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Pluralism in Islam



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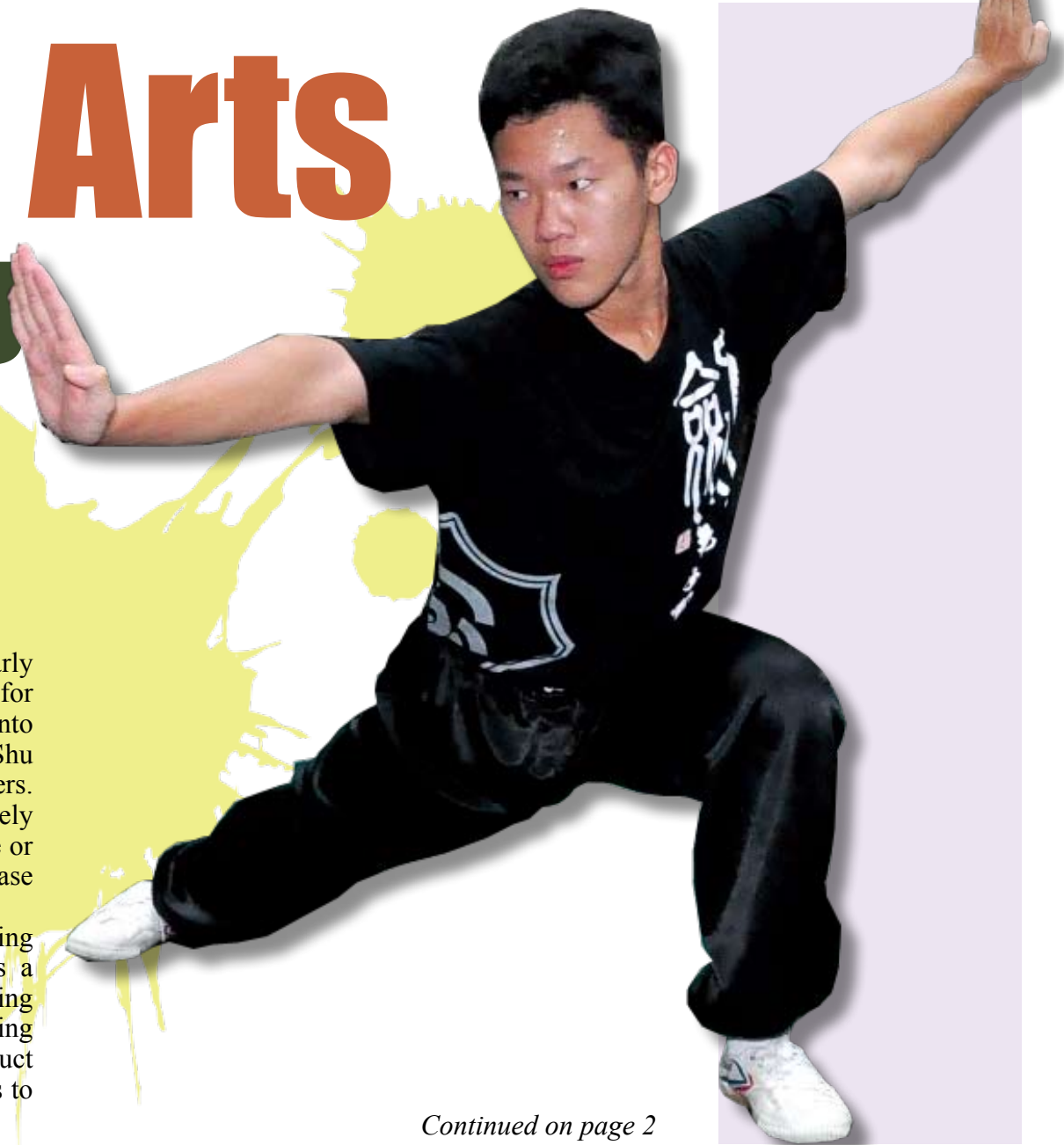
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Martial Arts - a Trending Sport

By Yvette Yeow

Martial Arts have been practised since the early days of our forefathers. Initially developed for self defense, martial arts have evolved into different forms ranging from Tai Chi and Wu Shu to Kick-boxing, Mix Martial Arts (MMA) and many others. The idea of practising martial arts today is no longer purely for self defense; instead it is treated as a form of exercise or sport to enable the practitioner to "sweat it out" or to release stress.

In today's society, martial arts is also becoming increasingly popular amongst the female population as a form of sport to effectively lose weight. Due to the increasing numbers of institutionalised martial arts schools springing up everywhere, Ipoh Echo took the opportunity to conduct a brief research to introduce some new options as well as to reintroduce old favourites to Ipohites.



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Helps to release stress, strengthen the immune system, build muscles and increase flexibility

Taekwondo

Standing amongst the official games for the Olympics since year 2000, Taekwondo is a highly popular form of martial arts that has been institutionalised and turned into a sport. Originating from Korea five thousand years ago, Taekwondo is a form of self-defense that enables one to build strength that follows a distinguished pattern emphasising the use of legs for speed and agility.

Taekwondo emphasises the synchronisation of mind and body movements. While Taekwondo organisations such as the International Taekwondo Federation (ITF) and World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) set the rules and define the general style of Taekwondo, individual clubs and schools tend to follow their own style of Taekwondo practices.

The Tiger Taekwondo Martial Arts Academy is an academy that teaches a variety of martial arts such as Taekwondo and Kick-boxing. Trainer William Toh has been teaching Taekwondo for over 30 years. Toh emphasizes flexibility and agility in Taekwondo and believes that it is a sport to train perseverance and patience in his students to achieve harmonisation in body and mind. "I believe that Taekwondo is not just a sport or martial art practice, I believe it is a way of life where students learn about responsibility and independence," he said.

The academy offers Taekwondo classes every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7.30pm till 9pm. Located at Taman Song Choon opposite the Kwan Yin Temple, the academy welcomes beginners or experienced practitioners to the class.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi or Tai Chi Chuan is an ancient Chinese martial art that is practised for its defense training and also health benefits. Tai Chi involves a series of slow, meditative body movements to promote inner peace and the unification of body, mind and energy. Because Tai Chi is slow and meditative, it may not be as well received as other martial arts but it is one of the most beneficial and least susceptible to injury.

Tai Chi practises a set of martial arts movements that place importance on body posture and alignment separated into three different aspects, health, meditation and martial arts. Health training concentrates on relieving the physical effects of stress on the body and mind. It is the foundation on which Tai Chi sits as it helps to build strength. On the other hand, meditation focuses on calmness cultivated through Tai Chi. Without meditation, harmonisation between the body and the mind would not be achieved.

Lastly, with regard to the martial art aspect of Tai Chi, contrary to popular perception that it is only beneficial for health, Tai Chi can also be used for self-defense as it is a study of appropriate changes in response to outside forces. Tai Chi is gentle with its graceful pace and low impact movements, placing minimal stress on muscles and joints. It is a sport that is beneficial for all ages and can be practised by all regardless of fitness levels.

Tai Chi instructor, Steven Boo told Ipoh Echo that Tai Chi is very beneficial to a person's body and mind if practised correctly. He says that the misconceptions that Tai Chi is for the elderly is wrong. Especially with the escalating pressure the public faces in today's society, Tai Chi is a very good exercise for people of all ages to relax and release stress.

"Classes are conducted in different sessions, with a Chinese-speaking class and an English-speaking class. I believe the practise of Tai Chi can help us maintain emotional health and being a non-religious practice, achieve spiritual balance while being a very good sport for relaxation and rejuvenation," he added.

Steven Boo began his internal art of the Yang Family Tai-Chi Chuan and training for more than thirty years, learning various routines of internal arts with masters from China and locally. He is proficient in the Internal Arts including Tai-Ji Quan, Qi-Gong, and Holistic Meditation, and the External Arts like Choy Lee-Fat, which are fast explosive martial arts.

Steven is currently giving lessons at the Mindfulness Yoga Centre in English which is a very rare opportunity for English speakers to learn Tai Chi as most Tai Chi classes elsewhere, are conducted in Chinese.

Thai Kick-boxing

Muay Thai, also known as Thai kick-boxing is a combat sport originating from Thailand dating back to several hundred years, which was essentially developed as a form of close combat that uses the entire body as a weapon for self-defense purposes. The traditional Muay Thai practised today, varies significantly from the ancient art of Muay Boran and uses punches and kicks in a ring equipped with gloves, similar to those used in boxing.

