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**My Kindred Spirit**  
● Page 3



**Don't Blame the Government for Everything**  
● Page 4



**SeeFoon Discovers New Hope for Foodies in Bercham**  
● Page 5



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# Caves of the Kinta Valley

By Nantini Krishnan, Ili Aqilah & Tan Mei Kuan  
Pictures By Rosli Mansor



The Kinta Valley is renowned for its Karst formations, which according to the Malaysian Karst Society, is landscape underlain by limestone which has been eroded by water through dissolution, producing various formations, including the limestone hills and caves. It is the caves that hold fascination for many and these abound, some, left alone to the birds and bats, some developed as tourist attractions, while others have been used as places of refuge and prayer. Ipoh Echo set out to explore some of these. *Continued on page 2*







## From places of devotion and prayer to caverns of awesome exploration and wonder

### Thrangu Dharma Retreat Centre Tambun

Nestled in the lush Tambun hills away from the hustle and bustle of the city, Thrangu Dharma Retreat Centre is an oasis of peace and welcome. The centre conducts contemplative programmes, retreats and prayers under the guidance of its 38-year-old Resident Lama, Lama Sangye from Nepal who entered monkhood at the age of 15.

A 11-feet Maitreya Buddha (the Buddha of the Future) statue, the first and the only one in Malaysia, was built last year. "This statue is very precious and many people come here to practise," the self-effacing monk who likes to read in his free time told Ipoh Echo. "The completion of this beautiful and unique statue is a very auspicious occasion as we could see a change in our cave. For example, it is full of energy. Many people come to the cave to see the Maitreya Buddha and they are all full of praise," added Madam Lee Lai Keen, the Chairman of the retreat centre.

During the Wesak Day celebration, the temple which was built in 2006, received more than 60 visitors. "Of course we wish for more to come. Once all the statues are completed, we will have an opening ceremony and we wish for Buddha Dharma to flourish in this centre," the 61-year-old chairman disclosed to Ipoh Echo.

Every month, the centre organises the Green Tara Puja in the first week, the 4 Arm Chenrezig Puja in the second week, the Guru Rinpoche Puja in the third week, the Medicine (Menla) Puja in the fourth week and the Amitabha Puja in the fifth week. Meanwhile, retreats are held three times a year.

In the cave, elaborate altars in the alcove are illuminated with gentle golden lights and flickering candles, providing a soothing tranquillity for the holy place. In addition, the natural limestone formations and aroma of incense lends the cave a special atmosphere.

**Cave Temple Address:**  
7.5 miles, Jalan Tambun,  
Tanjung Rambutan,

31400 Ipoh, Perak.  
GPS: N 4° 37' 40.8"  
E 101° 09' 02.9"  
Contact: 05 253 1181



### Gua Tempurung

One of the largest and longest natural limestone caves in Peninsular Malaysia, Tempurung Cave has been operated as a tourist cave since 1997. The iconic cave contains five giant domes: Golden Flowstone Cavern, 90m, Gergasi (Giant) Cavern, 15m, Tin Mine Cavern, Alam (Universe) Cavern, 72m, and Battlefield Cavern.

This nature's wonder at our doorstep has viewing platforms and railings to minimise inconvenience as well as illumination to highlight the cave's majestic fairyland of shimmering crystal deposits, stalagmites, stalactites, multi-tier ponds and volcano-like rocks.

Besides its magnificent chambers and beautiful speleothems, its almost vertical walls, slippery stones and chest-level underground crystal clear river also beckons to cave enthusiasts and adrenaline junkies!

**Dry tours and wet tours are available at the 1.2km long cave.**

**GPS: N 4°24'58.4" E 101° 11' 15.6"**

**Operating hours: 9am-4pm**



### Kek Look Tong



One of the famous caves in Perak, Kek Look Tong was used as a place of worship as early as 1920. It later became an iron-mining site operated by the late Mr Chooi Ah Kee in 1960. At that time, the cave was named as Tien Hou Gong and it was renamed after the cave was handed over by Ah Kee's son in 1982 to a non-profit, charitable



organisation, the Kek Look Seah.

Kek Look Tong which translates as 'Cave of Great Happiness', was used by Chooi Ah Kee as a place of worship. The cave underwent needed renovation and the committee has done a good job in repairing and preserving its heritage. The natural architecture of this cave is beyond amazing. From its head-of-dragon-carp-shaped entrance, gill-like limestone formations to gallbladder-shaped hind cavern and Buddhist statues, visitors will be mesmerised and awed through the entire tour.

A visit to the garden, located at the back of the cave, will leave guests awestruck by its lush green trees and reflexology footpaths. The park is surrounded with a variety of flora such as bougainvillea and hibiscus. It is also a natural habitat for carp, turtles, lizards and monkeys.

**Open for public from 7am to 7pm, Kek Look Tong is a must visit for everyone!**

**GPS: N 4° 33' 32.6" E 101° 07' 46.4"**

*Continued on Page 16...*



*"I cannot thank God almighty enough for all that he has given me. It brings me great joy to see the smile and cheer on Kak Kiah's face after she regained her eyesight." - Dr Gill*

### From the Editor's Desk By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

It never occurred to me that a lonesome, out-of-luck and pitiful Malay lady would one day bring individuals from two different vocations together for a common endeavour – to bring a semblance of dignity to an otherwise poor soul.

Zakiah bt Shahbuddin or "Kak Kiah" to her neighbours, was featured in Ipoh Echo Issue 52 (June 16-30, 2008). We had dubbed her the 'Pucuk Paku Woman' who lived alone in a rundown and half-completed brick-cum-wooden house at Kampung Batu Satu on the trunk road to Malim Nawar. The hovel, which was her home, belonged to her late uncle who took her in after she was abandoned by her more affluent siblings.

Her so-called house consisted of the barest of minimum. In the one-room abode Zakiah did her cooking, washing, eating and sleeping. The few utensils that hung above the stove had seen better days. She used empty tin cans she picked from dumpsites to store condiments and other dry stuff.

The roof leaked and the termite-eaten plank walls were in danger of falling apart. "On rainy days I've to cover myself with plastic sheets to remain dry," she sighed.

Zakiah had little money to go by. She resorted to plucking *pucuk paku* (fern shoots) to sustain herself. The ferns grew wild along a river bank close to her house. "It's a tedious job but what choice do I have?" she remarked. When it rained she got nothing. Zakiah never wore a shoe in her whole life. "I don't have a need for one," she told during my brief encounter with her one fateful day.

That was how pitiful this 63-year old lady was then. I have thought that her life would have changed for the better after a distant relative volunteered to care for her when her plight became news. But that was not to be. Her reprieve was short-lived. When her siblings questioned her rights over the late uncle's land and house, she was out in the cold once again. Having no one to turn to and with failing eyesight she got herself admitted to a welfare home in Taiping.

Zakiah would have just been a number had I not asked my reporter Rosli, who was instrumental in introducing the lady to me, her condition. Only then did I know that she was committed to a welfare home in Taiping.

She was near blindness due to cataracts that had infected both her eyes. Rosli intimated that Zakiah pined for home but was now a destitute with no one to turn to. I was



convinced that with the right people, the lady could be saved. And that was when Dr S.S. Gill came into the picture.

Dr Gill is a practising consultant ophthalmologist and eye surgeon with Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh. He has been in the profession for almost 20 years beginning his career in the government service. Gill is presently the chairman of the medical advisory committee and the clinical head of ophthalmology of Hospital Fatimah. And to top it all, the good doctor has frequently embarked on medical missions, on a voluntary basis, through non-governmental organisations in Malaysia and abroad.

If there is someone more than willing to help Kak Kiah to see again it is Dr Gill. I have full faith in this man to do the needful.

Zakiah was wheeled into the operation theatre at Hospital Fatimah on Wednesday, April 29. She underwent a complicated eye surgery that lasted over an hour. Gill could only save her right eye as the retina of her left eye was hardened with cataract and could not be salvaged.

The operation was performed pro bono. Dr Gill's humility touched everyone who was around to see poor Kak Kiah being given a second chance in life. They were not disappointed.

In acknowledging my gratitude for his generosity, Gill texted me this simple yet endearing message, it reads:

*"I cannot thank God almighty enough for all that he has given me. It brings me great joy to see the smile and cheer on Kak Kiah's face after she regained her eyesight."*

Dr Gill, you have said it all. In this time of uncertainty there are still people who will go out of their way to help the unfortunate, the maligned and the destitute. I can't thank you more, Doc. You are my kindred spirit!

## In The Name of My Father's Estate

Episode 41 • by Peter Lee

As both John Lee (Lee Sr's eldest son and Co-Administrator) and Connie (Lee Sr's second wife and Co-Administrator) remain unconscious after an accident, their families were informed by the doctors at the hospital that John may be paralysed while Connie is in coma. Then Mrs Patricia Lee (Lee Sr's first wife) told her daughter Michelle (Lee Sr's daughter and Co-Administrator) to inform their lawyer, Dave and asked what is going to happen to the Letter of Administration (L.A.). In reply, Dave said "Since they are still in this condition, the family may be left with the option of withdrawing both their names as the Administrators from the application (L.A.) to be submitted to the High Court and make a fresh application to appoint you as the Sole Administrator. If it ever happens, then both sides of the family must agree to this.



Michelle then asked "Does that mean it includes John and Connie's consent? Dave replied "No, their consent need not be obtained if they are still in this current condition." Michelle immediately asked "What do you mean?" Dave explained, "The doctors' diagnoses of them is very crucial. In other words, the doctors would have to assess whether their recovery period is going to be long and difficult. If it is, then an affidavit from the doctor regarding their condition would be sufficient for the court to dispense with John and Connie's consent. In the event the court does not grant such dispensation, then we will have to wait for the recovery or death whichever comes first. However, I feel that your family has to give time for the doctors to assess before jumping to any conclusion. Now, assuming that if both John and Connie regain consciousness but are unable to carry out the Administrator's job, then they have to renounce their position and decide on who is best to replace them.

