with a 'deplorable' public transport system. Hopefully when the master plan is finalised it will make Ipoh and the rest of the state easily accessible in time and affordability which is the benchmark of a good public transport system.

It may be a tall order for the consortium operators and the state government but with a master plan now being formulated should commuters expect anything less?

JAMES GOUGH

## CORRECTION

In Issue 82 Cover Story on retirement, the Ipoh Echo made mention of Dr Koh Wai Keat as Ipoh's only geriatrician. It has since come to our attention that Dr Esther G. Ebenezer, Fellow in Old Age Psychiatry (Australia), is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychogeriatrician offering services to senior citizens in Ipoh, practising in Ipoh Specialist Hospital and Ipoh General Hospital. Dr Esther is known for her pioneering work in alerting the public to understanding Alzheimer's disease.



Condition of schedule board – same as the bus services?



continued from page 1



### MY HOPES FOR MALAYSIA

The 1Malaysia concept is good. Stop criticising it folks. It is a concept developed with only the best intentions in mind and heart for the people of Malaysia. Hopefully someday we will be a true nation, not merely existing as a country. It wishes to see fellow Malaysians being united under the same umbrella, all striving towards excellence, moving the country forward, pushing through obstacles, jumping over hurdles, through loops of fire into a developed nation, without intentionally or unintentionally allowing any sector of the rakyat to be left behind, be it by race, religion or geographical location. It benefits both, the haves

and the have-nots, and it does not discriminate between the politically-connected and those without any connections. It is for you and for me to enjoy.

### New Routings

Another request proposed by tourists was to review the bus routes. Currently a bus ride from

and the have-nots, and it does not discriminate between the politically-connected and those without any connections. It is for you and for me to enjoy.

LEONG KAH MUN, 17 Student



'1Malaysia', a big term used to describe Malaysian community. No doubt it is an ideal saturation point to look forward to, but are we really there and ready to grasp this terminology? This is the biggest question that is still unanswered. On the surface, we are a harmonious country with a peaceful

interaction between multi races, gender, age groups etc.

However, I fail to grasp this feeling among the community. We are transacting the sentiment on a surface level and not getting down to the roots of the community. The talk of 1Malaysia should be followed with the appropriate actions and reactions by all individuals. We are still a long way from the 1Malaysia concepts, but hats off to the PM for initiating this terminology.

A sound from a clap requires two hands, let's clean up ourselves and start afresh to bring this terminology into our daily lives. 1Malaysia should start from within.

ARUL SELVAM, 26 Process Engineer

continued on page 6



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# MAKING SENSE OF POSTAL VOTE

Fathol Zaman Bukhari

*Fraudulent use of postal vote is a common complaint by the Opposition. Attempts at overhauling the system has been stone-walled by the ruling party for obvious reasons...*

## General Election

The first ever general election in post-independent Malaya was in 1959. All in all, the country has witnessed 12 general elections, the latest being in March 2008. And if the Prime Minister does not see the urgency of dissolving the parliament to get a new mandate from the *rakyat*, the 13<sup>th</sup> General Election will in 2013. The Federal Constitution requires that a general election be held once every five years. Barisan Nasional (BN) has been winning successive general elections since 1959 but suffered a setback in March 2008 when it lost its two-third majority in parliament, the first ever in the coalition's history.

To register as a voter in Malaysia requires one to be a citizen of the country and is above 21 years old. They must then register themselves as voters with the Election Commission (EC) either online or at offices sanctioned by the Commission, namely post offices.

## Voting Methods

While it is possible to vote by post, proxy and in person in other countries, voting in Malaysia is restricted to these two

methods only – in person and by post. However, voting by post is only available to servicemen (armed forces and police personnel), students studying abroad and those serving in Malaysian embassies overseas. Indonesia, like many Western democracies, allows its citizens living abroad to vote. This has somewhat escaped the Election Commission's notice despite repeated attempts at alluding to such glaring anomaly.

Postal vote has remained a contentious issue since the first GE in 1959. The fact that it is only restricted to the privileged few speaks volumes of its inappropriateness in this modern era. The Malayan Emergency is long gone and so have the Communist threats since the December 1989 Armistice. Our security forces no longer operate away from their home bases. With the exception of those serving on UN missions abroad, the majority of our servicemen are home-bound and are located at bases throughout the country. Is there a necessity for them to cast their votes through the mail box?

The country's armed forces is some 80,000



strong and this number can tip the balance in someone's favour should all of them vote. The 14,000 postal votes garnered by the BN candidate in the Setiawangsa constituency during the March 2008 election is a case in point.

## Frequent Grouse

Fraudulent use of postal votes is a common complaint after every general election. Attempts to overhaul the system remain nothing more than lip service to placate the disgruntled. A similar effort at introducing indelible ink to prevent multiple voting was disallowed at the eleventh hour. The excuse given was that voters reserved the right not to use the ink as it had no legal standing. An amendment to the Election Regulations 1981 was required. The EC had failed to table the amendment

at the Dewan Rakyat during its final session from August to December 2007.

Postal vote will not be hotly debated if it had remained true to its spirit. If it is done the way we submit our annual income tax returns to IRD via the post, there will be little to complain about, as everything is above board. The voter gets his voting slip in an envelope and is required to cross the name of his candidate of choice and then mail the slip in a self-addressed envelope to the EC agent in his constituency. So long as the sealed envelope reaches the returning officer at the stipulated time, the vote is considered valid. But this is not the case insofar as our postal voting process is concerned.

## New Approach

The approach to the voting process for servicemen

since 1990 has assumed a new dimension. Soldiers are given their voting slips as required. The forms are numbered, hence, whichever party the individual votes, can be traced, if tracking needs to be done. Thus secrecy, which is an inherent right of the voter, is being compromised. Once voting is done the soldier does not drop his sealed envelope in a mail box but into a mail bag provided by the EC instead.

In the 1990 and 1995 general elections, the job of managing postal votes in the armed forces was entrusted to the Personnel Division of the Ministry of Defence. An officer was assigned to each formation headquarters in the country. The said officer would stay at his assigned location until the whole voting process was done. The mail bags with the postal votes would then be surrendered to the EC. Where these bags will eventually end up is anyone's guess. And whether the bags will remain intact while in transit is another question altogether. The Election Commission has not given any satisfactory answers in spite of criticisms heaped upon it by the Opposition and election watchdogs.

Canvassing in army camps is strictly taboo and ground commanders are mindful of this restriction. However, there have been instances when members of the ruling party are allowed to "talk to the boys on a personal basis". Therefore, the possibility of soldiers being smooth-talked into voting a particular party cannot be ruled out.