Muay Thai is also referred to as "The Art of Eight Limbs" because it is characterised by



Thai Kick-boxing



the combined usage of hands, shins, elbows and knees. Thus, a practitioner of the art of Muay Thai has the ability to execute strikes effectively using all eight points of contact and at the same time could maintain strong defense.

The formal Muay Thai techniques are split into two categories, the major and the minor techniques category. Both the techniques fully utilise the entire body with its movement, rotating the hip with each punch, elbow, kick and block.

Today, Muay Thai is considered as one of the most popular combat sports in the world, not only is it used in professional leagues, it is also a popular sport amongst the public as an exercise for fitness and agility as well as an outlet to release pent-up stress obtained from daily life.

The Ipoh Head Hunter Gym situated at Jalan Watson offers a number of classes from amateur Muay Thai to professional ones. The head instructor Bernard Radin, 42, has a long history of experience in Taekwondo and Muay Thai and is also the head coach for the Malaysian Muay Thai team for three years. He has brought the team to the recent 2013 SEA games in Myanmar and has won a total of 2 gold and 3 bronze medals.

When asked to provide advice for new Muay Thai enthusiasts, Radin said,

"Just jump in. But before that, make sure to choose wisely, observe trainers and try to conduct brief research on different gyms and compare them to each other; evaluate whether they are genuine or not."

Wushu

Wushu is both an exhibition and full-contact sport derived from the Chinese traditional martial art. Wushu was developed in China after 1949, in an effort to standardise traditional Chinese martial art. In today's society, Wushu has become an international sport through the International Wushu Federation (IWUF), which holds the World Wushu Championship every two years.

Competitive Wushu is separated into two different categories, Tao Lu (forms) and San Da (sparring). Tao Lu involves martial arts patterns and manoeuvres for which competitors are judged and given points according to specific rules. The forms comprise basic movements such as stances, kicks, punches, balances, jumps, sweeps and throws. Modern Wushu participants are increasingly training in aerial techniques such as the 360 and 540 degree jumps and kicks to add more difficulty and style to their forms as a means to score better points in competitions.

On the other hand, San Da is a modern fighting technique and sport influenced by traditional Chinese boxing, Chinese wrestling methods called Shuai Jiao and other Chinese grappling techniques such as Chin Na. It has all the combat aspects of Wushu. San Da appears much like Kick-boxing or Muay Thai, but includes many more grappling techniques. San Da fighting competitions are often held alongside Tao Lu or other competitions. Both San Da and Tao Lu also use weapons such as knives, swords or spears to practise body coordination and agility as well as to preserve traditional martial art techniques that uses weaponry.

The Ipoh Chinese Chin Woo Athletic Association offers a variety of Wushu classes 3 days a week teaching both categories of Wushu, and also other classes such as Lion dance and Dragon dance classes. Wushu instructors Tan Chooi Eng and Chan Chee Kheong are the main instructor for the Tao Lu and San Da Wu Shu and has had decades of experiences in the field. Chin Woo welcomes newcomers especially the younger generation to try out Wushu as a sport for health as well as to train for personal characteristics such as perseverance and patience.

Conclusion

All in all, martial arts is a vast field that offers different types of sport to suit different individuals. With the increasing workload and stressful environment one faces, taking up a form of martial arts might just be the solution to your problem. Not only does it help release built up stress, it also helps strengthen the body's immune system, build muscles and increase flexibility.



Tai Chi with Steven Boo

Tiger Taekwondo Martial Arts Academy

2A Persiaran Rapat Baru 20, Taman Song Choon, 31350 Ipoh.

Tel: +6016 565 2560

Classes: Tuesday 7.30-9pm; Thursday 7.30-9pm

Mindfulness Yoga Studio (Tai Chi)

64A Lalan Perajurit 1, Ipoh Garden East, 31400 Ipoh.

Yeshe Dolma: +6012 500 5540

Steven Boo: +60125552638

Classes: Thursday 10.30-11.30am (rare opportunity for English speakers)

Website: <http://www.mindfulnessyogastudio.com/>

Head Hunter Gym (Muay Thai)

7 Jalan Watson, 30350 Ipoh.

Tel: +6016 444 3280

Classes: Mon-Sat, 6-7.30pm and 8-9.30pm

Ipoh Chinese Chin Woo Athletic Association

36 Jalan Hussein, 30250 Ipoh.

Tel: +605 254 4019 or 05 241 5561

Classes: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8-10pm

• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Muslims deemed liberal and pluralistic in their outlook, like the members of SIS, are being labeled as "deviants" as they have strayed from the true path of Islam.

The fatwa by the Selangor Fatwa Committee declaring outspoken Muslim women's rights group, *Sisters in Islam* (SIS) as deviating from Islam has caught many by surprise. The edict, sanctioned by the Selangor Islamic Religious Council and approved by the Selangor state government, was issued in July but was only known to SIS on October 20. The group learned of it by chance when the matter became public. The secrecy surrounding the whole episode is baffling. Must it take that long for the news to travel? Or was it a simple case of wanting to keep matters under wraps for some ulterior motives? The latter seems to be the answer.

Muslims deemed liberal and pluralistic in their outlook, like the members of SIS, are being labeled as "deviants" as they have strayed from the true path of Islam. This is not only cruel but totally unjustified. How could a religious body consisting of mortals usurp the power of God? When Muslims the world over insist that their religion preaches "simplicity, magnanimity and love" and that there is "no one in between God and humans", our co-called "clerics" are passing judgments on fellow Muslims at their whims. This is not only unbecoming but downright silly. If they believe in Judgment Day, as other Muslims do, who are they to label others as deviants and sinners?

What is so sinful about being liberal? Is thinking outside of the box wrong? Must a liberal-minded person be condemned for being so? Is speaking what you think is right, wrong? I can think of only one reason why those who sit in the state religious councils are so afraid of talkative people – fear. They fear people who talk because they, the religious people, are not as smart as those who talk. And God forbid if you are a woman. That is why Sisters in Islam is on their "wanted list".

The other dirty word is "pluralism". What does it mean? To the religious authorities liberalism means the acceptance that "all religions are the same and, therefore, Islam is on par with other religions in Malaysia." Thus Muslims in Malaysia are prohibited from being pluralistic because Islam is the only true religion.

The thinking comes about by the way these Muslim clerics are being brought up. Most are from rural areas and are educated either in national schools or religious schools known as *sekolah pondok*. They hardly mix and keep mostly to their own kind. Chinese and Indians are aliens to them. So whatever religions that are being practised by these "aliens" are unacceptable to them.

The other pertaining reason is academic qualification. If you cannot become a scientist or an engineer or an architect because of your limited educational capacity, becoming a *tuan guru* (religious teacher) is an option too good to miss. You can still



preach and label people as infidels and deviants from the safety of the pulpit. The fact that most Muslims, out of reverence, do not challenge their preaching makes them feel invincible and, eventually, a demi-God.

Mind you, I have seen this happening in my kampong and to my Malay brethren. I don't look down on them but I sympathise with them for they don't know what they are missing. If only they care to accept diversity as a way of life in a multi-ethnic and multicultural society like ours then these hang-ups about liberalism and pluralism will not have surfaced in the first place.

The attitude of our leaders too is to be blamed. They will only profess their religious moderation when speaking at international forums, and the medium will always be in the English Language. What they say and what they do are two different things entirely. So don't bank on them for salvation.

Having said so, my conclusion is this – being smart, articulate and opinionated is un-Islamic, pure and simple. If you are a Muslim and possess these qualities, Malaysia is not your home. Period.

