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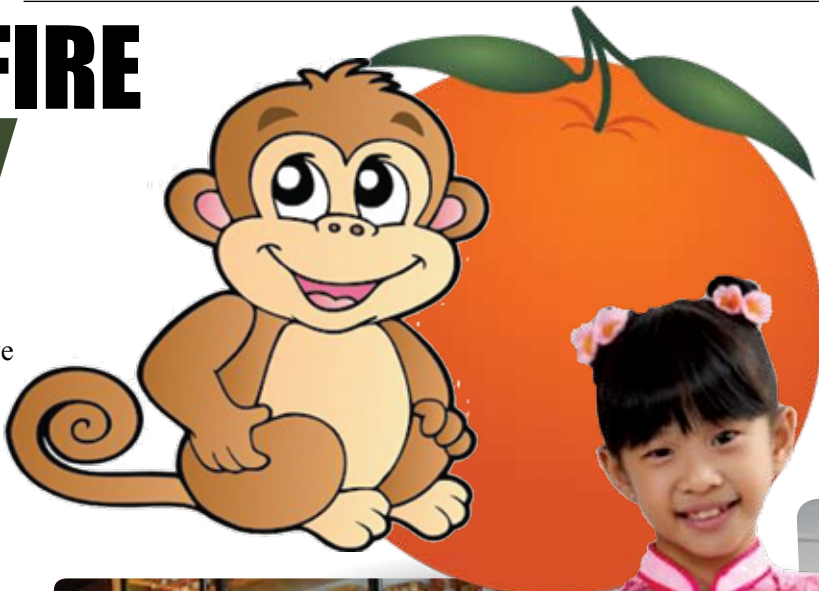
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## YEAR OF THE FIRE MONKEY

By Tan Mei Kuan

As the Year of the Monkey swings in on Monday, February 8, get into the festive Chinese New Year mood with Ipoh Echo as we present to you a glimpse into the world of feng shui, monkey-year individuals and a bonus mouth-watering section on our beloved spots to shop for perennial delights to heighten your Chinese New Year enjoyment. Let the fun begin!

Continued on page 2



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## Geomancy, Monkey Influences and Time for Feasting

**R**ussian metaphysics researcher and Feng Shui Master Lada Ray defines feng shui as follows: "In its highest and purest form, good feng shui signifies perfect alignment between inner and outer worlds."

As life becomes more and more frenetic, most people today have lost touch with the inner aspects of their lives and feng shui has been either dismissed as superstitious gobbledygook or as in the case of certain individuals who pay fortunes to consult with feng shui masters, followed slavishly to ridiculous extremes.

*Feng* which means wind and *shui*, water, is an ancient art and science developed over 3,000 years ago in China. It is a complex body of knowledge that reveals how to balance the energies of any given space to assure health and good fortune for people inhabiting it.

Ipoh Echo set out to get the facts in a one-on-one with Master W.K. Chan, a 67-year-old Ipoh-born astrologer who has been researching, studying and consulting on feng shui for about 30 years, to learn more about this ancient art.

"Do not be misled by the yearly predictions by the magazines or websites which are too general. For example, many believe that when the birth year of your birth sign comes around, you will suffer bad luck. Through my experience, not everyone does! You have to look deeper to know if you are offending the *Tai Sui* (Grand Duke Jupiter). Hence, not all Monkeys will become redundant this year," he explained.

According to Master Chan, monkey is connected to the metal element. Taking the elements into consideration, with 2016 being a 'Fire' year, many believe that this will not be a good year as the "fire" would destroy the "metal".

However, Master Chan thinks otherwise. First and foremost, one has to look into their personal element by examining their birth date for the Four Pillars of Destiny (consists of year, month, day and hour). From there, you work out if your self-sign element is strong or weak to determine the favourable elements for yourself.

For example, if you are born in spring, then the wood element becomes powerful. When the wood is strong, water element is naturally weakened. Only by knowing this can you then decide what should be released or replenished to achieve a balance.

The five influencing elements are wood, water, fire, metal and earth and how the elements would behave is in turn determined by the nine square grid of the magic squares. The squares form the foundation of all the predictions.

So how do we rectify it? On a personal level, one could use astrology, numerology or putting on certain gemstones to acquire certain elements that we may be short of.

Environmentally, it would involve the feng shui aspect, defined by the Oxford dictionary as a system of laws governing spatial arrangement and orientation in relation to the flow of energy, and whose favourable or unfavourable effects are taken into account when designing buildings.

To sum it all up, Master Chan advised, "In order to change one's personal destiny or luck, you have to know your destiny, do the right thing at the right time and rectify accordingly, as advised by the Feng Shui master to yield results."

### The Monkeys

Ipoh Echo caught up with a few monkey-year individuals from all walks of life to find out their thoughts on feng shui. Here's one from Joe Yee, a fresh graduate born in 1992: "I suppose like every year, 2016 will be a mixture of good and bad. I do hope that this year will be smooth sailing and a joyful one!" Hanyu, a 1992-born student, had this to say: "2016 is not totally disastrous for monkeys, perhaps just for some aspects like their health and love relationships."

A same-age sketch artist Sophie Lee opined, "Although there are a lot of unexplainable things in life, I like to think that feng shui has a placebo-nocebo effect. In other words, whether it's a good year for me or not ultimately depends on myself. Even if it's not a good year, you can't change anything if you don't at least try, right?" She wishes that she will have better finances and good advances in her career this year.

"I only believe in myself. Let it be!" a housewife born in 1956 shared with Ipoh Echo. "I wish everyone *shen ti jian kang* (good health) and *chu ru ping an* (may you have peace wherever you enter and exit)!" she added. Born in the same year is staff nurse CP Hor. "Every year, there's bad luck for different animal signs. So I have been praying every year for *chip tai sui* for my family of six and so far, we are alright. I believe we should think positively, pray and do more charity to pass the difficult times," Hor told Ipoh Echo.

Seng Tat, a retired businessman of year 1968 observed that the number of people believing in Feng Shui has diminished, especially in this modern era. "It is also pricey to get feng shui advice," he lamented.

### Classic Perennials and CNY Shopping

Last but not least, here is a friendly reminder that Chinese New Year would not be complete without a visit to the following gems for CNY goodies:

#### Ching Han Guan Biscuits Sdn Bhd

Harking back to 1949, the one and only Ching Han Guan pastry shop remains loved by many. "I was only one year old when my father established the shop," the 68-year-old Ching Chooi Hoe, always ready with his affable smile, shared. Freshly made and promptly sold, the all-time favourites during the Lunar New Year includes chicken floss roll and shrimp roll. Their multigenerational regulars also swear by the meat floss lotus paste biscuit, green bean paste biscuit and Teochew walnut soft candy. While checking out these handcrafted labours of love, one would definitely be amazed by the plethora of choices and the constant stream of customers!

Address: 145, Jalan Sultan Iskandar (Hugh Low Street), 30000 Ipoh.

Opening hours: Monday – Saturday (9.30am – 6.30pm), Sunday (9.30am – 6pm), closed on Tuesdays

Tel: 05 2545126

Website: [www.chg.my](http://www.chg.my)



#### Eu Yan Sang

Established in 1959, the oldest Eu Yan Sang branch in Ipoh offers a series of hampers containing selected quality mushrooms, fish maw, scallop, ginseng slices, essence of chicken, bird's nest, red wine, all in CNY-themed packaging along with auspicious names such as "Rolling Fortune", "Tremendous Opulence", "Joyful Success", "Growing Fortune" and "Prosperity Happiness". Prices start from RM99.

Plus, Eu Yan Sang is having a promotion for its health products, dried seafood, jerky treats and festive cookies till Monday, February 22 to ensure that you will find the perfect gesture of goodwill and filial piety!

Address: 36-38, Jalan Bandar Timah, Ipoh.

Tel: 1300 888 213

Opening hours: 8.30am-5.30pm everyday



#### Lim Keng Guan (Siew Ping Food Stuff Sdn Bhd)

From meat floss, sausage to dried meat, Lim Keng Guan has it all since 1961. Prices for meat floss starts at RM19.80 for 300g, dried meat at RM45 for 600g and sausage at RM27 for 600g. Time to shop for these addictive perennial delights!

Address: No 154, Jalan Sultan Iskandar (Hugh Low Street), 30000 Ipoh.

Opening hours: 8am – 6pm every day during the spring festival season

Tel: 05 254 0837



### Conclusion

Near and dear Ipoh Echo readers, cheers to a brand new start brimming with heart-warming family reunions and sumptuous dishes!



• From the Editor's Desk  
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

## AN EXTRAORDINARY LADY

*The imbroglio is made complicated by the Malay-Muslim psyche. Their penchant for increasing the Islamic ummah (followers) is the driving force...*

I have heard so much about this extraordinary lady, Indira Gandhi, for quite a while now and was anxious to meet her in person. The opportune moment came when the MP for Ipoh Barat, M. Kulasegeran, called me early in January requesting my presence at a media conference at the DAP Headquarters in Jalan Medan Istana, Bandar Ipoh Raya. The conference was scheduled on Thursday, January 14 after lunch and the party's former leader now adviser, Lim Kit Siang, would be present along with the protagonist, Indira Gandhi and her lawyer, M. Kulasegeran. My long quest for a meeting had presented itself rather by chance and I was thrilled.

Not wanting to miss anything I was at the appointed place well before the appointed time. It was a busy day for Lim Kit Siang, the venerated and often misunderstood Opposition Leader of the Lower House. He had just returned from a lunch date with his supporters in Old Town. Lim was a two-term MP (2004-2013) for Ipoh Timor and has a huge following in Ipoh.

The firebrand politician, who has been on the Malaysian political scene for almost five decades, was a picture of calm as he took questions from reporters present in the room. His demeanour speaks volumes of his disposition as a seasoned politician much unlike the kind that fill the benches of the Malaysian Parliament. Indira Gandhi sat on his right while Kulasegeran, an old acquaintance, on his left. I was seated facing them.

My impression of Indira Gandhi is someone of substance, someone who has to put up with injustice borne out of a system that considers non-Muslims as *pendatang* (aliens). Her fight to regain her dignity as a mother and the custody of her three children – two teenagers, a boy and a girl, and a child who was wrested from her arms when she was barely 11 months old – is far from over. She is in a legal wrangle, a common occurrence in Malaysia when one spouse converts into Islam leaving the other half high and dry. Her troubles began in 2009 when her estranged husband decided to convert to Islam and in the process inducted their three kids into the religion as well. Indira, seeking redress, took the matter to court hoping for relief and reprieve. But relief and reprieve will not



come easy for this 40-something Ipoh-based kindergarten teacher.

Although the Ipoh High Court, in a landmark decision on March 3, 2010, granted Indira custody of all her three children, her husband, sensing an imminent loss, sought the aid of the Syariah court and obtained a ruling in his favour. Indira was named a party in the Syariah court in spite of her being a non-Muslim.

The case was brought to the Court of Appeal in December last year. The three-judge panel, in a 2-1 decision, ruled that civil courts had no jurisdiction over the conversion of Indira's children to Islam, which they insisted "was solely the purview of the Syariah courts." This was pursuant to the provisions in Article 121 (1A) of the Federal Constitution. However, one of the judges, Datuk Hamid Sultan Abu Backer, concluded that not "all sections of the Administration of the Religion of Islam (Perak) Enactment are protected by Article 121 (1A) of

the Federal Constitution."