## Gerrymandering

Postal votes will feature prominently at the coming Bagan Pinang by-election on October 11, 2009. The state constituency is home to an armoured regiment, four training establishments and the Army Recruit Training Centre. It supports a population of over 5,000 service personnel which represents almost 36 percent of the total number of voters in the constituency. It will definitely have an impact on the overall result.

An equitable solution to this problem is long overdue. We have to do away with postal votes, as the process is so flawed and biased. But will the beneficiaries agree to a change when gerrymandering is their forte?

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State Secretariat

05-253 1957

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05-528 8805

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## THINKING ALOUD

## BRANDING IPOH

Using our most Unique Feature – Our Limestone Hills

From the time Ipoh became a recognised settlement 'Tin' has been its identity. Various tags were used to depict this personality. Of these the best known was 'The town that tin built'. It was a fitting label considering that Ipoh at that time was the hub of the richest tin field in the world. It needs to be added that this branding was not through design by some clever authority but by popular perception.

This title was retired bureaucratically and Ipoh was endowed with the name of a flower – the bougainvillea. From then on the city was aggressively promoted as the 'Bougainvillea City'. This notwithstanding that the flower was not indigenous to this nation let alone this town and it was not a plant that was prolific in the city. Save for some timid efforts to plant the flowers in some obscure locations the plant remained quite elusive for an icon of the city. Understandably it failed to evoke any emotional feel in the citizens of the city or create an impact in the minds of visitors. If a plant was needed to represent this city, the 'Kinta weed' or the 'Ipoh tree' would have been a more meaningful choice.

With the arrival of the new millennium came a mayor who decided that the city must acquire a new symbol in keeping with the age of technology. He began promoting Ipoh as 'The Virtual City'. As with all things virtual it lacked substance and thankfully it faded into obscurity with

the end of the originator's tenure. We are now again back with the bougainvillea tag.

## Staring Us in the Face

It is incredible why the powers that be keep on attempting to find a symbol for Ipoh when it is there staring them in their face everywhere they turn. No pamphlet, brochure or description of Ipoh fails to mention our limestone cliffs. Every piece of literature inviting tourists, investors and now retirees to this City devote columns describing these wonders of nature and the cultural heritage that it has engendered in the form of no less than 28 cave temples. Every visitor to this town has not failed to be amazed by these astounding features.

Nothing we can possibly create can come close to these staggering cliffs that dominate Ipoh's skyline. Nature has delivered to Ipoh, in stunning terms, a character so unique and towering that is nothing less than inspiring. All that the city needs to do is to embrace it.

Can there be any doubt that this is what should be the signature, symbol and identity of Ipoh?

## Commerce and Apathy

If the choice is so obvious why is it that we have failed or more accurately refused to acknowledge it as the mark of Ipoh? The answer lies in the rule of commercial interests and apathy of the general populace.

These cliffs suffer



the same fate as prophets in their home town. They receive no honour. Rarely do we value what is right before us. Our existence is devoted to admiring what is elsewhere and attempt shameless imitation, often without success.

Whilst we appreciate fine art, good music and elegant architecture we continue to scorn the beauty of nature that surrounds us. No one denies the cliffs have value but the sort of value perceived varies. When the British invaded India, one Governor General seriously considered taking the Taj Mahal apart and selling the marble blocks. This was the value he saw in this architectural wonder. Do we see the cliffs as resources to be exploited for commercial gain or as nature's gift that needs to be conserved to inspire our soul? How we manage the cliffs will be a statement of the values we hold.

## Conservation Critical

One and all who have some feeling for this City must not stand by whilst these magnificent hills are devastated. The people of Ipoh should get together and lobby for their conservation or at least register their opposition to their destruction.

Such a move may not succeed in preserving all of them but may lead to the conservation of at least the most magnificent of them. There could be a balance between total destruction and absolute preservation? We constantly talk of sustainable development but sadly it is talk only.

To generate passion amongst the Malaysian populace to safeguard the cliffs of Ipoh is not an easy task. Those who live around it take them for granted and those who have not experienced it will not be roused.

## Our Identity

Let us begin this process by adopting these features as the identity of the City.

This may stop wanton destruction. Recently a book has been published showcasing these features in pictorial form. The Echo reviewed it in its 81<sup>st</sup> issue. Hopefully this effort will lead to other attempts to bring awareness to the public of the precious asset we possess and perhaps rouse our conscience to defend them.

As for the authorities, for a start they need do no more than to implement what they themselves had undertaken to do. Their Ipoh Structure plan for the period 1998-2020 acknowledged that the Lime Stone Hills Gunung Kanthan, Gunung Rapat, Gunung Datuk, Gunung Tambun, Gunung Lano, Gunung Terendum, Gunung Panjang and Gunung Lang possessed heritage value and special features and advocated that they must be protected and gazetted as protected areas under Akta Taman Negara (National Park Act) and Akta Perlindungan Hidupan Liar 1972. It is time that this policy is effected.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05-2552181**; or email: [announcements@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipohecho.com.my), by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

**KAMI (Kinta Action on Mental health Issues)** Public Talk on 'Introduction to Meridian Therapy' (in Chinese & English) at: 4A Lebu Perajurit 3/2, Taman Ipoh Boulevard Timur, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at 2.30 p.m. Free. Call Su: **016-546 8003**.

**Malaysian Red Crescent Ipoh Chapter Blood Donation Campaign.** On 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009, blood donation & CPR demonstration with Polis Daerah Ipoh at: Taman Bunga Raya Kelab Kilat, Pasir Pinji. On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2009, blood donation with Salvation Army at: Jalan Permaisuri Bainun (Kampar Road). For details call: Mr Chang – **05-5454211**.

**NASAM (National Stroke Association of Malaysia)** Food & Fun Fair to be held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at: 8 Lorong Pinji, Off Jalan Pasir Puteh, Ipoh. Delicious food, handicrafts, jumble sales, and interesting games. For info contact Julianna at: **05-32110879**. (9am-5pm).



MUSINGS ON RETIREMENT LIVING

by See Foon Chan-Koppen seefoon@ipohecho.com.my



Continuing where she left off on Ipoh as a Retiree's Resort in issue 82, SeeFoon shines the spotlight on retirees who have taken the plunge and made Ipoh their Malaysian Second Home. First in a series of 3.

As Sivaprasagam so rightly points out in his Thinking Aloud column on page 4, Ipohites take their breathtaking limestone hills for granted and cannot appreciate the rarity and beauty of these geological wonders. The same is true of the ideal conditions that Ipoh provides for the retiree. My personal testimonial for my ongoing love affair with Ipoh has to do with the people – their friendliness, warmth and willingness to accept you into the community. To corroborate my impressions and feelings, I went further afield and spoke to a series of expatriates who have chosen to retire in Ipoh. Why have they chosen Ipoh over other cities in Malaysia, what brought them here and what makes them stay.