In The Name of My Father's Estate • by Peter Lee

Episode 35

After hearing John's (Lee Sr's eldest son and Co-Administrator) proposal in a lunch meeting at Fine Dining Café, Connie (Lee Sr's second wife and Co-Administrator) agreed to accept the cash proposal of RM5.4 million instead of accepting shares to her entitlement in the three family companies which John and his siblings are managing. However, her immediate demand is to get the entitlement of \$250,000 for herself and \$111,111 for each of her three children from the joint bank account between her husband, Lee Sr and his first wife, Mrs Patricia Lee in ZNA bank, Singapore. Since her immediate request is this, John then said, "Ok, please excuse me for a few minutes. I will be back soon." Then he walked to another quiet corner of the café and phoned his mum, Mrs Patricia Lee. After hearing from John about Connie's demands and her willingness to let go of the family shares, Mrs Patricia Lee also agreed to Connie's request and asked John to take action. John quickly went back to the dining table and told Connie about his mum's consent. With both parties agreeing to these two matters, John said, "Connie, the first thing I have to do is to ask my company secretary to prepare the share transfer forms for you to pre-sign first and at the same time ask our lawyer, Dave to prepare an agreement for this transfer so that both sides are protected before the Letter of Administration (L.A.) is obtained." In response, Connie said, "Go ahead with this but have the payment in cheques ready for me and my children from the Singapore bank account when I sign these papers." John then picked up his phone and called his company secretary and lawyer to prepare these documents. Both of them asked John to come to their office in two day's time to sign the documents.



After the telephone conversation, John turned to Connie and said, "Okay, we need to go to the company secretary's and lawyer's offices day after tomorrow to settle this matter. Is it okay with you that we go to Dave's office first at 10am and then proceed to our company secretary's office?" In reply, Connie said, "I will be there." John then said, "With this settled, I would like to check with you again on whether you could drop the idea of reporting to the police against my sister Michelle, for assaulting you the other day? After all we have come so far and now seeing some light at the end of the tunnel." "I will decide after we settle this matter" was Connie's response. Two days after their meeting, both of them met up in Dave's office for Connie to sign the agreement for the sale of shares. At that meeting, Dave said, "Connie, normally, when you sell your shares the documents which you have to sign is the share transfer forms prepared by the company secretary. However, since the transfer cannot be done now as the L.A. has not been obtained, and you need the money from the Singapore bank account now, then both you and John's family, who are the buyers, would have to sign a Sale & Purchase Agreement to safeguard each others' interest pending the transfer." Connie said, "Okay, show me the money first."

To be continued...

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He can be reached at: 012-5078825/ 05-2554853 or excelsecms@gmail.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>. His Book "To Delay is Human but to Will is Divine" (96 pages, RM28) is available at his office: 108 (2nd Floor), Jalan Raja Ekram, 30450 Ipoh; Rashi Mini Market (019-510 6284), 37 Jalan Perajurit, Ipoh Garden East; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.

EYE HEALTH – Arthritis & The Eyes

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about **RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS** affecting the EYES.



Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident Consultant
Ophthalmologist,
Hospital Fatimah

Most people know that arthritis is a disease affecting joints and bones but did you know that it can affect the eyes too? This is because arthritis is an autoimmune disease. What this means is that the body's own immune system can attack various organs including the eyes when a person has Rheumatoid Arthritis. This is something that many individuals may be oblivious about. Indeed rheumatoid arthritis can pose to be a troublesome problem to the eyes because the same inflammation that causes the joint problem can cause eye problems.

Some of the other common autoimmune diseases that can cause eye problems are:

- Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Sjogren's Syndrome (Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca or Dry Eye Syndrome)
- Graves' Disease (Thyroid related disease)
- Psoriasis (Skin disease).



EYE PROBLEMS IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Rheumatoid Arthritis is just only one of the many autoimmune diseases that can cause eye problems. Almost 25% of individuals who suffer from Rheumatoid Arthritis develop some form of eye problems. What are some of the eye conditions associated with Rheumatoid Arthritis? They are:

- Uveitis: Inflammation of the uveal tissue (brown/pigmented part) in the eye
- Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca: Dry Eyes & Conjunctival (clear part of eye) inflammation
- Scleritis: Inflammation of the white of the eye.
- Glaucoma: High eye pressure resulting that can cause blindness if uncontrolled.

UVEITIS

This is the inflammation of the brown or pigmented part of the eye. The eye becomes red, painful, sensitive to light (photophobia), with tearing and blurring vision to a lesser or greater extent. The uveitis will need to be treated correctly as it can lead to loss of vision due to scarring of the eye. The condition will need to be checked by an eye doctor as uveitis can only be diagnosed using special eye examination equipment.

DRY EYE SYNDROME (Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca)

Dryness affects a fair number of people with Rheumatoid Arthritis. The conjunctiva (the clear part of the eye covering the white part of the eye) becomes inflamed. The eyes tear glands become affected and do not produce enough tears. Hence the patient suffers from symptoms of dry eyes like grittiness, itchiness, burning sensation and reflex tearing.

More on Rheumatoid Arthritis and eye complications in the next issue.

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah 05 545 5582 or email gillyecentre@dr.com.

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Smugglers Paradise, Sabotage or Sour Grapes?

Perakians are familiar with the seaside town of Kuala Sepetang (Port Weld), in Larut Matang. The area is renowned for its tourism activities, with the natural beauty of the mangrove forests, and the bountiful harvest of seafood. The surge in eco-tourism has brought benefits to the population and speeded up development, in the area.

Last October, the tranquil nature of the sleepy cluster of fishing villages was shattered by a report in a local Malay newspaper. The residents were horrified by claims that their area was home to a den of smugglers and criminal syndicates.

When contacted, one resident was angry. He said, "The journalists did not get their facts from the correct source. Their report reads more like fiction."

The Malay newspaper claimed that the criminals ran their activities along the lines of the mafia. They controlled casinos, besides being responsible for murder, prostitution, gambling, drugs distribution and illegal land intrusion. Kuala Sepetang, it was alleged, was a hub for the smuggling of drugs, diesel, cigarettes, illegal people and liquor.

Many of the villagers were furious, because these unsubstantiated claims and negative perceptions had the potential to affect their businesses and trade, destroy the reputation of the community and scare away the tourists.

Village heads lodged police reports to say that the newspaper report had serious implications for the future of the village communities.

The points mentioned in the Malay newspaper report are revealing and one person who has close ties to the area, wondered if the reporter had been fed stories by disgruntled locals who have not been able to get a lion's share, in the economic successes of Kuala Sepetang.

The reporters wrote about Kuala Sepetang being the largest distribution centre for drugs in the area and that drugs were hidden in the locations which by day, were tourist sites.

Another local when contacted wondered if this malicious rumour was made by envious business rivals.

The reporters claimed that illegals were being smuggled into the area and that certain locals were harbouring them, before they were dispersed throughout the nation. The reporters also said, that whilst they were interviewing some villagers, other people were attempting to eavesdrop on their conversation.

The article said that the fishing activities were controlled by non-Malays and that the minority Malays residing in the area, were only small time fishermen. The big boats of the fishing operators were manned by foreigners and that the enforcement authorities ignored them but harassed the small time Malay fishermen.

The journalists, for the Malay daily, said that their sources claimed that gun-shots were heard frequently, and that little attention was paid when murders were committed.

The report also received the attention of the Perak police, which denied the presence of mafia-like criminals operating in the coastal fishing villages of Kuala Sepetang, Bagan Panchor and Pulau Kuala Sanggar.

The acting State police chief A. Paramasivam said that the level of crime in Kuala Sepetang was relatively low and the public should not panic over this report. He said that the police had not received reports of crimes "like snatch thefts, threats or any violent crimes from the public, especially the tourists."

He also questioned the newspaper report which he said, tarnished the reputation and integrity of the police.

Paramasivam said only one murder had been reported in the area, in 2013 and although there had been five arrests, no one was charged, for lack of evidence.

In 2014, there were 36 crimes, which included the smuggling of contraband goods and illegal immigrants. He also mentioned that there had been 11 motorcycle thefts and break-ins reported in the area. In the year 2013 to 2014, there had been 61 drug-related cases.

Despite the statement by Paramasivam, both the Umno-Baru division head, Syed Abu Hussin and the Home Minister Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi alleged that criminal syndicates were operating in Kuala Sepetang. Syed Abu said, "The villagers told us the activities occur



THINKING ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar

during bad weather or late at night when everyone has gone to bed."

The Inspector-General of Police, Khalid Abu Bakar has supported the Acting Perak police chief's assertion that the town was not run by the mafia and that the Malay newspaper reports were not true.

Khalid said, "Kuala Sepetang used to be a hotspot for trafficking activities. However, such activities

are not rampant, now."