After talking to Dave, Michelle approached Connie's sister, Jessica who was at the hospital with Connie's three children. Michelle then explained to Jessica the options which Dave had told her depending on the outcome of the doctors' diagnoses. Jessica felt that it was best for Connie to recover first to enable her to make a decision on the alternative Administrator. She further said, "If you ask me, I would prefer her to choose an independent third party as the Administrator of her husband's estate if she recovers and could not do the job." This she said was to be fair to Connie and her children. Then Michelle asked "Okay! then what is your opinion of appointing a Corporate Trustee which is impartial in their duties?" Jessica replied, "That sounds better but it still depends on Connie's decision."

After her conversation with Jessica, Michelle immediately briefed her mother, Mrs Patricia Lee (Lee Sr's first wife) and siblings about what Dave and Jessica had told her. In response, Michelle family members decided to give it a few days hoping that both could at least regain consciousness. In addition, the family was of the opinion that the last resort of appointing a 'Corporate Trustee' if Connie requests to do so, can be acceptable so long as it expedites the L.A. application.

*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 [excelssecms@gmail.com](mailto:excelssecms@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; S.S. Mubarak, Jln Sultan Yussuf; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.

## EYE HEALTH – DENGUE AND THE EYE

In our continuing series on Eye Health, Fatimah Hospital's Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S. S. GILL talks to us about DENGUE and how it can affect the eyes.



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

Dengue fever has reached an alarming level in Malaysia with health warnings and notices by the Ministry of Health being issued almost daily in the last few months, to the point that nowadays there are even banners put up in residential areas warning people of dengue and its dangers.

It is common knowledge that the infection is spread by the mosquito and to be more precise the *Aedes aegypti* one. The illness starts acutely with general symptoms of fever, headache, pain behind the eyeballs especially when the eyeballs move, severe muscle and joint ache along with exhaustion. Hence, it is often called "breakbone fever" because of the severity of muscle and joint ache.

Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever is the more severe variety that results in internal bleeding that occurs everywhere from the skin (forming a characteristic rash of bleeding under the skin called *petechiae*), bleeding into the brain, gut, nose and gums of the teeth.

The most severe form is called *Dengue Shock Syndrome*. This is the most life threatening. There are currently four different serotypes of dengue, which means there are four different 'cousins' amongst the virus. An attack of dengue from one virus serotype gives you a lifetime immunity to that one serotype only.



### EYE FEATURES

There is a broad spectrum of eye features that may occur. They are:

1. **MACULAR OEDEMA:** A swelling at the central portion of the retina (nerve centre). The person may see a dark patch in the centre of their vision (central scotoma).
2. **MACULAR HAEMORRHAGE:** Is a bleeding that occurs in the same area of the retina. This too may result in a similar symptom as Macular Oedema, albeit more severe.
3. **VASCULITIS:** Inflammation of the small vessels at the back of the eye (retina). The vision is most affected if the vasculitis is adjacent to the macular area.
4. **ANTERIOR UVEITIS:** This is inflammation in the pigmented part of the eye resulting in features of photophobia (inability to tolerate light) and also blurring vision.
5. **EXUDATIVE RETINAL DETACHMENT:** Thankfully, this is not that common as the first three. Should this occur, treatment is not the same as retinal detachment due to a retinal tear.

The spectrum of eye involvement may also include subconjunctival haemorrhage (bleeding into the white of the eye as in photo above), optic neuritis (swelling of the optic nerve) and posterior uveitis. If you ever contract dengue fever and have blurring vision, do inform your physician about it.

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah  
05 545 5582 or email [gilleyecentre@dr.com](mailto:gilleyecentre@dr.com).



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# Don't Blame the Government for Everything

These are the remarks made by both locals and expatriates who live, or who used to live, in Ipoh. Do they sound familiar?

"The Malaysian toilets are some of the worse I have seen in the world, and believe me, I have travelled extensively. The Malaysian toilet is one place where you do not wash your hands after you have done your ablutions. You pick up more germs from the taps."

"The taxi drivers overcharge, they are rude, their vehicles are dirty and they refuse to use their meters. If I were to complain, they threaten to stop and leave me stranded. Despite numerous complaints, from the public, there has been no improvement."

"Why are the floors in public toilets covered in an inch of water? Why are the hoses draped into the toilet bowl? Don't the cleaners, or their supervisors, realise this is an unhygienic practice?"

"If the traffic cop does not wear his seatbelt, overtakes on double white lines or double parks, what message does that send to other people?"

"In the west, a park is just that – a green lung for the city, where people can enjoy fresh air, sunshine and exercise, or relax with family and friends. Why are our parks a place for hawkers to peddle their food and drink? The litter left by irresponsible people, the rodents which feast on leftovers, defeats the purpose of the park."

"In the run-up to a major festival, ministers appear at the toll booths handing out leaflets and presents to drivers, to remind us to drive safely. This is a waste of public funds. There are enough laws to cover every eventuality. The problem is a lack of enforcement. There is lot of finger pointing when a big crash occurs or a structure collapses. They could be avoided by an adherence to basic principles."

"The factory discharge led to many dead fish. We complained because it affects our livelihood, but the illegal run-off wasn't acted upon as a senior politician has a share in that firm."

"I have to resort to begging because my husband left me and I have to feed my children. No. I do not know about any schemes to help people like me. Where should I go for help?"

"The factory emits thick black smoke from the stack. Its choking fumes force our grandmother to go indoors, as it worsens her asthma. The soot falls on our washing and makes it dirty. It has been going on for decades, but I put up with it."

"The building which has stood for over a century and survived WWII and the Emergency has fallen victim to people who understand nothing about conservation. Why add tacky features, which detract from the original historical piece? You wouldn't expect the Alhambra to have additions of modern tat. So, why has Kellie's Castle been defiled?"



**THINKING ALLOWED**

by Mariam Mokhtar

"I kept my appointment with the Pengarah, but in the lobby was told my elbow length sleeves were too short and revealed too much of my arms. How does the state government expect foreign investment and tourists to come, when they have petty, parochial, power wielding gorms sitting in front of the elevators checking people's attire?"

"My papers were in order and I had not broken any traffic rules

but when the cop stopped me, he insisted I had gone over a white line. He kept asking how I could settle things. I stood my ground, and told him that I had done nothing wrong. When I asked for his serial number and name, so that I could write to the police chief, he backed off, frightened by my persistence."

You would have experienced at least one of these incidents, involving rubbish, litter, traffic or pollution. We have councillors whom many consider are simply warming their seats and getting what one irate Ipohite called, "Makan gaji buta saja!" (sinecure).

One expat suggested the following. First. Education of the population to dispose of waste properly. Singapore and Switzerland are relatively clean places, because of education in schools and the practise of proper waste disposal is encouraged at home. Fines may be necessary to enforce the law. Second. The people should not just blame the government and expect it to solve all their problems. The people should also be made accountable for their actions. The government could help and give them guidance.

Do you agree? Have you other suggestions to help tackle any of these problems?

## Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,  
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

## Digestive Health

## Hiatal Hernia

A hiatal hernia occurs when part of your stomach pushes upward through your diaphragm. Your diaphragm normally has a small opening (hiatus) through which your food tube (esophagus) passes on its way to connect to your stomach. The stomach can push up through this opening and cause a hiatal hernia.

## Symptoms

Most small hiatal hernias cause no signs or symptoms. However, larger hiatal hernias can cause signs and symptoms such as: heartburn; belching; difficulty swallowing; chest or abdominal pain; feeling especially full after meals; or vomiting blood or passing black stools, which may indicate gastrointestinal bleeding.

## Hiatal hernia could be caused by:

- Injury to the area
- Being born with an unusually large hiatus
- Persistent and intense pressure on the surrounding muscles, such as when coughing, vomiting or straining during a bowel movement, or while lifting heavy objects.

Hiatal hernia is most common in people who are: age 50 or older, or obese.

Hiatal hernia is often discovered during a test or procedure to determine the cause of heartburn or chest or upper abdominal pain. Such tests or procedures include:

- **Barium swallow.** During this procedure, you drink a chalky liquid containing barium that coats your upper digestive tract. This provides a clear silhouette of your esophagus, stomach and the upper part of your small intestine (duodenum) on an X-ray.
- **Endoscopy.** During an endoscopy exam, your doctor passes a thin, flexible tube equipped with a light and video camera (endoscope) down your throat and into your esophagus and stomach to check for inflammation.

If you experience heartburn and acid reflux, your doctor may recommend medications, such as:

- **Antacids that neutralize stomach acid**
- **Medications that block acid production and heal the esophagus.** Proton pump inhibitors block acid production and allow time for damaged esophageal tissue to heal.

## Surgery to repair a hiatal hernia

In a small number of cases, a hiatal hernia may require surgery. Surgery is generally reserved for people who aren't helped by medications to relieve heartburn and acid reflux.

An operation for a hiatal hernia may involve pulling your stomach down into your abdomen and making the opening in your diaphragm smaller, reconstructing a weak esophageal sphincter, or removing the hernia sac.

Making a few lifestyle changes may help control the signs and symptoms of acid reflux caused by a hiatal hernia.

- Eat several smaller meals throughout the day rather than a few large meals.
- Avoid foods that trigger heartburn, such as chocolate, onions, spicy foods, citrus fruits and tomato-based foods.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Eat at least two to three hours before bedtime.
- Lose weight if you're overweight or obese.
- Stop smoking.
- Elevate the head of your bed 6in (about 15cm).

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

## Han Chin Pet Soo

To book a tour go online to: <http://www.ipohworld.org/reservation/> or scan the QR code.





## MUSINGS ON IPOH FOOD

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



# SeeFoon Discovers New Hope for Foodies in Bercham

Three years ago when I went to the **Ray of Hope Kafe** in Bercham, I found myself raving not only about the food but over the cleanliness of the place (in fact it's got the cleanest toilet of any food outlet in Ipoh and possibly Malaysia).