I am no stranger to this kind of wrangling, as I had my share of cases involving my soldiers when in the army. I dealt with two cases when commanding a territorial regiment in Seremban in the late 1990s. One was an Iban while the other was an Indian. Both had problems with their common-law wives and had conveniently converted to Islam when the going got tough. Fortunately, before the cases were blown out of proportion, I managed to convince the duo the futility of fighting it out in the open and got them to reconsider, much to the chagrin of my regimental *ustaz*.

The imbroglio, to my mind, is made complicated by the Malay-Muslim psyche. Their penchant for increasing the Islamic *umma* (followers) is the driving force. A conversion, no matter how tardy and ill-conceived, is a conversion. How the converts perform thereafter is not their concern. This dictum, unfortunately, has been drummed into every Muslim's mind and I am no exception.

Taking Indira's battle to the *rakyat*, as being espoused by the two DAP stalwarts, may be the only recourse available to the grieving mother. Indira, you have my tacit support and that of my family.

## Education

# Secondary School Scholarship Award

A total of 136 deserving students were awarded the Secondary School Scholarship Award (SSSA) set up by Rotary Club of Ipoh in a ceremony held at SMJK Poi Lam school hall on Thursday, January 21 with guest-of-honour Hj Hasni bin Hashim, North Kinta District Education Officer.

Hasni lauded the Rotary Club of Ipoh for sustaining the yearly programme to assist needy students despite the current downturn of the economy. The scholarship fund was established back in 1971. Secondary schools in Kinta district participate by entrusting a sum of money to this fund which would be matched on a Ringgit for Ringgit basis by the club. The interest received from the combined sum would be given back every year in the form of scholarships to the participating schools.

The awardees, selected based on their scholastic ability and financial needs, are from SMK Ave Maria Convent, SMK Methodist (ACS), SMK Main Convent, SMJK Perempuan Perak, SMK Perempuan Methodist, SMJK Sam Tet, Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman, SMK St Michael, SMK Tarcisian Convent, Wesley Methodist School, SMJK Yuk Choy and SMJK Poi Lam respectively.

A sum of RM13,600 was presented this year to the 12 participating schools.

Also present at the joyous occasion were Dr Kok Fu Loon, president of Rotary Club Ipoh, Lau Win Sang, community service director of the club, Leong Kar Yeong, organising chairman and Koit Sim Siang, principal of the hosting school.

Mei Kuan



## EYE HEALTH – Chemical Eye Injuries

*Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about EMERGENCY EYE CARE when chemicals get into the eyes.*



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

Chemicals are dangerous to the eye and may result in serious eye injuries should it get into the eye. This is especially so if the eye is not treated correctly fast enough because it can cause chemical burns to the eye. IMMEDIATE appropriate emergency treatment before you are able to seek professional medical help is absolutely essential as it has a great bearing on the final outcome of the chemical eye injury.

Basically, household chemicals are divided into alkalis or acids. Detergents, bleaching agents, drain cleaners, oven cleaners and floor cleaners all contain ALKALI. These chemicals should be used with extreme caution. Take note that ALKALINE chemicals cause the MOST SERIOUS EYE DAMAGE and can easily cause blindness.

The commonest acid around the home is vinegar. Some types of drain cleaners may actually be strong acids although most are alkaline. Always check the label. If you have an aquarium with fish, be careful when handling sulphuric acid if you use it to control the pH of the water. Interestingly, the leading cause of acid burns at home is an exploding car battery, often due to an inexperienced person "jump-starting" a car with the terminals mistakenly reversed. The eye injuries sustained can be serious, even to the point that it may lead to serious eye injuries and visual loss. Regardless of the chemical involved, if the eyes are not treated immediately in a proper way, it may lead to corneal burns, ulcers and opacification that may cause permanent blindness.



### EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Should a chemical get into your eye, IMMEDIATELY place your eye in running water CONTINUOUSLY for 15 to 20 minutes and allow the water to flush out the harmful chemicals from your eyes. You may need to use your fingers to hold your eyelids apart so that the water flushes out all traces of chemical and you can roll your eyeballs around so that the water gets to every area of the eyeball. If there is no running water, any cool drink that you may have with you can be used to flush the eyes out. If you are near a swimming pool, then jumping into it may be a good idea provided you can swim!

NEVER judge the seriousness of your eye injury by the degree of pain. Alkaline chemicals don't usually cause significant symptoms but they often cause even more serious eye damage when compared to acids!

In summary, to prevent any form of eye injury by chemicals, ALWAYS WEAR PROTECTIVE GOGGLES even for seemingly innocent household chores that involve the handling of chemicals. Prevention is surely better than cure. Should chemical accidentally get into your eyes, immediately flush them continuously for at least 20 minutes with running water and seek immediate medical attention without delay!

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



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## Resolving a Dispute with your Neighbour

A neighbourly dispute can be a living nightmare. It does not matter if you live in a small village, or a big city. What do you do, when you try to resolve matters, but the offending party just makes rude hand gestures and insults you with, "Go stay in the jungle"?

Frustrated, you go to the authorities, hoping that they may help to lessen your pain, but you find that things are no better.

You are shunted from pillar to post. No-one appears willing, to resolve your problem. You do not feel that it warrants a police report, but when the authorities say, "Do it for your protection", you start to fear the worst.

You are law-abiding and do not wish to do anything illegal, so what can you do? Going to court is an expensive and time consuming affair. Are there mediators available? Is there a solution?

A former Tarcisian Convent pupil, who moved to Sungai Petani, has lived in her single storey, terrace house, for the past ten years.

Her neighbour, whom I will call Mr Tan, moved to a larger house. She imagined that she would soon be welcoming new neighbours, but Mr Tan left the house vacant. He also left three dogs to guard the premises.

Being a dog lover herself, this lady knew that in these types of houses, tenants were only allowed to keep one dog. This was not her immediate concern.

The dogs were left neglected, sometimes, for up to five days. Mr Tan would return to the empty house, to feed the dogs, and left jars of water, for them.

The lonely dogs would howl throughout the night. Dog mess accumulated on Mr Tan's drive and when it was hot, the smell of faeces and urine, would waft onto her premises, making her, her family and any visiting friends, gag.

Worse was to follow, when dog fleas, "big tics" as the lady described them, then started to crawl into her house.

She attempted to talk to Mr Tan about the flea infestation, but he responded by saying that he did not know what to do, and he did not appear to take the matter seriously.

Frustrated by the lack of action, she took the matter to the local council. When they came, to investigate, they found out that the dogs were unlicensed.

Mr Tan was fined, and he removed two of the dogs.

Incensed that he had been reported to the council, and fined, for keeping unlicensed dogs, whenever Mr Tan washed his dog, he would use a power hose, to flush the dog mess towards his neighbour's entrance.

Now, the lady's family and friends have to jump over the moat of faecal sludge in front of their gates.

The aggrieved family has a child, who is autistic, and had to be kept indoors, lest she should fall into the sludge, at the entrance to their premises.

The local council alleged that they are unable to help, and one member of staff claimed that he was unable to settle disputes, as his expertise is in dog licensing.

The local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, allege that their powers are limited. Aware that the dog is neglected, they claim that they can do nothing unless a vet, with a court order, enters the premises to remove the dog.

Perhaps, this lady could seek the help of the neighbour on the other side of Mr Tan. In addition to the problem of the neglected dog, Mr Tan's garden is unkempt; creepers and weeds, encroach onto other people's premises.

If many neighbours were to lodge a complaint,

Mr Tan may realise that his anti-social behaviour is upsetting many people, not just one neighbour.

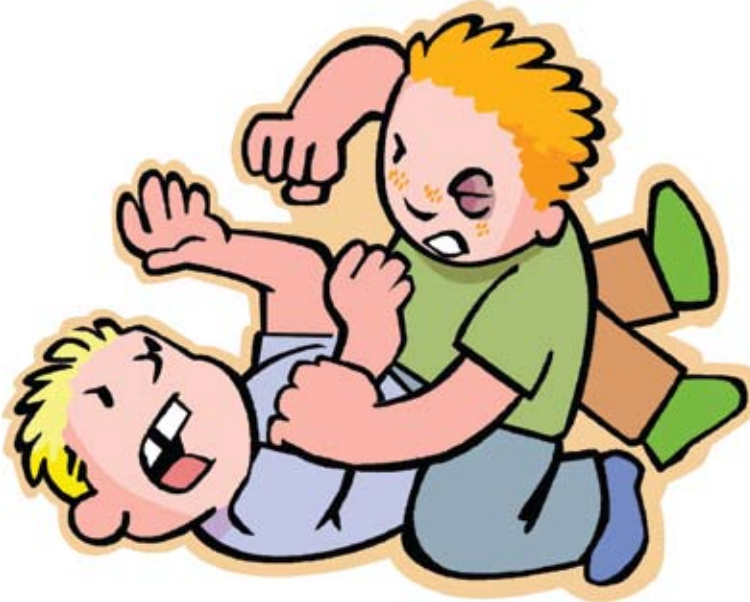
The affected family is aware that Mr Tan is breaching public health and pollution laws, and they could approach the environmental health department to deal with the nuisance.

They should be able to resolve this matter on an informal basis, on behalf of the people who live beside and adjacent to Mr Tan.

If Mr Tan persists, and continues to foul the road and entrance of his neighbour's premises, the Department of Health might be able to serve notice on Mr Tan to stop his actions.

Hopefully, the aggrieved woman will not need to send a letter, from a solicitor, to show Mr Tan that she is serious about her complaint.

Perhaps, you have a better solution, which you can share with Ipoh Echo readers.



## CHILD HEALTH

Dr Shan Narayanan

Consultant General Paediatrician, Hospital Fatimah

## Parenting: A Journey

What is a Parent? What is Parenting ?

A parent is either a mother or father to an individual. Parenting refers to aspects of raising a child other than the biological relationship.

We do not attend compulsory courses on how to be a parent (how to be a dad or mum). There is no right or wrong way of parenting. Most of us follow how our parents brought us up and learn through experience. Culture, upbringing and an individual's personality strongly influences parenting style. A high-quality parent-child relationship is critical for healthy development.

Parenting practices around the world share three major goals:

- ensuring children's health and safety,
- preparing children for life as productive adults and
- transmitting cultural values.

(The American Psychological Association)

In practical terms, these goals translate into the following:

- Being a good role model.
- Ensuring safety of our child.
- Interacting with our child.
- Providing order and consistency.
- Discipline.
- Monitoring their activity and friendship.

Parenting my children was and is a journey.

I was blessed with two lovely boys, three years apart. I was 32 when my eldest son arrived. Everything was so new. A family member decided to get me a parenting book as a guide. Along with it was a card that had a baby's picture with a crown and the words "king of the home". I just laughed only to realise with time that the baby was actually the "king". His needs had to be addressed first before endeavouring any other activity.

I used to observe him, while he was sleeping, to ensure he was breathing. At times, it would appear like he was not breathing, I will poke him gently to "get him to breathe". He will start crying and screaming. Obviously, I got scolded for having woken him up.