One tour operator who runs a successful tourism business said, "I have been at Kuala Sepetang since 2011, when I started my tour using wooden fishing boats. One of our stops is at Kuala Sanggar. Nowadays the villagers' income from selling fresh shrimp, dried shrimp and salted fish has increased. Since then, I have not heard of any gangsterism.

"There were two deaths, one was from drowning and the other one, which was possibly drug related, was from falling from the new bridge.

"This newspaper report is part of a campaign to smear us and give a bad reputation to our eco-tourism trade."

Announcement

PERAK TURF CLUB CHARITY CUP RACE & CORONATION CUP RACE

Both races will be held at the Perak Turf Club on Sunday, **November 23**. Donations to 51 charitable homes and organisations will follow after the races. The events, run over a distance of 1,800 and 1,600 metres respectively, are a permanent feature on the club's calendar.

Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health



Toxic Hepatitis

Toxic hepatitis is an inflammation of your liver in reaction to certain substances to which you're exposed. One of the liver's roles involves removing and breaking down most drugs and chemicals from your bloodstream. Breaking down toxins creates by-products that can damage the liver. Although the liver has a great capacity for regeneration, constant exposure to toxic substances can cause serious, sometimes irreversible harm.

Toxic hepatitis can be caused by: alcohol; over-the-counter pain relievers; prescription medications; herbs and supplements; and industrial chemicals.

In some cases, toxic hepatitis develops within hours or days of exposure to a toxin. In other cases, it may take months of regular use before signs and symptoms of toxic hepatitis appear.

The symptoms of toxic hepatitis often go away when exposure to the toxin stops. But toxic hepatitis can permanently damage your liver, leading to irreversible scarring of liver tissue (cirrhosis) and in some cases to liver failure.

Symptoms

Mild forms of toxic hepatitis may not cause any symptoms and may be detected only by blood tests. When signs and symptoms of toxic hepatitis occur, they may include: yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes (jaundice); itching; abdominal pain in the upper right portion of the abdomen; fatigue; loss of appetite; nausea and vomiting; rash; weight loss; or dark or tea-coloured urine.

Risk factors

Factors that may increase your risk of toxic hepatitis include: having a liver disease such as cirrhosis or fatty liver disease; hepatitis B or C viruses; aging; drinking alcohol; being female; having certain genetic mutations; or working with industrial toxins.

Complications

The inflammation associated with toxic hepatitis can lead to liver damage and scarring. Over time, this scarring, called cirrhosis, makes it difficult for your liver to do its job. Eventually cirrhosis leads to liver failure. The only treatment for chronic liver failure is to replace your liver with a healthy one from a donor (liver transplant).

Tests and procedures used to diagnose toxic hepatitis include: physical exam; blood tests; imaging, e.g., ultrasound or CT scan of your liver; liver biopsy. A liver biopsy can help confirm the diagnosis of toxic hepatitis. During a liver biopsy, a needle is used to extract a small sample of tissue from your liver. The sample is examined under a microscope.

Treatments for toxic hepatitis include: stopping exposure to the toxin; supportive care in a hospital; or liver transplant. When liver function is severely impaired, a liver transplant may be the only option for some people. A liver transplant is an operation to remove your diseased liver and replace it with a healthy liver from a donor. Most livers used in liver transplants come from deceased donors. In some cases, livers can come from living donors who donate a portion of their livers.

Prevention

Because it's not possible to know how you'll react to a particular medication, toxic hepatitis can't always be prevented. But you may reduce your risk of liver problems if you: limit medications; take medications only as directed; be cautious with herbs and supplements; don't mix alcohol and drugs; take precautions with chemicals; and keep medications and chemicals away from children.

For more information call Saravana.K Gastroenterologist and Liver Specialist Clinic at Hospital Fatimah (05 548 7181) or email gastrosara@gmail.com.

MUSINGS ON FOOD

By **SeeFoon Chan-Koppen**
seefoon@ipohecho.com.my



SeeFoon sandwiches herself in comfort food

There is something so comforting in a sandwich. Take two pieces of bread, slather on the butter, the mayo, mustard or whatever appeals to your taste buds. Stack on the meat, fish, lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, salt, pepper and again whatever tickles your fancy. Put the two pieces of bread together, skewer with a toothpick, fork, chopstick or whatever handy tool is nearby and voila, you have a sandwich. If the sandwich is a tall and thick one, stuffed to the gills with delectables, then wear your napkin around your neck, take hold of both the top and bottom pieces of bread and prepare to dribble. As indeed you will if the sandwich is a hearty one.

The origin of the word 'sandwich' for an item of food may have originated from a story about John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich. He didn't really 'invent' the sandwich but he may have made it popular.

It is said that in approximately 1762, he asked for meat to be served between slices of bread, to avoid interrupting a gambling game. This story may have been rumour or adverse propaganda, put about by his rivals. But soon people may have started ordering "the same as Sandwich", and the name stuck!

Lately, there has been a proliferation of cafes dotted around Ipoh serving a wide selection of the aforementioned sandwich, some with more creativity and flair than others. One such newly-opened cafe with flair is **Mustard** on Jalan Chung Thye Phin opposite the Elim church.

The front of the cafe is clean, modern, minimalist and bathed in sunny yellow;



designed for a quick bite or a longer meal in cool comfort. The back area is dimmed, rustic, shabby-chic-cum-industrial-glam with rough hewn wooden tables for longer more intimate chats over coffee and dessert and a sandwich or two.

The sandwiches have tantalising names like Awesome Pig, Smoky Virgin, Cowboy Hotpants, French Kiss, Green Submarine, Big Fish, Ducky,

Miss Kimchee, Honolulu Chicken, Vegan Steak and Sam Salami. I tasted the **Awesome Pig** which was grilled pork bacon with tomato sauce and yellow mustard served on toasted charcoal bread. As its name suggests, this was tasty with the bread slightly crisped at the edges, the filling satisfying except that I would ask them to hold back on the tomato sauce making the sandwich too sweet for my palate – **RM15.90**.

The **Vegan Steak** was surprisingly the most expensive item on the menu but when I read the ingredients I understood why. The filling consisted of grilled portobello mushrooms (which are expensive and often hard to come by), oyster mushrooms, mozzarella cheese served on toasted charcoal bread – **RM17.90**.

Extra fillings like mild and smoked cheddar, smoked bacon, smoked duck, smoked ham, roasted ham and mushrooms can be added to any order for between RM1-2.50 and all sandwiches are served with a side salad and taco chips making each order a complete meal in itself.

If a healthy salad is the yearning for the day, two in particular stand out. The **Honey Wild Rocket** with sliced Gala apple, smoked duck and tossed with a honey mustard vinaigrette, sprinkled with roasted walnuts was hearty and wholesome at **RM13.90**; while the **Anchovy Lover** with butter lettuce, crispy bacon chips, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, topped with garlic bread and Caesar dressing had the real tang of macerated anchovies which I love – **RM12.90**.

Mustard's menu also features a few soups and one or two pasta dishes as well as their special of the day which is displayed on a big signboard at the entrance as you walk in. Their coffees are delicious and all their breads are home baked by one of the partners' wife.



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News

Protect the Image of Perak says Zambry

In an effort to protect the sanctity of Perak and that of Ipoh, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir called on building owners in the state, especially those in Ipoh, to restore their properties.



He noted that these buildings, either through wall art or colourful paintwork, would attract the attention of visitors.

"Some owners have paintings etched on the walls, such as the man enjoying his cup of coffee while some spot bright paintwork. They are a huge attraction to visitors," he told reporters after chairing the weekly Executive Council meeting at the State Secretariat Building recently.

Zambry said that he had received positive feedback from visitors and locals alike who witnessed these changes to the city. "It's a collaborative effort among Ipohites that has led to this development," he remarked.

The MB reminded owners of old buildings to continuously restore their properties, especially in the aspect of safety. "We don't want to see mishaps happening. Should this happen the buildings will be torn down. In the case of buildings that are categorised as heritage, owners must take necessary measures to ensure that these buildings are restored accordingly," said Zambry.

He added that the state government was looking into the possibility of reviewing existing laws on errant owners who failed to restore their buildings, causing inconvenience to the public and marring the landscape of Ipoh City.



RM

Sport

Batu Gajah Mountain Bike Jamboree

The Batu Gajah Mountain Bike Jamboree 2014 held on Sunday, November 2 was a great success. This year's competition witnessed an increase in the number of participants – in excess of 700 – a huge jump from the 500-odd that took part last year. Obviously, promotional efforts by the organiser, the Batu Gajah District Office, had been fruitful.