Recently, I went back and discovered another element that makes this Kafe so endearing. Not only is the food cooked with love and care but the service is delivered with such focus and concentration by the learning disabled staff that it is a joy to experience and truly a credit to the trainers. There is a cheerful camaraderie that is truly palpable, supervised by two full time volunteer Mums whose sons were given vocational training at the centre and now work in the Kafe. Here is where their motto **"Every Life Counts, Every Person Matters"**, comes alive as I watch their smiling faces and the friendly jousting that goes on.

### Non-profit, Non-religious

Most food outlets exist to serve food to those unwilling or unable to cook for themselves and hope to turn a profit in the process. Some special food outlets have a dual purpose: serving food as well as helping those who serve. The Ray of Hope Kafe is one of these food outlets that not only serve good food but in the process, do good as well.

The Ray of Hope is a non-profit, non religious multi-racial centre set up by St Peter's and St Augustine's church, Ipoh. Its sole objective is to give hope to people with learning difficulties.

Datin Mary Yeoh who is the dynamo behind the centre and the main mover and



Datin Grace Lee

shaker for the centre came down to say hello and self-deprecatingly said, "I'll leave you to our new star in the kitchen. Datin Grace Lee will take care of you". And take care of our little group she did.

Grace Lee who could be playing mahjong or lunching with her friends as the lady of leisure that she is, has instead dedicated herself to helping out in the kitchen, working with the chefs on new dishes to freshen up the quite extensive menu. Given that she is an impressive cook, the Ray of Hope Kafe has now found itself a new ray of sunshine who not only shines in the kitchen but also with the learning disabled staff who all hang on her every word and call her Auntie Grace.

We were there to try some new dishes which Grace puts on the menu as specials. And to revisit some of my other favourite dishes here.

### Extensive Menu

The menu is extensive. There are more than 13 different rice dishes and a similar number of noodle dishes not to mention spaghetti dishes and western dishes like chicken chops with a big choice of sauces and fish and chips. Now, with specials like the delectable Taiwanese Beef Noodles which we had that day, a fulsome broth with robust body (no MSG), the beef chunks and beef tendons (yes beef tendons....now how often does one find that?) yumiliciously tender, with a choice of noodles and

topped with flat leaf parsley; or the herbal chicken which comes with a rich broth redolent with Chinese herbs and chockful of cloud ear mushrooms, the menu offers more exciting possibilities. A must-have but alas only on certain days or ordered in advance in quantity. **Taiwanese Beef Noodle RM17.90** (worth every bite) and **Herbal Chicken RM9.50**.

Also new on the menu is the **Baked Sambal Fish** with long beans and ladies fingers. An impressive presentation in tin foil, the fish was well imbued with spices and there was just enough *sambal* gravy to spoon on the fish. **RM12.90 for the normal and RM22 for the special** which has to be ordered in advance.



An unusual new item is the **Grilled Chicken Roll** stuffed with spinach and black olives. Served with a cranberry puree, the chicken was just charred on the skin, tender and moist, the stuffing lending hints of the mediterranean.

Of course, I also revisited some of my old favourites here, tasting as delectable as I remembered them from my past visits. I will mention the few items which I consider the 'must-haves'. The **Asam Laksa** was a generous portion, the soup/broth had a fulsome body to it unlike some others I've had before which can be plain watery. I could taste the fish that had gone into making the broth as well as the various herbs and spices which are critical to its turning out successfully. Chunks of fish with pineapple and cucumber slivers, topped with a sprig of fresh mint, complemented the smooth white 'lai fun', enveloped in the broth – **RM10.90**.

The **Nasi Lemak** is for me one of the best I've ever tasted. Served with pandan flavoured coconut rice, the traditional one served with *ikan bilis*, peanuts, *sambal* (very tasty), and chicken rendang, topped with a fried egg, is heavenly – **RM9.90**. There is also a **special Nasi Lemak** with the same rice and egg but served with a salt fish pickle and fried chicken – **RM12.90**.



Continued on page 6

## MALAYSIA'S LEADING CRITICAL THINKING & BLENDED LEARNING (ONLINE+OFFLINE) EDUCATION

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Continued from page 5



My old favourite of the Cornish Pasty is now back on the menu. This giant puff is traditionally filled with beef but here at Ray of Hope, this is a **chicken Cornish Pasty**, with potatoes and onions. The pastry was light and fluffy and one pasty is enough to satisfy an average appetite – **RM8.50**.

#### Star Bakery

But it is the bakery that shines as the star of the show in the cafe. I sampled their cookies, their different types of bread, their sweet and savoury buns, and particularly noteworthy are their new **Durian Puffs**. To be ordered in advance, these delectable Puffs are a steal at **RM4.50 for a box of three**. Order them for birthdays, or celebrations or gifts but do order them. Equally delectable are their **Lemon Cheese tarts**. At **RM2.50 each**, they were melt-in-the-mouth yummy and I, a professed non-sweet eater, found myself reaching for a second one. Their **Tiramisu** is most impressive considering that it's *halal* and no alcohol is added – **RM6.50**. As is their **Moist Chocolate Cake**, **RM6.50**.

Other items from the bakery which make great party offerings are their **boxed cookies** and their **biscotti**, paper thin crisps encrusted with almond and pistachio slivers, an Italian favourite of mine that is great with coffee or just for nibbling.



So for all my dear readers out there who read this column, remember that the next time you feel the urge for some confectionery, need to bring a gift to someone's house, or organising a gathering, remember to place your order with the **Ray of Hope Kafe** and while there to pick up your goodies, linger awhile and try some of the items on their menu. Their catering services are excellent as I have personally used them. Not only will you enjoy the taste treat but you'll be helping a good and worthy cause.



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## Happenings

# 2015 PSPA International Ensemble

## PSPA

International Ensemble – the resident musical ensemble of the Perak Society of Performing Arts (PSPA), has been the icon of music-making in Asia since 2007.

Entering its 9th year and renowned for its innovative concert programming and versatility, the PSPA International Ensemble continues to provide the highest artistic excellence to the local audience, gathers the most gifted and professional musicians from around the world to the beautiful towns in Malaysia, that is, Ipoh, Penang and Kuala Lumpur to partake in unique and intensive chamber music making. What entices these exceptional artists is a wonderful arena of discovery and an opportunity to achieve artistic and humanistic excellence. The ensemble provides music of all eras by taking the audience on a diverse journey. And at the end of the journey, they will realise that the possibility with

traditional classical ensemble is infinite.

From Bach to Yiruma! This year's ensemble will be music from Vivaldi's all time favourite, *The Four Seasons* violin concerto; Bach's famous *Air on G String* and *Brandenburg Concerto*; the heart-warming Yiruma's *River Flows Into You*; the exotic Bizet's *Carmen Fantasy* and many more! We will also feature the super clarinet soloist Mr Andrew Simon, well-known for his flawless fingers-flying techniques and beautiful tone that will give all an unforgettable musical journey!

The ensemble will also extend its mission on intensive education and outreach programmes benefiting local communities and the younger generation, such as "Meet the Musicians" sessions and workshops involving students from various schools – to provide harmony for ALL.

So, let's enjoy 'A Night of Musical Kaleidoscope' with various popular tunes and the versatility of PSPA International Ensemble.

**Ipoh Concert Date:** Saturday August 15  
**Time:** 8pm-10.30pm  
**Venue:** Tenby Schools Ipoh Auditorium Hall

Ticket Prices:

- Category 1 seats (85 seats) @ RM150
- Category 2 seats (110 seats) @ RM80
- Category 3 seats (95 seats) @ RM40
- **EARLY BIRD promotion (buy tickets before June 30) 20% discount**
- **Student 40% (early bird) / 30% discount**
- **Senior Citizen 60 years and above 30% (early bird) / 20% discount**
- **Buy online from PSPA store <http://www.ipohcity.com/pspa> and get a further 10% discount.**

**HURRY GET YOUR TICKETS EARLY!**

Early bird tickets can now be obtained from PSPA online store and PSPA office. Call Witzi at 012 508 8818, or PSPA at 05 242 7814, or visit our website [www.pspaipoh.org](http://www.pspaipoh.org) for more details.



## Community

## Foodie's Faves



The month-long Perak Food Festival 2015, in the month of May, is aimed at promoting Perak's authentic dishes and delicacies. It is held in conjunction with the Malaysia Year of Festival 2015 and is organised by Perak Tourism Management Berhad.

The festival was launched on Thursday, April 30 at the tranquil Sungai Klah Homestay in Sungkai.

Executive Councilor for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Dato' Nolee Ashilin binti Dato' Mohammed Radzi, in her speech, highlighted Sungai Klah's famous 'nasik bambu' (rice in bamboo) and the fact that Perak had the highest number of domestic visitors totaling slightly over 6 million last year. Present at the launch was Dato' Hajah Rusnah binti Kassim the Adun for Behrang.

The event began on the first weekend, **Friday, May 1 to Sunday, May 3**, with a food fest at Pasir Pinji. It featured traditional cuisines of the various communities. The second weekend, **Saturday, May 9 to Sunday, May 10**, was 'signature dish' held at Ibis Hotel, Ipoh. It exhibited food prepared by hotels in Perak.

The third weekend, **Saturday, May 16 to Sunday, May 17**, at the Taiping Lake Gardens a special programme named, 'Tema Pupus' will feature food which has slipped from our memories.

The programme, 'Food Trail' on the fourth weekend, Saturday, May 23 to Sunday, May 24 is meant for the media. Media representatives will get to sample the unique dishes of Perak at selected restaurants in the state. The food trail will take them to Kuala Kangsar, Taiping, Tanjung Malim and Ipoh.

Mei Kuan

## Celebrating Mother's Day



In order to appreciate all mothers and to honour motherhood, Maya Malar, Director of MBG Event and Poongothai, President of Pertubuhan Setia Kasih Wanita Perak organised a Mother's Day celebration themed, 'My Mother My Inspiration' at Symphony Suites Hotel on Saturday, May 2.

"My mother is my best friend. She's always the one I go to with my problems. I can talk to her about anyone and anything and she listens to me, gives me advice without judging me," said Aruna Raj Devarajoo, about her mother, Sarojiny Devi, 61, at the celebration.