It has been estimated

business. He thought of Dato' Tomiyasu and knew they would make a good pair. When he returned to Tokyo, he arranged for them to meet at a dinner party which he hosted in January 1974. It was love at first sight for the young couple and after a short courtship of 2 months; they tied the knot in Ipoh in March the same year. One can still see the sparkle in their eyes as they reminisce about their past. "Ipoh is where we started our life together. It is where our children were born and went to school. We've lived all our happy years of marriage here. This is home." The Ushiamas, who are now retired and are on the Malaysia My Second Home programme, have 3 grown children. The eldest son Takayasu, is with IHI

out the years here." They have also grown to love the local food and especially enjoy fried kueyteow, laksa and wonton mee. Active Lifestyle The Ushiamas' favourite pastime is definitely golfing. As they love the weather in Ipoh, they take advantage of it to golf regularly. Living in Meru Golf Resort makes this almost a daily pastime. Dato' Tomiyasu enjoys working in their garden. He has successfully grown brinjal, cucumber, 'cili padi' and ladies fingers. At this juncture in the interview, Datin jokingly nudges Dato' on the arm and jests that for a period of time, they ate cucumber everyday! Community Service Their weekly schedule is typically filled with ac-



that for every retiree who settles here, three to four jobs are created. For Dato' Tomiyasu Ushiama the process of job creation in Ipoh began way before retirement was even a remote possibility. How It All Began Dato' Tomiyasu came to Ipoh to establish a joint venture, Sagami Industries (M) Sdn Bhd in 1969. Construction of the factory started in 1972 and a year later, production of rubber products began. So began his association with Ipoh. At that time, Datin Mina was working in Düsseldorf, Germany with a trading company. As fate would have it, she became the interpreter for Dato' Tomiyasu's superior who was in Germany for

Aerospace Engineering Company in Japan, their daughter Yuko works with Dentsu in Kuala Lumpur, and their youngest son Shinjiro is reading Marine Biology in Sydney. Love Lifestyle When asked about what they liked most about Ipoh, it was unanimous; the lifestyle and favourable lower cost of living. They also enjoy the pace of life here which is more relaxed and a wind down compared to the bigger cities of Kuala Lumpur and Penang. "We love the beautiful surroundings, like the drive on the highway to Meru Valley on a misty morning where clouds and mountains play hide and seek. Also, we have made such great friendships through-

activities and community service. Datin Mina gives patchwork classes once a week at the Meru Valley Clubhouse and teaches Japanese to beginners at the Perak Malaysian Japanese Friendship Society. The Ushiamas also teach Japanese to children at the Perak Japanese School which they established 25 years ago in Ipoh. They regularly organise events introducing Japanese culture such as Ikebana, Sado (tea ceremony), cooking and many more at the Perak Malaysian Japanese Friendship Society, where Dato' serves as Honorary Advisor. After having established roots here for nearly 40 years, the Ushiamas are true 'Ipohites' in every sense of the word. Their

HAWKER FOOD

PAN MEE

Pan Mee or Mein are homemade noodles. Lumps or sheets of noodle dough are flattened and bits torn or pinched off into bite-size pieces. Sometimes a noodle-making machine is used and the dough can be cut into broad flat strips (like Fettuccine) or round & slim strands (like Spaghetti). These are then cooked al dente a portion at a time. The soup base is made of anchovies (ikan bilis). A handful of sayur manis, seasoned pork, mushroom and sometimes fungus (mok yee) is also added to the soup. This rich and flavourful dish is garnished with shallot and garlic crisps, crispy fried ikan bilis and served with sambal belacan or similar chilli sauce. Pan Mee can also be served dry.



NAME	WHERE	COMMENTS	PRICE (RM)	
RESTORAN SUN AND SUN 6.30am-afternoon Sundays off	3 Persiaran Bandar Baru Tambun 16, Bandra Baru Tambun	Soup is very favourable. Has fungus ('mok yee'), pork cracklings or chu yau char, mushrooms. Nice crispy ikan bilis. Sambal very good.	3.30	★★★★
PUSAT MAKANAN CHHA YONG 7.00am-2.30pm 2 days a month off	2 Tingkat Taman Ipoh 11 Ipoh Garden South	More rustic delivery. Noodles are only served as torn bits. Soup very flavourful. Mushrooms added. Sambal is good but a bit on the sour side	3.50	★★★★
KEDAI MINUMAN & MAKANAN HUA NAM 6.30-11.00am Closed 2 days a month	32 Jln Raja Ekram (Cowan St), New Town	Has 'mok yee' (fungus), sayur manis, strips of pork, soup tasty, sambal is good, good amount of crispy ikan bilis.	3.30	★★★★
STALL 12.30-5.00pm Sundays off every 2 weeks	Kg Tawas Market, Kg Tawas	Has mushroom, minced pork, fish cake. Ikan bilis is a bit tough but soup is tasty. Chilli paste is cooked in oil.	2.80	★★★★

Our next food review will be NYONYA KUIH  
Email your favourite recommendations to: food@ipohecho.

Recipe

NYONYA ACAR FISH (FISH PICKLE)

by Margarita Lee

Nyonya Fish is best served the next day as the flavours will develop overnight. Keep fish submerged in the vinegar mixture in a clean glass jar. It keeps well for about 3 days at room temperature and longer in the refrigerator.

Ingredients:-  
1 kg fish fillet or small whole fish (Belanak)  
2 tsp salt  
1 cup oil for frying  
50g fresh turmeric root, cut into thin strips  
3 tbsp cooking oil  
200g young ginger, cut into thin strips  
200g garlic, sliced thinly  
50g red chillies, cut into

thin strips  
50g green chillies, cut into thin strips  
300ml rice vinegar  
10-12 tbsp granulated sugar  
2-4 tsp salt to taste  
1 tbsp roasted sesame seeds

Method:  
\*Clean and gut fish and season with salt. Deep fry the fish until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and set aside.  
\*Fry turmeric strips with 3 tbsp of oil until oil turns yellow. Keep the crispy turmeric strips for garnish-

ing.  
\*Add rice vinegar, sugar and salt into the oil, stirring until the sugar melts.  
\*Leave mixture to cool before adding ginger strips, garlic slices, red and green chilli strips.  
\*Lastly, add in the fried fish. Garnish with crispy turmeric strips sesame seed before serving.



contribution to the local society has been an inspiration, especially towards building cross-cultural relationships and friendships between Japan and Malaysia. Retirees like the Ushiamas, give yet another reason to develop Ipoh's retirement potential.