The participants were divided into five categories namely, Men's Open, Women's Open, Boy's Junior, Girl's Junior and Veteran. They were required to cycle over a 38-km route that took them past Kellie's Castle, along dirt tracks and in oil palm estates. The route was 60 per cent off-track and 40 per cent track, a mix that had an appeal to those who thrived on adventure and hardship. The start and ending points were the same – Arena Square and Batu Gajah.

Some had to give up when their machines gave way due to a snapped chain or a punctured tyre but the rest completed the course in one piece. Most were pleased with the way the event was organised and managed, but were miffed by the time spent on raffle draws.

"The response was overwhelming," said Makhlis Othman, the Organising Committee Chairman. "We didn't expect such a number with some coming as early as 7am. The participants were satisfied with the course as it had something for everybody." The success had spurred the organisers to seriously consider making the event an annual affair.

Winners walked away with cash prizes ranging between RM500 to RM150. Prizes for raffle draws were equally attractive. They included bicycle parts, hampers and electrical goods worth well over RM30,000 in all.

Luqman



'Try to Tri' Community Triathlon

Triathlon, which consists of a swim, a bike ride and a run, is one of the world's fastest growing sports. So it was great to see last weekend 43 people get to do the inaugural 'Try to Tri' event held at Ipoh's Sports Stadium Complex. It was the first time for many of the participants to participate in such an event and for others who had done them before to do it in their hometown rather than travelling hundreds of kilometres.

The event even attracted a few participants from the other regions such as Sabah, Penang and KL. More importantly, it included children from as young as 7 years of age (some from the Tambun Boys Home run by the Salvation Army) and others who were approaching their 50th birthday, proving that it's never too late to try something new. Irrespective of age, they were all keen to have fun and enjoy the fresh morning air as well as test themselves, their level of fitness and the new personal workouts/lifestyles they were now adopting.

The event was made possible due to the efforts of the Perak Triathlon Association and the assistance of the Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh (MBI) who, amongst other things, allowed participants exclusive access to the Stadium Pool for the event.

Ernest Balasingam, the Association's founder and president said the intention was to run such events every month (the next is on November 27) and to help people experience the benefits and fun of doing multisport events like Triathlon and Duathlon (no swim). He also said that longer term, he hoped it would encourage more people from Perak to participate safely and successfully in the bigger triathlon events that take place both nationally and regionally.

Quentin Howell, the Association's secretary and the event organiser, has created a format that means that it is not a race against others but an individual time trial against the clock, making the event a lot more relaxed and fun and also allows participants to see how their swim, bike and run, as well as their overall fitness programmes, are progressing.

This fact provides important personal motivation for participants to continue with their new training regimes and lifestyle changes and increases their confidence levels as their PB's (personal best's) improve.

To help inspire first timers Tony Woo a local businessman, who recently finished the Langkawi Ironman, and Chong Him Shoong, the President of Kelab Runners Ipoh (KRI) and multiple Triathlon finisher, both participated at the event too. This helped to show how the format appeals to not only young and old but also experienced triathletes as well as new entrants to the sport.

If you'd like to find out more about the "Try to Tri" event and how you and/or your children can participate in future editions of it, contact Quentin at the Perak Triathlon Association by writing to him at qwhowell@yahoo.com.

Dave Spence



News

Catering to Those Outside the City

Frontier Prestige Car Dealers Sdn Bhd, located in Batu Gajah, recently held its first branch opening. Frontier, acting as a Proton dealer, aims to target customers who are located at the outskirts of Ipoh city, including town areas such as Batu Gajah, Pusing and Sri Iskandar.

In conjunction with the launching ceremony, Frontier also took the opportunity to organise a small car exhibition introducing Proton's new car, the Iriz. Guests were also treated to a light lunch prior to the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

According to Executive Director, Jerry Lai, the company looks forward to providing exceptional services as well as to bring convenience to their customers who would have to go all the way down to Ipoh for a new car.

"The main reason we decided on this location is

because we believe the people here, given a choice would much prefer to buy a car without going all the way down to Ipoh. We strive to bring convenience as well as to assist the population who is located outside of the city," he said.

Admin Finance Manager, Kevin P'ng also added that the company is planning to expand its business within the next 2-3 years by establishing a service centre.

"Although the business is only at its initial stage, we hope to be able to establish a one stop centre in the next few years, providing different kinds of services such as road tax renewing assistance, insurance information and many more," he told Ipoh Echo.

Also present at the opening ceremony was the Mayor of Batu Gajah, Haji Tarmidzi bin Abdul Manap, along with Chairman of UMNO Batu Gajah Dato' Wira Mohd



Yusof and Police Chief of Batu Gajah, Shaharon Anuar bin Abdul Latif.

Yvette

Personality

Jenny Pong, a Model of Inspiration

Jenny Pong Seow Chin, 48, may be a tiny woman without her limbs yet she is anything but tiny. Jenny is on a mission to inspire and motivate others like her through talk sessions conducted by a non-profit organisation known as *ehomemakers*.

Coming from a humble background, Jenny grew up in a small village in Ipoh with her parents and six other siblings. To feed them, her parents had to resort to growing their own vegetables and raising their own chickens. Due to their harsh living conditions, Jenny had to stop schooling when she was at the age of 12 to help out with the family. Jenny lost both her legs barely into her twenties after giving birth to stillborn twins. She was diagnosed with post-natal virus infection and fell into a coma for two long years.

"While I was in my comatose condition, my mother and family were the main source of support I had. Even though I wasn't able to move or open my eyes, I was conscious and could hear everything around me clearly. My mother, believing that I would come around one day, stood by my side and took good care of me. My father-in-law believed I was dead and wanted me removed," she recounted.

Today, Jenny is aspiring to become like world renowned speaker Nick Vujicic, who could motivate and inspire others to love and appreciate life. Although Jenny's education is very much lacking, she makes up by taking English lessons provided by *ehomemakers*.



"I am really blessed with such a loving family and teachers who are helping me to achieve my dreams. I believe that God really loves me. Although he took away my limbs, he gave me so much more in return. I've been tutored these past two months by renowned emcee K.T. Pillai and Mr Cheah from Toastmasters YMCA Ipoh, and my English has improved tremendously. I believe that with time and determination, I can soon stand before an audience to share my experiences," she exclaimed.

Jenny shared with Ipoh Echo the challenges she faced the past 30 years. Those concerning her health, especially, were difficult to overcome. Aside from her daily



classes, Jenny has to travel back and forth to the hospital for checkups. She is currently diagnosed with diabetes and a heart condition. She has a few doctor appointments yet to be completed.

Jenny is also a woman with many capabilities. She not only helps out with the chores in the house she currently shares with her younger brother and his family but cooks dinner on weekends. Lying flat on her stomach on a trolley made by her younger brother, Jenny shows us how it is done by frying an egg.

Jenny is recognised by the society, as well as the media, as someone who is determined and optimistic who does her best to live her life to the fullest. Jenny was awarded the *Pingat Jasa Kebaktian* (PJK) in 1988 by the Sultan of Perak. Publications, such as The Star and Portraits of Perseverance, have written articles on her efforts to improve herself and others like her. Jenny was one of the winners of the Hiruscar Beautiful Contest for being the most inspiring and "beautiful" people of 2014.

Presently, Jenny is under the management of *ehomemakers*, a community network that promotes working from home, teleworking and conducting businesses through the use of information and communications technology. *Ehomemakers* promotes self-help, business partnerships and entrepreneurship development for those who want to balance work and home life. Their profit is derived from projects focusing on eco-baskets production and service-provision to empower women to embark on social-economic self-reliance. For more information, log on to www.ehomemakers.net.

Yvette



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Community

Meru Valley Patchwork Society

Giving back to society is always an admirable initiative, especially when life has dealt you a good deal. There are many people who would like to participate in some form or another, in organizations that dedicate themselves to lending a helping hand to the less fortunate. There are others who would prefer to simply make monetary donations as their way of giving back to society. Both manners of sharing with the less fortunate are admirable and should be emulated when opportunity presents itself.