"Most parents don't encourage their daughters to get into a field like acting. However, I faced no such problem simply because my mother understands how the industry works, what my schedule would be like and my need for independence. I didn't even have to worry about getting my father's permission to start acting because my mother spoke on my behalf," said Aruna.

"When kids are young, mothers are playmates and disciplinarians. As they enter their teens, mothers become advice-givers and even confidantes. But now when I am 61 and my daughter is 31 we're best friends simply because our relationship has matured with time," opined Sarojiny Devi.

Nantini



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All images are for illustration purposes only

## No Frills Charity Lunch

Mother Teresa's Reading Shelter (MTRS) organised a fundraising charity lunch at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Hall. It was not an extravagant event and the tickets were priced at RM10 which was affordable for the man in the street. Most of the guests were members of the parish, their relatives and friends. It was buffet style and there was a take-away section.

Vegetarian and non-vegetarian food were served and the only meat dish was chicken. Though the food was simple, it was tasty and people did not expect much for RM10. In spite of the long queue, people were patient.

As part of their Feed-the-Poor Programme, well-wishers were encouraged to buy tickets and donate them to MTRS. These tickets were used to invite some 200 children from a number of homes, poor families and single mothers to enjoy a hearty meal.

Grace Margaret, spokesperson for MTRS informed that they raised RM15,000 and the money would be used for operating costs. They need volunteers to teach students on Saturdays from 9am to 1pm. Well-wishers can donate food items such as milo, milk powder, biscuits as well as cash. With additional funds more activities could be organised.

Grace thanked everyone for their support, especially the volunteers for their services including sale of tickets and the Parish Priest for his encouragement.

"We can do no great things; only small things with great love." – Mother Teresa

For further details call **05 241 0751**.

Jeyaraj





## News

## A Humble and Friendly Ruler

When he was Raja Muda Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah won many hearts with his down-to-earth behaviour, including his request to have a modest coronation ceremony.

Upon his installation, on Wednesday, May 6 at Balairung Seri Istana Iskandariah, Kuala Kangsar, as the 35th Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah stressed the importance of remaining loyal to King and Country in order to ensure stability.

In his inauguration speech, Sultan Nazrin put emphasis on the role of a King (Sultan) in a democratic institution.

“A King will protect his subjects regardless of their race or religion. He acts as a symbol of harmony, justice and he’ll unite all the people under his rule. To have a strong country, we need to have faith and believe in God. Practise the law of religion and the rules of law,” said the Sultan.

Attending the ceremony were Malaysia Prime Minister, Dato’ Sri Najib Razak and his deputy, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin. They were accompanied by Perak Menteri Besar, Dato’ Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir.

“Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah’s endearing traits; fairness, modesty and firmness have charmed his subjects. His wisdom and foresight will help make Perak a better state,” said Zambry.

The same sentiment was shared by Raja Jaafar Raja Muda Musa, the Raja Muda of Perak. He was confident of Sultan Nazrin Shah’s capabilities as a just ruler.

“It’s no mean task to lead a state with fairness and kindness. However, guided by the principles of neutrality and tolerance, I believe, and I am confident, he can carry himself in the most responsible manner,” said Raja Jaafar in his congratulatory



speech.

The coronation ceremony was attended by representatives of the royal households of Terengganu, Selangor, Kedah, Perlis, Pahang, Johor, Kelantan and the Sultan of Brunei Darul Salam. The Governors of Penang, Malacca, Sabah and Sarawak were also at the event.

RM

## Enhancing the Environment



X-Camp Sunway City, with the collaboration of Environment Online, organised a Planting Parade recently to celebrate Earth Day which falls on April 22 every year.

Eighty students from Tuanku Abdul Rahman School participated in the event where they planted fruits and herb trees on X-Camp’s campsite. Amin Jamadi, a representative for X-Camp, hoped that the event would be an annual affair just like Earth Day.

“It’s vital to instil awareness in the young generation on the importance of planting more trees for the future. Let’s treat every day as Earth Day. We need more trees and fewer buildings,” he told participants.

Lemongrass, kaffir lime, bird-eye chili, sugar cane and papaya were among those planted by the students. Mrs Ruhill, the teacher from STAR, applauded X-Camp’s initiative and wished more would follow in its footsteps.

“All the students involved are members of the school’s Nature Society. The society was established two years ago but this is the first time we get to plant trees outside of the school compound,” said Ruhil to Ipoh Echo.

Devyah Daranee Radhukrishnan, Miss Earth Malaysia 2012, was present to assist in the planting.

Ili Aqilah

## Celebrating Sultan’s Coronation

On the coronation day of Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah on Wednesday, May 6, the Haven Resort at Tambun was abuzz with activities. The presence of police and the entourage of Royals and very important guests staying at the 5-star hotel, which has become an icon of Perak, were part of the celebrations in the enthronement of the 35th Sultan of Perak.

Early in the morning of the auspicious day, the Landscape and Maintenance staff of the Haven Lakeside Residence did something out of their routine. They gathered together and prayed in unison for the new Sultan and the Sultanah that they may enjoy long lives and a just and happy reign together in favour with God and men.

Not to be outdone, the management and staff of the Haven Resort took time off their duties and gathered in the resort’s garden to celebrate the occasion. In a joyous mood they proclaimed, “Daulat Tuanku” three times. The event was captured for posterity in a group photo.

Steve Oh



## Live-Firing Practices

Headquarters 2nd Infantry Brigade organised a live-firing practice for media representatives recently. The event was held at Camp Syed Putra rifle range situated in the shadows of the iconic Gunung Panjang, where the Tambun cave paintings are found.

The programme was a form of appreciation to media representatives for their efforts in promoting military activities organised by the Perak-based brigade. In return, participants got the rare opportunity to handle and fire the American-made Colt M4 5.56mm Carbine, a standard-issue assault rifle currently in use by the Malaysian Armed Forces.

Commander 2nd Infantry Brigade, Brig-Gen Mohammad Abd Rahman, in his welcoming speech, alluded to the proposed military tattoo on Saturday, May 16 at Stadium Perak, Ipoh. The much-anticipated tattoo is held in conjunction with the installation of the new Sultan of Perak. It will be the climax of a military exhibition which began on Thursday, May 14.

Ipoh Echo sent their best soldier-wannabes, Ili, Luqman, Mei Kuan, Nantini and Rosli to take up the shooting challenge. Learning from the best of the best soldiers, the eager amateurs managed to line-up their sights, took a deep breath and squeezed the trigger to fire their weapons from a prone position.

They emerged second runner-up in the 100-metre shooting contest and were part



of the winning teams in the falling-plate competition.

The highlight of the day was the friendly match between the brigade’s chief of staff quartet and the brigade commander’s foursome. It left everyone in awe, as these professional soldiers took barely 30 seconds to down all the plates on the butt after running a distance of a hundred metres from one firing point to another.

Mei Kuan



## News

## Windfall for Engineer



A young and pretty engineer from Penang won a Suzuki Swift car in the ‘Shop and Win’ contest prize presentation at AEON Kinta City recently.

Choo Wan Qi, 26, who shopped at AEON Mall Station 18 in March, did not expect to win the grand prize in the contest.

"I am surprised and happy to win this prize. I come to Ipoh to visit relatives and also to shop here, but I never thought of winning a car," she said after the prize-giving ceremony.

According to the general manager of the shopping mall, Ahmad Fazli Abu Bakar, a total of five AEON malls namely, Kinta City AEON, AEON Station 18, AEON Seri Manjung, Taiping AEON Mall and AEON Bukit Mertajam participated in the contest beginning March 5 to April 5.

He said that customers needed only to spent RM100 in a single receipt to enable them to participate in the competition.

"This is one way to reward customers who are loyal to us," he said after the prize-giving ceremony.

Consolation winners also received AEON shopping vouchers worth RM200 while five third-placed winners took home a Samsung Galaxy S4 Zoom sponsored by Exclusive Telecommunication Sdn Bhd.

Second-placed winners received Reebok ZR7 Treadmill sponsored by Fitness Concept, while the top winner took home massage chairs sponsored by Ogawa.

The main prize, a Suzuki Swift, was sponsored by the CST Group of Companies.

Nantini

## First-Ever Pinji Fest

The much-awaited and first-ever Pinji Fest 2015, with its line-up of exciting events, kicked into gear on Friday, May 1 at Fu Jor Seah, Pasir Pinji. Running on the theme ‘self-sustainability’, the event was packed with activities aimed at rebranding Pasir Pinji, enamouring Pinjians and stimulating the local economy.

The opening ceremony, with its auspicious lion dance, festive drums and ocarina performances and an overwhelming response from the public, got the festival off to a cheery start. At the three-day festival which showcased Pasir Pinji’s assets and community spirit, Ipoh Echo met two unique individuals who are the living proof of a quote by poet C.S. Lewis, “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

One of them was Ipoh-born Miss Tung, 57, a former teacher from one of the stalls at the festival’s Art and Craft Market. Tung who grew up in Pasir Pinji, wrote a book on origami, the Japanese art of folding paper into decorative shapes and figures entitled, “Simple Creative Origami Paper Dolls”.

This is no ordinary book as it is a labour of love which reflects her life. A chapter in her book features origami dancers which were inspired by her sister who dances well. “She is a good dancer since primary school years and I am so envious of her, as I am not a



Howard Lee joining in the fun at the fest



## Ear, Nose &amp; Throat Care

By Dr Rekha Balachandran



## Good Sleep Habits

Last month, my article discussed snoring and sleep apnea. As a follow up to that, I’d like to touch on something called sleep hygiene or good sleep habits. Healthy sleep habits can make a big difference in your quality of life.

## Types of Sleep

Sleep is divided into 4 phases, that is, stages 1 to 3 and REM (rapid eye movement sleep). Stage 1 and 2 are light sleep, stage 3 is considered deep sleep. We progress through these stages in a cycle lasting almost 2 hours.

To get a good night’s rest, our body needs to spend enough time in each stage of sleep. If someone is asleep in stage 3 for example, and is woken, when he goes back to sleep he goes back to stage 1 again and the whole cycle repeats itself. This results in a feeling of persistent tiredness even when someone has spent 8 hours in bed.



## Effective Sleeping Habits

Try to follow the practices below on a regular basis to achieve good sleep quality.

1. Your body needs to wind down and shift into sleep mode, so having a relaxing pre bedtime activity helps. Among the things you can do include meditation or listening to soothing music. Turn off all devices with bright screens like hand phones, tablets and laptops. The light coming off the screens of these devices is a stimulant to the brain and makes it harder to fall asleep.
2. Make your room a sanctuary. Don’t bring in the stresses of the day, your work, computer, paper, etc. It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment. The bed is meant for sleep and sex. If you associate a particular activity or item with anxiety about sleeping, omit it from your bedtime routine.
3. There should not be any bright lights and noise to distract your sleep. If the atmosphere outside your room is bright and noisy, consider using blackout shades or earplugs to drown out unwanted light and sounds.
4. Have a regular sleep schedule of the same bedtime and wakeup time. This helps to regulate your body’s internal clock and helps you to fall asleep on time.
5. Avoid napping during the day if you have trouble sleeping at night.
6. Exercise is good way to tire yourself out. But avoid vigorous exercise 3 hours before sleep.
7. Avoid drinking alcohol, caffeinated drinks, cigarettes, and heavy meals late in the evening. Alcohol, cigarettes and caffeine can disrupt sleep.
8. If you have trouble sleeping, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired.

Not having enough quality sleep puts us at risk of workplace or road accidents due to poor concentration, heart disease, high blood pressure and many more. Kids with poor sleep also have trouble concentrating in class and maybe labelled as hyperactive.

If you are having trouble sleeping, try the steps above to improve your sleeping habits.

## Rekha ENT Specialist Clinic

Suite 509, Level 5, Pantai Hospital Ipoh. Tel: 05 540 5408.

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RekhaENTClinic](http://www.facebook.com/RekhaENTClinic)

good dancer at all!” she recalled nostalgically, as she pointed out the Chinese dance steps illustrated in the form of origami in her book.

She turned her life-long hobby of folding origami into a business idea in 2006 when all her children had grown up. “Sometimes when you’re down, you just take up a hobby and you’ll forget all the unhappy things. I spent my whole childhood here. All my bittersweet memories are here. Because of this, my heart and root are always here at Pasir Pinji,” she added heart-warmingly.

At a corner inside the Fu Jor Seah hall, one particular booth was always brimming with visitors. It was manned by an equally talented yet humble Mr Wee Ong Chin, 61, a retired headmaster from Pangkor Island who makes a wide array of traditional toys, not for sale but to be given away free. He guided visitors patiently to disentangle the seemingly unsolvable wire puzzles! “Have a good try!” he advised every puzzled but determined first-timer.

Retired last year, he has done research on traditional toys for 20 years. Looking at the toys, curiosity was piqued among the younger attendees while nostalgia was evoked among the older ones. “Traditional toys can also promote systematic thinking among children,” he told Ipoh Echo when asked about the purpose of his admirable effort.

The festival line-up provided something for everyone, from toddlers to pensioners with its pottery workshop, Cantonese opera performances, outdoor village rustic games (think clog race and five stones!), classic cinema experience, “Decorate a Reusable Bag” competition and a sharing session of childhood folklores, rhymes, riddles as well as folksongs.

Throughout all these activities, Howard Lee Chuan How, the Adun for Pasir Pinji could be seen relentlessly working behind the scene as well as joining in the fun. His efforts and dedication in leading the festival were indeed admirable.

However, all good things must come to an end. During the performance-packed closing ceremony, Howard thanked his team members for their blood, sweat and toil in the last 7 months in ensuring the success of the festival.

Be it artistic, cultural, social, historical or economic rationale, there was something about the Pinji Fest which was intrinsically different from other festivals. I patiently await the next one.

Mei Kuan



## Community

# Coaching for Underperforming UPSR Students

Some 15 underperforming UPSR students from four homes are undergoing a 25-week Guidance Programme in YMCA.

The programme is organised by Love and Welfare Society and Susila Manuel its Secretary said that the students are from National and Tamil schools and would be attending classes on Saturdays for four hours. They would be given tuition in Bahasa Malaysia, Maths, Science and English. Five qualified teachers would be conducting the classes and the students would be given monthly tests and report cards. The goal of the programme is to make the students obtain satisfactory results in the forthcoming UPSR exam.

The students are from Good Shepherd Home, Vision Home, Praise Home and One Malaysia Home. Susila said that all materials would be provided free and this is one of their programmes under their 'To Serve the Deserve' project. Susila thanked the anonymous sponsor and added that they are trying to get sponsors to conduct other programmes for the needy.

Jeyaraj



## Prayers for Earthquake Victims

Perak State Legislative Assembly Speaker, Dato' S.K. Devamany organised a special prayer for victims of the Nepal earthquake disaster on Saturday, May 2 at Kallumalai Temple, Ipoh. He also helped to raise funds for the unfortunate Nepalese.

The prayer was for the victims' souls to rest in peace, to give strength to the survivors and hope for the future of Nepal. Nearly a hundred people gathered at the temple offering prayers for those who lost their lives and homes in the massive earthquake which killed more than 7750 people.

Special prayers dedicated to communities in the affected region of the Himalayan nation were also performed by the temple members.

The prayers were followed by fundraising. Donation boxes were placed at strategic points in the temple for devotees to contribute. Over RM1000 was collected, in all.

Nantini



## A Timely Clean-up

There was much laughter at the Home of the Aged, Kg Simee, Ipoh, when Selangor-based Cleanpro Laundry Holdings Sdn Bhd visited the centre recently.

The team came with a mission to help clean the home and entertain the residents. Chan Huei Ning, the corporate communication director of Cleanpro Laundry Holdings Sdn Bhd, was excited to be part of this charitable event.

"The timing of our visit couldn't have been better.

Upon our arrival, we're informed by the management that the home's washing machines had broken down. We're more than happy to oblige and had the machines replaced," said Chan to Ipoh Echo.

Besides cleaning the dirty linen for free, the team provided lunch and donated food hampers to the residents.

Judging from the many happy and smiling faces, Chan felt that his team had achieved what they had set out to do. He hoped to organise similar events in the future.

The Kg Simee old folks home is being managed by the Catholic Welfare Services.

Ili Aqilah



## Aiyoh Wat Lah! Awards 2015



The Aiyoh Wat Lah! Awards 2015 ceremony was held at the Sarang Paloh Event Hall, Ipoh on Sunday, May 10. This was the first show of its kind in Ipoh. Response by Ipohites was overwhelming, as some 170 packed into the hall leaving little breathing space.

The awards ceremony, initiated by the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) and hosted by the irrepressible Ms Ribena Berry aka Ms Jo Kukathas, began in 2012 with all three previous shows held in Kuala Lumpur. Ms Ribena Berry, in her trademark sequin purple dress and shawl, kept the audience in stitches with her wit and antics.

The show was aimed at "raising awareness on what constitutes sexism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia in Malaysia and to encourage higher standards of behaviour from public figures and institutions in relation to gender and sexuality."

Prior to the ceremony, 1391 respondents, both local and foreign, voted to pick the winning public statements, actions and policies in the various awards categories. The categories developed by JAG to represent areas in which sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia exist in public discourse are: "Foot in Mouth", "Insulting Intelligence", "Least Helpful to the Sisterhood", "Cannot Ignore", "Policy Fail", "Enough Already" and "Right on Track".

Ms Ivy Josiah of JAG and one of the initiators of the Aiyoh Wat Lah! Awards, told Ipoh Echo.

"We want the audience to understand that it's okay to hold people accountable, especially public figures, who utter nonsensical and completely illogical statements. And we can call them out in ways that are funny, witty but serious."

When asked on the one precious advice for the women facing issues of sexism, she replied, "I've two, one for women and one for men. My only advice to women is that to stand up and not to put up with it. For sexist men, stop it and have respect for women."

The "Foot in Mouth" category was easily the most interesting, as it was the first in the line up. Deputy Home Minister Dato' Seri Wan Juanidi Tuanku Jaafar's proclamation that, "Non-Malays are less sensitive to the rape of teenage girls" got the highest number of votes defeating "You are a coward, you are a *pondan*" utterance by MP for Baling, Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim (Umno).

Meanwhile, in the "Right on Track" category, Justice Mohd Hisham's decision in striking off a syariah court's verdict on cross-dressing, thus acknowledging the rights of transgendered people, took top honours.

The show in Ipoh was made possible with the tacit support of the Perak Women for Women Society. Its president, Puan Halida Mohd Ali, made extra efforts to ensure that the show took off. "In spite of the many constraints, I am glad it's a roaring success. Apparently, the Ipoh show was the most attended so far," she exclaimed.

Penang will be next year's venue.

Mei Kuan





# Seamless Integration of the Perfect Lifestyle

Stepping into a Manor Born showhouse during its first public unveiling on Friday, May 1, one could not help but notice its many one-of-a-kind features.

Beginning with the landscape, its surrounding 3,000 trees have been nurtured years ago to create the existing natural aesthetics. Another of Mother Nature's work of art are the 250- million-year-old limestone hills soaring as the backdrop of the largest landscaped masterpiece in Perak. Located within The Dales, the dream of resort-inspired living in the embrace of nature now translates into a homestead at Manor Born.

Everything is well-thought-out for the exclusive community of 18 bungalows, from its 6-tier security system (complete with guardhouse, barrier gates requiring card access, double card entry points, perimeter fencing, 24/7 patrolling guards, CCTV and alarm system); facilities (private resort inspired



swimming pool, outdoor lounge area, modern equipped-gym plus use of the existing facilities in 57-acre The Dales which includes a playground, a jogging track, tennis court, futsal court, basketball court, jungle treks and The Dales orchard); to its easy accessibility (daily amenities are just minutes away).

Within the 3-tier exquisite bungalow, one would be amazed by its lavish design which pays great attention to detail. For instance, there is a central courtyard garden to allow nature to inhabit the home and a basement with motorised roller shutters for the convenience and security of its occupants especially the elderly as they could then be driven right into the home. Unleash your creativity and shake things up by converting the versatile basement into whatever you fancy. An ultimate walk-in wine cellar, perhaps?

Priced from RM2,500,000 and above, each manor contains 6 en-suite bedrooms, 2 study/utility rooms, 3 living halls, 2 kitchens, 2 powder rooms and a separate maid's quarters.

There is an early bird promotion in which the first 10 units would receive a home lift. A few units in the last remaining piece of The Dales illustrious community have already been sold, so what are you aspiring homeowners waiting for? Come visit this exquisitely luxurious show house, open every day from 9am to 7pm.

Kindly contact **019 701 2222**, **019 703 2222** or **05 242 7000** or visit the website [www.manorbornthedales.com](http://www.manorbornthedales.com) for further details.

## Food for Thought

We welcome your thoughts and will accept contributions from individuals with thought-provoking opinions. Please ensure that the content is relevant to Malaysia in general and Perak in particular. We reserve the right to edit and refuse publication to those articles we deem unsuitable.

## 'Why': Small Word, Big Impact

By Dr Chakr Nagara

Words such as 'why', 'who', 'where', 'when' and 'how' are small words. But they carry a big impact. Of these 'why' carries the most impact. We, all too often, fail to use this word, for we have been conditioned to accept what is given out by our elders, teachers, authorities as 'gospel truth' and above questioning.

When young, our parents often say 'Because we tell you so', thus stifling the young, naturally inquisitive mind. In school, our teachers teach by rote, rather than by reason. This unfortunately, is the failing of our educational model. As adults, we are being fed our daily dose of 'pronouncements' through the various manner of media, from printed to electronic.

This situation does the country no good. It discourages intellectual discourse. Of course it helps in control – people control. If we are not careful, we could well be heading toward rule by edict.

Therefore this 3-letter word 'why' is so very important. We must encourage everyone to use it. Get the young children to ask WHY; get the students in schools and universities to ask WHY often enough. If these two levels of youngsters start asking WHY, it will be natural for adults to ask the same question, as it will become a habit acquired from youth. We must engage those who tell us what to do and how to do whatever, in an intellectual discourse by questioning 'WHY?'

The importance of this word lies at two levels.

Firstly, it nourishes the brain. By asking 'why' the brains of two parties are stimulated, the questioner and the one who has to answer the question. It wakes up the moribund brains. Like physical exercise which builds up muscles, intellectual exercise improves the brain.

Secondly, by asking 'why', we prevent people in position, from pulling the wool over our eyes. They must respond with logical and reasonable answers, or look foolish.

The mere question 'why' sets in motion a series of intellectual exchanges between the two parties involved. In the course of communication, further questions may arise, using other 'small' words, such as 'how', 'where', 'when', 'who', etc.

This will then evolve toward mutual understanding of each other's position. From this, both parties can then analyse the subjects under discussion and often arrive at solutions. The use of the word 'why' should NOT be considered as an act of confrontation, but rather that of a quest for mutual understanding, and thus improving on the situation at hand.

Let us take a simple, common problem, we see day in, day out as an example – bad road manners, more specifically, dangerous behaviour at road junctions with traffic lights, and ask 'WHY'.

Why?

'WHY' is it that every day, at every junction with traffic lights, we see suicidal behaviour amongst our normally sane road users? It is a 'confrontational dance' between two groups of road users – the 'light jumpers' and the 'light runners'.

'Light Jumpers' are those amongst us (and there are more than we care to admit) who 'jump' the lights, by crossing the junction before the lights turn green.

'Light Runners' are those who run through the junction before the lights turn red by rushing and speeding toward the junction, often to miss the green light and thus crossing the junction when the lights turn amber or even red. These are suicidal road users, risking their lives and those of innocent road users.

Why do they have these horrible habits? Why are the traffic police powerless in apprehending them? Why are the CCTVs, supposedly installed at these junctions, not working?

Why are those caught 'light running' and have their pictures published in the papers, be 'lucky' to have their number plates blurred out? Why do we need an epidemic of deaths, and injuries, before the authorities wake up to do something?

What can be done?

For a start, can we NOT blur up the number plates of cars caught 'running' the lights when we publish these pictures in the papers. We also need to have a regular, daily section in the paper, on one full page if necessary. By having this 'name and shame' strategy (with number plates clearly shown), it is hoped that there will be less of these reckless road users. The authorities should also follow up on these photographs by implementing the law and persecuting these lawbreakers.

Perhaps we can incentivise citizens to participate in photographing them on camera phones and by rewarding them (with a portion of the fines collected from the law breakers upon conviction?). The police can assist by having a dedicated number for these photographs to be electronically posted for further action.

Even the 'Mat Rempits' and their poorer cousins 'Mat Basikals' can be put to community duty instead of roaming aimlessly around. Another practical suggestion is to have road bumps before the approach to these road junctions, as this would force the 'light runners' to slow down.

There are many other issues that are of interest to the public and we need to ask simple questions, such as 'WHY'. It is hoped that this article will stimulate more comments from the public on other pressing issues, and the public to start asking 'why'.

Dr Chakr Nagara can be contacted at [chakrsri@gmail.com](mailto:chakrsri@gmail.com)



## Ipoh Watch

# Making Ipoh a Liveable City

In April 2014, the US News ranked Ipoh as one of the nine best places to retire in the world. It also ranked Ipoh as the world's third most affordable city after Hanoi and Chiang Mai. As President of Ipoh City Watch (ICW), I am most delighted to hear this flattering news coming from an established paper which is a recognised leader in preparing ranking for colleges, graduate schools, hospitals, mutual funds and cars.

The criteria used include the quality of fresh air, clean water, and relaxing lifestyles that help improve life quality and promote longevity. Ipoh is a small city with a population slightly over 700,000, not an overly crowded city with skyscrapers and high-rise buildings. The locals here speak English and are friendly, which makes it attractive for foreigners to stay.

However, that does not automatically make Ipoh the most liveable city in Malaysia, especially among Ipohites and Malaysians. The word "liveable" is very subjective and difficult to define. Not even a single publication can define accurately what liveable means. It varies from one city to another. It is about how people perceives a city as liveable.

The Economist rates 140 cities throughout the world. It includes 30 quantitative and qualitative factors across five broad categories namely, stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure.

Melbourne has been declared as the most liveable city in the world. What makes Melbourne the most liveable city? Dr David Burney, the Commissioner of New York's Department of Design and Construction, says liveability is about both hard and soft infrastructure; power, water, waste management, transport and adequate shelter, but also soft infrastructure elements, such as education, housing, the crime rate and the likes. "Soft infrastructure defines the modern liveable city," he says.

Associate Professor Carolyn Whitzman of Melbourne

University defines liveable as a place with affordable and appropriate housing, with easy access to jobs, mobility options and adequate services. She added that the concept comes from the 20-minute neighbourhood in Oregon USA where appropriate services and jobs can be reached by walking, cycling or taking public transport for a maximum of 20 minutes. By that criterion, Melbourne will be divided into inner city and suburb; where jobs and services are good but there is no cheap housing in the inner city and there are slightly more affordable housing but not near jobs and services.

Ipoh can become the most liveable city in Malaysia. And ICW can help make that happen with the full cooperation of the local government, other government agencies and of course the people of Ipoh. We will focus on the cleanliness, safety and health, good transportation system including public transport system and roads, availability of jobs and business opportunities, gender sensitivity, making cost of living affordable and a haven for food.

Ipoh City Watch is currently embarking on a Community Recycling Project in collaboration with Rukun Tetangga Jelapang and Perak SWCorp to educate and explain to the public on the importance of recycling so as to reduce illegal dumping.

The project, launched on April 4, has started to bear fruit when after 6 weeks or 3 collections, a total of 956kg recyclables have been collected and salvaged from dumping grounds. This is 15.3% of the total estimated garbage of 6250kg produced by the residents. The national rate for recycling is at 11% at the moment.

We will continue to engage the general public and government agencies to ensure we achieve our mission of making Ipoh as the most liveable city in Malaysia. We stand by our slogan 'Our Community, Our Responsibility'.

**Dr Richard Ng**



## Books

# Books by Ipoh Writers



L-R: Dr S.K. Teoh, Lat, Bridget Eu, Alexandra Wong and Jasemin Sibo

Perak Academy launched four books penned by Ipoh-born writers at Kong Heng Square on Saturday, May 9. The four publications were "Cell Wars" by Dr Teoh Soong Kee, "When Footsteps Merge" by Bridget Eu Yoke Lin, "Made in Malaysia" by Alexandra Wong and "Epiphany" by Jasemin Sibo.

The launch was officiated by renowned cartoonist, Dato' Mohammad Nor Khalid (Lat). Present at the launch were the Acting Chairman of the Perak Academy, Chan Kok Keong, Dato' Dr M. Majumder and Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian and Puan Sri Dato' Sandra Lee.

Ipoh Echo spoke to one of the four writers, 40-year-old Alexandra Wong.

**Ipoh Echo:** What is the main message that you want readers to get from your book?

**Alexandra:** I want the story to inspire other Malaysians to also perform acts of kindness because the whole book is about acts of kindness. There are 40 unsung heroes here and many of them are strangers who did something nice for me.

**Ipoh Echo:** Do you recall how your interest in writing originated?

**Alexandra:** Mrs Julie Ho, my tutor from age 10 to 15, inspired me. She was not an ordinary tutor. She was very fierce but at the same time she knew how to make us interested in the language by cracking funny jokes!

**Ipoh Echo:** What were you like at school?

**Alexandra:** I was very shy. Also very sensitive because I am very observant and easily affected by what I see.

**Ipoh Echo:** Do you have a favourite author?

**Alexandra:** Douglas Adams who wrote 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy'.

**Ipoh Echo:** What is the hardest thing about writing this book? Do you ever get writer's block?

**Alexandra:** Most of the stories here are from my 'Navel Gazer' column in The Star. The hardest thing was actually choosing the stories. It was like having 40 pieces of jigsaw puzzles that you have to put together and you don't know what the final picture will look like!