The Ipoh Echo in your e-mail box!

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## LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. Why not subscribe online and get the Ipoh Echo in your email inbox and read the latest happenings in your community even before the paper arrives on your doorstep?

## 1MALAYSIA

Congratulations to the writer for being honoured as the tokoh merdeka at my former school. With today's racial polarization, this concept is welcoming. During my school days, we were taught the muhibbah concept which my good buddies and I still cherish. My only disagreement with the former ranger's message is the term tolerance. One should never tolerate another but to accept. To tolerate means that you might not enjoy the company but to keep a shorter distance. On the other hand, acceptance means to want to learn the other company's culture, protocol and everything else. This was preached by a rabbi at my daughter's school.

**PENG LOOI**  
September 02, 2009

Thanks, Peng Looi, for your observation. The tolerance I meant covers all aspects – acceptance, empathy, sympathy, giving and taking etc. Values which were so enduring and also endearing to me and my friends when we were kids growing up in a racially mixed community. This is conspicuously absent today all because of a hostile policy put in place by a ruling party hell bent on dividing and keeping Malaysians apart. We'll prevail so long as we remain united and focused.

**FATHOL ZAMAN**  
September 02, 2009

Thanks Fathol Zaman for the clarification. I suppose the current ruling party has learnt well from the colonial days. Keeping the

Malays in the rural agricultural zones, Indians in estates and Chinese in new villages was the policy of the old days. That was my Father's days. For our generation (I assume we are of the same age group), we were well 'blended' and great strength in a bilingual education. It seems the country has taken a U-turn for the worse unfortunately.

**PENG LOOI**  
September 03, 2009

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Kumar**

**016 5531092**

PEACEFUL  
CO-EXISTENCE

I refer to your article WHERE'S THE LOVING FEELING? by Fathol Zaman Bukhari.

I read with a sense of sentimentality too what we seem to struggle with today in terms of relationships across ethnic backgrounds.

I feel I have had a lucky childhood having lived and grown up

together with different families and celebrating each other. Today, it's a different story and we are saddened and angered by how much hatred there is in the air.

Who gains from this hatred? To me, it's a political game that we are being drawn into, and we must be conscious to get ourselves out of the trap and remind each other of the good stories. We are capable of making good out

of what we have and vice versa if we choose to.

Thanks Fathol for your story, its one we need to tell and tell again. To tell the rest that there are many of us who want real unity and peaceful co-existence. Congratulations on the encouraging development of the Ipoh Echo!

**GAYATHRY V.**  
Centre for Independent  
Journalism

 continued from 2



Tanah. Much joy, tears, and merriment was shared that day.

This is 1Malaysia, and I believe that there is hope.

**JOANNA GOUGH, 21**  
Student, Music Degree

When 1Malaysia was announced by Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Najib Tun Razak, I asked myself whether the Government had a clear definition of the concept or was it mere rhetoric to placate the rakyat, especially the Orang Asli. The Government should not resort to slogan shouting when it hasn't a clue as to its true calling. Does 1Malaysia mean equality among the races? Are the Orang Asli now at par with the Bumiputras? Are we being accorded equitable treatment insofar as native land rights are concerned? These require actions not



platitudes. Otherwise the whole concept of 1Malaysia is meaningless.

**RIZUAN A/L TEMPEK, 30**  
Social Activist

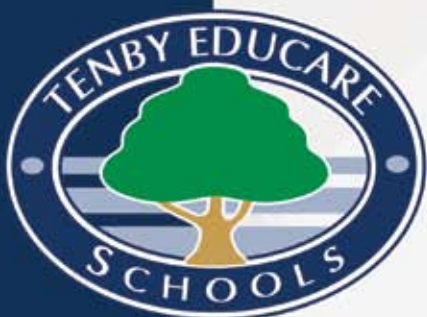


If you'd like your comments to be featured, please write in with your contribution of not more than 100 words, a photo of yourself, your profession and your age.

## BEST WISHES



Ipoh Echo wishes the Malaysian Tae Kwon-Do National Team 'All The Best' on their upcoming matches at the Sixteenth World TaeKwon-Do (ITF). Championships to be held at St Petersburg Russia from October 12-17. 7 of the 10 competitors are from Perak while 6 of the 8 officials are Perakians.



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Tel: 05-5472603  
Business hours: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., closed on Sundays.

Diamonds are forever. Diamonds are a girl's best friend. These mantras prevail whenever the subject of diamonds comes up. Weng Mei is Ipoh's very own jewellery boutique which combines the artistic skills and technical expertise typical of Hong

Kong craftsmanship displaying not just diamonds, but also jades, gemstones, and pearls. Using white or yellow gold, Weng Mei's expert craftsmen will design and produce a fresh piece of jewellery totally unique to each client. A note on the interior of the boutique – once inside, anyone will be swept away by this tastefully designed, cosy little boutique, which puts you at ease almost immediately. Call Weng Mei now for your own personal consultation and have your own jewellery experience!

### SINCERE GIFT

45, Lorong Taman Ipoh 1, Taman Ipoh Selatan, 31400 Ipoh.  
Tel/Fax: 05-5451926

Ever scratched your head in bafflement as to what to buy a friend for his/her birthday? Well, fret no more and traipse along to Sincere Gift, also located within the multitude of shops in Ipoh Garden South. Once you step inside, you will be spoilt for choice by the gifts that abound. Find a parade of soft toys to choose from, from brands like: Russ, Hush Puppies, Ty, Pooh & Mickey, etc. Photo frames grace the shelves of Sincere Gift, one which read 'SuperDad' particularly caught my eye. This is also where you can find original Royal Selangor pewter. Pewter figurines of golfers can be the ideal gift for a golf fan. Other goods available for sale are scented candles, pipes, clocks, ship models, ornamental swords, desk accessories and much more. Sincere Gift is worth checking out if you are in the lookout for something big, small or just something that comes



from a sincere heart.

### A&S MEN'S COLLECTION

Shop Lot 6, Ipoh Garden Plaza  
39, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah Utara, Taman Ipoh Selatan, 31400 Ipoh.  
Tel: 05-5488809 (Alan: 012-5087312)

Now, men who are starting to think there's nothing for them in Ipoh, think again! A&S is arguably Ipoh's first ever men's collection boutique. It certainly stands out in the row of women's boutiques in the area. Previously known

as Silver Thread, partners Alan and Sam came together with a concept which the men of Ipoh have no doubt been waiting for. Although it is primarily a men's boutique, it also has a small selection of women's clothing. Enjoy off-the-rack discounts, some in slim-fit designs, and a selection of limited edition shirts. Other things on sale include men's accessories like belts and ties. For tailor-made attire, A&S specialises in suits, court attire, graduation attire, commercial and industries uniforms, and shirts or trousers.