The Meru Valley Patchwork Society has for years taken it upon themselves to help in any way they can. The Meru Valley Patchwork Society was the brainchild of Datin Mina Ushiama which started with the generous support of the Meru Valley Golf & Country Club. A 12-member team comprising of Malaysians, Japanese, South Africans, English, Taiwanese and Iranian ladies who have a passionate love for handicraft and sewing, come together every Wednesday at the Club's Café 28.

These ladies have a mission in mind, when they set about creating beautiful and useful handmade items such as place mats, coasters, hand-phone cases, bags, passport holders and many others. With these beautiful custom-made creations, they set about raising funds to support those in need. Each member of this society works tirelessly to help create a wide variety of products to be put up for sale at the charity bazaar, which is held yearly at the Meru Valley Golf & Country Club. From food items to household gadgets, there is something for everyone.

The Pertubuhan Jagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Setia, a home for physically-challenged children, located at No. 17 Lorong Silibin 30100 Ipoh, has benefitted from the generosity of the Meru Valley Patchwork Society. Last year these ladies managed to raise an impressive RM8000 to help these handicapped children, who are in constant need of care and attention.

Every year these wonderful ladies come up with equally wonderful creations, which are offered for sale at a charity bazaar, held at the Meru Valley Golf & Country Club. This year they again, proudly invite everyone to come by, view and purchase the beautiful items on sale at the charity bazaar. You can be a part of this wonderful



experience and help make a difference in someone's life. Come and enjoy the variety of things on display for sale, ranging from food items to delicately made handicraft items.

With the Christmas season just around the corner, take this opportunity to purchase fine hand crafted items as holiday gifts. Bring a ray of sunshine to the lives of these handicapped children with your generosity. The funds raised at the charity bazaar, go a long way to making a difference in their lives.

Pencil in the details of the charity bazaar and do your bit in giving to a deserving cause. Don't miss out on a golden opportunity to make a difference this Christmas.

Serena Mui

Charity Bazaar Sale

Venue: Function Room, Meru Valley Golf & Country Club
Date: November 29 & 30 (Saturday & Sunday)
Time: 10am-3pm
Items on sale: Patchwork pieces, handbags, fancy goods, homemade biscuits, Japanese food, household items and many more.

Hospital Fatimah Celebrates 40th Anniversary

This year's Hospital Fatimah's annual dinner was also to celebrate the hospital's 40th anniversary, marking an important milestone in its history. The function was held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel, Ipoh, recently.

The 600-odd guests comprised a delegation of five from the Brothers of Mercy in Trier, Germany, led by The Superior General Brother Peter Berg, the Bishop of the Diocese of Penang Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis, Chairman of the Board of Directors Brother Ambrose Heng, Chairman of the Executive Council Brother Dr Patrick Liew, Chief Executive Officer Dr Lim Chie Kean, members of the Board of Directors, doctors, nurses, support staff, visiting doctors and students and staff from the Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing.

The theme of 'Seventies Retro' brought colour and life to the occasion, and gave guests an opportunity to let their hair down.

In his opening address, Dr Lim said, "From a very humble beginning, we have grown from two wards and a handful of specialist doctors to our current capacity of 242 beds. We now have 33 in-house specialist doctors and 53 visiting doctors."

"During this year, we have seen 137,000 outpatients and 19,000 patients were admitted. Although they're generally satisfied with the care they received, we must not rest on our laurels and must continue to improve our facilities and services to provide safe and high quality healthcare to the community.

"Our immediate plan is to fill up the six floors of the 8-storey Block E Medical Centre, above the Wolfgang Cancer Centre. In the pipeline is a new cardiac catheterisation laboratory, diagnostic facilities, wards for 39 new beds, a new cytotoxic drug reconstitution and pharmacy facility, meeting rooms and an auditorium. New medical equipment will be installed as well."

"To ease parking woes, we are going to start constructing an 8-storey car park. All these, in addition to the relocation of our Emergency Department and the introduction



of more clinical disciplines, will allow us to provide high quality healthcare and more efficient and effective services to our patients and their loved ones."

Dr Lim stressed that the hospital would continue to raise the bar to the next level of quality care, adding that the hospital would introduce more clinical disciplines for it to become a one-stop tertiary specialist hospital.

He continued, "The challenge for the coming year would be to succeed again in the 4th accreditation survey by the Malaysian Society for Quality in Health."

Chairman of the Exco, Brother Dr Patrick Liew, in thanking the doctors and staff of the Hospital for their commitment and dedication in carrying out their responsibilities and in recognition of their hard work, announced the bonus for 2014 for the staff, much to their surprise and delight.

The event also saw recognition given to two departments of the hospital. The Best Department Exemplary Awards went to the Supply, Procurement and Distribution Department for the non-nursing section and Haemodialysis Centre for the nursing division.

Long service awards were also presented to those who have served at the hospital for ten, twenty and forty years. They received a sash, a certificate of appreciation and a gift. Mr Albic a/l Anthonisamy, an operation theatre assistant, and Madam Mah Foong Ngan, a senior seamstress, were given a thunderous round of applause for having been with the hospital since its first day, 40 years ago.

Entertainment for the night was provided by staff from both Hospital Fatimah and students from Hospital Fatimah School of Nursing. Fr. Peter Chiang from Vancouver also delivered three tracks, while the German delegation of the Brothers of Mercy in Trier performed a German religious song. Topping it all was a play on the history of Hospital Fatimah. It was directed by Datin Rosalina Ooi.

Speaking to Ipoh Echo, Dr Lim said, "Our Wolfgang Cancer Centre was opened in 2013 and we're up-to-date on our radiation and chemotherapy equipment. We currently see about 30 patients daily for radiation and chemotherapy treatments, and we can take in more patients. Our School of Nursing, which was opened in 1994, continues to train assistant nurses. We also offer conversion programmes to train assistant nurses to registered nurses. We will soon be offering a post-basic training course in midwifery. During this trip to Ipoh, the Brothers from Germany, led by the Superior General Brother Peter Berg, made a visit to Hospital Fatimah. They were very happy with the progress we have made thus far."

Emily



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iSpeak
A. Jeyaraj

Dengue Becomes a Reality in Mosquito Garden

In the August 16 issue of Ipoh Echo I wrote about residents of Lim Garden living in fear of dengue. This has become a reality and there were a number of dengue cases in a short span of time and victims including three of my relatives, one of whom had it for the second time.

Health inspectors visited a number of houses around Tarcisian Convent School to inspect their compounds, poured medicine into their septic tanks and put up posters on fines for people breeding mosquitoes in their compounds.

Four health inspectors from Batu Gajah came to my area and inspected the compounds. After inspecting the surroundings they told me to complain to MBI and JPS. The pond created by realignment of the river is filled with stagnant water and I was advised to rear fish to prevent mosquito breeding. The vacant land in front of my house is not maintained.

The inspectors informed me that they are low-rank staff and are obeying orders. They advised me to inform the media, talk to my assemblyman and best of all call TV3 to highlight the problem.

The main cause of the mosquito problem in Lim Garden has been identified as the individual septic tanks which are major breeding grounds.

K. Sagadevan, Secretary of Lim Garden Residents Committee has given a letter to Ir Azrol Bin Noordin, Branch Head, National Water Services Commission (SPAN) requesting for a Centralised Sewage System (CSS).

Speaking after a recent council's full board meeting, the Mayor said, "I want all councillors to report to me on the performance of contractors in their respective zones." This is a good idea. Each councillor must be given specific tasks and targets to be carried out in their zones. The problems in all zones are not the same. The councillors must hold weekly meetings with the residents. Perhaps it would be a good idea if the Mayor went around and looked at the situation.

Recently, Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam, Health Minister, said that a special committee to fight dengue should be set up in all states to complement prevention and awareness efforts conducted by the national committee. In Perak, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, Chairman, Perak State Health Committee has said that the state government has set up a high-level committee to tackle the dengue menace.



Setting up committees, attending meetings and adjourning with delicious food will not solve the problem. The members of the committee must regularly visit dengue prone areas and see for themselves what the situation is. Neither Dr Mah nor anyone of his committee members has visited Lim Garden. They are ignorant of the cause. The way to solve the problem is to find the causes in each area and take action.

As far as Lim Garden is concerned, the cause has been identified as individual septic tanks. CSS must be built without any further delay before any fatality occurs. Residents cannot be living in fear of dengue fever.

[As this goes to print, the writer's wife is also down with dengue.]

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Business

World's Biggest Industrial Park

A tripartite partnership of Malaysian, Chinese and Indonesian companies is developing one of world's biggest integrated industrial estate in South Sulawesi.

The companies, Ipoh-based BTN Power (M) Bhd; China state-owned enterprise – China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC); and Indonesia government linked entity – Perusda Bantaeng, have been awarded as “Joint Master Developer” of 3000 hectares of land in Bantaeng, about 130km south-east of the capital – Makassar.

“We are proud to announce that our BTN-CMEC joint venture has won the confidence of the local government of Bantaeng in South Sulawesi to develop the integrated industrial park,” announced BTN Power’s group managing director, Datuk Nizaruddin Mohamed, at a press conference in Ipoh recently.

“Hardly two months after all the agreements pertaining to the project were signed in Ipoh in late August, we have launched the ground-breaking ceremony for a power plant at the site.”

He stressed that it shows the BTN-CMEC joint-venture is enthusiastic and determined to carry on with the development. It would not be a “fly by night” scam. It also shows that a local company has successfully penetrated the investment-development sector abroad.

The integrated industrial park will be supported by all necessary infrastructure. Its Gross Development Value (GDV) will reach RM30 billion upon completion in 15 years.

The BTN-CMEC is the major shareholder of the project with the backup for project financing for the nickel and iron smelting on EPC basis if required. The group will invite Bumiputera contractors from Malaysia to participate in the infrastructure works at the integrated industrial park.

Since its inception, the industrial park has attracted and secured eight committed catalytic industrial manufacturers, primarily nickel pig iron smelters and its related services from China and Indonesia for land totaling 750 hectares with a total investment of RM9 billion and a workforce of 50,000.

The 2x300-megawatt power plant, costing RM4.5 billion, is scheduled to be completed in 2017. It will increase electricity supply in the region, which is already experiencing a shortage. Its construction is being undertaken by CMEC. Bantaeng Sigma Energy, a subsidiary of BTN Power, has acquired a total of 50 hectares of land from the landowners and the Bantaeng local authority in the coastal area for the project.

The project will undoubtedly boost socio-economic development in the region, where the majority of the residents are farmers, cattle breeders and fishermen. A township with all the infrastructures and facilities will be built nearby to accommodate the increasing population. Also a jetty to enable supplies to be imported and exported by sea will be constructed.

BTN-CMEC together with an Indonesian partner are also planning to develop a major tourism project, Royal Tallo Riverfront City Resort, in Makassar with a Gross development of RM45 billion over a 20-year period. It is aimed at attracting visitors from Middle East, Europe, China, Korea, Japan and Asean countries seeking an ecological and nature oriented option to Bali and Phuket.

Jerry Francis



Indonesian Ambassador to Malaysia, Mr Herman Prayitno (centre) launches ground-breaking ceremony in Bantaeng

Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 255 2181**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd 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.

“Kembalikan Negaraku” a forum by civil society movement, **NegaraKu**, will be held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel and Suites, Ipoh on Monday, **November 17** beginning 8pm. Admission: Free. For details call Ms Yip at **012 521 2480**.

A Fun Day at the Dental Clinic, Saturday **November 22**, 9am-12.30pm at Specialist Dental Clinic, Level 4, Pantai Hospital Ipoh. For children 10 years and above. Admission is by registration. Register early as seats are limited. For details, call Renuka or Gloria at **05 540 5712** or Specialist Dental Clinic at **05 540 5455**.

“Nothing in life is more important than the ability to Communicate Effectively” – YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club is organising a Demo Meeting for the public to create awareness for Toastmasters activities and its benefits; Wednesday **November 26**, 7.45pm at YMCA Ipoh. Who should attend? College & University students and young working adults. Contact: Pak Peter at **019 574 3572** or just walk-in.

Charity Bazaar by Meru Valley Patchwork Society, **November 29 & 30**, 10am-3pm at Function Room, Meru Valley Golf & Country Club. Items: patchwork, handbags, fancy goods, homemade biscuits, Japanese food, household items, etc. All proceeds will be donated to Pertubuhan Jagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Setia in Silibin.

Sathy Sai Baba's Birthday Celebration, Saturday **November 29** from 5.30pm to 10pm at Sri Mariamman Temple Hall, Jalan Sg Pari, Buntong, Ipoh. All are welcome to attend. For details call Dr Prem **011-1635 3059** or P.S. Rajah **019-573 6734**.

Charity Food Fair by Hope for Autism Society, Sunday **November 30**, 9am-1pm at 88 Jalan Bulan, Taman Westpool, Ipoh (opp. Petron). For enquiries on contribution, contact: Ms Cyrus **05 546 7827**. Facebook: hopeforautism.

Ipoh Family History Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Family History Week from **December 2-6** (Tuesday to Saturday) from 10am to 6.30pm daily at 12 Lorong Cheah Cheang Lim, Greentown, Ipoh (opposite Secret Garden). A photographic exhibition by *IpohWorld* will be featured along with the church's FamilySearch.org, My Family Booklet, genealogy, etc. Wira Association Malaysia will also have a display. Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided. For enquiries call **016 538 0121**.

Fun Day with NGOs by Perak Parkinson's Association, Sunday **December 7**, 8.30am-1pm at Sekeping Kong Heng (Plan B), 75 Jalan Panglima, Ipoh. Free — all are welcome — Come and check out non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Perak and fun stalls. Line dancing, body painting, art & crafts, clogs painting, fruits, heroes photo shoot, etc. Tel.: **05 545 5610**, **011 1640 8406** or Samuel **012 557 7682**.

Ipoh Down Syndrome Centre, a non-profit making organisation, is now open for registration. Parents of down syndrome children aged between 2 months and 12 years can register their children by calling **05 546 8386** or dropping by the centre at: 2 Persiaran Bercham Selatan 27, Taman Sri Kurau, 31400 Ipoh, during office hours.

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11. Impiana Hotel Ipoh, Jln Raja Dr Nazrin Shah. Tel: 05-2555555
12. Ipoh Downtown Hotel, Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Tel: 05-2556766
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14. YMCA Ipoh, Jln Raja Musa Aziz. Tel: 05-2540809/2539464
15. Meru Valley Golf Club members' desk
16. Khimzian Enterprise, 75 Jln Yang Kalsom. Tel: 05-2427381
17. Sunway College Ipoh, Psrn SCI 2/2, Sunway City Ipoh. Tel: 05-5454398
18. Break the Code, Greentown Business Centre. Tel: 05-2420484
19. Symphony Suites, Jln Lapangan Symphony. Tel: 05-3122288
20. Olympia College, 18 Jln CM Yussuff. Tel: 05-2433868
21. Ibis Styles Ipoh, 18 Jln Chung On Siew. Tel: 05-2406888
22. Daybreak, Lot 75242 Jalan Pulai, RPT Pengkalan Pegoh. Tel: 05-3235908/09
23. Banyan Beauty, 40 Jln Raja DiHilir. Tel: 05-2426866/012-5073866
24. Ipoh Echo's office



Ipoh's New Landmark



The completion of SOHO 2, a development project undertaken by MH Amanjaya Properties Sdn Bhd, is set to give Ipoh a new look. Small Office Home Office (SOHO) 2 is in fact, phase two of an on-going project to develop the piece of land fronting the Menteri Besar's residence. It is located at the end of Jalan Sultan Idris Shah near the roundabout.

The ground-breaking ceremony by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir was held at the site on Wednesday, November 5. It was witnessed by a retinue of top government officials which included the State Secretary, Dato' Seri Ahmad Puhat Mat Nayan, State Financial Officer Dato' Ghazli Jalal and Chairman of MH Amanjaya Properties Sdn Bhd, Dato' Aminuddin Hashim.

Phase Two will comprise of ten SOHO units, a 40-room boutique hotel, a 10-storey office tower, eight office units and a prayer house. It will cost the developer RM100 million to construct. The time frame earmarked for its completion is 24 months. The first phase of the project was launched in 2011.

“This project is beneficial to the state government as it'll generate revenue through rentals and usage of the office units and blocks. Economic activities generated will benefit Ipohites too,” said Aminuddin in his opening remarks.