**Ipoh Echo:** How did you come up with the title, 'Made in Malaysia'?

**Alexandra:** I was cracking my head. I know I wanted the word 'Malaysia' inside. Then one day, there was a tissue box with the line 'Made in China' and suddenly it came to me. And I thought, "Hey, that's perfect. That's exactly the message I want to send out."

**Ipoh Echo:** What is your advice to other aspiring writers?

**Alexandra:** My editor once told me this: "The writing may not be about you, but there's always you in it."

'Cell Wars' recounts how Dr Teoh remained optimistic even after discovering lymphoma in his stomach, 'When Footsteps Merge' is a collection of poems based on Miss Bridget's true life experiences as a mother and a professional in the field of caring for over 40 years while 'Epiphany' is a collection of short, true stories about failed relationships as a therapeutic means to cast out nagging memories of ex-boyfriends.


'Cell Wars' – RM10, available at Pustaka Sufes, SCC Books & Gifts, YMCA Ipoh and Dr Teoh's clinic at KPJ ISH. (Sales from this book will be donated to charity.)

'When Footsteps Merge' – RM20, available at all major bookstores.

'Made in Malaysia' – RM32.90, available at all major bookstores.

'Epiphany' – USD13.82 (paperback) and USD26.90 (hardcover), only available online at Amazon.

**Mei Kuan**



## Han Chin Pet Soo

To book a tour, go online to: <http://www.ipohworld.org/reservation/> or scan the QR code.





## Business

# Mining Blueprint Launched

Menteri Besar Incorporated (MB Inc) organised the Perak Mining Blueprint Seminar and Launching at Hotel Casuarina @ Meru, recently.

The objective of the event was to clarify to stakeholders, the importance of revitalising the mining industry for investment, and its significance to the economy, environment and to Perakeans. It was also to promote awareness of the need to develop mineral resources in a sustainable and responsible manner via a viable blueprint.

The mining blueprint was developed in collaboration with MB Inc, Camborne School of Mines, ITRI Limited and Malaysian Chambers of Mines, as well as the support of government agencies such as the Department of Lands and Mines Perak and the Minerals and Geoscience

Department Malaysia.

Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Zambry Abd Kadir, said that the blueprint was extremely important, as it provides a long-lasting contribution to the state's economy.

"I hope that this blueprint will achieve its goals and will be successful implemented," he said in his opening remarks.

The Chief Executive of MB Inc, Dato' Aminudin Hashim, said the Mining Blueprint emphasised 10 key recommendations that will become references to the development of the industry.

"Perak is rich in natural resources, especially tin and limestone. To improve productivity, we should adopt sustainable mining methods so these natural resources



would last longer. The blueprint mining will provide ideas and solutions to help solve mining issues," he told reporters after the launch.

Nantini

## Environment

# Objections to Rezoning Exercise

Residents and owners of Permai Lake View Apartments and The Haven Lakeside Residences have submitted 800 objections, on prescribed forms, to Datuk Bandar Ipoh to officially register their displeasure over the proposed rezoning of the 1.93 acre land from "Infrastructure and Utilities" to "Kediaman". MH Amanjaya Properties had commenced works on this land and had advertised their QUBE Project, consisting of two towers of 15-storey high rise buildings.

Their reasons are varied:

### 1. Preliminary objection:

That the amendment process has failed to comply with the provisions of The Town and Country Act 1976 as well as procedures for the amendment of a local plan. There are several areas where the procedures do not comply with existing regulations. Therefore, any changes made will be considered null and void.

### 2. Adverse impact on water:

That building on the land will affect underground water which will invariably impact the quality of the water in The Haven lake.

### 3. Flooding in Permai and The Haven:

That works at the said site will cause flooding to neighbouring properties. Surface water will not be able to permeate into the subsoil because of saturation caused by excess water's inability to discharge normally.

### 4. Independent geological reports raised concerns:

That two professional engineering reports show that it is dangerous to build high-rise buildings on the said land.

### 5. Negative economic impact:

That the proposed development will have a negative impact on neighbouring properties' values. It will be a disincentive for developers, investors and visitors to Perak.



### 6. Last remaining land zoned for infrastructure and utilities:

That this 1.93 acres land has been gazetted for Infrastructure and Utilities and is the only land reserved for such purpose. If this piece is used for development, there will be no reserve left for future infrastructure and utilities requirements and a water retention area.

### 7. More traffic jams:

That additional traffic from this unplanned "high-ratio" development will affect traffic flow. Existing roads will not be able to cope with an increased traffic volume.

### 8. Lost trust:

That the developers of the surrounding estates have committed valuable time and resources based on the attractiveness of the surrounding land. A rezoning will result in a loss of trust in the published information. Investors' confidence will nose-dive.

A forum was held on Tuesday, May 5 where two geological specialists presented their papers highlighting the unsuitability of the 1.93-acre land for high-rise developments, citing porous limestone slopes, underground waterways, water retention pond requirement and the like. Panellists felt it would be most unlikely that authorities could ignore the pleas of neighbouring residents and owners, especially when it involves safety, flooding and investor interests.

A resident said that owners bought into the development based on the current zoning and that the authorities should not be empowered to change the use of land unilaterally.

Eight hundred objections is a large number, probably the largest objections that Ipoh City Council has ever received on a single project.

The Council must pay heed or it would make the process of gathering comments/objections a futile exercise thus affirming the notion that the Council does not care for the people and is a law unto itself.

Ed

## 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.

## Forgive and Forget

The Taman Medan incident where the perpetrators forced Christian believers to remove the cross is an ugly sight in the eyes of our laws. No person with a good frame of mind would have embarked on such an act.

Any damages performed against any religious belief is unforgivable. Let us leave it to the police to investigate the whole episode and deal accordingly within the stipulated laws. As Christians let us forgive and forget the wrong doers for it is written in the bible to pardon them with the spirit of love.

Here I must congratulate our Prime Minister Dato Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak for his timely intervention to calm the situation. The way he handled the incident is very commendable. He acted in a tender manner without hurting anybody. He portrayed himself to be the people's Prime Minister without looking at colour, creed and religion. A big kudos PM.

Another leader to be appreciated is none other than our Home Minister Dato' Seri Dr Zahid Hamid. His prompt action and order to the police force to investigate the matter gained confidence among Malaysians at large.

The actions by both our top leaders have added an assurance to the freedom of worship which has been enshrined in our Malaysian Laws.

Let us not disturb the peace of this nation. It is our duty to uphold the sovereignty.

James Ratnam

Christian Caring Community Centre, Bercham

## Price Difference in Pharmacies

In good faith, I am offended with your author's (A. Jeyaraj) article in issue 211 (May 1-15, 2015).

As owner of one of the pharmacies mentioned by him, it's harder for me to make a living and has also affected 5 of my staff.

With the GST implementation, economy is already slow in Ipoh and everywhere else in our country.

I understand his concern about "medicine price control" but this is not a new issue. By mentioning my pharmacy will not resolved but only make it worst especially on my part. As a senior writer and author he should be more diplomatic and only mention using Pharmacy A, B, etc.

I think his actions are personal and unprofessional.

I really can't take it positively and rationalized his action by naming my pharmacy.

As a citizen of Malaysia and taxpayer, to avoid more problems, I urge you to recall his articles from your publication including electronic media or printed medium.

Faisal Katran

Farmasi Manjoi, Owner and Pharmacist



## Young Perak

# Excellence Awards

Lack of Arabic background and knowledge did not stop Kalaivani Rajandran from scoring the subject with flying colours. With determination, perseverance and help from her lecturers, Kalaivani proved that nothing was impossible when she won three awards at the Ipoh Mara Poly-Tech College's excellence award day held at Excelsior Hotel recently.

Born in Sungai Petani, Kedah, Kalaivani received the dean's award for her achievements in graduating with a diploma in multimedia. She was not too interested in the course in the beginning but slowly fell in love with it after earning a certificate in creative animation in Penang.

"It was my sister's encouragement that led me into the field of multimedia. I was scared but giving up was not an option. Through constant support from my family, I worked at it," she told Ipoh Echo.

Over a hundred students received awards for their academic achievements during the day-long presentation ceremony.

Mohd Firdaus Abdul Ghani, who received the TOV award for his Bachelor in multimedia computing, admitted that there was no hidden ingredient in his recipe for success.

"I followed the flow. Attended all the classes and submitted the given assignments. I consulted my lecturers whenever I had difficulties," he added.

College Director, Anuar Zakarian, presented the awards.

Ili Aqilah



## Arts & Culture

# A Platform for Enterprising Youths

Borak Art Youth Series (BAYS), a platform specifically created for youths to discuss and expound their ideas and passion for arts and entrepreneurship, held a get-together at Sepaloh Art Centre, Ipoh recently.

The 100-odd participants were entertained with an opening act from Space Gambus Experiments. The band used gambus, a classical Malay instrument with Middle-Eastern origin, to play high-tune rock music. It was something new for the listeners who eagerly recorded the performance on their mobiles.

Incidentally, BAYS is an initiative by My Performing Arts Agency (MYPAA) in partnership with Projek Rabak and presented by Bursa Malaysia. The objective of BAYS is to imbue the spirit of entrepreneurship in Malaysian youths.

Co-founder and director of MYPAA, Brian Johnson Lowe hoped Ipoh's art industry would grow bigger and stronger following this initiative.

"I've a soft spot for Ipoh because I was born here. I love the charm and the atmosphere the city exudes. We hope everyone will have a great time and learn a thing or two from our experienced panellists," said Brian in his opening speech.

After the opening ceremony, Tintoy Chuo from Action Tintoy shared his experiences with the audience. He believed in promoting traditional arts by applying modern-day trends and objects so they can relate to current and future generations.

One of the many projects he had done was 'Peperangan Bintang Wayang Kulit' which had generated a buzz around the world. He highlighted some of his previous and current projects and stressed on the importance of passion in achieving one's dreams.