### EU YAN SANG

Shop 11 & 12, Ground Floor, Ipoh Garden Plaza  
39, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah Utara, Ipoh Garden South, 31400 Ipoh.  
Tel: 05-5472130

From its humble beginnings offering Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) remedies to tin mine coolies in Gopeng, Perak, more than 130 years ago, Eu Yan Sang today is a household name in Asia with the reputation as a renowned manufacturer of the TCM industry. Find a whole supply of fine quality Chinese herbs, Chinese Proprietary Medicines as well as health foods and supplements, including favourites like chicken essence and bird's nest. Also find packaged edibles like chocolate wholegrain digestive biscuits, green tea cake, and brown sugar seedless prune, just to name a few. In the timely month of the Mooncake Festival, discounts on mooncake sets are available. Traipse along the healthy road of Eu Yan Sang, and you are on a sure way to a whole new, healthy lifestyle.

## PARENTING

## IT NEVER HURTS TO ASK

By MARIAM MOKTHAR

Children should be raised as scientists. To be more precise, as chemists.

Chemists ask lots of questions. They don't simply live in their own little test-tube world. They are curious. They want to know why things happen. They are satisfied once they know the solution.

The time to capture a child's interest in science is when they are small. Science can be mysterious but there is nothing strange or secretive about it. Science fascinates.

A good scientist never takes anything for granted. Sadly, many teachers or school-science projects are dull. Learning becomes tiresome. Children contend that if learning was made interesting, their enthusiasm might increase.

Some parents are driven to distraction when plagued by the questions their children ask.

"Why do teeth turn orange when eating *kunyit* (turmeric) whole, but not carrots?" "Why is the sky blue?" "If *tok* and *opah* are the same age, why is he bald but not her?" "Why do babies have green poo?" "Why does curry tickle the throat?" "Why do onions make you cry?" "Why do burnt pans become clean after boiling with baking powder?"

These never-ending 'whys' drive parents up the wall.



"Go away..." "Don't disturb me..." "Don't be so stupid..." "Go play your PlayStation?" "Google it" "Ask your father..." But the poor child knows that father's response will be "Go ask your mother".

There is always some irreparable damage done when we are negative. Is it any wonder children are reluctant to ask questions? They fear reproach, ridicule and rejection. Are they to blame when it is us who are really at fault?

Some parents lack 'quality time' with their children. In today's whirlwind world, many lack the patience to answer each child's questions. To stimulate their interest, their curiosity and ultimately their happiness, we must make time for them.

We complain about the quality of our school-children, our schools and our teachers. Children are constantly coached for examinations only – taught parrot-fashion to regur-

gitate facts and figures. Thus appeasing curiosity becomes secondary.

Nevertheless, a child's curiosity should be encouraged, not stifled nor scoffed at. This curiosity will fuel creativity and further thinking. Asking questions develops the brain and stimulates the child to think logically and independently. That is why it is important to encourage them to open up and feel free to query anything. Outside school, parents should set a good example.

Children who engage positively with adults, develop a feel-good factor because their curiosity is satiated, their intellect nurtured and their enthusiasm for learning developed.

As adults we need to listen aggressively. If we do not know, or are unsure of the answer, we need to acknowledge this, turn the question back at them, to think it through or come up with a plausible answer.

If I am stumped, I will say so. But then, the child and I will attempt to look for the answer in the encyclopaedia or computer.

By showing children that not knowing is not disastrous but that searching for the answer may be just as exciting, we demonstrate that adults are not infallible and can learn

from their mistakes.

And there is one last rule. An untruth should never be told in an effort to make children do something, to force a change of behaviour, for instance.

As a toddler my child-minders had great difficulty making me sit down to eat. They warned that if I swallowed whilst standing up,

the food would go to my legs and feet and become lodged in my toes. Toes the size of potatoes. And they showed me pictures of a person with elephantiasis. To this day, I always sit-down to eat, even when snacking, and never have food on the go.

If only I had my test-tube mentality then.

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## IPOH – RETIREE’S RESORT

The current crop of

KEN YEh

September 18, 2009

Yes, the Baby Boomers have come of age and with it they hold the majority of the world's disposable income. By tapping into this market, many services can benefit and blossom.

## SEE FOON CHAN-KOPPEN

It was utterly shocking to say the least Dato' Daniel Tay, coming from a well-known tennis playing

While at it, why not promote also Malaysia My Second Home. I understand that each retiree that settles in Malaysia creates

Another question I would like to ask: what does Dato' Daniel Tay hope to gain with all the efforts made to please Datuk

In the final analysis, property development is like the extractive industry. When your reserves (land) runs out you move to somewhere else to start again.

**RETIRED MINER**  
September 19, 2009

This event took place more than a month ago and I have not seen nor read any response from Dato' Daniel Tay. Certainly an acceptable explanation or an appropriate apology is warranted instead of silence.

## ANOTHER IRATE SPECTATOR

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## IPOH IN BRIEF

More pics at [ipohecho.com.my](http://ipohecho.com.my)

## HEALTH CAMPAIGN AT SUNWAY



The diploma in Marketing students of Sunway College Ipoh successfully organised a health campaign after months of intensive planning and preparation. The purpose of the event was to prepare students for the real working environment; to cultivate creativity among the students; to understand nature of event management; and to understand and learn the processes involved in marketing.

The three-day event which started with an HIV exhibition was held in cooperation with the Perak Family Health & Planning. Useful information on HIV/AIDS was displayed for the college students. The following day, 65 students and the general public responded to the noble call of saving lives by donating blood. It was held in cooperation with blood bank of Ipoh General Hospital. On the third day, the students organised a HIV talk in cooperation with the Buddies Society of Ipoh. The event was organised by Sunway College of Ipoh's School of Business and Marketing which is headed by Ms M. Thiruchelvi.

It took the diploma students a month to prepare for the 3-day event. They were assessed on their teamwork, event management skills, leadership skills and communication skills, all related to their Public Relations subject.

## FOMSO FUND COLLECTS RM30K



The Federation of Sri Lankan Organisations (FOMSO) Humanitarian Relief Fund was successfully launched by the Guest of honour, Tan Sri Dato' Seri V. Jeyaratnam recently at the Rayan Cultural Hall, Ipoh.

The Relief Fund managed to collect about RM30,000 via cash, cheques and pledges. Aqua-Filter Malaysia Sdn Bhd also donated water filters and medical kits to this fund. This donation will be used to provide assistance to the Internationally Displaced Tamils in the various refugee camps in Sri Lanka. The aid provided will be in kind consisting mainly of food, water, medicine, prosthetic limbs, water filters and other needs that are required but lacking in the camps.

## PAST LIFE REGRESSION



## HARVEST SERVICE



The youths of the Bahasa Malaysia Congregation of St Peter's Church Ipoh organised a revival service for a good harvest called 'Kebaktian Kebangkitan Rohani Gawai dan Keamatan' recently.

Events of this nature are commonly organised in East Malaysia to give thanks for the plentiful blessing received during the harvest season.

The youth from the universities in Sri Iskandar and Kampar and the Orang Asli communities staying around Ipoh were joined by local youths from East Malaysia, who staged this event with great enthusiasm and lively spirit. Apart from the praise and worship session, traditional dances from East Malaysia were performed during the service. The highlight of their performance was the bamboo dance called Mogunatip Dance which kept the audience on their feet.

According to their advisor Mr Alex Chuah the spin-off benefits received by the youths were enormous in the form of experience in event organisation, working as a team and leadership training. In addition, the camaraderie and esprit de corps shown by team members during the organisation of this event contributed greatly to their personal development as members of a caring society. They plan to organise events of this nature annually.

## VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED



The National Stroke Foundation of Malaysia (Ipoh branch) or NASAM recently held a press conference to highlight its activities. NASAM conducts rehab sessions which includes physiotherapy conducted by therapists and assisted by trained volunteers. NASAM is an NGO dependant largely on public donations to fund its activities. It is now 5 years in Ipoh and is currently tending to 40 patients. Administration Assistant Juliana Yah highlighted that one of its immediate needs currently is volunteers, as the therapy is conducted on a 1 to 1 basis.

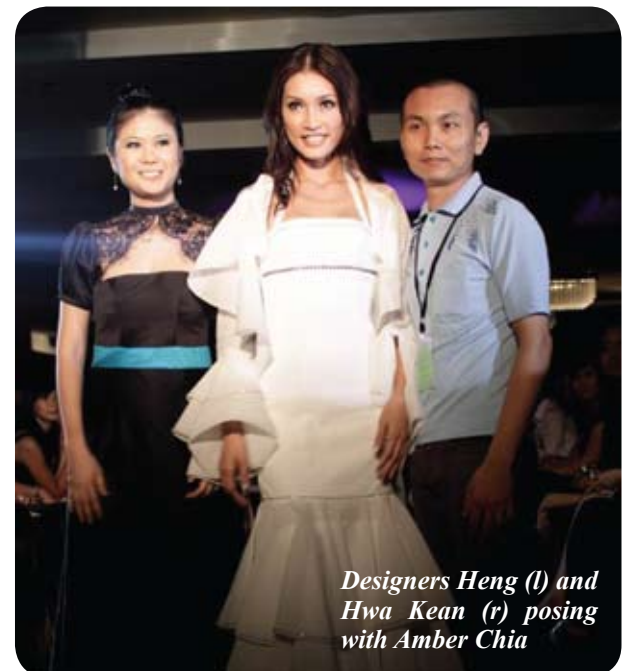
Also present at the press conference were 2 rehabilitated patients. Taxi driver, Wong Yeong Keong, 56, was first brought to NASAM six years ago in a wheelchair. After rehabilitation and therapy, he is now self-employed. Another ex-patient Soam Fatt Moon, 81, had a stroke 6 years ago. Rehabilitated, he now helps out at the centre and does gardening. Readers wishing to assist NASAM can contact Juliana at Tel: 05-3211089 or visit their premises at 9 Lorong Pinji, off Jalan Pasir Puteh, 31650, Ipoh. NASAM is planning a Food and Fun Fair on November 15. So please mark the date on your calendar and show your support.

## A NATIONAL PRAYER



It was a peaceful and auspicious day on September 19<sup>th</sup> when the representatives of Multi Religious Groups held a ritual prayer for beloved Malaysia at the Ipoh Town Hall. Present were representatives of Islam, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Taoist and also Soka Gokkai faiths. The sole objective of the gathering was Prayer for peace, unity, harmony, stability and prosperity of the country. All were Malaysian, of different faiths but praying together in line with the theme of the gathering 'Unity in Diversity in 1Malaysia'. When it was time, the congregation joined MB Dato Seri Zambry to break fast before all sat down for dinner.

## JIU FASHION FIESTA



Designers Heng (l) and Hwa Kean (r) posing with Amber Chia

## LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!!

And so began the biggest fashion event of Perak. Entitled the 120909Fashion Event it was definitely a breath of fresh air away from the suffocation of the concepts of Batik. Home grown Ipoh designers, Hwa Kean and Heng who established the brand JIU, had put together a night of fantasy and glamour that just wouldn't stop. They didn't do it alone. Alongside them was also Body Painting Artist Zenneth Ma who won the International Art Fair in Korea in the year 2005. Thus the night had proven itself to be an inspiration of the arts.

The Red Carpet evolved to a Runway when the models strutted their stuff. Beginning with the hair and makeup line by SUPERSTAR Make-Up Academy, CHK Hairdo and Make-Up Academy, the performance was given a new twist when the models halted on the catwalk and designers began dressing their models on the spot. This was followed by Dinner Wear with models sporting tantalizing Body Painting done by Zenneth Ma featuring animal themes of Tigers, Peacocks and Leopards. The last item featured a beautiful couture line by the two designers modelled by Supermodel Amber Chia. All in all an interesting evening showcasing Ipoh's potential for creative expression in fashion and art.

At one time or another, most of us have had a feeling of *déjà vu*. It may be a place that we've visited for the first time or a connection to a person on the first meeting. This was explained by Dr Selina Chew (pix) in a talk at the Ipoh Buddhist Dharma Association (IBDA) Centre recently. Being a certified past life regression therapist since 2004, Dr Chew has regressed several hundred patients and she shared some of these experiences.

Past life regression (PLR) is the process of going back to a previous life through hypnosis, which is a focussed state of concentration where the mind is conscious and not in a stupor, as is often believed. The purpose is to go back to the past to heal something in the present. When one finds there is a 'block' in one's current life and it lacks

direction, PLR helps to clear that 'block'. The experience is multisensory whereby one feels hot and cold, hears sounds, and has emotions.

Why is it important to remember past lives? Some of the reasons are: to overcome the fear of death, to understand current life's relationships, finding out life's purpose and what direction to take. The ability of a person to regress easily is based on whether the person is a right-brainer or left. Right-brain people are artistic and creative and more apt at visualisation. Left-brain people, being more analytical and logical, take a bit longer to visualise.

For more information on PLR, visit: [www.lifeinspirations.com](http://www.lifeinspirations.com).



## COMMUNITY NEWS

## MBI RESOLVES MOSQUITO PROBLEM PRONTO

**Problem:** Residents of Damai Puri apartment were suddenly attacked by swarms of mosquitoes. The mosquitoes were everywhere; inside as well as outside their apartments.

**Action:** The residents complained to MBI and within a couple of hours, James Kathihasu from the Unit Kawalan Vector, MBI, visited the site. Investigations



showed that aedes mosquitoes were breeding in one

of the ponds in the septic system.

area was immediately fogged and the site was inspected for other places in the complex for stagnant water.

**Appreciation:** The residents are freed from the mosquito problem. One of the residents who is an expatriate, said that even in his country the local councils are not that efficient. The residents appreciate the quick action by MBI.

**Resolution:** The whole

## INNOVATIVE OR PLAIN SHODDY?



The above signboard for alternative route to 'Pejabat Kerajaan' is constructed along Jalan Dato' Onn Jaafar near the traffic light junction at Jalan Sultan Idris Shah (Brewster Road). The foundation for one support is on the pedestrian walkway; the other

support is on a car tyre placed between the five-foot way and pedestrian walkway. Since the levels are not equal, a plank has been placed under the tyre for balancing. Perhaps someone is ensuring that future dismantling of the sign should be as quick and easy as possible?

## ZAMBRY'S OPEN HOUSE



Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Zambray's open house at his official residence on the first day of Hari Raya was a fully joyous occasion. Zambray being the gracious host, walked around meeting all his guests and gladly posed for photographs with whole families and individuals of all races. As it was a festive occasion he politely declined answering any questions of a political nature posed by reporters. Adding a spot of gaiety to the occasion was a group of Japanese MM2H residents who took to the stage to wish Selamat Hari Raya greetings to all the local guests. Over 10,000 guests graced the grounds of Zambray's residence that afternoon.

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## CONTROLLING DENGUE

Ipoh City Hall's efforts at controlling the spread of dengue appears to be showing positive results.

Since July its Vector and Enforcement staff have been holding operations jointly with the Kinta Health Department officers at housing estates, to create awareness amongst the local residents of the need to "take 10 minutes each day to search and destroy dengue breeding spaces".

The goal of the operation is to create the awareness among residents to keep their houses and immediate surroundings clean in order to control the spread of the disease. According to MBI Health Director Dr Harjeet Kaur, "houses that are found to be breeding grounds are



advised to clean up. So far the delinquent houses have not been issued compounds. The goal is to create awareness".

The initiative is making an impact on the results which from July till 12th September this year was 581 cases as compared to 942 in the corresponding period a year ago, a marked reduction of 361 cases.

Nevertheless the operations will continue. The most recent operation was held on 18th September at Kg Tersusun Tasek where 25 cases were recorded over the last 2 months.

## THE NIGHT SCENE AS SEEN BY PIERRE HARY

In a small town like Ipoh, one of the most popular questions that many people ask for nightlife entertainment is, "Where to go?" There are only a few happening 'hot-spots' in Ipoh. Most people look for a place with good music, service, ambiance, drinks and most importantly, a place with a crowd. In this column we aim to give our readers a few ideas on where to enjoy the night after a day's work or even better, on weekends!



## DEVIL'S BARROOM

Rated one of the most popular and happening clubs, located in Bandar Baru Medan, the Devil's Barroom made its debut in Ipoh in December last year. With a modern and unique design and concept, the club attracts people of all age groups, offering good friendly service as well as a variety of drinks, shot-drinks and cocktails.

Like most nightclubs in Ipoh, Barroom plays R&B in the evening and moves on to House music as the crowd grows bigger throughout the night.



Back to school

On week-ends, public holiday's special events with themes like 'Back to School' or 'At the Beach' are staged. Guest DJs are invited to spin their set of music assuring a wide variety, alongside with resident DJ Katak.

Being a DJ, playing music, talking on the microphone and attending to song requests from customers may look easy from the customer's point of view, but there is more work and knowledge required to spin in a club than meets the eye. One innovation Barroom is introducing to the clubbing scene

in Ipoh is their soon-to-open, DJ Academy which provides Disc-Jockey courses and training for anyone passionate about music and curious about the profession. These lessons would include learning how to mix one song to another by synchronizing the beat with the upcoming track in order to avoid a 'blank-spot' between two songs, therefore ensuring a smooth flow in the music.

So readers, go out there and have fun, drive home safely and keep track of Barroom's special upcoming events!

## APPEAL

## LIVE-IN CARER &amp; DAY CARER FOR SENIORS

The life expectancy of an average citizen the world over has been increasing progressively due to medical/scientific inroads, education, high living standards etc. In many countries it becomes the duty of citizens to care for their fellow elder citizens. It is the writer's belief that it is ideal if the senior citizens are cared for in their own familiar homely environment than in an institution.

Some families are better equipped to handle this aging process which requires not only financial resources but also human resources in the form of carers or nurses whether in-house or outsourced. In Malaysia the locals are reluctant to act as carers and it is necessary to import foreigners to fulfil these roles. There is a talented pool of highly qualified locals who are very well equipped and better suited for these roles than the imports.

The advantages are numerous both for the carers and senior citizens and I list a few:

1. Seniors' lifestyle is not materially affected or interrupted as he continues to live in familiar environment than in an institution.
2. The carer is providing personal services to his own fellow citizens.
3. Retired nursing staff can continue with their professional career being gainfully employed to supplement their income.
4. Reduces the unemployment rate by adding to the work force.
5. Locals will be more familiar with the local conditions and provide far superior service than imports.
6. Save foreign exchange by employing locals.
7. Integration of various racial groups by one race helping a different race.
8. If a professional pool of carers group is set up now every citizen including you will benefit in the future.

If sufficient numbers are interested in continuing their nursing experiences in helping their fellow elder citizens then positive steps can be taken to ensure that their objectives are satisfied by setting up professional organisations to provide carers.


Interested members please send in CV, self addressed stamped envelope, preferences as to live-in carers or day carers and expected remuneration to: Chandran, 26 Jalan Kucing, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh. Phone no.: 017-5096742. (Confidentiality and privacy will be protected.)

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## MYSAY



The glorious era of Kinta Valley, once the world's greatest tin mining region, needs to be immortalized and promoted as a unique tourist attraction. Not only the state capital, Ipoh, was built by tin. Towns such as Papan, Gopeng, Kampar, Tanjung Tualang, Tronoh and others were too.

The livelihood of thousands of workers and their families had depended on the mining industry and other supporting industries, especially foundries. However by 1984 when international tin prices collapsed, the local economy began to decline and most of the workers left Perak to find jobs elsewhere.

But, the rich heritage of this glorious past has not been completely wiped away. It can relate many inspiring stories of the pioneering Malay and Chinese

miners, as well as the old European mining companies, which had worked along with the local miners to make tin the leading industry of the country. Sites like the century-old Papan town, tin dredges, *palongs*, gravel-pump mines and mansions that once belonged to wealthy tin miners and various mining equipment remain to lure the curious tourist.

#### Packaged Tour

A well-organised package tour into the past of the Kinta Valley can certainly be educational and interesting. It can include a visit to the last of the tin dredge located at Tanjung Tualang, old mining towns, mines, and as well as other natural attractions, cave temples and dwellings. Otherwise, who would ever want to spend a night in Ipoh? It is not a city where one can get good entertainment or shopping, except some good hawkers' foods, biscuits and pomelos.

#### Tin Gallery

Therefore, the setting up of



a Tin Gallery by Morubina Sdn Bhd in conjunction with its multi-million-ringgit Kinta Riverfront Project along the Kinta River in the heart of Ipoh City, is a commendable move. Although small in scale, it is a beginning. It can serve as both a tourist attraction and as a centre of knowledge. The gallery outlines all the tin mining areas in the state and the various tin mining methods. There are also a large collection of

old photographs and some samples of tin ore and ingot.

The next move, I hope will be a gallery of Pioneer Miners. Theirs are interesting stories of "from rags to riches". Some of them had come from abroad as labourers and through dedication and hard work became wealthy miners. Many other adventures and heart-warming stories surrounding the tin mining industry can be told.

#### Pioneer Miners

Like the story of the Malay chieftain, Larut Menti Long Jaafar, the founder of Taiping, who was the first to discover tin on a large scale in Klian Pauh. He later mined it on a commercial basis on the site in Kamunting. His son, Ngah Ibrahim, later inherited the business.

Like Long Jaafar, there were many other pioneer miners who had contributed greatly to the economy

of the country through mining. Their successes can be the inspiration for our young generation. But, it is sad that the stories of these miners will eventually be lost, and what will probably remain are just their names on many of the roads in the Kinta Valley if we failed to preserve this glorious era in the history of Perak.

The various tin mining associations, particularly the Perak Chinese Mining Association and the All-Malaya Chinese Mining Association, should take up the challenge to set up the 'Gallery of Pioneer Miners'. I am certain many members of their families will gladly contribute to its success as these pioneer miners have been philanthropists, as well as community and business leaders.

Both, Tin Gallery and Gallery of Pioneer Miners, can be the beginning of the establishment of a big unique Tin Mining Museum to proclaim Kinta Valley as the undisputed tin mining region of the world.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

## FREE GPS MAPS FOR YOU



The Ipoh chapter of MyASEANFreeMaps (MFM, formerly MySgFreeMaps) organised a gathering for GPS (Global Positioning System) enthusiasts on Merdeka eve at The Majestic Station Hotel at the railway station.

The gathering, well attended by over 70 participants from across the country, with some venturing from as far as Singapore, was held to commemorate the first anniversary of the founding of MFM as well as to enable its members to meet up and interact face to face, where all along, they only knew one another through their online personas (known as avatars).

The GPS system is primarily used to pinpoint one's location and for navigation. What was once a US military application is now used by millions of civilians worldwide. Today one doesn't have to buy a GPS device as many mo-

bile phones already have GPS modules attached. However, GPS hardware is useless without maps (much like a TV is useless without TV programmes), and this is where MFM comes in.

MFM was founded by Anthony Yong, a freelance computer programmer. The aim is to produce an accurate and comprehensive regional map that is available for use to all at absolutely no charge. Currently, the map includes Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei but there are plans in the offing to map Southern Thailand as well.

MFM contributors enjoy venturing into uncharted territory, producing track-logs of roads (akin to leaving breadcrumbs in the Brothers Grimm's classic fairytale Hansel & Gretel). These track-logs are subsequently incorporated into the MFM map by the mappers, and released weekly.

One surprising fact is that MFM members all work for free, and they are passionate about their contributions. The resulting map is so good that even commercial vendors find it hard to match, with many giving up due to poor commercial returns. For instance, the recently opened Jelapang-Ipoh Selatan through traffic stretch of the North South Expressway was updated in the MFM map within the first week of opening. In the process of producing the track-logs, their dedicated contributors even had to contend with a punctured tyre as nightfall was closing in fast, on a busy highway!

(MFM map is updated weekly and available for free at <http://www.mal-freemaps.com>. It works on Garmin, Papago and selected mobile phones/PDAs.)

WONG WAI LOON

## MANJUNG RESIDENTS IN DIRE STRAITS

Residents of Manjung District, especially those living in outlying areas of Sitiawan, are dismayed by the authorities' lack of interest in ensuring a proper bus service for their ease of accessibility. Since the Sitiawan Transport Company Ltd changed hands some 4 years ago, service has practically ground to a halt.

The Chairman of the Malaysian Pensioners Association, Manjung Branch, Hj Jauhari Yahaya (inset pix), bemoaned the authorities' indifference citing several reasons why a proper bus service was essential. "Getting into town for errands and other chores have become considerably difficult for those without their own transport", he lamented. "It costs RM10 by taxi for a one-way trip to town. This is very costly for the lower-income group." Jauhari had raised this issue several times when he was sitting on the Manjung Town Council. But his pleas fell on deaf ears. The council, said Jauhari, had built several bus stops along highways but without buses plying the routes these stops had become redundant. "The introduction of mini buses is ideal as they are nippy and efficient", said Jauhari. However, such a venture requires a huge capital outlay, something beyond the authorities' capacity, he argued. "It would be ideal if



MARA could step in".

S. Asogan, PTA chairman of a Sitiawan school, said that the absence of a proper bus service had affected students' attendance. They missed classes and could not turn up for extra-curricular activities. "This will have an impact on their performance", he remarked. Some of them had resorted to express buses plying the Ipoh-Sitiawan route to get to schools. "This is ridiculous", he exclaimed.

The Sitiawan Trans-

port Company Ltd has been in existence since 1937. It is the sole bus operator in the district and has been providing excellent service to the people of Manjung until recently. Due to poor passenger loads and high maintenance costs, the company wound down its operations and changed hands. However, the new operator cannot turn it around and service has deteriorated.

S. SAMINATHAN

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