Many more things were new to me. There were many questions on how to parent him, what to do, etc.

I relied on my intuition, that as a parent, my role was to care for him and to guide him to be a responsible individual. Thus it requires interaction and leadership.

As an infant, toddler and preschooler, there was much interaction through storytelling. Every story was fun and had a moral value in it. The leadership was with me, to ensure they followed rules and were disciplined as they enjoyed their childhood.

As they became teenagers, the interaction became more testing. Naturally, teenagers want to be individuals and make their own decisions. Thus the process of "letting go" begins and giving them limited leadership.

Now, as young men I have left it to them to make their own life decisions and being available for guidance when needed.

The only constant in life is change. Same in parenting, the parent child relationship changes as the child grows. We as parents have to keep up with time, flexible but firm to ensure our children are brought up as responsible and productive adults.

For more information, call Dr Shan's clinic at Hospital Fatimah 05 546 1345 or email [shaniea02@gmail.com](mailto:shaniea02@gmail.com).



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## ON IPOH FOOD

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

Pics by Ginla Chew



# SeeFoon Discovers Another 'Lo Chiew Pai'

How this restaurant has escaped my foodie tentacles and not been on my flavour of the month, year, indeed even lifetime list is baffling to me. Indeed I even accused my Foodie *kaki* Ginla Chew of keeping secrets from me when she finally brought me here. Apparently when I mentioned going there to some other friends, they said, "Oh Fay Loo, it's been around for a long time and used to be our favourite after-clubbing spot for supper." Their name card for the restaurant says they're open from 6pm till 2.30am so after 20 years in Ipoh, why haven't I been there?

It was well worth the wait though as I have definitely decided that this will be my 'go-to' place for a casual dinner, a place to tuck into some of my favourite 'homey' Chinese dishes and a place to 'pig' out literally and figuratively as they have many superlative pork dishes.

It's a rare treat when one finds a restaurant where 12 out of 12 dishes which I tried were superb and worth going back for. So let me get down to describing the dishes.

Fay Loo is known for their pomfrets, both the black and the white more expensive variety. We started with one of their signature dishes which was Black Pomfret smothered in chopped *Ham Tsoi* or pickled vegetable. It was a big fish and very fresh, the *Ham Tsoi* adding a salty tart element to the fish – RM40. For contrast I asked for the **white pomfret steamed Hokkien style**. This was a small pomfret and again absolutely ocean fresh – RM30.

The next dish, the **Ham Yu Yoke Pang** or Salted fish meat patty really spoke to my palate. This is the kind of home cooking I grew up with: crispy on the edges, the inside redolent with the



fragrance of salted fish – RM12.

The next dish was even more homey: **Dried prawns, Tsu Yao Tsa** (lardons) with green pepper and onions, spicy, salty, crispy and perfect as a snack or with rice – RM14.

The **Salted Kampung Chicken** was steamed to perfection, not too salty nor bland – RM35 followed by

**Asam Prawns** which were superlative – RM35.

The pan-fried Big Squid (which is known as **Wong Ka Lun** in Cantonese) was chewy without being rubbery and was perfect with our drinks as an appetiser – RM24. **Clams** followed done 'Kam Heong' style, very fresh and fragrant with the curry leaves and spices – RM14.

What made the **Mah Po Tofu** special was the addition of *Tsu Yao Tsa* or lardons. This soft tofu dish with minced pork is a Szechuan specialty that can be fiery and in this case, it was moderate but the added lardons made it particularly fragrant and delectable. Definitely a 'must repeat' – RM12.

And the dishes kept coming. Belly pork or **Tseng Chiew Fa Yoke** with red and green pepper was excellent at RM14 while the 'Moonlight Noodles' named for the raw egg resembling a full moon topping the noodles was quite romantic as well as yumilicious – flat rice noodles with a soupy sauce.

We ended our meal with yet another noodle dish, this time a **Mee Goreng**, spicy and very close to the Indian version.

## Restaurant Fay Loo

A7 Jalan Dato Tahwil Azhar

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## Nosh News

Ili Aqilah



# Wing Zone Arrives in Ipoh

Chicken wing lovers! Get ready to experience award-winning flavours brought to you by Wing Zone, now open at Greentown, Ipoh.

This is the third Wing Zone branch in Malaysia after they opened several years ago at Aeon Seri Manjung and Bandar Baru Kampar. With over sixteen different sauces or as Wing Zone calls it, flavours, your taste buds are in for a treat. You can choose from the Traditional Buffalo Flavour such as 'Nuclear Habanero', 'Buffalo Bliss' or 'Hot Shot' to their wide range of Sweet With No Heat sauces; 'Liquid Goal', 'Sweet Samurai', Honey Q' or 'Cinnamon Maple' or their Dry Rub Flavours; 'Blackened Vodoo' or 'Cool Ranch'. They also have 'Heat Index' placed on the menu to depict how fiery a selection can be.

The restaurant uses fresh chickens and vegetables, and they are made to order unlike your usual fast food chains. Wing Zone offers the must-try Buffalo Wings (prices start from RM10.90 onwards), succulent chicken tenders (from RM10.90 for three pieces, RM15.90 for five pieces and RM28.90 for ten pieces where you can have two flavours for your chicken), premium beef, cheese burger served with wedge fries, good at RM14.90, supreme grilled chicken sandwich priced at RM15.50 also served with wedge fries. They also have variety of local favourites (drumsticks), fresh salads and several side dishes like Mozzarella Stix (RM12.90), Cheese Fries (RM7.90 & RM12.90 for jumbo size) and special for Malaysia, Aromatic Rice priced at RM2.20.

With over 150 branches all over the world including in USA, UK, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Honduras, India, Colombia and many more, customers of Wing Zone will get to enjoy 50% off on combo meals if you celebrate your birthday at Wing Zone!

Wing Zone opens everyday from 10am to 12midnight. You can dine in, order takeout, pick up (call the restaurant beforehand) or delivery (minimum order is RM20 with RM2 service charge).

Wing Zone Green Town is located at 20, Persiaran Greentown 1, Greentown



Business Centre, Ipoh. For pick up and delivery, call 1-300-80-WING (9464) or you can check out their web at [www.wingzone.com.my](http://www.wingzone.com.my).



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## Politics

### Party Amanah Perak Line-up

The Perak chapter of Party Amanah Negara (AMANAH) held its inaugural meeting on Thursday, January 21 at Wisma Amanah Negeri Perak. The following is the state party committee line-up for year 2016/2018:

#### Speaker

Hj Jamaluddin Hashim

#### Deputy Speaker

Hj Azizi Lee

#### Chairman

Hj Asmuni Awi

#### Deputy Chairman

Dato' Seri Ir Haji Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin

#### Vice Chairman

1. Dr Muhaimin Sulam
2. Dr Fakhruddin Hashim

#### Committee Members:

- |                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Abdul Rahim Mohd Noordin   | 8. Hj Mohd Zainuddin Mohd Yusof |
| 2. Ahmad Badrin Khalid        | 9. Nali Raja a/l Sengodan       |
| 3. Ahmad Khair Faizal         | 10. Safarizal Saleh             |
| 4. Hj Aminuddin Zulkipli      | 11. Salman Saleh                |
| 5. Dr Khairuddin Abd Malek    | 12. Richard Wong Chee Chew      |
| 6. Megat Shariffuddin Ibrahim | 13. Hj Zulkifli Ahmad           |
| 7. Mohd Reza Ayub             |                                 |

For updates refer to the party's Facebook page at: *Parti Amanah Negara Negeri Perak*.

**Mei Kuan**



### To Advertise

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## Arts & Culture

### Sharpened Word Literary Matinee: Writers' Dilemma

It was indeed an eye-opener during the fourth Sharpened Word Literary Matinee on January 16 at Sepaloh Art Centre as the writers were asked about the benefits and pitfalls of publishing their own books.

For Chuah Guat Eng, the first Malaysian woman to publish a novel in English in 1994, she was left disappointed with the response she received from a few publishers who were interested in her book but demanded the lady to change bits of her story in their favour.

"The publishers wanted me to do many alterations and modifications of my story. Soon I was wondering why I should settle with their way. This is after all my book and my story," said the writer.

That was when Chuah realised that instead of heading for publishers, with her background in advertising, she could get it printed by herself. Chuah studied English Literature at University of Malaya Kuala Lumpur and German Literature at Ludwig-Maximillan University, Munich. She also has a PhD from UKM for her thesis on From Conflict to Insight: A Zen-based Reading Procedure for the Analysis of Fiction.

"I knew a few printing companies and graphic artists. Although it was going to be tougher; to do everything by yourself, I can say the result was even more fruitful."

Her works have been well received by general readers and are studied by students and scholars of postcolonial literature not only in Malaysia but also in Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia. In fact, an academic book entitled 'Colonial to Global: Malaysian Women's Writing in English 1940s-1990s' touted her as "an attempt to move towards an independent notion of identity and a distinctive writing with tradition."

The same sentiment was expressed by another author, Arthur T.Y. Foo known for his 'Natasha' trilogy that was nominated for the Reader's Choice award in 2013 and 2014.

"It was a lengthy process when you and your publishers have different ideas. At the end of the day, what I can suggest to anyone who is interested on publishing the book themselves, is to stick to your idea. Fight for it. It is your book and your idea. It has to be about you," added Arthur during the Q&A session.

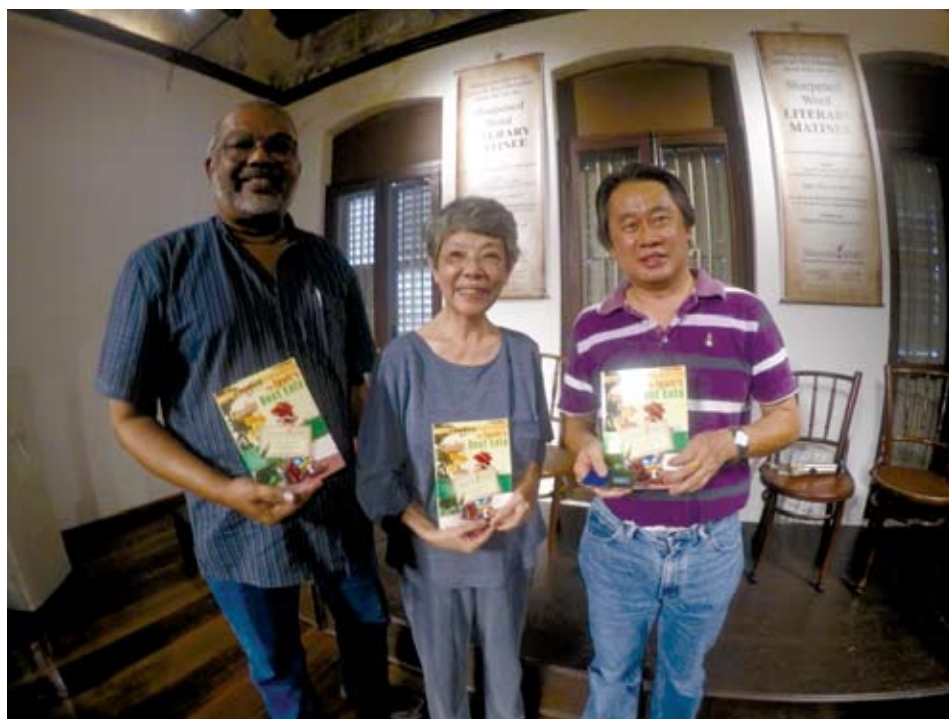
As the two writers discussed with the audience about having guts and sacrifices they had to make as self-published writers, it is clear how important it is to find publishers who share the same sentiment and ideology with the writers. In other words, a relationship needs to be built between the two parties before a book is printed and sold to the public. Although many didn't dare follow the footsteps of Chuah and Arthur, self-publishing has indeed become the first choice for some writers.