Luqman

LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

Open Letter to Menteri Besar

Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Seri DiRaja,

According to MMU Associate Professor, Tan Ching Seong, the way waste in Pangkor is handled is hazardous to the health of residents. From the short TVkini clip it is apparent that the handling of wastes from their original form to its final state – dust (after incineration) – is well below most health safety standards.

It is not only a threat to the health of those who work in the incinerator plant but also to Pangkor residents, per se. Depending on the wind direction, Lumut and other mainland population would also be affected.

There is also the danger of leaching which affects the water table. Eventually this will leach into the sea, affecting marine life. Contaminated fish caught around Pangkor, which is distributed throughout Perak, will be eaten by unsuspecting consumers. It is not inconceivable that in time, consumers of seafood caught around Pangkor Island, will be afflicted by the Minamata Disease.

Minamata Bay in Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan was highly polluted. In the mid-fifties there was a high increase in deformed births in the area, which was traced to the consumption of fish caught in the Bay and even as far as the Shiranui Sea.

Unless this matter is taken seriously and handled transparently the consequences

do not bear contemplating.

Pangkor is a holiday resort. A large section of the population depends on tourism for a living. Tourists will shun Pangkor once news of this goes out.

As the MB and Assemblyman for Pangkor, I am sure you would like to address this issue and ensure that the handling of wastes is done to the highest standard. This applies not just to Pangkor but to the rest of Perak.

On a related matter (of cleanliness and health), I must say that Ipoh is getting dirtier by the day even though the 'important' roads are generally clean. But then Ipoh is more than just Tiger Lane, Tambun Road, Gopeng Road, Brewster Road and Hugh Low Street.

Looks like having a new broom, or rather a newly-appointed Mayor, has not swept Ipoh clean.

Your response will be much appreciated, Dato' Seri DiRaja.

Sincerely yours,
Yin Ee Kiong

Kalau Saling Membantu Ipoh Pasti Boleh

In reply to the letter by Yin Ee Kiong in Ipoh Echo Issue 200, I wish to apologise for your bad experience in Concubine Lane. I run the shop that sells bling. I think it is good to point out that I am a young person in Ipoh. I wish I would have spoken to you and made your experience on the street a little bit better. But I tend to be a little awestruck with people who have seen the likes of Whiteaways and George Town Dispensary. I assure you the shops on Concubine Lane offer the best hospitality in town.

I feel you have mistaken what we do on our street. While we do sell bling, we also do a lot of other inspirational things. I noticed your penchant for things local. Half of the stuff sold at our shop are from Ipoh's start-up vendors, which we believe in giving opportunities to. Most of them are just like me and the people you mentioned in your letter, young adults in Ipoh trying to start something on their own.

The shop is part of our efforts to help build Ipoh. That is to help and support inspiring and creative people in Ipoh. We support a large cross-section of Ipohites; senior and young, NGOs and groups. We are a shop that sells bling with a big heart.

We are also home to the likes of the *Ipoh Bus Project*, which is not to be missed at the front of the shop. The *Ipoh Bus Project* is a citizen-initiated project that advocates the use of the bus system, while building an identity for Ipoh. The project has painted bus stops, looked at the unique designs of the Ipoh bus system and, periodically, feed good articles to educate fans. The project runs on the positive, not the negative. You would have loved it. I am sorry you missed this.

For the street, I cannot speak for everyone but, all are free to speak to us and the

neighbours. Views on heritage are diverse, and there is no single true answer. Ipoh is a living and breathing city. It has many silly quirks you love and hate. It ebbs and flows on current functional needs and aesthetic tastes. I do not wish to defend bad buildings as it will do no good to my reputation, instead I hope you will seek and understand the choices made.

I am particularly proud of the development around Kong Heng by Sek San and friends. They have brought about a different, more contemporary direction from the Penang and Melaka models. This could have only happened in Ipoh because of our existing heritage and 'relaxed' regulation on heritage; allowing creative people to experiment.

Finally, while we may sell bling and our street a miss-mash of different happenings, it does not mean we are not doing anything good or inspiring for Ipoh. I assure you, all we think about every day is about Ipoh. I have a lot of respect for the small movers in Ipoh. The small is inseparable and of equal importance to the big. In football the biggest teams rely on the school teams to discover and train talent and the smaller teams rely on the bigger teams to inspire their talent. There is no competition, only a symbiotic relationship. I hope you will stand and support us on Concubine Lane, as equally as you support other parts of town. We are part of Ipoh too.

Someone
The shop selling 'bling'

Crematorium is Safe

The recent protest by residents at the entrance of the Hindu burial and cremation grounds in Buntong against the construction of a modern crematorium on a property owned by the Hindu Paripalana Sabah of Ipoh is a sad reflection of the Hindu community.

The protesting residents are worried that their health and peace will be affected if the construction of the crematorium is allowed to proceed. They claimed that the Department of Environment (DOE) has not approved the crematorium due to its proximity to residential areas. The department's regulations stipulate that a buffer zone of 200 meters is required. The proposed site, apparently, does not meet this requirement.

I understand the feelings of the residents affected, especially those who make a living attending to the many open-burning rituals. The Hindu Devasthanam Paripalana Sabah in Ipoh and the state authorities should look into the residents' concerns and work out an amicable solution. We should not ignore their fears. The state authorities and community leaders should step in and help settle the problem.

The residents who are protesting against the building of the crematorium should be reasonable and must take into consideration the needs and wishes of Hindus in Ipoh. At the moment there is not a single crematorium in the city that caters to them. Hindus who wish to cremate their loved ones have to travel far away to perform the rites and that too in non-Hindu crematorium grounds.

Many of the Hindus I met are grateful to the state government for allocating RM1.3 million to the Hindu Devasthanam Sabah of Ipoh for the crematorium. They are also concerned for the affected residents and are hoping that a win-win formula is worked out so that the building of the crematorium can proceed without delay.

We cannot dismiss the needs and feelings of the majority of the Hindu public who are looking forward to the building of a modern crematorium for many decades.

The fears of the residents may be due to a breakdown in the communication between the residents and the Hindu Devasthanam Sabah of Ipoh. It could also be the work of certain quarters who are exploiting the sentiments of those affected.

Modern crematoriums are fitted with high-tech gadgets to mitigate all kinds of pollution emitted during the incineration process. These crematoriums are environmental-friendly and relatively safe for city folks' needs. They follow stringent operating procedures. As such the residents should not be unduly worried of the safety and health aspects.

Open burning of corpses, as is currently practised, is more hazardous to humans and the environment. There is practically no pollution control for this traditional method of cremating. Generally, many Hindus do not like to speak openly about this, as a mark of

respect for the religion and its associated rituals.

Buntong's population, especially the Indian community, is on the rise. It is appropriate that a modern crematorium be built to phase out open-burning of corpses in this densely populated area. Those who wish to continue with the traditional method can do so in other open Hindu cremation grounds.

I appeal to all parties concerned to put their differences aside and unite for the interest of the community. The affected residents should also be realistic about their demands and be wary of those who are trying to exploit them. The land, where the crematorium is supposed to be built, belongs to the Hindu Paripalana Sabah. It is a private property.

In the meantime, I urge DOE to review its requirements regarding buffer zone. With the advance in science and technology, modern crematoriums are relatively safe to be built and operated near human dwellings.

S. Param

Bus Fare Increase Unfair

Recently the Land Public Transport Commission or Suruhanjaya Pengangkutan Awam Darat (SPAD) announced that it would recommend to the respective departments for a bus fare increase. This news is shocking to Ipohites like me.

The rakyat is already facing a high living cost. The Commission's irresponsible attitude to support the rich bus operators will further burden the public. The government should instead ask bus operators to improve their services rather than entertain their grouches.

We know that there are bus companies who, like the fishermen, are selling diesel to third parties for a profit. This has affected their schedules thus causing one to wait for over an hour for the buses.

And worse, many bus companies are not giving fare discounts to senior citizens. Just look at the number of new buses on the roads.

Chris Ng

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| Validity Period | 8456-30/05-2016/0517(P) |
| Approved Plan No. | 29/05/2014 - 28/05/2016 |
| Land Encumbrances | OSC/250-A/2/B/1/65/1006/11 |
| Total units | Charged to Malayan Banking Berhad |
| Exp. Completion date | 89 |
| Land tenure | June 2016 |
| Price | Freehold |
| Approving Authority | Min RM 404,800 Max RM 524,800 |
| | Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh |