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ISSUE **241**

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MOSQUES in Ipoh

By Ili Aqilah

Did you know there are more than 50 mosques in Ipoh alone? Continuing the series of discovering places of worship around Ipoh, we turned on our research mode and discovered five mosques that stand out from the rest. From historical anecdotes to unique architecture, we are certainly blessed to live in a multi religious country as we get to explore and learn more about one another's belief systems and heritage. Let's check out these mosques!

Continued on page 2



Panglima Kinta Mosque



Muhammadiyah Mosque



Sultan Idris II mosque



India-Muslim Mosque



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From landmarks to love and geographical architecture, Mosques in Ipoh provide edifying glimpses of history and culture

The one with the oldest history: Kampung Paloh Mosque



As one of the oldest mosques in Ipoh, the work of Kampung (Kg) Paloh Mosque began in 1912 by Wan Muhammad Salleh who was the superintendant of Penghulus (village heads) and assistant collector of Land Revenue under Sir Frank Athelstane Swettenham, the first Resident General of the Federated Malay States.

The construction was funded by two prominent individuals at the time and one of them was Long Kassim. In return for his generous help, the administration of the mosque was given to his grandchildren and today it is still being handled by one of his grandchildren. Despite undergoing extensive renovation over the years, the original five-tiered minaret and mausoleum of its founders are still in their original form.

Kampung Paloh Mosque is located at Jalan Datoh, 31650 Ipoh.



The one with Chinese influence: Muhammadiyah Mosque

When it was first built, it caused quite a sensation with its unique Chinese architecture and design.

What started as a small *surau* (prayer house) by the late Haji Abdul Latif and his friends in 1978 has grown to be one of the most unique mosques in Ipoh. After several renovations and refurbishments, the *surau* has transformed into a mosque complete with learning centres and recreational spots for various activities.

From far, many might mistake the mosque for a Chinese temple until they see the signboard located at the entrance. Unlike the one in Kelantan which has Thai architectural

influences, the mosque is 100 per cent influenced by Chinese traditional architecture, including the colour of the building which is red; symbolising happiness and good luck.

Muhammadiyah Mosque is located at Lot 70406, Jalan Musim Bunga, Taman Tasek Jaya, Ipoh.



The one as most prominent landmark: Sultan Idris II Mosque

Known to many as the official mosque for the state of Perak, Sultan Idris II Mosque is located right in the centre of Ipoh. It is one of the largest mosques in Ipoh with facilities that are more advanced than the rest, such as conference rooms, library, open space hall (available for rent) for weddings and the best, a free guided tour.

Sultan Idris II mosque was built in May 1966 and the foundation stone was laid in 1967 by Tun Haji Abdul Razak who was, at that time, the Deputy Prime Minister. It was completed in 1968 and later officiated by Sultan Idris Iskandar II, in conjunction with his 54th birthday celebration in September 1978.

Visitors keen on visiting the mosque can do so by calling the mosque's management office located within the compound. There, visitors are provided *abayas* (long dresses) as guests will need to dress appropriately when visiting. With its strategic location (in front of Ipoh Railway Station), this mosque has always been one of the prominent landmarks of Ipoh City.

Sultan Idris II Mosque is located at Jalan Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab, 31650 Ipoh.

Echo Tips: After the tour, be sure to take a stroll at Little India or head to Kong Heng's square for coffee! The mosque is also a place for cat lovers as friendly felines roam around the mosque.



... continued on page 6

• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

IS LIFE THAT CHEAP?

So long as the men in blue are more concerned for the safety of political leaders than the rakyat, life will remain cheap for us all...

The cold-blooded murder of a 43-year-old moneylender at the Setapak Central traffic junction on Wednesday, July 27 sent chills down the spines of law-abiding Malaysians. The gangland-style killing took place in broad daylight and was captured on closed-circuit television cameras of Kuala Lumpur City Council. In a matter of minutes the video went viral and the whole nation reeled in shock seeing how two hired killers emptied their handguns on the poor victim. His bullet-riddled body lay slumped on the driver's seat, bringing an end to his nefarious lifestyle.

The killers left the scene nonchalantly riding pillion on two separate motorcycles. Both are still at large. The irony is that the murder took place a stone's throw away from the Setapak police station. In spite of the Inspector of Police's assurance that the killers would be hunted down and tried nothing concrete has happened thus far.

Earlier in July another grisly killing took place in Taman OUG when a woman was killed and one of her children was seriously wounded. Two gunmen opened fire on her as she left a restaurant with her five kids and her maid. Six shots were fired one hitting the lady on her neck killing her instantly. The killers are still at large.

Such incidents are common these days. It is only when lives are lost that we tend to take notice, otherwise no one gives a damn. Is life so cheap?

According to unconfirmed reports killers can be hired for as low as RM5000 and should you want to give your irritating neighbour a fright, handguns are available for rent for between RM2000 to RM3000 apiece. All you need to do is to knock on the right door or call the right number. With a porous border up north, gun-running has become big business.

Back in the 1960s right to the 1980s when communist terrorist threats were prevalent, gun-running was virtually unknown, as the border region was closed to civilians. Movements in and out of the country were monitored by the army and the police. I did many stints at border posts in Lapangan Nenering, Kelian Intan, Keroh (Pengkalan Hulu), Baling, Weng and Bukit Kayu Hitam. The Gerik-Baling road which passes through Kelian Intan and Keroh was particularly notorious as the many twists and bends provide ideal spots for ambushes. We lost many lives to the terrorists who, after



springing an ambush, would disappear into the deep jungle and would be in Thailand in a matter of hours.

But despite the scarcity and the difficulty there were instances when handguns found their way to the bad hats. One likely source then was from army armouries. When my battalion was stationed at Wardieburn Camp in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur in the early 1970s, one rogue armoury sergeant was in the business of renting out pistols to gangsters. I had suspected him all along and, being the adjutant, it was my duty to apprehend him before he could cause more harm.

I had him tailed and sure enough caught him red-handed with two 9mm Brownie pistols, which he had illicitly withdrawn from one of the rifle companies' armouries. He was court-martialled and was dishonourably dismissed from service. He had over 15 years of unblemished service behind him but greed got the better of him. The pistol was rented for RM50 each

a day – a pittance today but a huge amount then.

In those heydays we used to boast to friends and family members that our lives were worth two cents – the cost of one 7.62mm or 5.56mm round. We would have a good look at our rifle magazines, which were filled with live rounds, before going on jungle patrols. A cocked rifle will fire if you mishandled it. One of my corporals was accidentally shot in the back by a soldier who slipped and fell when coming down a slippery slope in the jungles of Gubir, Kedah. One deranged soldier committed suicide while resting in his hammock. Luckily, he turned his 9mm SMG (sub-machinegun) on himself and not his platoon.

Have the police been effective in curbing gun-running, gun totting and violent crime? How is the crime index calculated? Why are the police quick to denounce a murder but are slow in reacting to one? These are burning questions on every citizen's lips. No answers are forthcoming and none will ever come.

My theory is simple. So long as the men in blue are more concerned for the safety of political leaders than the *rakyat*, life will remain cheap for us all. And this is worrying.

EYE HEALTH — HEALTHY EATING (Part 2)

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us on NUTRITION & VITAMINS for the eyes – PART 2.



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

Good nutrition with all the necessary vitamins and minerals are important for the eyes to function normally. It helps our bodies grow, helps in the repair process due to wear and tear and also protects against infections.

Some of the vitamins that are essential for the eyes include:

- Vitamins A, C, E, B2
- Minerals Zinc and Selenium
- Antioxidants Lutein and Zeaxanthin – known as 'carotenoids'
- Omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA.

ANTIOXIDANT – VITAMIN A

Vitamin A is also known as retinol because it produces the pigments in the retina (nerve) of the eye. Vitamin A promotes good vision, especially in low light. A deficiency in vitamin A causes a condition called **Night Blindness**.

Vitamin A deficiency can also cause serious eye problems like **Xerophthalmia**. This is a common cause of childhood blindness in developing countries especially in Africa and Latin America. It is caused by lack of Vitamin A in the child's diet. It is simply because the poor child does not get to eat fresh green leafy vegetables and proteins in the form of **meat, eggs, cheese, fish, poultry, milk, yoghurt, dairy products, nuts and grains**. Vitamin A helps the surface of the eye form an effective barrier to bacteria and viruses, thereby reducing the risk of eye infections. The lack of vitamin A causes the cornea to become very dry, leading to clouding of the front of the eye, corneal ulcers and finally vision loss.

ANTIOXIDANT – VITAMIN C

Vitamin C is good for our whole body and particularly good for your eyes. The aqueous humor is the watery fluid that fills the space between the cornea and the iris. This aqueous humor fluid nourishes and protects the cornea and lens. This aqueous humor has very high levels of Vitamin C, in fact much higher levels of Vitamin C than in our blood. So, make sure you eat diets rich in Vitamin C like **citrus fruits, capsicum, broccoli and strawberries** to maintain good eye health.

Generally, a good balanced diet that includes sufficient **fresh fruits and vegetables** should be adequate in providing all the vitamins and minerals that the eyes need in order to be healthy and function well. The problem lies in the fact that in these fast-food times, diets may lack the ingredients of a healthy meal. This is where vitamin supplements may help.

Key points to remember:

- Eat a good, balanced diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Educate yourself with information on proper diet and nutrition.
- Avoid smoking. A healthy lifestyle makes all the difference!

For more information, please call Gill Eye Specialist Centre, Hospital Fatimah **05-5455582** or email gilleyecentre@dr.com.

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Have the Big Fish Slipped Through the Net?

In 2015, the exposé of a Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) corruption scandal, involving the procurement of goods from the Depot Bekalan Armada (Fleet supply depot) in Lumut did not come as a surprise, to many Malaysians.

Retired First Admiral, Mohamad Imran Abdul Hamid, who once served at the Lumut naval base, had previously warned that the purchasing department which operated a three-tier procurement system, could be open to abuse.

He claimed that civilian suppliers were allowed to become too familiar with the purchasing officers, naval staff were open to influence by those higher-up, and unscrupulous naval staff were able to manipulate the system, because they had been in their positions for a long time, studied the procurement methods, and knew of ways, of milking the system.

When he retired from the navy and became the MP for Lumut, Mohamad Imran advocated the tightening of procedures for the purchase of goods, encouraged the transfer of staff to prevent abuse of the system, and claimed that goods were being sold at six times the normal purchase price. An unnamed MACC employee claimed that staff had been milking the system for five to ten years.

In early August, the Ipoh Sessions Court fined former RMN officer, Lieutenant Commander Khairul Izwan Mohd Khir, RM100,000, and seized his property which was valued at RM1.6 million.

In September 2015, Khairul had first pleaded not guilty to the six corruption charges levelled against him, involving the supply of RM1.5 million of goods to the navy, but he later changed his plea, to guilty.

Money had been transferred, by a contractor called Hussin Roslin, to Khairul, via an Affin Bank Bhd account, in Sitiawan, Manjung. On another occasion, in Seri Manjung, Khairul had received a CIMB debit card, which was allocated to an account which contained around RM100,000, from company owner, Mohd Nasir Abdullah. In Kuala Lumpur, Khairul had accepted a RM19,000 Bell & Ross watch, for his help in facilitating a supply deal, to the navy.

Khairul once worked as the Material Control Officer 2 at the navy supply depot. He committed the offences between May 2013 and Feb 2015 and was charged with five counts under Section 165 of the Penal Code, for receiving money and a debit card worth RM1.5 million.

Malaysians were pleased to note that Khairul had finally been caught for his role in the corruption scandal, which involved taxpayer's money, but many questions remained unanswered.

Why was he not court martialled, but instead charged in a civilian court, initially in the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court, and later, at the Ipoh Sessions Court?

It was mentioned, in the newspapers, that Khairul was a "former" naval officer. Was he sacked or dishonorably discharged from the navy, or did he become a "former" officer, because he was only on a short-term commission,

and his tenure had expired around the time the corruption scandal had been exposed?

Malaysians wonder why the punishment, of a fine and the seizure of property, did not also include a jail sentence. Are these deterrents sufficient to serve as a warning to others?

What steps have the navy taken to stop this manipulation of the purchasing of goods, in the future?



**THINKING
ALLOWED**

by Mariam Mokhtar

Will the MACC investigate other supply contracts in the other branches of the armed forces?

Will the MACC also act on the other warnings, given by the former admiral turned MP, about naval supplies?

Has the MACC investigation uncovered any other evidence of wrong doing?

How bad is this problem? Have other corruption scandals been unearthed and resolved?

Why was this corruption scandal not discovered earlier, especially after annual audits of the navy?

Is the case involving Khairul the tip of an iceberg? How many other icebergs need to be tackled?

It is difficult to accept that Khairul is the biggest fish, especially as it was previously reported, that other naval officers were involved. Have the big fish been allowed to swim free, again?

Dr Saravana K.

Consultant Physician, Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

What are Liver Function Tests (LFTs)? – Part 1

As the liver performs its various functions, it makes chemicals that pass into the bloodstream. Various liver disorders alter the blood level of these chemicals. Some of these chemicals can be measured in a blood sample. LFTs are some tests that are commonly done on a blood sample. These usually measure the following:

- **Alanine transaminase (ALT).** This is an enzyme that helps to speed up chemical reactions. Large amounts of ALT occur in liver cells. When your liver is injured or inflamed (as in hepatitis), the blood level of ALT usually rises.
- **Aspartate aminotransferase (AST).** This is another enzyme usually found inside liver cells. When a blood test detects high levels of this enzyme in your blood it usually means your liver is injured in some way. However, AST can also be released if heart or skeletal muscle is damaged. For this reason, ALT is usually considered to be more specifically related to liver problems.
- **Alkaline phosphatase (ALP).** This enzyme occurs mainly in liver cells next to bile ducts, and in bone. The blood level is raised in some types of liver and bone disease.
- **Albumin.** This is the main protein made by your liver and it circulates in your bloodstream. The ability to make albumin (and other proteins) is affected in some types of liver disorder. A low level of blood albumin occurs in some liver disorders. It can also occur in people who are malnourished.
- **Total protein.** This measures albumin and all other proteins in blood.
- **Bilirubin.** This chemical gives bile its yellow/green colour. A high level of bilirubin in your blood will make you appear 'yellow' (jaundiced). Bilirubin is made from haemoglobin. Haemoglobin is a chemical in red blood cells that is released when your red blood cells break down. Liver cells take in bilirubin and attach sugar molecules to it. This is then called 'conjugated' bilirubin which is passed into your bile ducts:
- A raised blood level of 'conjugated' bilirubin occurs in various liver and bile duct conditions. It is particularly high if the flow of bile is blocked. For example, by a gallstone stuck in the common bile duct, or by a tumour in the pancreas. It can also be raised with hepatitis, liver injury, or long-term alcohol abuse.
- A raised level of 'unconjugated' bilirubin occurs when there is excessive breakdown of red blood cells – for example, in haemolytic anaemia. It can also occur in people with Gilbert's syndrome which is a common, harmless condition.

The normal range of LFTs can often vary between different laboratories, so it is not always possible to compare results directly if they have been taken at different places. Also, the normal ranges of values for LFTs are often different for men and women.



Han Chin Pet Soo

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ON IPOH FOOD

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

SeeFoon Finds Three Jewels in Jalan Tokong

Every time a new shophouse development pops up in Ipoh, we can be rest assured that a few new eateries will show up as well. Sure enough, with the new development of Jalan Centre Point, in these few rows of shophouses, a familiar name glows in the dark, beckoning to diners.

And diners at **San Poh** are aplenty. Arriving at the already late hour of 8.30pm one Wednesday evening, I was very pleased that I had made a booking in advance and had a table waiting for me inside the airconditioned comfort of this small restaurant while a small queue was hovering near the few tables outside on the pavement.

The name Sam Poh is a familiar one, having reviewed them in IE149 in 2012 when they had their restaurant in Ipoh Garden East and I can still recall the lingering mouth feel of their specialties at the time, their faux shark fin which tasted like the real McCoy, their magnificent grilled squid with abalone sauce and a host of other delectables.

Now with this new outlet, although the anglicised version of the name is now San Poh with an 'N', the same proprietress Elliza is very much present, leaving the running of the other outlet which is still operating, to her partner. And while most of the items that I raved about in the Ipoh Garden outlet are available here in this new one, Elliza has decided to expand her repertoire, introducing new and innovative dishes which are well worth coming for.

The **Steamed Tilapia** with dominant aromas of calamansi (our local limes or *Tsuen Kum*) lifted the fish to new heights of degustation. More Thai in flavours than Chinese, the fish was fresh, the flesh firm and the sauce delectable – **RM47** for a big fish for eight persons.

The **Seafood Pot** was incredibly smooth, with pigs' tendons imparting their gelatinous properties to the sauce while lending a velvety texture to the other ingredients of sea cucumber, Chilean clams, prawns and a host of other seafood delicacies – **RM48**.

Chicken with Red Yeast Rice which is a perennial favourite among locals, was tender and fragrant, the rice wine thick and sweet (although not too sweet as can be found in other restaurants), accompanied by the usual accoutrements of ginger, wood-ear fungus which makes this a dish favoured as a postpartum dish – **RM15**.

The **Thai Style Pig's Trotter** (I was told that the trotter was from Germany where of course, the Schweinshaxen – their grilled version – is almost like a national dish) is supposed to have a crispy skin but somehow missed the mark on that, arriving on the table with a garlicky, spicy



Thai sauce which added a lift to the meat and especially the fatty bits. Aside from the lack of crispiness to the skin, I couldn't fault the taste with the meat falling off the bone, the tendons, grizzle and fat done to the perfect degree of tenderness and the sauce mitigating the richness – **RM36**.

The fried homemade **Tofu** next was delicious, firm, yet tender, and had all the umami taste and textures which only the addition of fish could provide – **RM10**.

Another dish that I particularly loved was their **Long Bean 'salad' with minced pork**. This arrived on the table, totally smothered in Thai Basil, dressed in a mild yet distinctive sauce, that had the group of us clamouring for more – **RM12**.

The last dish for that evening came in the form of the **'Lai Wong' Crab**, three mid sized crabs drenched in a buttery, creamy sauce, the crab very fresh and the sauce velvety smooth. I would have preferred bigger crabs but as these were the local mud crabs, I had to accept the size given and considering that **three mud crabs cost RM78** (these are all daily prices depending on availability), all in all quite reasonable.

I went back on another occasion wishing to satisfy my yearnings for home cooked 'Kah Heong Choy' and ordered their **Steamed Salted Fish with pork** – S/M/L: 13/18/28 and found this comfort dish did the trick. Their **Sambal Kangkong** at S/M/L RM 7/9/12 lacked some 'Wok Hei' but was tasty enough and their **Oat Chicken** S/M/L RM15/20/28 was most satisfying, the chicken pieces still succulent on the inside while the crispy oats which enveloped the chicken pieces provided the contrasting crunch to a delicious mouthful.

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Mosques in Ipoh . . . *continued from page 2*

The one with Indian sway: Indian-Muslim Mosque

Shaikh/Sheikh Adam came to the country from India and he was one of the leading Indian businessman at the time when he decided to build a mosque for the Muslim community. Construction of the mosque began in 1908 employing Indian workers. It has some similarities with Diwan-I-Khas (Red Fort) in Delhi, reflecting the Indian influence in its design.

Aside from its strong Indian influence, the mosque is known to many for its signature 'Bubur Lambuk', given only during the holy month of Ramadan to the public for free. Located next to St Michael Institution Ipoh, there are also dorms and rooms available for rent at the mosque.

Its strategic location has made this mosque among the easiest to find. This Indian-Muslim mosque is located at Jalan Seenivasagam, 30450 Ipoh (opposite Ipoh Padang).

Echo tips: This mosque is located a stone's throw from Ipoh's Old Town; a place filled with murals, handmade crafts and unique eateries.



The one with a love story: Panglima Kinta Mosque

Built in 1898, Panglima Kinta Mosque was a work of love by Dato Panglima Kinta Mohamed Yusof as a tribute to his late wife who passed away the same year. It was said this mosque was one of the earliest built in Ipoh along with Kampung Paloh Mosque. The architecture of the place was mainly influenced by the glory of Indian mogul architecture. Located right after Hugh Low street (Jalan Iskandar Shah), it has a central dome and two minarets. The mosque did go through a few restorations but the design has remained unchanged.

Should you wish to visit this place, don't be shocked to see a mausoleum located behind the mosque. The chambers of the mausoleum house the remains of members of Dato Panglima Kinta's family and also Sheikh Tholji, a famous Quran teacher from Egypt who popularised Quranic recitation in Perak.

Panglima Kinta Mosque is located at Jalan Masjid, Kampung Kuchai (before entering Hugh Low bridge, you'll see on the left, a small signboard with the mosque's name).

Echo tips: After visiting, head on to the mural alley located in front of the mosque. All the paintings are done by local artists and residents of Ipoh!



Potential tourist spots

With many mosques currently undergoing renovations and upgrades, it is definitely wise to make mosques a must-visit spot in your itinerary when in Perak. Tourism Perak has launched the 'Perak Mosque Trail' last year where visitors can mosque-hop and

learn about prominent prayer houses along the trail.

With initiatives like this, it is small wonder that for three years running, Perak has recorded the highest number of domestic tourists compared to other states.

Look out for our upcoming stories on Churches and Gurdwaras soon!

News

Manage, Prevent and Control

Over 160 participants from various universities and the health industry attended the annual seminar on tropical medicine and infectious diseases organised by UniKL Royal College of Medicine Perak, Ipoh.

Focusing on the management, prevention and control of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, the one-day seminar was held at Syeun Hotel on Thursday, July 28.

"The theme is timely and of great interest to clinicians, scientists and academicians. New and recurring viral infections like Zika virus, which is transmitted by mosquitoes was detected in Brazil in May 2015. Since then the virus has been detected in 20 other countries in Latin America. This virus can spread to other regions through international travel," Associate Professor Dr Cheah Tong Soon, the organising chairman stated.

"At present, some of the notorious tropical diseases like dengue, malaria, tuberculosis, Japanese Encephalitis, filariasis, leptospirosis and Nipah virus infection can be found in

our region and country," said Associate Professor Dr Syed Rahim Syed Hamid, Dean of Faculty of Medicine, UniKL Royal College of Medicine Perak, Ipoh.

Among the topics of interest discussed during the seminar included Zika virus, status of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia, potential emergence of viral infections during the current El Nino phenomenon, hospital-acquired infection, zoonotic diseases, food safety and current trends in vaccination.

Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, the Executive Councillor for Health, Public Transport, Non-Islamic Affairs, National Integration and New Villages, explained, "Infectious diseases are a leading cause of illness and death throughout the world. The enormous diversity of these microbes, combined with their ability to adapt and evolve in changing populations, environments, practices and technologies, offers a serious threat to public health. It will, undoubtedly, have an impact on our efforts to prevent and control them.

"I'm told that lately there are some who reject vaccination. This is something the medical fraternity worries about. Infectious diseases, which has been eradicated via vaccination, have now resurfaced. Doubts or inquiries on vaccination should be clarified before jumping to conclusions and rejecting it outrightly," Mah told reporters during the media conference that followed.

He reminded outstation participants to savour the taste of famous Ipoh street food and explore the city which has been listed as the sixth must-visit destination in Asia by world renowned travel-guide book, Lonely Planet.

Mei Kuan



Announcement

Swimming Pool Complex Closed

The Ipoh City Council swimming pool complex will be closed effective Monday, August 8 for upgrading works which will take 19 months.

The pool will reopen on March 1, 2018. Inconvenience caused to users is regretted.

It is hoped that the upgrade will benefit the public, especially participants of the upcoming SUKMA Perak 2018.

Opinion

By Koon Yew Yin

Dangers of Passing Hudud Law

In two months from now, Parliament will be sitting again. What is at stake for the nation is nothing less than our way of life and our Malaysian dream.

This is because a private member's bill to amend the Shariah Court (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 will be tabled and debated at that sitting.

PAS president Hadi Awang has been going around to claim that this bill is only to upgrade the Shariah Courts and that it has nothing to do with non-Muslims.

PAS-oriented analysts and *ulama* leaders have also commented that it is not really a "hudud Bill" and that its passage is only intended to pave the way for PAS to enforce its version of Islamic penal laws in Kelantan. Hence they argue that its effect will be limited.

However, Hadi and his supporters are only trying to fool the public.

Here are my reasons for why all Malaysians – Muslims and non-Muslims – should oppose the bill which unexpectedly was allowed by UMNO to 'potong jalan' or jump the queue during the last parliamentary sitting.

Negative Impact of Hudud Bill Enactment

Here is a summary of its negative impact.

Firstly, the passage of the bill is against the Federal Constitution, the country's supreme law which calls for equality before the law. The proposed bill will destroy this key provision by allowing more criminal offences seen to be against the "precepts of Islam" to be dealt by the Shariah courts and result in two sets of criminal laws for Muslims – the Shariah and the civil law system; as well as two sets of laws for Muslims and non-Muslims.

Secondly, the passing of this bill could pave the way towards further constitutional amendments that could result in Shariah courts superseding civil courts and for the full imposition of *hudud* which includes limb amputation for thieves and flogging in public for adulterers, according to the Kelantan Deputy Menteri Besar, Mohd Amar Abdullah.

Thirdly, if non-Muslims think they will not be affected by the proposed bill, they are sadly mistaken. Already some prominent *ulama* such as Perlis Mufti Asri Zainal Abidin have gone on public record to say that non-Muslims should not be exempted from *hudud*. We have seen unilateral conversions of children from divorces and body snatching by Islamic religious departments. As pointed out by the columnist, Farouk Peru, in his article, "Hudud: Non-Muslims Beware".

"What would happen when a Muslim is convicted for stealing and his non-Muslim partner is caught alongside him? Will he stand by and lose his limb while his partner with great relief goes to jail? Highly unlikely."

To me, this is more than just the camel in the tent scenario. There is good reason to believe that the passing of this bill will embolden the radical Muslim lobby to push for more. It will not stop with the present bill.

If passed, it will take us down a dangerous road and ultimately push us over a precipice. Even liberal Muslims such as Farouk Peru and others are saying this. *Hudud* law belongs to the middle ages not to modern society.

The bill is clearly an attempt by PAS at playing Islamic politics. Taking advantage of the Islamic religious resurgence in Malaysia, it is aimed at reinforcing PAS position in Kelantan and Trengganu as well as pushing UMNO which is presently in a crisis due to the 1MDB and personal donation to the Prime Minister twin scandals to support it so as to retain Malay Muslim support.

But what will happen immediately next when the bill is passed is what we should be worried about.

Expect Economic Disaster if Hudud Bill Passes

The most important reason for Malaysians to oppose the bill is the severe impact on our economic development, and economy and society.

It is a factor which has been given relatively little prominence by local analysts and the media.

However in my opinion, this factor should be deliberated upon and emphasised in the coming Parliamentary debate.

Why I say this is because I have been recently approached by a columnist from a prominent foreign based newspaper for my views on the coming bill. It is clear from this approach made to me that the international community, especially the business community, although we may not be aware of it, is closely watching what will happen after the bill is enacted.

Potential 'Taliban' Nation

If the bill passes through, I predict that the first impact will be in the economic sector and the business community. Both local and foreign investors will reassess their commitment to Malaysia. We can expect many investors to pull out and relocate to the other ASEAN countries or elsewhere.

Once we are internationally branded or labelled as a potential 'Taliban' nation, the ringgit will drop further; foreign investment will dry up; foreign tourist arrivals will be sharply reduced; the stock market will take a big hit and that will be the end of our ambition to join the ranks of developed nations.

Let me warn PAS and UMNO parliamentarians.

Don't try to fool the nation that this is simply a minor change in the country's legal system for Muslims. The ripple effects and consequences on our economy – which is already not doing well – will be incalculable.

Announcement

Family Wellness Club will be organising a 3-day workshop on 'Financial Literacy for Young Working Adults', in collaboration with Money Tree Ipoh Garden and i-Gen XYZ Financial group.

The workshop aims to teach participants essential money management skills that will help them to better manage their personal and family finances. It is open to young working adults aged from 21-35 years and will be held on 3 consecutive Friday nights in August 2016, namely **12/8/2016, 19/8/2016 & 26/8/2016**, from 8pm-10pm at Banyan Spa, No.40 Jalan Raja Dihilir, 30350 Ipoh.

Places are limited and on a first come first serve basis.

Registration is free

Call **05 242 6866** (Denise)
between 10.30am-7pm to register.



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Raya Open House & Tree Planting at Bandar Baru Sri Klebang



With tree-planting as it's main theme the Bandar Baru Sri Klebang (BBSK) Raya open house was definitely a memorable gathering for those who attended. Emphasising on the green concept, the tree-planting session was led by Kinta Properties's Director, Ms Chong Wai Lin and the General Manager, Mr Lim Kam Foo. Kinta Properties Management provided 300 over Eugenia plant seedlings. Visitors and the staff of Kinta Properties had a great time together in leaving their Green Footprint and making the community a better place. "We want to encourage people to appreciate nature. With the tree-planting, I hope people will realise the importance and beauty of greening," said Kinta Properties' sales manager, Wong Hoong Wah.

The Raya event was held at Aspen Show Houses



on Sunday, July 17, from 9am till noon. There were a variety of fun activities and attractions such as *ketupat* making, inai drawing, caricature and lucky draws. Games such as balloon-darting and buzz wire kept the children entertained for the day. Booths dealing in Tupperware, Pizza Hut meals and Melilea Health products added to the activities of the day.

Lucky visitors of the day walked away with bread maker, slow cooker, blender and complimentary petrol



vouchers.

Kinta Properties Team would like to thank all participants on that day and looks forward to seeing you again in their next event.

Community

Ninth Car-Free Day

The good thing about Car-Free Day is having the road all to yourself. On Sunday, July 24, Ipoh City Council held its ninth Car-Free Day from 7am to 10am with Hari Raya merriment as the theme.

The designated road, Jalan Raja Dihilir, was filled with evergreen Raya songs. Well over 6000 people joined in the fun. Bicycles, roller skates and the latest craze, hover-boarding were the order of the day.

People were everywhere, some walking, some jogging. They greeted one another as they passed by. Among the activities organised were aerobics, a lion dance and an environmental awareness campaign by non-governmental organisation, Ipoh City Watch. Its objective was to make people aware of the importance of cleanliness.

Mayor Dato' Zamri Man participated by cycling around with his wife and some of the council's senior staff.

"You know what I like most about Car-Free Day? It's seeing people of all ages and races on one street, enjoying each other's company. I like watching two complete strangers talking to each other and having a sense of connection with one another," said Zamri to reporters.

The thing that made the event more spectacular was the costumes the public wore based on the theme. Some of them were dressed in *baju melayu* and *baju kurung* while walking and cycling.

"I'm glad that more and more people are taking part. I hope the number of participants will increase at the next session. It's more than just a family outing, it's about bringing the community together," Zamri added.

Khaleeja



Eye Care for Students

The 'Magnum Youth in Action' is a corporate social responsibility initiative by Magnum Corporation Sdn Bhd to encourage its employees to contribute back to the community.

This year, the team embarks on a campaign entitled 'I Can See Clearly Now' to bring eye care to primary schools and welfare homes nationwide. The team will raise funds to provide spectacles for deserving children who require corrective vision.

For Ipoh, a total of 60 students in SJK (C) Pasir Pinji (1) and 45 students in SJK (T) Chettiar were given spectacles free of charge recently.

Mei Kuan

Wellness

Allergies Among Babies and Toddlers

With increasing cases of children with allergies, Ipoh Echo spoke to Dr Cheong Hon Kin, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital's Resident Paediatrician (Neonatologist) to discover how to overcome and control allergies among babies and toddlers.

The new allergy epidemic is dominated primarily by food allergies from eggs and milk. As egg allergy is most often present at birth, there is a possible role of prenatal factors. Epidemiology suggests two theories that could answer the question of how children get allergies. First is the Hygiene Hypothesis and second is the Intrauterine Programming Hypothesis.

According to Dr Cheong, the Hygiene Hypothesis avers that children who have diverse gut flora, are vaginally born, lives in a farming environment, have older siblings, attended day care in the first year of life, have previous infection like Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and have been vaccinated, are less susceptible to allergies. In other words, this group of babies are protected against allergies.

"The first born has a higher probability of allergy as allergy is a disease of small family and a plague of the first born. In both conditions, early life is crucial and determines the development of allergy. Today's children are offspring of children who were allergenic at the end of the 20th century," added Dr Cheong.

Allergy symptoms often start with atopic dermatitis and food allergies and can be detected as early as 2 months old followed by asthma at 3 years old and allergic rhinitis at approximately 5 years old. Despite our advanced technology and advancement in

the world of medicine, the only proven way to prevent allergies is in the form of supplementation of probiotics during pregnancy and in breastfeeding women and infants, which reduces the risk of eczema including atopic eczema that is common among infants. However, supplementation of probiotics is not proven to reduce the risk of



Dr Cheong Hon Kin, Resident Paediatrician (Neonatologist)

other allergic diseases in children. There are ways to treat allergies like atopic eczema, asthma and allergic rhinitis. Parents can try weaning diet no later than 24 weeks old nor earlier than 16 weeks old in terms of allergy risk reduction.

Dr Cheong also discussed the role of breastmilk in minimizing allergies in children. Breastfeeding definitely is encouraged for all newborns as breast milk is rich in nutrients, probiotics and prebiotics. In non exclusively breastfed infants (formula fed infants), World Allergy Organisation (WAO) guidelines suggest that prebiotic supplementation has a role to play to reduce allergies.

Readers who are keen on learning more about allergies or other related medical issues among babies and children can set up an appointment with Dr Cheong Hon Kin at 05-2408777 (ext 8027) or visit his clinic at Suite 1-16, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital, 26, Jalan Raja Dihilir, 30350, Ipoh Perak.



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Ladang Care Community Development Extension Centre for the Orang Asli

The core work of the Malaysian Christian Association for Relief (Malaysian CARE) is with Orang Asli communities. Ladang Care is a 15-acre farm started in 2007 where research, demonstrations and training on sustainable agriculture is conducted. The construction of new facilities in Ladang Care, which started early this year, is now more than midway to completion. Malaysian CARE are currently working with 31 villages.

They are constructing buildings: two family blocks, one male dormitory block and one female dormitory block and one community block to increase classroom and lodging facilities so that they can train more people. The expansion includes a new community education development centre for indigenous education for Orang Asli children.

Malaysian CARE has raised RM1.3 million through various fundraising efforts and contributions from faithful donors. There is still a shortfall of RM500,000. They are appealing for contributions toward this work through sponsorship or advertisement in the Souvenir Programme for Ladang Care Open Day & Thanksgiving Celebration on **October 22** (see flyer announcement on the side of this page).

Ladang Care Open Day & Thanksgiving Celebration on **October 22** (Saturday), 10am to 2pm at Ladang Care, Chenderiang, Perak. Live performances, music, OA games competition, prizes, game booths and food galore. Shuttle service from Pusat Latihan Khidmat Negara, Kem Sentosa (GPS 4.310083, 101.232556) provided. For coupons and information, contact: Nicholas Perera (Klang Valley) **03 9058 2102 ext. 504** or Stanley Lim (Kinta Valley) **012 588 1925**. Email: openday@malaysiancare.org.

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Fennie Yap

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[2] Practice as Clinical Nutritionist, a Nutrition Product Consultant, Nutrition Advisor & Trainer
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Education

Tertiary Advisory Group PLT

“It started around November last year when we were talking with one of the partners of this company and the topic on education arose. Being passionate about education, we all agreed to do something different for the industry,” said Heah Hock Hin, one of the co-founders of *Tertiary Advisory Group* (TAG).

From being a topic that was only discussed over coffee, TAG was formed in a couple of months and started its activities by signing up with some local institutions and even participated in a few school fairs and organised an education open day.

TAG's aim is to provide a growth platform to nurture secondary students right from the beginning till they get into their dream universities, wherever that may be. They are here to help students get a clearer picture and direction of what they want.

“Most of the students we encounter are completely blank about their future. They don't know where to go, they don't have a proper career path and we want to change that,” another one of the co-founders, Chim Weng Kong said.

The local colleges they are working with are Distd College and Advance Tertiary College (ATC). Distd is well known for their A-Level programmes whereas ATC is well known for their law programme. In this short while of TAG's founding, TAG has signed up with York St John University in the UK and have managed to establish a top up degree programme between ATC and York St John where ATC's diploma students can get a UK Business degree by just spending an additional year in UK after completing their Business Diploma programmes.

Working with other partner agencies, TAG is also able to offer choices of Universities in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and China to name a few.

Without charging anything, the services they provide are counselling, university and visa applications, flight and accommodation arrangements, interpreting and translation, preparatory classes, as well as seminars and training.

“We're all very experienced in the industry so we know what the job requirements will be like five years from now, something the students might not see at this point,” continued Chim.

They also conduct MUET classes, where the lecturer is one of the examiners of the actual exam.

“Another one of our objectives is also to let students experience the university atmosphere. It's a tuition centre, with our staff engaging them and with the brochures we provide, students will get some ideas of what they actually want, depending on their budget,” Heah added.

Students who are interested can walk in to their office situated at 8A, 1st Floor, Jalan Greentown 3, Greentown Nova, Ipoh or visit their page at [fb.com/tertiaryadvisorygroup](https://www.facebook.com/tertiaryadvisorygroup) or call 016 555 6811 for further details.



Andre Ng, Mok Wye Kheong, Chim Weng Kong and Heah Hock Hin (from left to right)

Sunway College Achieves Excellent Results



On Thursday, July 21, Sunway College Ipoh's School of Accountancy organised an impromptu celebration for its students who had exceeded the world's passing rate for Certified Accounting Technician (CAT) and Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) papers. The students scored an incredible 100 per cent pass rate.

Sunway has been a registered and approved learning partner with ACCA for over 10 years now. They were among the first institutions in Perak to be awarded the Platinum status in 2014.

There are two sessions of ACCA and CAT held every six months, in June and December. These are the two major papers. ACCA introduced two more papers recently, which are not as significant as the other two.

In order to maintain the Platinum status, the college needs to meet the passing rate of 80 per cent every time. There are nine papers for CAT and 14 for ACCA.

“The moment we got the results, we knew we had to celebrate. It's so overwhelming, as we only met the requirements before. Now that we've surpassed the world rate, it's definitely worth celebrating,” said programme coordinator and lecturer, Liza Wong.

Celebrating with the cutting of the famous Nancy Chong cake, both students and lecturers acknowledged their achievement. The occasion was made more meaningful as one of the lecturers' birthday fell on the auspicious day.

The programme has about 200 students and nine lecturers. Besides having to meet the requirements, ACCA monitors the college closely. They check on the college management, students' attendance and the facilities offered.

“Education is more than just excelling in examinations. Here in Sunway, we are proud to say that we also implement skills in students which will make them a well-rounded person. This is not only to celebrate the exceptional results but to motivate the juniors and to remind them that it is achievable,” said Adawiah Norli, Principal of Sunway College.

Khaleeja

AMETIS' Project Kerala 2016

ASIA Metropolitan International School (AMETIS) places immense emphasis on developing learners who excel academically and are competent socially as global citizens via its outreach programmes.

The AMETIS team, consisting of 16 learners, four staff members and a parent volunteer, carried out their programme in Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan from Tuesday, July 5 to Sunday, July 10. Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan is a registered charity based in the state of Kerala, India. Through its five centres and various community-based projects, the organisation primarily operates to help children at risk: street children and youth, child labourers, child beggars, lost children, children in conflict with the law, abused children, abandoned children, runaways and children from dysfunctional family environments.

The team spent two days at one of the centres for boys aged between 11 and 14 in Cochin. They conducted various activities such as language games, sing-along sessions, painting and colouring.

Thanks to generous donations from parents and friends of AMETIS, the team was able to bring along gift bags for the children brimming with stationery and foodstuff. Plus, a cash donation of INR 80,000 was made to the organisation.

For the learners from AMETIS, it was an invaluable experience.

AMETIS offers the Cambridge International Primary and Secondary programmes of study, leading up to the IGCSE. Enrolment is open for September intake. For more info, please call **05 241 3141** or visit its website at www.ametis.edu.my.

Ed



Green-Themed Student Camp

Running on the theme, ‘Let's Go Green to Get Our Globe Clean’, SMK Raja Perempuan organised its annual student camp recently. Form 1 to Form 6 students representing 13 schools from Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Terengganu and Perak took part.

Go-green-oriented competitions included public speaking, solar car, best practices, green couture, hands on challenge and multimedia-video making.

One of the highlights was the ‘Ecological Thinking Save Our River’ programme held at Kinta Riverfront and Taman DR Seenivasagam. The pupils cleaned up the river, cleared rubbish from the drains, threw mud balls into the river to enhance the quality of the river, checked the water pH level, carried out pollution mapping and planted wetland plants. Then, it was followed by a brief talk on sewage treatment by Indah Water Konsortium.

The one-day camp also featured exhibitions by various governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Besides the camp, SMK Raja Perempuan has always stayed true to going green by having an organic farm, a “no paper, plastic and polystyrene” canteen policy, rain-harvesting barrels and recycling bins in the school.

Mei Kuan

News

Food Truck Garden

People of Remarkable Talent's (PORT) organising a "food truck garden" within its premises will help expose food-truck culture to Ipohites. It will also help create a healthy competitiveness among the handful of operators. On Friday, August 5 a Garden Festive Celebration was held at the facility's compound beginning from 8pm till midnight.

Apart from helping the operators gain extra income, it was also an opportunity to promote Ipoh for the upcoming Visit Perak Year (VPY) 2017.

The food truck garden at PORT is the only one of its kind in Ipoh. With its laid-back ambience, it is the perfect place to hangout.

"Using trucks, lorries and even buses to sell food is definitely unique. PORT's initiative to help these young entrepreneurs by providing them with a conducive location is laudable," said Dato' Nolee Ashilin, Executive Councillor for Arts, Culture, Tourism, Communication and Multimedia. Nolee is also a member of PORT's board of directors.

The food truck garden operates on Friday, Saturday and Sunday each week. The main players are *Freddo*, *Ali Yeh Yeh*, *The Hut*, *Meltshack*, *Chef Uni Ayam Garam*, *Puffer on the Move*, *The Golfer Chef*, *Sneak Out*, *Coffee Ride* and *Old School Coffee*.

Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir was among the VIPs attending the function that night. He gave away plaques to the community leaders and partners of PORT.

"Ipoh has been receiving a number of visitors especially from Singapore. They come all the way here to taste Ipoh's street food," said Nolee.

"Besides food there are other attractions to see. An influx of tourists will contribute to the state's economy," she said.

Rosli Mansor



Gadgets for Rangers



In conjunction with World Ranger's Day, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) contributed hi-tech gadgets worth RM28,477 to the Perak State Parks Corporation (PTNPK) on Monday, August 8.

Among the items given were a satellite phone, global-positioning-system devices, camping equipment, walkie-talkies and cameras.

Acting General Manager Noor Asmah Mohd Nawawi said that the gadgets will help its staff, especially the rangers, in observing and surveying the Royal Belum State Park.

Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Multimedia and Communications, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi received the gifts on behalf of the corporation.

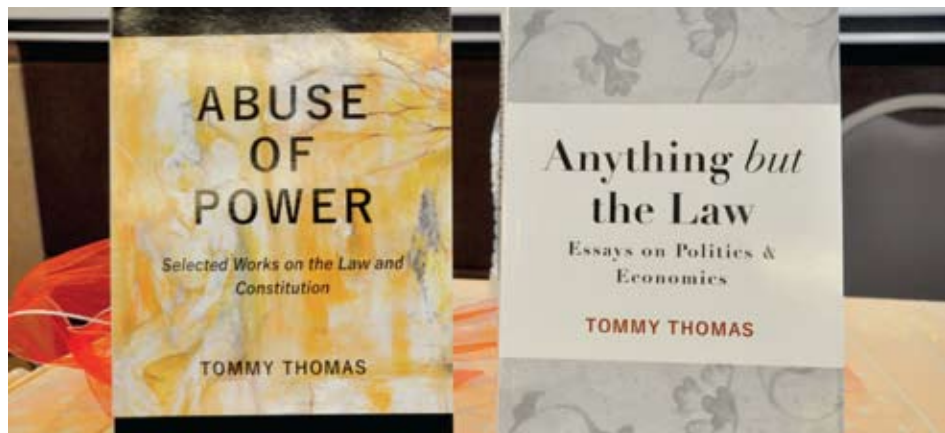
"The Royal Belum State Park has one of the oldest rainforests in the world. It's an important area for biodiversity conservation and preservation in Malaysia. These much-needed items will help ease surveillance work, especially in ensuring that wild animals in the park live freely without any external threats," said Nolee in her acceptance speech.

They were presented by WWF's Head of Conservation, Norizan Mohd Mazlan at the State Secretariat Building, Ipoh.

"I wish to thank WWF for its contributions. This is their second time to PTNPK. Besides maintaining the biodiversity and conserving the environment, the gadgets are a form of protection to the rangers themselves," she added.

Rosli Mansor

Books by Tommy Thomas



Perak Academy hosted the launch of two books, 'Abuse of Power' and 'Anything but the Law', penned by prominent lawyer Tommy Thomas on Friday, July 29 at Cititel Express Hotel, Ipoh. It was followed by an enlightening talk on political and legal governance in a violent and dangerous world which are impacting us today.

Chan Kok Keong, vice chairman of Perak Academy, explained the objectives of the academy in his welcome address, "The answer is in two words, 'do good' without any thought of ever being repaid. The academy provides access to worthwhile knowledge with a personal touch. Our topics are wide-ranging, from geography to botany, from history to issues affecting our economy."

Tommy Thomas ranks among the best of constitutional law advocates in Malaysia. Committed, charismatic and vocal, he is without doubt one of nation's foremost lawyer and thinker, as attested to by his brilliant legal career, the breadth and depth of his dissertations, writings and talks on law, nation, institutional building, financial liberation and globalisation.

"On a simplistic level, as one looks at the new headlines, exaggerated on the internet and Facebook, anybody would think that this is a really dangerous and violent world we

live in. I suggest that the reality is something different. If you look back, every century, in the last 4000-5000 years of human civilization, has been violent. What is happening today is nothing compared to genocide, colonialism, slavery, comparatively speaking," said Tommy, who has over four decades of service in the Malaysian Bar, to the attentive audience.

"Change is constant in politics and national affairs, as it is in everybody's life. So the big question really is, how does a society manage or accommodate change? How do you deal with change? And I suggest, in all these difficult periods, if one looks at what is happening in the UK, and you will then see a shining example of an accountable governance in functioning democracies. The people voted fairly and the prime minister respected the people's will. Just absolutely peaceful and effortlessly," he added, referring to Brexit.

Also present was guest of honour, P. Subramaniam, a well-known figure in the Methodist schools in the country. Commending Tommy's two intellectual works, he said, "His presentation has been forthright, analytical and has had an attitudinal perception as in Shakespeare's Macbeth, to be bold and resolute."

Articulating without fear or favour on issues of immense public interest, the author takes the readers on a journey in his books to confront our fears and our hopes and to ponder on the kind of nation we want Malaysia to be. 'Abuse of Power' features selected works on the law and constitution while 'Anything but the Law' is packed with essays on politics and economics. Priced at RM50 each, it is available at all bookstores in town.

Mei Kuan



Correction

In the Ipoh Echo issue 240 (August 1-15, 2016) under the title 'SMK Menglembu Visits Old Folks Home', the name of the school is **SMK Seri Keledang Menglembu, Ipoh**, and the name of the teacher who assisted the programme is **Ms Yong Oi Chin**, and not as printed. The error is regretted.

My Say

By Jerry Francis



Replacement of the 'Taj Mahal of Ipoh' Fails to Shine

The combination of the iconic Ipoh Railway Station and its Dataran KTM has often been affectionately described as the "Taj Mahal of Ipoh".

It is because the Moorish architectural Railway Station and the once beautifully landscaped garden with fountains located in front of it had always presented a picture postcard sight to visitors.

This is no longer so. The Ipoh City Council decision to redevelop the site instead of restoring it has created "a boring and barren sight".

It has also failed to meet the need for more parking spaces and ease traffic congestion. The estimated 100 parking bays in the area are insufficient as the railway station is increasingly becoming busy as the frequency of the electric train service increases.

Vehicles parked at the far end of the railway station are having difficulties to get back to the main entrance to pick up passengers, especially the underprivileged and senior citizens and their luggage. There is also no proper taxi stand.

Much emphasis was given to open space, and this encourages youths to skateboarding and cycling around the Dataran ground causing damages to the tiled flooring and plants.

What's more, at one stage it was like a "pesta ground" at night until the city council stopped enterprising folks from setting up stalls for hiring skate-boards and battery-operated mini cars and motor-scooters.

Now, hardly five years since it was redeveloped, the new-look Dataran KTM appears to have been neglected.

The wall of the raised platform around the Upar Tree (*Antiaris Toxicaria*) from which the city got its name, was superimposed with pictures and inscribed with information of all the tourists' attractions in Perak has faded.

I wonder whether even its main attraction, the multi-coloured-lights-synchronised-fountain, which had been drawing spectators nightly, is functioning.



This is the result of our culture of poor maintenance. Unlike most public parks outside the country, the city council has failed to ensure that they were being continuously maintained and preserved.

It appears that every five to 10 years, the city council has to source for funds to redevelop its public parks as most of the features would have stopped functioning or are damaged. It is not because of the shortage of manpower, but poor maintenance.

In a hasty effort to spruce up the Dataran KTM, the city council had pathetically erected six mini theme

gardens. The gardens, which include a Winter Theme complete with a snowman, appear like misfits and are slowly being neglected.

The city council should look into appointing a consulting professional landscaping company to turn the Dataran KTM, which is surrounded by a war memorial, and Colonial-style Town Hall and High Court buildings, into a beautification project of which the city can be proud.

The Dataran is the first place that visitors to the city will see on their arrival by train. This is also the first image they will record with their cameras and the starting point of the "Heritage Trail" of the city. Therefore, it is important that the city council maintain a good "first impression" of the city.

Even the railway station building needs a major facelift. Apart from the a renovated platforms, the rest of its areas is not being utilized for useful economic purposes.

If KTM has no other development plans, the state authorities should step in to make good use of the building. The state authorities should explore the idea of converting the unoccupied space into a restaurant cum hotel, tourists' information centre or an art centre, etc. It's a sheer waste of economic space if this heritage building is not put to good use and spruced up.

The image of Ipoh will be tarnished if the city council continues to ignore the upkeep and utilisation of the Ipoh Railway Station and its Dataran KTM as a beautification project.

Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 255 2181**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

Sharpened Word – Short Film Fest, Saturday **August 20**, 2pm-5pm, Old Andersonians' Club, 932 Jalan Hospital, Ipoh. Guest speaker: Hassan Muthalib, the maestro and godfather of our Malaysian film industry. For further details, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta/>.

World Sight Day 2016 Free Eye Screening organised by Chew Eye Specialist & Surgery Sdn Bhd on **August 21** at Taiping Mall, from 10am to 3pm. The aim for the eye screening is to increase general public awareness on blindness and visual impairment. For more information, contact **05 807 6980** (Taiping) or **05 547 0008** (Ipoh).

Perak Community Specialist Hospital Talk: 'Enhancing Natural Beauty & Restoring Functionality'. Saturday **August 27**, from 3pm -5pm at Meru Valley Golf Resort (Function Room). The talk will be conducted by Yeoh Tze Ming (Consultant Plastic, Reconstructive, and Aesthetic & Hand Surgeon). Highlights include one-to-one Q & A Session with Dr Yeoh and three lucky draw giveaways consisting of Wrinkle Erasing Treatment. Admission is free, inclusive of high tea. Limited seats available. For reservations, contact **017 387 4794** (Shireen) before August 23.

Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Perak Grand Prix Chess Championship 2016: 6th Leg Final – Ipoh – Syeun Hotel, Ipoh – Sunday August 28. Sponsored by Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad. The entry form and a copy of pay-in-slip MUST be faxed to **05 547 5033** (office hours) or email to caturperak@hotmail.com not later than Thursday, August 25. The organiser reserves the right to limit the number of entries to the first 200. Pay to Persatuan Catur Negeri Perak (Maybank Account No: 5-08177-68448-3). Direct submission of entry form with cash payment to Yunus **010 221 8129**. Webpage: <http://perakchess.blogspot.com/>.

Methodist Girls' School Ipoh inaugural musical concert, "A Night of Musical Vignettes" features performance from multiple arts and cultural centres, as well as academic institutions. Will be staged on Friday, **September 2** and Saturday, **September 3** at the auditorium of JKKK Perak from 8pm. Tickets, priced at RM 30, can be obtained from the school. For details, call Linda Zakaria **012 517 6940** or Zainal Akyan **013 926 6939**. Proceeds will be used for facilities upgrade and the purchase of musical instruments for the school.

Perak Community Specialist Hospital (PCSH) Antenatal Seminar, September 3 (Session 2) from 2-5pm, at the hospital's conference room. Topics for Session 2: family planning, entire delivery process and healthy diet and nutrition during pregnancy. There will be a 15-minute antenatal exercise regime demonstration whereby expecting mothers will be given the chance to participate using yoga mats & exercise balls. Participation fee for two sessions is RM10 per couple, inclusive of high tea buffet for 2 pax. Contact Ms Shireen at **017 387 4794** for registration.

PWW Fundraising Concert: 'If I Sing'. Organised by Friends of Perak Women for

Women Society (PWW) to help women and children in crisis. **September 3**, 7.30pm at Meditation Garden, The Haven Resort Hotel, Jalan Haven, Tambun, Ipoh. For enquiries, call: PWW at **05 546 9715** or Su Win at **012 288 6888**.

Ipoh Fine Arts Society presents 'A Night of Jazz, Soul and Rock & Roll' featuring Mireia Frutos & Maya Hanum. For the benefit of KHWAN – The Women's Wing of the Haemophilia Society of Malaysia. **September 10** at The Dome, Meru Valley Resort. Dinner at 7pm; Musical Evening at 8pm. For further details, contact: **012 524 0104**, **016 527 2959** or **016 532 1087**.

Noah's Ark Ipoh Rock and Roll Fundraiser Night. Friday **October 7**, 7pm at Kinta Riverfront Hotel. Guest appearance: Harith Iskander. Dress code: Rock and Roll. For enquiries, call Jeya 012 538 6366, Malika **017 575 1556** or Claudia **012 359 0476**.

Nasam Ipoh Food & Fun Fair, Saturday **October 22**, 8.30am-1pm at 9 Lorong Pinji, Off Jalan Pasir Puteh, 31650 Ipoh. For details, call **05 321 1089** (Jennifer).

Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) offers counselling services, for victims of domestic violence, by Mabel Wong our licensed and registered counsellor. PWW also has a crisis intervention support team comprising of para-counsellors. For more information, please call PWW at **05 546 9715**.

Performances of Traditional Songs and Dance every Friday every week at 8pm (except fasting month). Held at Kompleks Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Perak, Jalan Caldwell, Off Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh **every 1st and 3rd Friday; 2nd and 4th Friday** at People's Park. 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**.

Free Arts and Culture Lessons. The Perak Department for Arts and Culture (JKKN Perak) is conducting free music, dance and theatre lessons at its complex along Jalan Caldwell for enthusiasts aged 7 and above. **Traditional dance and music: Every Saturday** from 9.30am to 12pm. **Children's theatre: Every Saturday** from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. **Adult's theatre: Every Tuesday** from 8.30pm to 10.30pm. These lessons will last till the end of the year. For information call Fairus at **018 958 9049** or JKKN Perak at **05 253 7001**.

The Dementia Day-care Centre is open daily from 9am till 5pm. The centre also holds support group meetings every 2nd Saturday and Monday of each month. All carers who have loved 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.

Garden Market @ PORT Ipoh. Friday, Saturday & Sunday nights, 6pm onwards. Food trucks, book, antiques, vintage comics, collectibles, buskers, bundle, pre-loved items, etc. Wayang Pacak on Friday and Saturday nights.

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.

ISPCA and NAI

It appears that the one letter which Ipoh Echo published in their Issue 240 from NAI (Noah’s Ark Ipoh) has unleashed a torrent of outrage from the public. We reprint here some comments from our online website as well as other letters from animal lovers. Looks like Ipoh Echo is really acting as its intended mission of “Your Voice in the Community”.

I was a life member and a previous committee member of ISPCA, and was always a supporter of ISPCA until the new management came in. I have since diverted my donations to other animals NGOs that are helping animals with integrity and sincerity.

Now I read the “tug-of-war” between ISPCA and NAI in the newspapers with a heavy heart especially to the cats and dogs who have no voice of their own to speak out.

In the recent NAI’s letter in your Ipoh Echo, I strongly believe that NAI is correct to say ISPCA should stop intimidating them and allow them to continue to care for the animals there. NAI has the right to voice their concern over the welfare of the dogs especially when ISPCA should be as it is in their name – Ipoh Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. NAI is just acting properly for the welfare of the animals and it is not a criticism.

It makes me wonder why ISPCA is taking this with so much vengeance by building up walls, cutting the electricity and water and asking NAI to get out. It seems they also wanted to evict the shelter helper who has been living there since ISPCA has moved there.

This is enough to question what is behind their action?? Why don’t they, for the welfare of the animals, sit down and discuss amicably.

Thank goodness I am no longer a supporter of ISPCA. I had my doubts quite some time ago and for the following reasons: (Note: At the last AGM they did not present any accounts audited or unaudited – where is the transparency?).

1. Why the drastic reduction of the dogs from 300 to 120?
2. When I asked at the AGM why their FB reported over 250 dogs in the shelter when in fact there are around 150 and what is their secret for being able to adopt so many in one month? The President said that, that is how they can get more food donated for the dogs by quoting more.
3. Why the adopters of the poodles in 2014 were not given a receipt?
4. Why all genuine volunteers are not allowed to continue their service at the shelter? Only when its open day they open their gates.
5. Why the Vice President/Shelter Manager is being paid over a thousand ringgit? Isn't that a volunteer position? During the previous management, the then Vice President/shelter Manager was not paid.
6. Why sack the previous auditors who are animal lovers and giving them free service in mid term without approval from members?

There are many more.

I appeal to the public that you should think why the new management of ISPCA are acting in this way.

Mai Palmer

I adopted my cats from NAI six months ago and they have grown to be the loves of my life. As a Muslim we are taught to love all life, so I would’ve wanted to adopt a pup from ISPCA had I not been turned off by the standoffish lady supervisor and her foreign kennel hand. Besides, the dogs looked neglected unlike the cats and rescued dogs at NAI. My Muslim friends and I vote that NAI be left to care for the cats and manage the cattery as they’ve been doing an excellent job up to now while the folks caring for the dogs at ISPCA had better clean up their act before we petition for the entire committee to resign!

Nor Abdul

I am a strong advocate and supporter of animal welfare. I urge the Dept of Housing, Planning, Community and local Government, the Ipoh City Council, ROS, DVS, SPCA (Selangor) and the RSPCA UK to look into the books and welfare of the dogs and animals under the current committee of ISPCA. A SPCA must always strive to be a well-respected and TRUSTED animal welfare non profit organisation. Something is obviously rotten in the present ISPCA which requires immediate attention and a revamp; the only way to regain the lost trust and respect of its supporters and animal lovers throughout the country.

Michelle Soo

All I can say is, the President of NAI was able to tell me the history of EVERY Resident cat in the cattery! I am not talking about 10-20 cats, the whole cattery. That is how an Animal Shelter should be managed...with dedication, love and kindness, sincerity and hard work. Cannot say much of the welfare of the resident doggies at ISPCA at the moment.

LSY

Well said, have always wanted to commend NAI for turning the ISPCA cattery into a model for catteries in this country. In fact, I’m sure it will also be lauded by our RSPCA of UK who used to be very supportive of the old ISPCA. The old ISPCA though crowded and many dogs had to live in cages held true to a no kill policy and each dog was accorded TLC by the previous management and volunteers. That’s why it used to be easy to raise RM100k and above each fund raising dinner event because the supporters were ensured that the dogs and cats would be well fed and accorded proper care though confined. They were generally happy carefree dogs proven by their excited barks and hearty appetites whenever volunteers brought treats. These days there are narrow runs to replace cages, crude brick walls to replace wire mesh but a grim silence greets you as you near the shelter. The ISPCA FB would have one believe that it's the best place in the world for the dogs. The present committee boasts about projects after projects to woo the public but in reality, rarely answer calls for rescue, turn away animal loving workers and volunteers, install CCTVs as if there is much to rob at the ISPCA, give notice to evict a part of its NGO, the cattery which is doing a much better job than they are and employ a manageress who is so obviously ignorant about animal welfare and does not have a heart at all for animals. The casualty rate is high as dogs are grossly neglected and malnourished. The numbers of inhabitants have drastically reduced in a dubious manner as there are no proper documentation on the process of adoption nor have there been any transparency in how public funds and donations are disbursed unlike the AGMs of the past where past committees always tabled the accounts and remained above board about how and where public money was spent. No wonder the donations and sponsorships are dwindling. Isn't it going against the very reason for the existence of a society which prevents cruel treatment of animals!

Dr

I was a former committee member and active volunteer in ISPCA before the new management took over in April 2016. From April 2016 to current date I heard that many dogs have died under their care. I urge the authorities and Dept of Veterinary Services to step in and look into the welfare of the dogs in the ISPCA shelter immediately. Please do something before more dogs die!! Further, whoever complains about them are kicked out and their latest victim are the cats in ISPCA cattery which is being managed by NAI. Instead of thanking NAI, they are evicting them.

AMS

Agree with you entirely in regard with whoever complains are being kicked out including unable to renew their ordinary membership.

MCT

It is with deep sadness that we read about the spat between ISPCA & Noah's Ark of Ipoh, that is, NAI in the Ipoh Echo issue 240. If our No. 1 official of ISPCA is keen on resolving the problems, he should agree to meet up with NAI! Ignoring their calls and then issuing threatening letters to evict the cats is absolutely not fair.

Before I start, I would like to stress that I am not a member of NAI but have been an ISPCA member for years. For the past two years, we've been very, very disappointed with the new management. Yes, there were some cosmetic changes to the shelter but they were all at the expense of the animals.

There are a few questions which some members and I would like to pose to our ISPCA Committee:

1. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS...Why is it no accounts were presented for the past two years, even at the AGM!!! Ms VP (our Manageress + No. 2 official) had stressed that there were reduced donations to the society, BUT AN NGO MUST HAVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY. Any records of funds collected at events? For example, annual dinners, public donations, adoption funds??????? Our members have been asking for two years now!! No figures were presented! Do not wonder why, and do not blame others if donations are dwindling (please do not blame NAI either).
2. DONATIONS...Donations by the public are for the animals, cats included, right?? Otherwise, the name should be changed to ISPCD, and I believe donors want the cats to benefit as well. Cutting the electricity and water supply, and sending notice to evict them is totally uncalled for! Most members do not know that your committee has been cutting monetary support to the cats, otherwise, the society will receive even less donations. (On the contrary, NAI must be given credit for looking after the welfare of the cats with great love and devotion).
3. PUBLIC FUNDS... all donations, every single cent, should go to the welfare of the animals, right? Not for hiring a manageress (our VP), installing CCTVs, erecting walls, printing T-shirts, publicity works, etc. All these are not for the welfare of the animals. It amazed us that the walls erected are to protect the doggies! What is there to steal? Once you approach the gate of the shelter, the barking of the dogs will keep any thief away. Moreover, to get into ISPCA is absolutely not easy. One has to go through a columbarium (which is gated and guarded) and the shelter is located by the mountain side where snakes are aplenty! Is it necessary for a wall to go up?
4. VOLUNTEERS... Why bar the entry of our volunteers who have been volunteering for years? To say that they took pictures of sick doggies to run down the society is not true. They can take photos of any old diseased dogs from the street to post instead of traveling several km, wasting time, energy and petrol! It must be the truth then, otherwise why is the committee so sensitive as to put up a sign 'NO CAMERAS ALLOWED'? To counter their lies, throw open the gate and welcome all and sundry to ISPCA at all times. Let people take photos of the HAPPY & WELL CARED FOR DOGGIES instead of barring everyone from entering, even ISPCA members. Visitors are only allowed when the place is tidied up, so appointments are necessary!(By the way, by volunteers, I meant those who go in to groom, cut nails, bath them, interact, getting their hands & feet dirty, that type of voluntary work!! Not 'organised photo sessions' with the press present for publicity, for example, going up the roof, ducking into the drain to do rescue work, etc.)
5. DOGGY POPULATION... has been drastically reduced! If the No. 1 Official of ISPCA said that they practise a NO KILL POLICY, please examine your conscience! From 300 to 100+ dogs????? Hmm...mm.....ok, the number of dogs has been reduced, so why is the society not accepting abused and injured animals? Two and a half years ago, the society could afford to house and feed 300 over doggies PLUS THE CATS. Now that the cats have been under the care of NAI, there should be surplus funds.
6. Members...why are there several memberships not renewed?? Some names even gone missing??

Please enlighten the public and our members who are in the dark. As for NAI, their rescue work is extremely commendable. ISPCA’s rescue work with the animals just cannot be compared with them.

To be fair to NAI, they've been exercising great patience and restraint, despite the unfair treatment and limitations set up by this new committee!

As far as we know, NAI does a lot of:

1. rescue work, daily they are being called to rescue distressed animals as ISPCA could not be reached!!!!
2. they TREAT and board them (at great expense as they don't have a shelter)
3. TNR (trap, neuter & release) which they do about 30-40 animals per month.

Do not be mistaken that WE, members, are enemies of ISPCA. At the end of the day, THE WELFARE OF THE ANIMALS IS OUR PRIORITY AND CONCERN. NO POLITICS AND CERTAINLY NO PERSONAL AGENDA.

A Concerned Member of ISPCA

Only good is being done by the people who volunteer to care for these animals. The ISPCA should be grateful instead of being petty. Complaints that are made should be looked upon as being helpful and in the best interest of the animals. Being mean is out of place here.

Renny Havelock

I’m an ISPCA member and a past dedicated volunteer at the dog blocks for many years until the new management took over. The new management no longer welcomes genuine volunteers who have only the welfare of the dogs and cats at heart and visitors and volunteers have to make an appointment before going into the ISPCA shelter these days. It’s sad indeed that the present management has much to conceal from the public eye. I read with concern the latest crisis involving the cattery. Since NAI was invited to assume management of the cattery, I have noted the progress and tremendous improvements made, the cattery which was once dingy and cramped was transformed into almost a 5-star hotel for cats. On each visit, we would note the dedicated happy faces of volunteers and visitors at the cattery and the happy lively antics and purrs of the once homeless cats! Why then are the cats and their caregivers being treated in such a callous and shabby manner? I think the current committee owes the members and supporters an explanation about their belligerent stand they have chosen to take with regards to the cattery and NAI.

TMC

What is a SPCA without cats? If they are bent on getting rid of the cattery, then they should apply to the ROS to have ISPCA changed to an ISPCD and they can be sure public support towards their cause will dwindle as many donors and supporters are cat lovers who approve of the thriving and happy cats there and well-managed cattery since NAI assumed management of it in 2012. I cannot say the same for the sorry state of the dogs and general premise of the shelter since the present management took over in 2014. It’s heartbreaking to see the dogs thin and sickly and lolling in their own faeces and vomit and the place filthy, smelly and rat infested. The current committee’s priorities appear to be publicity and self promotions than on the welfare of the voiceless animals of the shelter.

Tang

Sport

RPS Hockey Tournament

SMK

Raja Perempuan Ipoh (RPS) hosted its fourth open 9's national hockey tournament over the weekend, July 16 and 17 at the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Stadium, Ipoh.

In a game of hockey, a team has 11 players on the field. In Hockey Nines, however, a team will have nine players on field. The game consists of two halves, 15 minutes each, with a three-minute interval in between.

Seventeen teams participated in this year's hockey tournament. Kuala Lumpur Sport School (KLSS) Titans from SMK Seri Titiwangsa got into the finals with GR Highlanders from SMK Gunung Rapat, Ipoh.

KLSS Wipers and SMK P. Midin from Terengganu were the other teams in the semi-finals. Both games were held simultaneously, making KLSS Titans the overall champion with a score of 4-1 against GR Highlanders. Third place went to KLSS Wipers, followed by SMK P. Midin.

"Hockey symbolises Ipoh. When people talk about hockey, they think of Ipoh. That's why RPS makes efforts to organise this hockey tournament," said Mashidah Abu Bakar, a teacher from RPS.

It was Seri Titiwangsa's second time participating in this hockey tournament. The school sent three teams in total, which were KLSS Juniors, players aged 13 and 14, KLSS Wipers, players aged 13 to 17 and the strongest team, KLSS Titans, players aged 16 and 17.

"The first time we participated we only made it to the semis. This time we came expecting only one win but won two. Despite the shortage of budget, I'm glad my girls' efforts paid off," said coach, Kannagi Arumugam.

Khaleeja



Ipoh International Run 2016

The 21st edition of the annual Ipoh International Run was held on Sunday morning, August 7 at Ipoh City Square. The event, which began at 6.30am, attracted some 7180 participants from Germany, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Ghana, Kenya, Singapore and Malaysia.

The run was divided into four categories based on age, sex and distance, namely, 5km, 7km, 10km and 21km. An entry fee of between RM10 to RM35 was charged for all those taking part.

The blue-ribbon 21km race was partly along the famous Ipoh Heritage Trail, where participants had to run past the Royal Ipoh Club, Ipoh Railway Station, Ipoh Padang, Little India and a major portion of Old Town.

"Having the race along the heritage trail is to encourage participants to visit Ipoh in view of Visit Perak Year 2017. The old colonial buildings are definitely a sight to behold," said mayor, Dato' Zamri Man.

Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Diraja Dr Zambry flagged off the run according to the categories. The 21km distance was flagged off at 6.45am followed by the 10km at 6.55am and the 5km and 7km simultaneously at 7.10am.

While waiting for participants to complete their run, zumba and aerobics sessions were held to kill time. Five cartoon characters namely, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, Minion and one from Frozen joined in the fun.

Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Chess Championship – Ipoh Leg



The Ipoh leg of the 7th Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Chess Championship was held at the Quest International University Perak (QIUP) on Sunday, July 31. The annual championship is organised by the Perak State Chess Association (PCNP) with sponsorship from Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad.

This year, the series of tournaments were previously held in Sungai Siput, Bagan Serai, Kampar and Tapah respectively.

A total of 132 players mostly from Perak, Penang, Selangor and one from as far as the Philippines participated. The seven-round competition started in the morning and ended in the evening. Abu Bakar Martin acted as the chief arbiter.

The winners are:

Open section:

1st Fong Yit San (Kampar)
2nd Jax Tham Tick Hong (Kuala Lumpur)
3rd Fong Yit Ho (Kampar)

Under 17 section:

1st Yeoh Yuan Hui (Penang)
2nd Eng Jia Wei (Penang)
3rd Dharmin a/l Pathamanathan (Ipoh)
Best Perak player: Muhammad Irfan b Fakaruddin (Sg Siput)

Under 12 section:

Putera Amirul Iqmal Rosli (Kg Gajah)
Syed Firdaus Asyraf b Syed Hashim Azmi (Kampar)
Syed Amirul Asyraf b Syed Hashim Azmi (Kampar)
Best Perak player: Muhd Abu Bakar Ahmad (Taiping)

Also present were Chan Swee Loon, president of PCNP, Dr Yee Meng Kheong, advisor of PCNP, Nicholas Goh, the chief operating officer of QIUP and Associated Professor Chandrasegaran Suppiah, also from the university.

The 6th Leg Final will be held on Sunday, August 28 at the Syeun Hotel. The entry form and a copy of pay-in-slip MUST be faxed to **05 547 5033** (office hours) or email to caturperak@hotmail.com not later than Thursday, August 25. The organiser reserves the right to limit the number of entries to the first 200. Pay to Persatuan Catur Negeri Perak (Maybank Account No: 5-08177-68448-3). Direct submission of entry form with cash payment to Yunus **010 221 8129**. Webpage: <http://perakchess.blogspot.com/>.

Mei Kuan

Booths selling snacks and promotional items were erected around the square while the milling crowd, consisting of supporters and curious onlookers, entertained themselves watching the organised events. Everyone had a good time.

Kenyan Chirchir Paul Kipkurui won the men's open 21km category with a time of 1 hour 6 minutes and 38 seconds.

Chirchir won the RM5000 cash prize and a medal. He expressed his gratitude to the organisers and promised to return next year to defend his title.

Khaleeja





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Tasty Addition to Taiping Zoo

“My late maternal grandfather was an expert cook. His cooking talents were inherited by my mother. Among my siblings, I was the only one interested in cooking. I observed her every move in the kitchen since I was little,” said Abdul Ghani Noordin, Managing Director of the **Mergastua Restaurant**.

Mergastua is the latest addition to the Taiping Zoo and Night Safari facility. It took Ghani over two months to transform the old and dilapidated zoo canteen into the top-notch restaurant it is today.

Incidentally, the word “Mergastua” was taken from an old name plaque Ghani found with the following inscription written on it, “Taman Mergastua by Sultan Idris”. It was the zoo’s original name before it was changed to “Taiping Zoo and Night Safari”.

The eatery’s specialties include chicken chop, mee goreng, samosa and nasi goreng kampung. Phase two of the menu will be ready by year’s end. It will be focused on a wide-range of South and South-East Asian dishes, namely from Ho Chi Minh City, Shanghai and from the Indian subcontinent.

As *mee udang* is synonymous with Taiping it will be added to the list with a distinct Mergastua touch, courtesy of Ghani’s ingenuity. The entrepreneur, who has been in the food and beverage industry for well over three decades, exclaimed that cooking to him is more therapy than passion.

“I travel a lot so whenever I eat, I’ll ask the cooks to share their recipes and cooking tips. That’s how I learn to innovate. However, all my cooking is done based on my mother’s techniques,” he enthused.

“I can still recall the aroma of Kopi Kluang going by the brand name, ‘Cap Televisyen’ which my late grandmother brewed when I was little in Johor. The smell sticks till today. And when I found that the factory is still around, I knew I had to get it for my restaurant.”

Local specialties like *lemak cili padi*, *asam pedas lada hitam* and *serunding udang kering* are also served for the less adventurous. Food served is, however, pork and beef free as the restaurant believes in pleasing and serving everybody.

Due to the 1965 separation, Ghani was born in Singapore while his other family members grew up in Malaysia.

Mergastua Restaurant is open daily from 10am to 9pm, on weekdays and 9am till 10pm, on weekends. As Ghani is always on the move, the restaurant is taken care by Yusoff Ghani, General Manager of Mergastua.

“We feel that a restaurant like this is a must in a zoo. It’d be much more convenient for visitors, local and out-station, to have their meals here rather than venture outside,”

said Taiping Municipal Council’s Tourism Education and Outreach Division chief, Puan Hanim Ramly.

Apart from the Mergastua Restaurant, upgrading works are on-going at the enclosures of the marmosets, tamarins, orangutans, chimpanzees, ibexes, sambar deer, tigers, Asian golden cats, gaurs, lowland forest and Australian fauna while a night stall will be built within the African savannah pen.

The upgrades, once completed, will allow visitors to have a better view of the animals and, at the same time, provide some ‘creature comforts’ to the zoo’s precious inhabitants.

Operating a zoo requires strict adherence to the rules and regulations imposed by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, especially on each enclosure’s size.

Dr Kevin Lazarus, Director of Taiping Zoo and Night Safari, has his own plans behind every upgrading. For instance, he added an exercise yard for the orang utans. Therefore, when the primates have disagreements with one another, which might lead to fights, the extra space allows them to cool off.

“We can’t afford to have trees in the enclosures, as trees tend to deteriorate faster when animals use them too frequently. Instead, we build concrete structures which serve the same purpose as a tree for the chimpanzees,” explained Hanim.

Chimpanzees are afraid of water. Thus, during feeding, if their food falls into the water, they will test the depth of the water first before picking it. There is always a reason behind every action and this is amazing.

When the new enclosures are ready and the animals transferred, the older enclosures will be used to house other animals that do not have specific requirements.

The zoo’s staff are a committed lot. They treat all the animals like their own pets. It is against the zoo’s regulations to promote animal shows.

“Putting animals on show is a form of cruelty. Most of us might not think so but such shows are like bribing. I don’t believe in coming to the zoo to watch animals perform antics they don’t normally do in the wild,” said Dr Kevin.

Names of animals on the boards in front of the enclosures are written in five languages, Malay, English, Chinese, Tamil and Arabic. Their scientific names too are also mentioned. At night the boards are lighted up so they are legible. Fun facts are also included to spice things up.

The total cost of the zoo’s upgrading efforts is in the region of RM3 million, with funding coming from the Penang-based Northern Corridor Implementation Authority. Some 90 per cent of the upgrading works have so far been completed.

“Our other aim is to focus on education and conservation. When we’ve a good collection of animal species, we’ll exchange them with other zoos to avoid poaching,” said Hanim.

Khaleeja





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Land size
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2 bathrooms

Waze : Arena Tasek Putra (Tasek Nova)
GPS : 4°39'05.0"N 101°06'37.0"E



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No. Lesen Plan: 13139-1/09-2016/03362 (J) Terengganu: 25-09-2015 - 25-09-2016 No. Permit: 13139-1/09-2016/03362 (J) Terengganu: 25-09-2015 - 25-09-2016 Tarikh Dinyatakan: 2015 32 unit Rumah Bersekat 1 Tingkat Harga Min RM 680,000.00 Maks RM 647,500.00 5% diskaun untuk 12 Bulan Seleksi sekatan kepentingan / Tada

Arts & Culture

Hooi Leng & Friends: Encore Malaysia

Friends of Perak Women for Women (PWW) rallied to organise the "Hooi Leng and Friends: Encore Malaysia" charity concert in benefit of PWW on Sunday, August 7 at The Dome Restaurant of Meru Valley Resort.

"We do not have funding from the government and the lease for the premise we are stationed in is almost finishing. PWW incurs an estimated monthly operating cost of RM10,000," Mabel Wong, the President of PWW highlighted. A total of RM25,000 was raised from the fundraising concert sponsored by Kinta Properties.

Ipoh Echo had an exclusive one-on-one with Hooi Leng, a composer, pianist, recording artist and four-time Grammy Award winner. Born and bred in Ipoh, Hooi Leng emigrated to Washington state, USA seven years ago. Also known by the name Lynn Yew Evers, she had performed on many occasions in Ipoh, KL and Penang, even playing for former prime minister, Tun Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir and the late Sultan Azlan Shah, before she moved to America.

"I was a single mother with three young kids for eight years while I was living in Malaysia and I totally understand how difficult it is for the single mothers and abused women that PWW is supporting. I too was abused verbally and physically. We tend to hide it inside ourselves for fear of the shame it will bring to our families. In our culture, being a single mother is not something glamorous. I'm very glad that there are now advocates going around to counsel and educate these hapless women. It's very meaningful for women to stand up for their rights. During my time, I had to educate myself! It means a lot to me to be able to do this concert for a noble cause in support of PWW," Hooi Leng told Ipoh Echo.

Here's her one precious advice for other single mothers out there, "Be strong, do not be afraid to go out for education and counselling and move on."

When asked what she enjoyed the most about performing, she said, "When I go up to the stage and just start playing, I know it's going to be beautiful."



Having four albums to her name, her latest one, 'Elysian', is equally satisfying having won the Global Music Awards and Akademia Awards. Two of its pieces, 'Bluebird Day' and 'Finding You', were nominated in the Hollywood Music in Media Awards.

The close of 2015 brought Evers to the prestigious Carnegie Hall in New York where she performed selected pieces from her award winning album 'Dawn of Peace', voted January 2016 Best Album in the ambient/instrumental category by Akademia.

October this year will see Lynn return again to Carnegie Hall, an accolade of the highest order for this Malaysian lass who has moved so far away to pursue her passion and yet her heart remains in her home town of Ipoh where she has returned for a worthy cause.

Accompanied by the ensemble comprising local musicians featuring the grand piano (Lynn), flute (Cheryl Lee Foong Xin), saxophone (Foo Cheong Lin who played a most evocative and romantic 'Misty'), double bass (Rester Ng Heng Young and Liew Soon Yee), the guests that night were in for a treat as the 15 compositions she played were mostly from 'Elysian'.

"It tells the story of the last 15 years, from the hardships of being a single mom all the way through starting my new life at America till I saw the light at the end of the tunnel," the amiable Hooi Leng explained. For instance, 'As The Train Leaves' recalls the first encounter between her and her current husband Jeff Evers, at the train station in Kuala Lumpur.

Last but not least, what does she miss the most about Ipoh? "The food! *Nasi lemak*, laksa and all the local delicacies," she cited.

Perak Women for Women is a registered, apolitical, non profit and non governmental organisation set up in 2003 to enhance the status and the lives of women in Perak regardless of race, religion or social background. Besides providing support groups, training and public outreach programmes, PWW also provides a safe house for women and children in crisis. The safe house is a temporary measure to provide a transitional safe place for them to sort out their future plans. All of PWW's services are free and confidential.

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Facebook: [perakwomenforwomen](https://www.facebook.com/perakwomenforwomen).

Mei Kuan