However, for Malachi Edwin Vethamani the third speaker of the session, a poet, writer and a professor at University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, he was given a publisher who let him write the way he wanted to.

"My book was different from the other two writers. It was an academic book that was written, based on facts and ten years of hard work. It provides data on works done by Malaysian writers in writing English. Mine was a different experience from them," said Malachi.

His latest publication entitled, A Bibliography of Malaysian Literature in English (Maya Press, 2015) also contains details on the publication of Malaysian writers in four literary genres; the novel, drama, short stories and poetry. As a poet himself, Malachi recited several poems of his to the audience during the first session.

The Q&A session also saw some good questions asked by the large audience.



Everybody appeared to be eager on becoming self-published writers and the panellists certainly gave them a few pointers to ponder on becoming one. Undoubtedly, Sharpened Word Literary Matinee has put together yet another worthwhile affair!

The next Sharpened Word's literary matinee will be held on Saturday February 20, 2.30pm - 5.30pm at Sepaloh Art Centre. Find out more about upcoming featured writers by registering on their mailing list or go to: [www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta](http://www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta).

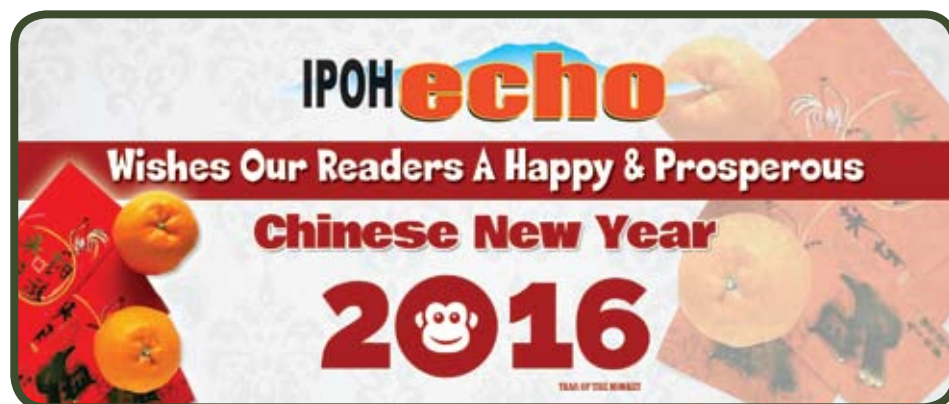
**Ili Aqilah**

**IPOH echo**

Wishes Our Readers A Happy & Prosperous

**Chinese New Year**

**2016**





## Arts & Culture

# First Malaysian Knowledge Exchange to Ballet West



Five young Malaysian ballerinas have been selected to train alongside Natasha Watson, principal dancer, actress & Genee Medalist, in Ballet West UK, as part of their effort to place Malaysian dancers on the international Ballet map. Amongst the five, two of them are Perakeans, Jia Yi Seah from Teluk Intan and Cheok Lam Woo from Ipoh.

Ballet West opened its doors to its first international student exchange programme as part of its project to provide international exposure for Malaysian students.

The other Malaysian students who were successfully selected for the programme are Florence Chuah, Saraphina Lee-Boey and Shao Wen Chew.

The U.K. Ballet Student Exchange Programme is a collaboration effort between Direct Academia International (DAI) and Ballet West. The five-day workshop has exposed student to different genres of dance from Classical Ballet to Jazz.

Shannon Lee, Managing Director of DAI said that this student exchange programme, is one of DAI's initiative in developing talents to put Malaysians on the international ballet map.

"In Malaysia, students rarely have the chance to perform with international soloists. Through this programme, students can experience the dance industry alongside professional dancers."

Gillian Barton, Founder and Principal of Ballet West, a member of Royal Academy of Dance and Fellow of the Higher Education Academy UK (FHEA) added that the Malaysian students get to experience the same training as the professionals through this programme.

"Ballet West also tours internationally with sold-out performances in China and our world-class teachers have worked with names like George Balanchine and Margot Fonteyn. One of the key tutors for the students is emerging principal dancer Natasha Watson, 19. Her young age makes her a role model for all young talents."

Natasha is a Genée International Ballet Competition medalist and the only dancer from the UK selected to join the prestigious Prix de Lausanne in 2015.

Audrey Kwan Arts and Learning Director states that Malaysian girls have made great progress not only in dance technique but also show the ability to cope physically and mentally throughout their intensive dance training.

"The girls are very lucky to have Natasha as their teacher, her focus on sensations allows the girls to visualise how technically difficult repertoire can be performed in a graceful and effortless way."

"As an ambassador for Ballet West we are proud to work with Ballet West to develop the next generation of Malaysian dancers to be part of the international dance scene," said Mr Shannon Lee.

To make opportunities like this more accessible to Malaysian dancers, DAI and Ballet West has commenced plans to organise an international workshop in Malaysia. For those who wish to be part of this exciting journey to contact us at [info@dainternational.co.uk](mailto:info@dainternational.co.uk).

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## A Night to Remember

"I've hopes that overflow like a flood rushing through my soul," rendered the Watoto Children's Choir during what would be best described as a night of powerful vocals, energetic moves and overwhelming thankfulness on Thursday, January 14.

Their second time in Ipoh was the end of the choir's "Oh, What Love", Live Tour of Asia 2015. The ensemble, consisting of 18 children aged 8 to 17 clad in vibrant costumes, toured internationally as ambassadors of Watoto by presenting the mission of Watoto via music and dance.

Watoto is a holistic care programme that was initiated as a response to the overwhelming number of orphaned, vulnerable children and women in Africa.

Explaining the theme "Oh, What Love" was Frankie, the choir team leader who has been with Watoto for seven years. "So many people are broken and going through hardship. Hence, tonight is about connecting the people with God. My hope tonight is for people to walk away knowing that God loves them," he told Ipoh Echo.

Tenby Schools Ipoh hosted the choir for the first time ever in line with the school's effort in promoting international-mindedness and giving back to the community. The free-seating session was attended by over 600 students in the afternoon and 300 Tenby community at night.

"They dance and sing so well. It's such a heart-warming moment, as we sing along and cheer for them all night long," said a retired businessman in the audience.

"The Watoto Children's Orphanage was founded in 1992 with the aim to support up to 10,000 orphans. At present they support about 4000-odd orphans and vulnerable women. With these children, they take them in, provide them with a foster mother and help them lead a normal life," stated Jane Kuok, the Tenby campus principal. The rescued children live in a Watoto village which has a clinic and community centre for



school assemblies, community functions and church services.

Last year, 15 Watoto students graduated from different universities in Uganda. Hence, sponsorship is their greatest need. You could sponsor a Watoto child, Watoto baby or Living Hope (for women – most of whom are HIV positive and returnees from abduction with the rebel army) with just about RM150 per month which in turn provides them with a home, food, clothing, education, medical and spiritual care. Find out more at [www.watoto.asia](http://www.watoto.asia).

Watoto Children's Choir will be back in February to April next year.

Mei Kuan



# VACANCIES

An established English Language Centre in Ipoh is looking for dedicated and resourceful teachers with a good command of the English Language, able to make learning English fun and interactive. Teachers are part-time for Pre-schoolers, Primary and/or Secondary levels.

Vacancies also exist for general clerks cum customer service assistants, full-time or part-time.

Call 016-5200098 for interview or e-mail resume to [cpelanguageschool@hotmail.com](mailto:cpelanguageschool@hotmail.com)

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## Education

# English Camp for Educators

A total of 32 English Language school teachers from 21 Chinese vernacular primary schools attended a 'Teacher Training Camp' held at UTAR Kampar Campus recently.

Jointly organised by UTAR Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FAS), Division of Community and International Networking (DCInterNet), and Kampar-Gopeng Chinese School Teachers' Association, the three-day teacher training camp was aimed to help school teachers develop essential knowledge and teaching skills, as well as to educate them on planning interactive English lessons for schoolchildren.

During the opening ceremony, Kampar-Gopeng Chinese School Teacher's Association President Foo Yuen Choy reminded the participants that teaching is a prestigious profession, and teachers are often referred to as "Engineers of the human soul". He added, "With the responsibility of educating the younger generation on their shoulders, it is crucial for teachers to be equipped with the necessary skills that could help them become effective disseminators of knowledge."

UTAR Vice President for Student Development and Alumni Relations Associate Professor Dr Teh Chee

Seng concurred, saying, "Being educators, you have the responsibility to help and inspire students. I believe that behind every great student, there is always a great teacher. Teachers have the responsibility to grow and guide their students in learning. The practical training and sharing among the schoolteachers and lecturers will help to explore new approaches and expand existing ones for them to upgrade their teaching skills and strategies."

"The training camp is very interesting and refreshing at the same time. I feel it's a good opportunity for me to revise and recall what I had learned previously. It's a good platform for all of us to learn some practical tips to be applied in the classroom," said Nur Amelia binti Mohd Nazrin, an English teacher from SJK (C) Chuang Hua, Kampar.

Another participant from SJK (C) Sungai Durian, Tanjung Tualang, Hajah Rosnah Choong binti Abdullah said, "It was a very good opportunity to attend this teacher training camp. The entire training programme was very exciting and insightful. The trainers are extremely well versed in their subjects and they really took the time to ensure our understanding using real life examples."



## 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.

## The Costs and Returns to Medical Education?

Since the publication of my scholarships offer to help students whose parents are earning less than RM4,000 per month a few days ago, my wife has received more than 50 applications for financial help and most of the applicants want to pursue a medical degree which cost the most.

**The sole purpose of writing this article is to help inform students who wish to study medicine not to apply for my financial assistance.**

There are 40 Medical Colleges and about 500 University and Colleges in Malaysia. All of them are lowering their entry requirement to compete for more students.

**Tuition Fee for a Medical Degree in Malaysia is between RM250,000 to one million Ringgit:**

Among the cheapest are University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR): RM255,000 and AIMST University: RM250,000.

Among the mid-range are: Asia Metropolitan University (AMU): RM300,000

MAHSA University College: RM300,000

Melaka Manipal Medical College (MMMC): RM348,000, Monash University Sunway: RM455,000

Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NuMED): RM450,000

Among the more expensive are: Penang Medical College: RM650,000

Perdana University offers the following: Royal College of Surgeons Ireland: RM800,000

John Hopkins University Schools of Medicine: RM1,000,000.

All the above mentioned fees exclude accommodation, books, traveling costs, food and other expenses which could easily add another RM100,000 to the total cost of studying medicine.

A student will require at least RM350,000 to complete a medical degree. Assuming he can get RM150,000 PTPTN loan, he will still require RM250,000.

**Is it really worth pursuing a medical degree in Malaysia with such high fees?**

It is compulsory for all medical graduates to practise in a government hospital for five years to complete their housemanship.

During this period their salary ranges between RM2,600 to RM4,000. As housemen they work for a minimum of 12 to 15 hours a day. After two years, their salary increases gradually to RM4,000 per month.

When they are promoted as medical officers their salaries range between RM4,500 to RM5,000. After the final year they have an option to continue their career in the government service or private concerns.

However, after 12 years and spending a minimum of RM350,000, is it worth just to earn RM5,000 to RM6,000 per month as a doctor?

**They must remember that they have to pay back the RM150,000 PTPTN loan at RM2,000 per month for about 20 years.**

**A good alternative proposal:**

I like to suggest students to consider other courses such as accountancy, finance, engineering, marketing, etc. The tuition fee for a one-year foundation course is RM8,500 and for a 3-year degree course is about RM38,000 in UTAR. The fees for all Government Universities are less than RM20,000 for a degree course.

All students whose parents are earning less than RM4,000 per month can apply for my scholarships worth RM15,500 to cover the one-year foundation course fee and the cost of living. After the completion of the foundation course, all students are entitled to receive PTPTN Government loan to complete their degree courses.

Since I made the offer to consider helping students who find the PTPTN not sufficient, my wife has received more than 50 applications in two days and most of the applicants want to study medicine. We found that most of the applicants are not realistic. They are poor and with poor results they want to study medicine.

With the PTPTN loan, the parents need to subsidize a small amount to complete their degree courses with the exception of medical degree. If the parents are really poor, I am willing to consider helping them. My offer to help students doing degree courses has opened the door for all students in the country. But the students must be realistic. In any case, we reserve the right to reject any application for financial help.

Note: All scholarship recipients do not need to work for me or pay back the money I spent on them. But they must promise me that they will remember I helped them when they are poor and when they are financially solvent they must help other poor students. I believe many graduates will continue to help poor students when I die. Since I started offering scholarships about 10 years ago, I have given out about 300 scholarships and a large number of the recipients have graduated.

Koon Yew Yin

## Ipoh Deserves a Better Book Fair

Ipoh certainly deserves a much better book fair than the one organised by the Perak State Library recently. By all accounts, it lacked credible booksellers and titles. How then to inculcate a healthy reading habit among Ipohites? As it stands, what percentage of the city's population visits the library regularly?

A closer look at the books stacked up for the record-breaking pyramid, a question comes to mind. Are these books fit to be donated to village libraries, orphanages and school children? What is required is the right book for the right category of readers and

at the right time.

Something is not right, as I came across some Islamic-titled books in the pyramid. Respect should be accorded to religious books and they should not be stacked up for show.

I am sure the organisers can come up with better strategies to inculcate the reading habit in Ipohites, as reading is not something endemic among Malaysians.

Nadim



## Business

### Small Business Loan (Part 1)

Every businessman's nightmare: Frustrated with your banker with the Bank taking an awful long time to approve your business loan or the bank asks too many questions. Sounds familiar?

It all began when Ah Chong decided to expand his trading business by taking on new product lines to spread his risk as well as reduce his over dependence on a few products. Naturally, being in business for several years now, he relied much on his own savings and credit extended by his existing suppliers where he enjoyed favourable credit terms.

As the business centred on old customers and repeat sales, little was done on promotions and creating awareness for the company and its products. What that means is that there was little paperwork or promotional activities let alone a company profile. No reason to go to the bank for working capital loans.

Operating from rented premises, the existing stocking area was not sufficient to handle additional stocks for the new business. Before going to the bank, Ah Chong knew that he had to get his act together and there were a few important decisions and strategies that needed to be in place as well as the timing of funds so that deadlines of the launch of new products could be met.

Some of the questions that needed to be answered were:

1. About the existing business – customers, terms of trade, scale down, competition?
2. About the new business – new customers, pricing, promotion (including online), competition, when to launch, SWOT analysis, terms of trade?
3. About the existing premises – is there sufficient space? If not, consider new premises
4. About the new premises – location, additional rental?
5. How much funds are required to fund the new business?
6. Where would the funds come from? If the fund avenues (one's own or from friendly parties) are exhausted, then consider approaching bank for financing.

Lessons to be learnt:

- You need to know your business and the numbers behind your business
- Have the business plan/framework drawn up

What happens next.....watch out in the next edition.

Lim Guan Chye

## Lifestyle

### Suraya's Birthday



It was a beautiful affair with beautiful people in a beautiful venue when Suraya Yusoff, the founder of Sculpt Fitness celebrated her birthday. Friends and family flew in from all over the world as the hippest party in Ipoh got into full swing at the Deck at the rooftop of the WEIL Hotel.

Guests were told to arrive by 6pm to catch the beautiful sunset over the Ipoh skyline and have pictures taken by the pool. With a theme of resort white, guests were mingling well into the night while tucking into a sumptuous spread laid on by the hotel.

Suraya looking youthfully younger than her 50 years which she was celebrating, looked like an older sister to her two daughters Sophia and Deanna Khan who were the masterminds and organisers of the party. The Deck was festooned with exotic decorations which they had painstakingly set up.

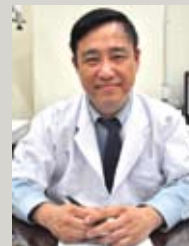


## Health

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

### What is Retinal vein Occlusion?

How often are you put off by 'medicalese' where you throw your hands up in despair and leave it all in the hands of the good doctor? So if you find yourself having a painful eye with some or severe visual impairment and you happen to be middle aged or older (although it can happen at any age), then you may have a Retinal Vein Occlusion (blockage). Or in layman's terms, a stroke or blood clot in the eyes. Ipoh Echo spoke to Dr. Lee Mun Toong, Eye Specialist at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital about this medical problem.



Dr. Lee Mun Toong  
Resident Consultant Ophthalmologist,  
KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital

"Blood circulating through the retina leaves the eye by draining into the retinal vein. A retinal vein occlusion is (RVO) a blockage that prevents normal blood flow out of the eye," said Dr. Lee, a veteran of more than 10 years at KPJ Ipoh. The blockage may be caused by a blood clot, by squeezing (compression) from a nearby retinal artery, or by diseases that affect the blood vessels, such as diabetes, high eye pressure (glaucoma), high blood pressure, and hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis). Retinal vein occlusions are more common in people over 65 years of age.

#### Symptoms of RVO

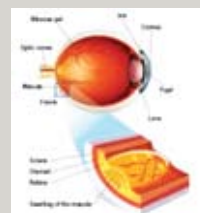
Sudden blurring or vision loss in all or part of one eye are the most common symptoms of retinal vein occlusion. For some patients, the vision loss may happen gradually over days or weeks instead of suddenly. The amount of blurring or vision loss depends on how much damage to the retina has occurred.



#### Management of Macular Edema in RVO

The Macula is situated at the end pole of eyeball and Macular edema means swelling of macular region (as shown).

No known effective medical treatment is available for either the prevention of or the treatment of central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO). Identifying and treating any systemic medical problems to reduce further complications is important. Because the exact pathogenesis of the CRVO is not known, various medical modalities of treatment have been advocated by multiple authors with varying success in preventing complications and in preserving vision.

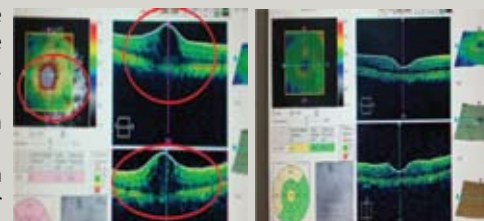


#### Dexamethasone intravitreal implant

"Today we are focused on the intravitreal implant, and I have found this to be one of the treatment using the Dexamethasone intravitreal implant. Of course the results may vary from patient to patient but generally they have been most favourable. Allow me to share my experience of one of them," said Dr. Lee:

A 62 year old gentleman presented with right eye blurring vision for one month.

We diagnosed it as Right macular edema due to RVO. Picture 1 shows a macular edema (swelling) before Dexamethasone intravitreal implant (Vision 6/18). Picture 2 shows the disappearance of the macular edema after 10 days of Dexamethasone intravitreal implant (Vision 6/9). "I was thrilled with the result" he enthused.



PICTURE 1

PICTURE 2

For more information,  
call Dr. Lee Eye Specialist at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital **05 2544 388**

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Belly dancing from a professional was raucous especially when her friend Moustafa took centre stage and started showing us his moves. Guests danced the night away and a wonderful time was had by all. Overheard at the party from an out-of-town visitor, "Wow Ipoh really has some very hip people and parties."

SFCK



## News

## The Big Five

Eighty-year-old well-travelled Mohd Khan Momin Khan, with a passion for wildlife and nature ignited by his childhood in Taiping, was the latest distinguished speaker to join the Perak Academy's lecture series.

A Director-General at the Department of Wildlife and National Parks until 1992, his other designations include the past president of the Malaysian Nature Society and Friends of Templer Park Society.

Knowing Taman Negara National Park like the back of his hand, it was no wonder when his lecture, "The Big Five" touched on the survival of the five major animals in the country through time: the Javan Rhino, Malayan Elephant, Malay Tapir, Malayan Tiger and Gaur.

He quoted George Maxwell, author of "In Malay Forests", who was in Straits of Malacca looking at the coast of Malaya towards the end of 1800: "Neither the season, nor the flight of time, leaves a mark upon the forest: virgin in the days of which we cannot guess the morn, virgin in our days, virgin it will remain in the days of generations yet unborn." However, a seed of destruction was sown when the first rubber seedling was planted in Kuala Kangsar in 1877. Then, in 1911, 500,000 acres of forests were cleared and this went on as rubber was in such demand for tyres and electrical insulations. In 1999, the forest coverage in Peninsular Malaysia was 44 per cent.

According to him, among the five, the Malay Tapir is doing well in our forest



because of a lack of interest in the species. However, traps, falling into wells and getting killed in road accidents are some causes of mortality of the species.

"In Peninsular Malaysia, poaching is still a serious problem. The poachers are all over the country! But they're not really the culprit, they're just doing the dirty job for their bosses," he lamented.

He shared the stories behind every photo featured in his informative presentation which took place on Friday, January 15 at the Perak Academy premise at Jalan Tun Sambantan Ipoh. When asked how regular folks could get involved and do something, he replied, "I think NGOs are doing very well."

Also present was 75-year-old Dr Francis Ng, the editor of the UTAR Agriculture Science Journal. Published quarterly since January 2015, it is available on the Internet as an open-access journal with a limited number of printed copies for distribution. It serves to tell the fascinating story of agriculture in a way that would encourage people to think of agriculture as an exciting, creating, challenging and rewarding field to enter.

"We've to fund this journal as we receive no governmental support," he said during a short address towards the end of the talk. Readers who want to help in sustaining this educational venture, kindly contact him at [francisng@utar.edu.my](mailto:francisng@utar.edu.my).

Mei Kuan

## Perak's First 160 Slice CT Scan



Pantai Hospital Ipoh (PHI) launched Perak's first-of-its-kind 160 slice CT Scan on Saturday, January 16 in a ceremony graced by Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, Executive Councillor for Health, Public Transport, Non-Islamic Affairs, National Integration and New Villages, Ahmad Shahizam, CEO Parkway Pantai Malaysia Operations Division and Chong Siet Fong, CEO Pantai Hospital Ipoh.

The RM4.5 million facility with cutting edge technology not only meets current increasing clinical requirements, it also serves as a new standard platform in healthcare.

This latest technology makes it possible to obtain high quality clinical images for diagnosis with a low dose resulting in at least 50 per cent less radiation than conventional CT besides optimising workflow. Less concerns about risks of cancer are linked to the high-powered imaging technology.

"The robust growth of a hospital depends not only on its expansion programme, increase in skilled professionals but also latest state-of-the-art equipment and technology," Chong explained.

PHI, a tertiary healthcare facility and part of the Pantai Hospitals Group in Malaysia, was established in 1996. From a humble beginning with only 76 beds, the hospital now has 180 beds and over 70 consultant specialists.

For more information on the facility, call 05 540 5555.

Rosli Mansor

## Ageing: Role of Media

Running on the theme, "Age Inclusiveness & Supportive Environments", the Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) held a media roundtable on ageing on Monday, January 18 at M Boutique Hotel.

The objective was to share information on population-ageing, promote a holistic approach to understanding old age and strengthen the use of research data through media engagement in improving the well-being of older Malaysians.

While the family continues to be the main provider of care for older Malaysians, there is a growing debate regarding the roles of the state, market and voluntary sectors. In the age of the internet, the media wield significant soft power that can be highly persuasive. For example, a demographic "crisis" narrative may convey a sense of urgency to act on the phenomenon of rapid population ageing.

"Malaysia is ageing at lower levels of development and it presents both opportunities and challenges for national development. The increase in the proportion of older persons requires a rethinking in health and social care provisions," concluded Professor Dr Tengku Aizan Hamid, the institute's Director.

"Ten years ago, a forum on ageing in Kota Bharu was one of our earliest engagement with the media. The institute welcomes the prospect of working with the media as partners



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in our dissemination efforts," she added.

Present at the enlightening session were Professor Datuk Dr Mad Nasir Shamsudin, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International) of UPM and Professor Dr Esther Gunaseli, the Consultant Psychiatrist of UniKL Royal College of Medicine Perak cum the Chairperson of the Dementia Society Perak.

Mei Kuan



## News

## Another Successful Year for Kinta Properties

**K**inta Properties took a bold first step into the New Year with splashes of gold and red during its annual dinner held on Friday, January 22 at the lantern-adorned Dome Restaurant, Meru Golf and Country Club.

"The crowd gets bigger every year. I'd like to thank everybody including the staff, consultants, contractors and bankers for all the support that they have given us. We have staff who have been with us for many years and we are also bringing in new and younger people to continue the company," said Dato' Lim Si Boon, Chairman of Kinta Properties. Kinta Properties is synonymous with property development within Perak for almost 48 years now.

What is Chinese New Year without bountiful bites? After the must-have *yee sang* (prosperity toss), there was free-flowing charcoal-grilled Australian wagyu beef, fresh oysters, *chuka kurage* (seasoned jellyfish), *chuka hotate* (seasoned scallop), tiger prawns, baked salmon and more.

The crowd of over 200 was also entertained by live band Supernova, rendering golden classics from the 80s throughout an evening filled with hugs and cheers of *yum seng* (bottom's up!). It went really well with the dance floor filling up as the night wore on.

Other highlights included the best-dressed competition and lucky draws in which lucky guests walked away with AEON vouchers, Cornell juice extractor, Philips air purifier, Samsung 40-inch Smart LED TV and iPad Mini 4.

Mei Kuan



## Heart-wrenching Perseverance

**F**or the past seven years, Indira Gandhi has been nothing but a picture of heart-wrenching perseverance. Fortunately, it is no longer her lone fight. Ipoh Echo caught up with those who stood and are standing by her, through thick and thin:

"How could that be possible that in modern Malaysia of Year 2016, a mother cannot see her child for seven years? It's an utter shame. I don't believe that there's any religion that would approve forced separation of a mother and child," DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang highlighted during a media conference at the Ipoh DAP Headquarters on Thursday, January 14.

"Perak Women for Women Society is looking at the family side of this matter. The most worrying factor at this stage is we have two teenage children and they are now deemed as Muslims due to the conversion. The Court of Appeal decision says that they have to go to the Syariah Court for remedy. This was a marriage which was contracted in civil law and the children were conceived during this marriage and they are born Hindus. Overnight, it appears now, they are Muslims. This is how unfair the provisions are and it is wreaking havoc in a family," said Sumathi Sivamany, Vice President Perak Women for Women Society (PWW).

"Cabinet committees were formed in 2009 and 2013 but it has all come to zero, so what are these committees doing?"

On the other hand, M. Kulasegaran, Indira's lawyer added: "This is not new and this is not the only case," showing a picture when Indira was breastfeeding the then 11-month-old baby.

"These seven years we keep hoping some miracle will happen but till today there's nothing. To make it worse, I was asked to go to Syariah Court although I am not a Muslim and I still believe my children are strongly Hindus. After so many years, we're more confused which side to go now. I don't know how long I have to go through all this. It's too painful to go on like this forever. I hope there will be a solution," said Indira Gandhi in a tearful response. These seven years she has not even once seen her youngest daughter. Her other two children have been denied of their sibling bond. It is something that a mother should not go through.

Also present during the press conference was Victor Chew, secretary of Ipoh City



Watch and this was what he said, "I feel it's high time that everybody who are concerned about family, home, women's rights, children's right should come forward together and stand to make something sensible for everybody."

Subsequently, on Saturday, January 16, PWW and the crowd of over 300, from near and far including NGOs from Kuala Lumpur and Penang, walked in solidarity with Indira Gandhi at the iconic Polo Ground.

Among the placard messages on display included "Women's rights is human rights", "No unilateral decision by one parent", "Equality before the law", "How would you feel if they are your family?" and "Indira, we feel for you".

"As a multi-ethnic country, it's very disappointing that such an occurrence is happening in our country when it shouldn't. It just should be fair, the mother should have the same amount of rights as the father," Deviyah Daranee, a 25-year-old Ipohite told Ipoh Echo.

"We're here because we care. Indira's case has broken the hearts of many Malaysians. It is cruel to deprive a child of her mother's love and to separate them. Have kindness and compassion for them," said Halida Mohd Ali, President of PWW.

Also present during the walk were Meera Samanther, past president of Association of Women Lawyers Malaysia and Lalita Menon, President of the Women's Centre for Change, Penang.

According to Meera, a grave injustice has been perpetrated against Indira and her children and yet the legal system seems completely incapable of providing justice for them. "Recently, the government announced the setting up of another committee, this being the third committee to look into this issue specifically. But we fear that it would be to no avail," she pointed out.

"Sad to say, one of the highest courts in the country cannot read the interpretation part which says 'parents' means both parents," Lalita lamented.

Mei Kuan





## COMMUNITY

# Sai Baba's 90th Birthday Celebration



Some five hundred devotees and friends celebrated the 90th birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Maha Mariamman Temple Hall. The event was organised by Sathya Sai Baba Centres of Perak with the theme Love, Unity and Service.

The children from various Sai Baba centres staged graceful aesthetic dance offerings, drama and cultural programmes reflecting the values of Sai Baba.

One of the outstanding performances was a short play titled 'One Good Life' presented by children from the Sungai Siput centre. The play was in English. This was a good initiative and gave the opportunity for the children to communicate in English. Other NGOs can follow this lead and give the opportunity to students to communicate in English.

A. Mahendren, President, Sathya Sai International Organisation, Malaysia, was the Guest of Honour and admonished devotees to face the challenges in their spiritual life. He quoted Sai Baba, "Service to man is service to God".

In line with Sai Baba's philosophy of service to society, especially the poor and needy, 172 students were presented with a set of uniform and shoes and 43 students were presented with spectacles.

Mementos were presented to eleven NGOs in recognition of their service for helping the needy.

The finale came with an entourage of Sai children with candle lights accompanying four youths carrying the birthday cake to the stage for the cake cutting ceremony.

A. Jeyaraj

## Keeping Ipoh Clean and Green

Ipoh City Watch (ICW) a non-governmental organisation whose aim is to make Ipoh the most liveable city in Malaysia, teamed up with Rukun Tetangga Jelapang and the Jelapang Sports and Recreation Club to set up a refreshment booth, for the very first time, during the recent Thaipusam celebration on Sunday, January 24.

The booth, located along the busy Jalan Sultan Idris Shah and next to the Telecoms building, was at an ideal spot where vehicles and devotees converged.

According to Dr Richard Ng, President of ICW, food and drinks were placed in reusable plastic containers and cups. No polystyrene containers were used. The objective was to teach people to stop using polystyrene. Well-wishers, volunteers and ICW members stood by the booth holding placards with messages urging the public to go green and be clean and to embrace recycling as a way of life.

"We hope our efforts can help kick start good habits among Ipohites and visitors. We've to start educating the public. This is in line with ICW's motto, "Our City, Our Responsibility," said Richard to Ipoh Echo.

"Next year ICW will again team up with Rukun Tetangga Jelapang and others to offer food and drinks to devotees and visitors while reinforcing the message on making Ipoh the most liveable city in Malaysia," he added.

Present at ICW's debut appearance during Thaipusam were Thinakaran, Chairman of Rukun Tetangga Jelapang, and Paramesawaran, the National Executive Committee Member of Party Gerakan.

Nantini



## Helping Out the Orang Asli



Members of Love and Care Society, a freelance Ipoh-based social work team, took time off to help out at Kampung Ulu Jelintoh, Gopeng recently.

The team had the cooperation of Mansor Bin Jang, the village head of Kampung Ulu Jelintoh, in the conduct of their altruistic efforts at improving the lives of the indigenous people. The volunteers taught the villagers, especially the children, the importance of hygiene and education.

They gathered in front of the Orang Asli settlement, located about 12km from Gopeng, early in the morning. Headman Mansor was present to welcome them. It was great to see volunteers from different backgrounds working together to help the Orang Asli.

Activities with the kids took place in the community hall. The kids were playfully

active and the volunteers had a tough time calming them down in order to get things started. Once they settled down the kids behaved themselves and enjoyed the games and activities arranged specially for them.

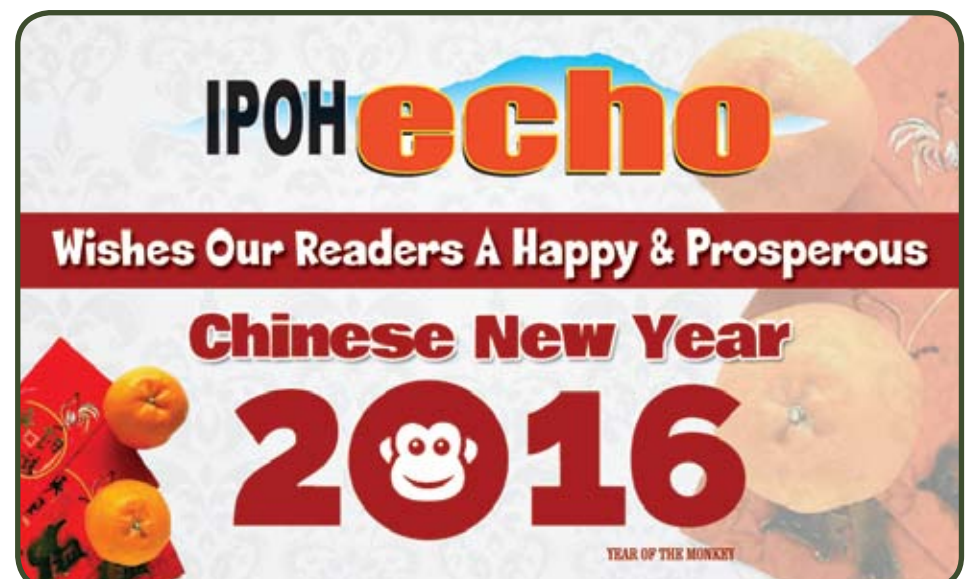
Jelintoh consists of over 100 families with an average of five kids per family. The total population is about 700. Most of the villagers eke out a living from the surrounding jungle.

"We're a non-profit society whose aim is to provide a substantial and meaningful assistance to people in difficulties. The villagers here live in poverty without proper houses. Their living conditions are bad. They complained about leaking roofs, flooding and dampness," said Jenny, a team member to Ipoh Echo.

Mansor hoped that activities such as these would continue on a much more regular basis.

"We hope the authorities would provide better services and amenities, including an access road to Gopeng and possibly some form of public transportation," he added.

Nantini





## Yang TU Yang NI



## POSTCARD FROM SHENZHEN – PART 2

Shenzhen is probably the most liveable tier-1 city in China although this is not widely known. A city planned from ground zero has many attributes. The streets are wide – eight lanes in many places, traffic is reasonably orderly and drivers are generally quite courteous – stopping at zebra crossings. Most streets are tree-lined. Shenzhen has more parks per square mile than any big city in China. In parts it hugs the coast. In fact there are good beaches just a bus ride out of the city limits. Shenzhen has over 300km of cycle tracks. Although not as cultured as Beijing, Shanghai or even Chung Ching, it's not a cultural desert. It has many art galleries, libraries, international class concert halls, museums, book shops. The Art Village in Dafen is something else! "You want a Picasso, Sir? No problem. Van Gogh, Vermeer, Monet . . . give me a minute."

But what is Shenzhen really like? I believe people make a place (like Ipoh) and Shenzhen is no different. Like big cities everywhere people are on the go all the time busily "cari makan". But every now and then you see the kind side of the inhabitants. For instance, they do give up their seats in public transport for the elderly and those with children. It's rare that I have to stand in the bus or the MRT. (It's different in KL.) Ask for directions and they would gladly help you.

I asked for the post office, the guy misunderstood me and took me to the postal bank instead. At the bank they tried to give me directions and when that failed because of my fantastic Mandarin, the clerk took me there himself. That's kindness for you. But this kindness I have found everywhere I have been in China especially in small towns and villages. Once on a bus in a remote area the lady opposite me gave me a "chang" which she made. Me, a total stranger, a "lauwai" with hardly a word of Mandarin. Another time the guard at a national park allowed me in free.

So why do many Malaysians say the Chinese are rude? I can only think that it's a language and cultural problem – we are not used to their ways. In Shenzhen I can say most of them are country bumpkins who have only recently come from the *ulu* and most of them are blue collar (or were before they made good). Their ways are rough and they speak loudly and many still spit or snort in public (less these days). As the new generation of Shenzhen-born increases and people travel abroad more, the people will acquire more socially acceptable habits.

China's progress is impressive but we must remember that it's a huge country with a huge population. Many things remain much the same as before especially common practices and expectations. What would be unacceptable to us is perfectly normal to them. For instance, they are so used to crowds that privacy is not a big deal. Just to illustrate: Dentists operate in full view of the public, just like a shop, you can look through the glass front and see him treating, his patients. In some rural areas they do it in the park – al fresco dentistry, no extra charge.

It's the same in hospitals. No privacy! Patients wait for the doctor, card in hand and when he arrives they crowd into his examination room each thrusting forward his medical record card. He takes the nearest.

"Let's have a look. . . Lower your pants please" Snigger all round.

"Now cut that out, this is serious" Decorum restored he examines the patient. "Mmmm, you definitely have full blown syphilis. Well if these pills I am prescribing don't work . . ." Tsk tsk (he shakes his head gravely) "we will have to perform extreme sunnate!" "Yes doctor, thank you doctor" he nods and leaves to collect his antibiotics.

"Next", and he grabs the next card. "Still not functioning? Mistress not happy? Okay last resort, try Tongkat Ali. If this fails I suggest you become a monk" "Next" and so it goes on till he sees all the patients, right in front of everyone. Of course it's not that extreme but it's true – No privacy!

And don't ever have a stomach ache in a bus station, especially in small towns. You don't want to squat together with ten others in full view of everyone else. Never mind the stink, what if you are not well endowed?

It will take time to change people's expectations but change they will.

Already I can see a change in their attitude to dogs. The Chinese have always liked dogs – grilled, stewed or steamed in herbal soup! But seriously, while eating dog is still common in rural China (keeps you warm in winter they say) in urban areas they are treated almost as well as their 'little emperors'.

Meanwhile meandering aimlessly I stumbled onto "Malaysia Drinking" (how did they know we are "kaki botol"?). Well it turned out to be a coffee outlet, I looked at the menu: KL Latte, Melaka Black, and so on, I ran my finger down the list twice, no IPOH White. Why? Insulted, I walked off in a huff. Then at Carrefour (I am a great loafer) I saw "Teh Tarik, hand-made". Wow!

I assure you, whether coffee or *teh tarik* it's not Malaysian; not what we expect at home; same for Chinese food. Conversely, to the people here I may be Chinese descent but not Chinese – my mannerisms are different, the way I speak (dialect or Mandarin),

my expressions, they are different. That's because I am not Chinese but Malaysian of Chinese descent.

Similarly an Indian Malaysian or a Malay Malaysian will be regarded as a foreigner, in India or Indonesia. That's because we are Malaysians whose ancestors have come from Indonesia, India or China and over time have acquired a unique Malaysianess.

Yet you have misguided politicians who demand that we *balik* Tongsan or India whenever we don't agree with them because our ancestors were from there. By the same token I can also ask them to *balik* Indonesia. But I won't because this is as much their country despite the fact that some of their fathers only came over like yesterday. These people want to make the country mono ethnic, mono culture yet they proudly proclaim "Malaysia Truly Asia", talk about "Bikin tak serupa cakap!"

Not too long ago lion dances were banned because they were considered foreign. Schools could not perform dances not on the government approved list – that is Chinese and Indian dances. Funnily, ballet was on the approved list. So ballet must be a Malay dance then? You can say that's all in the past but there are still politicians who harbour such ideas.

There are religious kooks who think yoga is *haram* and Muslims must not practise it, that Christmas carols must not be sung publicly and Valentine's Day is a Christian religious festival.

There are those who think Malay/Islamic culture is Malaysian culture forgetting that the Orang Asli, Dayaks, Penans, the natives of Sabah and Sarawak also have their cultures. And they were here long before us.

People forget that culture cannot be artificially created by political manipulations or religious edicts, culture evolves over time from interaction between the communities.

Travel and you will discover how Malaysian you are. Maybe then we will stop demanding others balik here or there. The only balik I will do is balik kampung TR. Shenzhen is okay, China a great place to visit but Ipoh is home, Malaysia tanah air.

**Yin**  
the man from TR

## IPOH ECHO + THE HAVEN

Winner for January of the Ipoh Echo + The Haven contest.  
Congratulations!



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## Essay

The following article by a 17-year-old Poi Lam High School student won an international competition, the International Youth Food Culture Contest.

# When I think of Food

By Angie Lee Xiao Fong

When I think of food, the first thing that pops up to my mind is my parents. They're a lovely bunch – the best parents I could ask for, and the only ones I would ask for. They've filled my entire 17 years of life with 17 years' worth of delicious food, so I'm dedicating this essay to them. I love you Mom and Dad!

I was born and raised in a country that's unique for its culture and diversity – Malaysia. A mix of Malay, Chinese, Indian, Iban and Kadazan cultures gave birth to a brand new mesh of distinct yet intertwining cultures. The people here colloquially call our culture "rojak", which is also the name of a Malaysian salad where all sorts of different fruits and vegetables are thrown together, just like how our different cultures are thrown together and made into something unique and colourful, with a special blend of spicy sauce added! Our lifestyle, cultures, even language are fused into something so unique that words are inadequate. A fusion of Malay style, Indian Style, Chinese style, along with the different provincial styles for cooking, gives rise to a Malaysian food culture just as unique as the country and its inhabitants. Spices, herbs, soup bases, and oils – they are the very foundation of a local meal and they are the very embodiment of what food here is. Imagine, with each style of cooking using their own sets of ingredients, you put a variety of distinctive cuisines close to each other, allowing their aroma to mix in the same air—you'll see a whole new genre of food, a whole new chapter of culture – Malaysian food.

My father is a cook, a true Malaysian cook. He's the type of man that mixes with everyone, no matter your race or religion – a characteristic that allows him to cook the best of all worlds. With the help of people he meets, he is able to create cuisines from any worlds: English, American, Indian, Chinese, Irish, Taiwanese, Malay, Korean, Japanese, Italian and the list goes on. He can combine herbs from one style of cooking into another, and he can switch around the whole style of cooking—Indian spices mixed with Chinese herbs, Malay cooking style mixed with a signature American dish. One of his favourite cooking styles is to mix everything together. His outstanding cooking has earned him great respect from the far to the close, and from the old to the young, including myself.

I once asked my father how to become a cooking expert like him. "If you want me to teach you how to cook, you'd first have to step into my shoes, and walk the path I've



walked. It took me sixty years of living to cook, and it'll take me that long to teach you. So just live and learn." These words from him always ring in my head, reminding me constantly the very truth about cooking – cooking isn't just something you learn in a jiffy, it's a lifelong process if you want to create works of art.

As a famous Malaysian proverb says, behind every great man, there is a greater woman. My mother plays an important role in perfecting my father's cooking. My father is usually the inventor of the recipe, and my mom is the person that prepares and ensures the quality of the materials. From the sauce, to the marinating of the meat, to the steaming of the dish, she carries out my father's visions with great diligence. Without my mother, I'd not have learned about the many details necessary for great cooking. My mother knows my father's small slips here and there, even the way he holds the wok; and together, they help each other make the best food

you could imagine. Herbal Chinese Chicken, Korma Lamb Curry, Rendang Chicken, and Potato Salad are just a few signature dishes they have created. My mother is also the one who is in charge of garnishing the dishes, making sure that the food is rich in taste, texture, and appearance.