Executive Councillor for Tourism and Culture, Dato' Nolee Ashilin was in attendance. She had a lively discussion with the participants on "exposing Ipoh-based arts through entrepreneurship" along with Eric Lai, Mohd Jayzuan, Nur Hanim Khairuddin and Fazli Abd Latif.

Participants were broken into groups for the first workshop on the topic, 'The Business of Arts – Put Your Skills to Work'. They learned basic entrepreneurship skills

and how to mix and match them and create unique desirable products.

The second workshop, conducted by singer-poet writer, Fynn Jamal, was on 'Young Writer's Block'. Fynn spoke on the basis of storytelling, how to publish books and how to make it a lucrative venture.

The event ended with Fynn Jamal singing her hit songs.

Readers interested to find out the next venue of BAYS can visit MYPAA's website for details.

Ili Aqilah



# Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 255 2181**; 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.

**PAP Smear Campaign by Perak Family Health Association, May 5-29**, 8am to 4pm at Perak Family Health Association, Waller Court Clinic, E1-E4 (Ground Floor), Waller Court, Ipoh and at Taman Cempaka Clinic located at 60A Regat Sri Cempaka, Taman Cempaka, 31400 Ipoh. Held in conjunction with Mother's day – only RM23 with free glucose test for first 100 pax. For details, call **05 254 4275**, **016 5264233**, **05 547 7849** or **016 524 5233**.

**"Taking Charge of Our Mental Health"** forum by Betty Ong author of "Ripples". Session on second Saturday of every month (except public holidays) from 3.30 pm to 5 pm. Venue: Perak Parkinson's Association, 128, Jalan Hala Wah Keong, Taman Mirindy, Ipoh. Admission: Free. For details call Betty **019-431 5053**.

**Events for Parkinson's and Down Syndrome, Sunday May 17**, 7am to 1pm at Potpourri House (behind Heritage Hotel), No. 2 Jalan Woodward, 30350 Ipoh. (i) Pet Event (for dogs only) – 10am-noon; (ii) Charity Cycling; (iii) Food & Fun Fair – 9am-1pm. Jointly organised by Perak Parkinson's Association and Ipoh Down Syndrome Centre. Contacts: Terry Wong **05 545 5610**, **011 1640 8406** or Samuel Ng **012 557 1682**.

**Kechara Earth Project organised by Kechara Ipoh Study Group, Sunday May 24**, 9.30am-11.30am at 73A (1st Floor), Jalan Dato Lau Pak Khuan, Ipoh Garden, Ipoh (in front of Ipoh Garden post office). We recycle to protect the environment and the beings within humans and animals. Items that can be recycled: metal/aluminium, electronic equipment, plastics, newspaper/carton boxes, paper, old clothes, mason jar (old clothes will be donated to Orang Asli). For more information, contact Mr So **016 532 8309** or Yee Mun **012 522 3200**.

**PestaRia 2015** organised by PIBG of SK(P) Methodist Ipoh, **May 30**, 8am to 2pm at MGS Primary Ipoh,

69 Jalan Chamberlain Hulu, 30250 Ipoh. Proceeds will go towards the building of a new 4-storey block that will add 12 classrooms (allowing a single morning session for all primary students) and a car park. Coupons are available at the school office **05 254 5453**. Donations are welcome.

**Kiwanis Ipoh Youth Camp from June 5-7** at Sufes Campsite, Tapah. The camp targets youths between 12 and 14 years and aims to train and empower young people with leadership soft skills and to improve their emotional quotient (EQ). Registration fee is partly subsidised by the club. To register, please call Steven Chong **016 521 3986** or Ann Yong **012 522 2291**.

**YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club Mission** provides a supporting and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth. The group meets every **2nd & 4th Wednesday** at 7.45pm at 211 Jalan Raja Musa Aziz (Anderson Road), 30300 Ipoh. Contacts: Ramesh Victor 016 566 2866, May Foo **017 466 0943** or Nur Aida **013 346 9490**.

**Performances of Traditional Songs and Dance every Wednesday every week** from March 25 at 3.30pm. Held at Kompleks Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Perak, Jalan Caldwell, Off Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh. Come and experience dances like Dikir Fusion, Nego (Kelantan), Joget Kete Lembu, Tangtung, Kollatum, Joget Malaysia and traditional music. Free admission. For enquiries, contact: Puan Nor Fairus Binti Alias **018 958 9049**.

**The Dementia Day-care Centre is open daily from 9am till 3pm**. The centre also holds support group meetings every **2nd Saturday and Monday of each month**. All carers who have love ones with dementia and others are welcome to attend. These are sharing sessions. For more details kindly call April at **05 241 1691** before 3pm.



## News

# Interaction Day for International Students

More than 50 international students took part in the Interaction Day. The full time and exchange students came from countries as diverse as Hong Kong, China, Pakistan, the United States of America, Canada, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Uzbekistan, Germany, Myanmar, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Iran. Some of the international students came with their family.

"It is fun to be present at such a gathering where I am able to meet students from different parts of the world," said Manan Ahmed, a UTAR Master of Engineering Science student.

When asked what influenced his decision to study in UTAR, Manan said, "I am already working in Malaysia and I feel that a Master in Engineering would give me good career advancement prospects. I did some research on universities in Malaysia, and found that UTAR is a top tier university with good facilities, affordable fees and a reputation for research excellence.

The day included ice-breaking games and interaction activities for the students to make new friends and for some fun and laughter as a break from the daily routine of studies. The day concluded with a buffet dinner of local food for everyone.

The International Students Interaction Day is held twice a year to allow new and current international students to get fresh updates about services and assistance provided by DISS. It also serves as a platform for the students to make new friends with other international students.



## Mother's Day Treat

Where there is kindness, there is goodness, and where there is goodness, there is magic. And Healy Mac's stands true to this maxim by preparing a sumptuous lunch for approximately 100 children from five children's homes in Ipoh on Sunday, May 10 at the Healy Mac's Irish Bar & Restaurant in Greentown Avenue. Donations were given to each home too.

"Being Mother's Day, I thought it fitting to bring the kids and let them feel wanted. We give back something to the community," said Jerry Galvin, the outlet manager, to Ipoh Echo.

A clown put on a balloon show for the children aged between 5 to 16 years old. They were from Good Shepherd Family Home, Hannah Home, Praise Home and the Tambun and Buntong flats, respectively.

Every year, charitable acts are always a priority with Healy Mac's. "I'd like to see more companies doing something similar. It takes very little to make these kids happy and the effect is priceless. It's nice to see the kids go home with a smile on their faces," the friendly and humble Jerry added.

Miss Quah from the Good Shepherd Family Home expressed her gratitude to Healy Mac's for organising the event. "They're very good kids and this is one outing they eagerly await," said the good lady.

Mei Kuan



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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
13. D'Eastern Hotel, Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Tel: 05-2543936
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



## Han Chin Pet Soo

To book a tour go online to: <http://www.ipohworld.org/reservation/> or scan the QR code.





Continued from Page 16...

## Panjang Cave

Gunung Panjang is a large limestone hill in the Kinta Valley in Tambun, Ipoh. It is about a 10-minute drive from AEON Kinta City Shopping Mall. Gunung Panjang is best known for the neolithic art believed to be painted by the ancestors of the Orang Asli and believed to be 5000 years old. These rock paintings depict the life of the early dwellers and many of these beautiful Neolithic murals are still visible, demonstrating that men lived in the area during that period. The paintings 20-30 feet above ground are likely to be genuine, but the alphabetic and modern paintings at ground level are merely the work of vandals. Visitors to Panjang Cave will also be thrilled by the inhabitants around the area which include troops of monkeys, horses, goats as well as several types of birds. To get there use GPS coordinates **N 4° 36' 25.8" E 101° 07' 48"** or follow the road sign to Tambun until you see the Caltex Petrol Station on your right. Next to the petrol station, there is a small lane that leads to a little polo field. Cut through the field towards the base of the limestone massif and you will see the signboard 'Lukisan PRA Sejarah Gua Tambun' just around the corner.

**Open to the public and better to go in the daytime.**



## Kandu Eco Adventure

Gua Kandu is a cave system in the vicinity of Gopeng in the Kinta Valley. It is located about half an hour from Gua Tempurung. Gua Kandu was used as a base by Japanese soldiers during World War Two and later, it was taken over by Communists as their hideout during the Emergency. Evidence of these former cave dwellers can still be seen in some sections of Gua Kandu. The caving exploration which takes about two hours to complete involves rock scaling and rock sliding. There are three sections to Kandu Cave with four entrances. The most popular and frequently used one is at the second section of the cave. Gua Kandu was formed 500 million years ago and interesting rock formations, stalagmites and even patterns on the wall can be seen as you go from one chamber to another. The cave is located 1.5km from the Gopeng toll exit.

**Address: Lot 9176, Gunung Mesah Hulu, Jalan Jahang, 31600 Gopeng, Perak.**

**GPS: N 4° 26' 56.4" E 101° 10' 27.2"**

**Contact: 019 510 1253 (Marzuki) or 019 480 1253 (Norhayati)**



## Sam Poh Tong

Discovered in 1912, Sam Poh Tong is a natural limestone hill that is used as a place for Buddhist worship. It has become the most famous cave in Ipoh as it was said to be the biggest cave temple in the country and easily accessible as it is situated along Gopeng Road.

According to legend, in 1890, a monk from China visited the cave and decided to meditate for 20 years. To this day, monks and nuns who dedicated their life to Buddhism, reside here. Guests who visit this cave will get to discover statues of Buddha in various forms, both man-made and carved from natural materials.

Aside from Buddha statues, visitors will be entranced with the colourful and vibrant mural paintings and other statues located around the caves. Tourists should pay a visit to Sam Poh Tong's legendary tortoise pond and yes, you are allowed to feed the friendly tortoises with water spinach (*kangkung*) sold at the entrance.

The peak season for Sam Poh Tong is during Wesak Day and other Buddhist festivals. Be sure to plan your trip to this beautiful limestone cave beforehand. And while there, finish your visit with a meal at their vegetarian restaurant near the entrance from the road.

**GPS: N 4° 33' 51.6" E 101° 06' 56.0"**