Aspiring to be as good as my parents, I couldn't help but try new recipes of my own. Many times, I was disappointed. "You learn how to be extremely patient when it comes to cooking. You might fail once or twice when trying out a new recipe. But it's worth it when you create something delicious. The look of joy when the kids eat makes me happy." It is my mother's simple words that keep me continuing my spirited exploration of new recipes and cooking styles, hoping one day I would create a recipe book as colourful and diversified as my culture.

Sometimes when my parents cook in the kitchen, you can hear them argue with each other. But coming from my parents when they cook, these are arguments filled with love and passion. Food is our love; love fills our family. I dedicate this essay to my parents—thank you for all the years' worth of delicious meals that you raised me up with and for many more to come! I also dedicate this essay to my country – thank you for the wonderfully diversified, vibrant cultures that celebrate not only food, but also rich humanities!

## Education

### Sunway College Raises Awareness on Crime Prevention

Sunway College Ipoh organised a 'Police Awareness Day' at their college on January 22 with Perak Police Contingent headquarters in an effort to create awareness on crime prevention and personal safety. Sunway's principal, Adawiyah Norli believes it takes two to tango in reducing crime rates and everyone should know about what and how they can help.

"Today we find news reports that crime and violence is prevalent; robberies, murders, snatch thefts, rape and domestic violence. We see men, women and children affected and deeply scarred by these tragedies that should never have happened to them," said Adawiyah.

The Deputy Head of Crime Prevention and Community Department (Operation), ASP Suresh Kumar was given the honour to hold a talk regarding what the public can do and how they can play a bigger role in preventing future crimes.

"Everyone is a part of a community. Although it is the police's responsibility to keep everyone safe, but unfortunate events can be prevented if the public plays their part. Should you see any suspicious activities happening, call us immediately," said ASP Suresh. Arranged by the police force, an exhibition about the history of police and several crime cases were put on display in the college where it gave the students and staff an understanding of the role of the police force in curbing crime rates.

"Sunway College Ipoh has always placed their students' and staff's safety as their priority and we will continue these efforts to create awareness on safety by organising programmes like this again in the future. The police has done such wonderful work securing our campus, we owe them a debt of gratitude," added Adawiyah Norli.

Ili Aqilah



### MGS Mural 1967 Dedication Ceremony



It was in 1967 when Mrs Vivian Chong and eleven MGS girls painted the mural entitled 'Occupation of Women' consisting of three different panels; manual workers, vocational workers and professionals on the wall outside the Principal's office.

One of the painters, Chan Wai Chun was in pleasant shock when she visited the school in 2009 and saw that the mural had survived the passage of time, forty two years to be exact. Through the help of a friend, known as the 'Heritage Man' to many, Wai Chun showed Law Siak Hong a former Ipoh ACS student, the mural. Siak Hong later managed to convince Wai Chun to lead the mural restoration project as he believed that this is the only Malaysian school mural that is all about women.

"It is a reflection of the socio-economic history of Ipoh, and in turn, of Malaysia. More importantly, it is going to be half a century old and it needs conservation so it can last longer, if not for ever!," said Siak Hong.

"In terms of art, the style of this mural is called a triptych. The style was of mosaic, each 'tile' painstakingly painted with a small brush," said Wai Chun to Ipoh Echo who was there to witness the process.

After the meeting with the current MGS school principal, Datin Mungit Kaur on October 10 2014, the restoration began on November 7, 2015. Wai Chun managed to contact another three original painters; Lam Lai Meng, Ooi Siew Ling and Chan Kok Loon who were willing to help her and the whole restoration. The team also was joined by another two former students of ACS; Law and Kong Kai Tuck.

During the dedication ceremony happening last month at the school, Dr Ting Cheh Sing said he hoped the mural will last as long as the school will stand.

"This mural is dedicated to all MGS teachers and students – past, present and future," said Ting in his speech.

Ili Aqilah





iSpeak

A. Jeyaraj

# Executive Councillors To Go To the Ground

During his executive talk to civil servants, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir said that executive councillors would go to the ground soon to serve the people (NST, January 13, 2016). This is a good initiative and should have been implemented earlier, however, this should not be limited to only executive councillors but all assemblymen from both sides of the political divide.

My assemblyman, A. Sivasubramaniam comes around only when asking for votes during election. More than a year ago K. Sagadevan, Secretary of Lim Garden Residence Committee and I, met Siva and shared our problems and invited him to visit our area. He came and saw the situation and I was lucky since the buffaloes were grazing in front of my house during his visit. He forwarded our complaints to the former Mayor, requesting him to take action. As expected, nothing was done. Siva has the only active service centre in Buntong and is there quite often to meet the people. Saga says that Siva is in touch with him.

The most important representatives the ratepayers want to meet are their councillors, who are supposed to be the voice of the people and mediate between ratepayers and the council.

After being appointed as councillor for Zone 8 in 2014, Ong Chee Keng made no initiatives to meet the residents. Since councillors are not elected, residents have no idea who is appointed as councillor to their zone. It is the duty of the councillor to introduce himself to the residents of his zone. It was some months after his appointment that K. Sagadevan, managed to arrange for a meeting with Ong and representatives from the zone. After that first meeting he has come to the zone a few times only when he was invited. Saga says Ong is in touch with him, but he must meet the people.

In contrast, when Dato' Daniel Tay Kwan Hui was appointed as councillor for Zone 8

previously, he called for a meeting with representatives of the zone for a meeting at MBI and introduced the relevant MBI officers. He divided the zone into four sub divisions and visited each division and saw the problem areas. He was easily contactable. This is an example of a good councillor. He is one of a coterie of dedicated councillors who understand that they are being paid to provide service to the ratepayers. We should have more councillors like him.

Some years ago members of several civil society NGOs in Ipoh carried out a survey on councillors to help ratepayers understand the roles and functions of city councillors. Their findings highlighted three glaring facts:

- 81% of residents do not know who their councillor is.
- 92% of the residents have not seen their councillor in their area over the past twelve months.
- 83% of the residents are not satisfied with the performance of their councillors.

I think the situation has not changed. I get calls from residents asking who their councillor is. At the swearing-in ceremony, many of the councillors said that their main aim is to serve the people and solve their problems. They said they would organise 'meet the people' sessions which they are not doing.

Residents in a number of housing estates are concerned about new businesses being allowed to operate there. They are worried that outsiders and foreigners would be coming and there would be a spike in crime. The councillors who approved this must discuss it with the residents and obtain their views.

Some years ago NGO Ipoh City Watch (ICW) suggested preparing Annual Report Cards for the councillors as was practised in some countries. This did not materialise. The newly launched ICW must make this their top priority.

## Sport

# Battle of the Mind



Universiti Teknologi Petronas, Tronoh recently witnessed the National Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship (NRBCC) 2015 where Meor Zarif Afandi Meor Ahmad from Perak defended his Under-16 category title beating other talented youngsters.

The tournament has always attracted experienced players where two thirds of its contestants in the Rapid Open event are FIDE-rated (World Chess Federation) and many with ratings above 2000.

Sponsoring the NRBCC is Ipoh-based conglomerate, Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK) who have always been keen on supporting the Chess scene by also sponsoring the Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Perak Grand Prix Chess Championship (PGPCC)

for the past six years. KLK representative who was at the event agreed that chess will improve concentration and encourages strategic and tactical thinking.

"As an activity that advances both mental and character development, chess has many lessons for life and is a sport which KLK is proud to be associated with," said the KLK representative.

Nelson Villanueva from the Philippines emerged as the winner in the Rapid Open category while Jonathan Chuah Jin Hai from Penang and Nur Najiha Azman Hisham (Selangor) were the champions in the Open and Under-16 categories respectively. Below is the full result of NRBCC.

### Rapid (Open)

1. Nelson Villanueva
2. Masrin Erowan
3. Jonathan Chuah

### Rapid (Under 16)

1. Meor Zarif Afandi Meor Ahmad
2. Mukhrie Shah Mahmood Shah
3. Dharmin Pathmanathan

### Blitz (Open)

1. Jonathan Chuah
2. Mas Hafizulhelmi
3. Chan Sheng Yip

### Blitz (Under 16)

1. Nur Najiha Azman Hisham
2. Mukhrie Shah Mahmood Shah
3. Kelly Lim Pei Ying

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.

Speech contests are a Toastmasters tradition. Contests are a key component of Toastmasters Int. members experience. Contests offer an opportunity for members to step out of their comfort zone, test their skills, and receive recognition for their accomplishment both from inside and outside of the club meeting environment.

**International Speech Contest** – Contestants present a 5-7 minute speech on any subject they choose. **Table Topic Contest** – an impromptu 2-minute speech, all contestants are assigned the same topic, told to them when they are introduced by the contest chair. The public is invited to witness the contests. Date: Wednesday **February 17**, 7.45pm at YMCA of Ipoh, Jalan Raja Musa (Anderson Road). Contact Person Toastmasters Pak Peter **019 574 3572**.

**Sharpened Word next literary matinee meets on Saturday February 20**, 2.30pm to 5.30pm at Sepaloh Art gallery No. 16 Jalan Sultan Iskandar (Hugh Low Street). Our purpose is to celebrate all things writing and literature, and to open up the inner workings of the writer's mind to a general audience. For more info please visit Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta](http://www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta).

**Park jetty closed for renovation.** Ipoh City Council (MBI) has closed the Gunung Lang Park jetty for up-grading works for a period of five months beginning Monday, October 26, 2015 to Saturday, March 26, 2016. The boat service in the lake operates as usual from a temporary jetty.

**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.

**Performances of Traditional Songs and Dance every Friday every week from March 25** at 8pm (except fasting month). 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**.



新天地 *Bandar Baru*  
**Sri Klebang**

**15 Years**  
2001 - 2016

普天同庆迎新春  
**LUNAR NEW YEAR  
CELEBRATION**

**2016**

**NEW LAUNCH  
2-Storey Link Homes**

@ Pine Park, Bandar Baru Sri Klebang

Sunday **14 Feb 2016**  
from **10:00 a.m.**

**Come visit our Show Homes**  
**10a.m. - 6p.m.** @ Bandar Baru Sri Klebang  
(Close on 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

**Activities :**

- Appearance of God of Prosperity & Monkey King
- Meet Cupid
- Lion Dance Pole Jumping
- Count the Peach Blossom Flowers Contest
- Photo Contest  
(Best Family & Best Couple Portrait)
- Lucky Draws
- Light refreshments will be served

**Photo Contest \***

- Photos taken by a photographer on event day will be posted on Kinta Properties Facebook page and contestants with the highest "LIKE" votes will win the contest.
- Voting duration starts from :  
**15th Feb - 28th Feb 2016**
- Prizes : Winner for Best Family Photo & Winner for Best Couple Photo :

**RM500 AEON Voucher**

\*Terms & conditions apply



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Phase 5E (Maple)  
Developer Licence : 8456-31/07-2017/0603(L)  
Advertising Permit : 8456-31/07-2017/0603(P)  
Validity Period : 30/06/2015 - 30/06/2017  
Approved Plan No. : MBI LB01/0000198/0004/14/P00/P00/L00  
Land Encumbrances : Nil  
Total Units : 68  
Exp. Completion Date : December 2017  
Freehold  
Land Tenure : Freehold  
Price : Min RM 437,760 - Max RM 585,800  
Approving Authority : Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh