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PROGRESS OF VISIT PERAK YEAR 2017

By Nabilah Hamudin, Leanne Tan and Rosli Mansor

Before you know it, Visit Perak Year (VPY) 2017 is well-nigh past its sixth month. How time flies! Throughout the past few months, aside from the usual advertisements, countless projects and events were organised to boost the number of domestic and foreign tourist arrivals to the silver state. With the sheer amount of blood, sweat and tears put into promoting Perak as a holiday destination, one may wonder whether all the effort and 'hard work' paid off. In this issue, Ipoh Echo examines the progress of VPY 2017.

Continued on page 2



MAPS – a new boost to Perak tourism industry



Taiping – A Town Of Many Firsts

Taiping got its name from the Chinese word "Tai-Peng" meaning everlasting peace. Klian Pauh, its former name, was changed to Taiping soon after the Larut War in 1874. The town, once the capital of Perak, is also known as the "Heritage Town" due to its numerous old buildings.

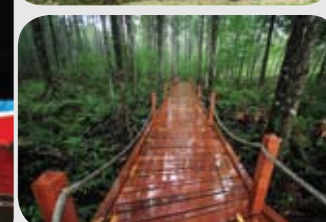
The Taiping Lake Gardens was originally a tin-mining field before it became a public garden in 1880. It was the brainchild of Colonel Robert F. Fawker and the man responsible for developing it was town planner, Charles Compton Reade. The 64-hectare abandoned mining field was donated by Chung Thye Phin for use as a recreational park. It was the first public garden in the country.

Rain trees (scientific name *Samanea saman*) are a major attraction at the gardens. A total of 19 such trees, some over 130 years old, are still standing today. There are ten scenic lakes and ponds altogether.

The Taiping Zoo is the first ever public zoo in Malaysia. It houses over 2000 animals of various species. Watch them in their natural habitats at night for a unique experience.

The setting sun, seen from atop Bukit Larut, 1250m above sea level, is a sight worth watching. Known previously as Maxwell Hill, it is the first hill station in Malaysia. You can either walk up to the summit via a tarred road or take a dizzy ride on a Land Rover for a fee. The distance from base to the top is about 13km (7 miles).

The Matang Mangrove Forest Reserve is an eco-education centre. This 40-acre marshland is home to two mangrove tree species namely, *bakau minyak* and *bakau turap*.



After a visit to the charcoal factory at Kuala Sepetang, explore the enchanting world of fireflies via boat rides along Sepetang River at Kampung Dew.

A dish not to be missed is prawn noodles (*mee udang*) at Kuala Sepetang and crab noodles (*mee ketam*) at Kampung Dew. They are available at eateries in the area. The popular cat fish curry (*kari ikan sembilang*) and *yong tau foo* are also available.

Before leaving Taiping, drop by Changkat Jering day market for fruits, Malay cakes (*kuih muih*) and jungle products. The famous Batu Kurau durians (if in season) will be the perfect takeaway.



More Needs to be Done to Achieve Eight-Million Target



Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi

Progress Overview

According to Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi, the Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Multimedia and Communications, Perak has seen an increase in the number of foreign visitors from around the globe since January this year.

"The number of tourists who flew into Ipoh airport during the first quarter (January to March) this year has increased by 10 per cent compared to the same period last year," said Nolee, adding that this would help the state achieve its eight-million target as a consequence of VPY 2017.

Based on statistics from Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad, Perak witnessed a total of 31,785 tourist arrivals for the first quarter of the year compared to 22,095 last year.

Nolee added that MAH's (Malaysian Association of Hotels) campaign, the "100,000 Hotel Rooms Promotion", was well received. This was partly due to the many international sports events held, such as the 5th Ipoh International Waiters Race, Ipoh Cycle Fest, 26th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup and the Asia Rugby Championship.

What do Industry Players Say?

For some tourism industry players, VPY 2017 is something that they can be proud of. However, there are those who felt more needs to be done to achieve its target.

According to MAH (Perak Chapter) Chairman, Maggie Ong, tourist arrivals to Perak have increased by 15 per cent between January and May. Nonetheless, hotels have experienced a corresponding increase in their income.

"There are many reasons behind this," said Maggie. "One is the incremental number of day-trippers. We found that most of domestic tourists prefer a day trip, especially on weekends. In fact, they use Perak as a transit point to get to other destinations," she lamented.

Another factor is the increase of other types of lodgings, such as homestays, service apartments and the phenomenal Airbnb, which have impacted hotel occupancy rates.

"It's a trend now for local tourists to opt for these lodgings, as they're cheaper and can accommodate a larger number," said Maggie.

Maggie suggested Tourism Perak double its efforts in the remaining six months, by promoting VPY 2017 to international markets, in view of locals opting for day trips. Besides, an international airport needs to be built in order to bring in more foreign travellers to Perak.

"Our first of its kind in Asia theme park, Movie Animation Park Studios (MAPS) is opening soon. It'll attract tourists from China and the Asian regions," she added.

Dissimilar to hospitality, promoted destinations such as Gua Tempurung, Kellie's Castle and Maxwell Hill are attracting tourists during VPY 2017.

Gua Tempurung manager, Roslan Abdullah said from January to May, Gua Tempurung had recorded a total of 43,000 visitors.

Based on ticket sales, Roslan revealed that 90 per cent of visitors were locals while the remaining were foreigners.

"We hope to receive 110 to 120 foreign visitors by year-end. Response from locals is good during school



Roslan Abdullah



Gua Tempurung



Kellie's Castle

holidays and festive seasons. Most of them are repeat visitors, as they want to try the various packages on offer," he said.

Despite claims that VPY 2017 lacked promotion and was short on "mega" activities, Roslan felt that Tourism Perak had succeeded in promoting Perak and its touristic products to Asia and Europe, during the first six months of VPY 2017.

"We only have another six months to ensure VPY 2017 achieves its objective of making an impact on the state's economy.

"There may be a lack of promotion and large-scale events to enliven VPY 2017 but we've to appreciate that the current economic climate is not too conducive," he added.

The manager of Kellie's Castle, Zamari Muiy felt more needs to be done by Tourism Perak.

"Like Gua Tempurong, Kellie's Castle too has recorded a five per cent increase in visitors between January and June, compared to the same period last year.

"What's worrying us is our target of 10 to 15 per cent increase in visitors for VPY 2017. How are we to achieve this when we only had a five-percent increase in the first six months?" Zamari reasoned.

Zamari proposed that promotional efforts should focus on domestic tourists not foreign.

"The current economic climate affects the local tourism industry, especially the unstable fuel prices.

"Why do we lack local tourists? The answer is simple, lack of promotion," he remarked.

With only six months remaining to achieve the goals, Zamari said all parties, including non-governmental organisations, and individuals have to play their part to enliven VPY 2017.



Zamari Muiy



By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Smoking Ban in Public Parks

Creating awareness, in all fairness, is good but will it work?



Despite many false starts the decision to ban smoking outright, like in Singapore, never saw the light of day until the passage of the Control of Tobacco Product (Amendment) Regulation 2017. The amended bill, which came into force on Wednesday, February 1, 2017, makes smoking in gazetted public areas a crime punishable with a RM5000 compound and if taken to court, a fine of RM10,000 or a jail term of two years or both.

A cooling period was allowed for states to enforce the new ruling which was made mandatory on Thursday June 1. Perak and Selangor were among the states who observed the June 1 ruling.

The regulation defines a public park as “an open area for the purposes of leisure and recreation and contains soft or hard landscapes, or both, such as pedestrian paths, playing fields, game courts and playgrounds.”

In Selangor educational and awareness activities were held beginning February 15. Over in Perak the programmes were in place on January 1. The responsibility was entrusted to the Perak Health Department under the direction of Dato’ Dr Mah Hang Soon, the Executive Councillor for health, non-Islamic affairs, Chinese new villages, public transportation and national integration committees.

According to Mah, some 517 compound notices were issued between January and April and 513 of them paid up. The health department conducted 96 operations involving over 880 public premises during the four-month period. Among the premises checked were hospitals, the airport, entertainment outlets, public transports, government buildings, shopping complexes, children’s playgrounds, cyber cafes and recreational areas.

Cases not compounded were dealt with in court. Some 194 cases were brought to court and 25 offenders were fined. The total fine collected was RM9750.

The efforts by the authorities to instil awareness and enforce the no-smoking ruling are commendable but how effective are they? Ipoh Echo sent its undercover team out on a ‘recce’ and here is their report:

The places the team visited were Polo Ground, Tesco and Jusco supermarkets, children’s playgrounds, Ipoh Padang, restaurants and car parks. Since it was right smack in the fasting month of Ramadan, human activities were rather limited.

However, there was a feeling of apathy, as the people the team spoke to were unaware that smoking in parks, air-conditioned buildings, government offices and on playing fields was taboo.

At Polo Ground the team came upon a group of youngsters who were puffing away without a care in the world. They messed up the spot where they sat and cigarette butts were



strewn everywhere. Apparently, this same group of kids would gather at the spot in the evenings to chat and while away their time. They looked every bit like “Mat Rempits” enjoying a break after an illegal race on the road.

Well, it is pointless to knock sense into these kids, as smoking and appearing scruffy are part and parcel of their physical make-up. In short, apathy is written all over their faces. This popular culture is so prevalent among Malay youths of today and no amount of counselling and cajoling would make them repent.

The scene was similar at the Tesco covered car park in Ipoh Garden. Cigarette butts were aplenty, especially at the inner parts of the car park. The culprits had to be motorists who had little or no regard for cleanliness, let alone their physical well-being. They had no qualms to smoke and litter the grounds they walk on. A pathetic lot I must say.

Smoking is an acquired habit. I was quite a smoker during my formative years. I picked up the habit while in secondary school in the company of my friends who smoked purely for the heck of it. It was an adult thing, and over time we were hooked. However, military discipline requires me to be fit and alert, both physically and mentally. The problem was compounded by the issuance of cigarette ration to troops on operations. Every soldier then was entitled to 50 sticks a month, which came neatly packed in tins and distributed to us in the frontline.

Soon I had to decide whether to kick the habit or to continue it at the risk of my health. The death of a dear friend from lung cancer was what prompted me to quit smoking. It was in 1979 when I was stationed at Terendak Camp, Malacca. My smoking ‘misadventure’ lasted over 20 years. What a relief.

One must have the resolve and the determination to quit for good. Many tried but failed. They made one resolution after another, but sadly none stuck.

Creating awareness, in all fairness, is good but will it work? Raising the price of cigarettes has little impact overall, as smokers have access to smuggled cigarettes. The only option left is enforcement, and this is one area the authorities in Ipoh lack. A campaign will start off with a bang but after a while things are back to normal. Let’s hope the smoking ban will not suffer the same fate.

EYE HEALTH — Facts & Myths

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about EYE FACTS & MYTHS

Myths and facts about issues surround us daily with many of them being passed on from one person to another without any confirmation of truth. In fact, you may be one of them who may be passing on these old wives’ tales unknowingly. Let’s take the blinkers off here about the common myths about eye-care.



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

CARROT CONSUMPTION IMPROVES VISION

Will eating carrots all day long give you bionic eyes? Actually, it’s the overall DIET that’s important. Although carrots are foods that are high in Vitamin A and does play a role in maintaining eye health, having an excess of this vitamin does not enhance vision further. Foods like spinach, broccoli and dark green leafy vegetables can also help the eyes. So, you do not have to be eating carrots like a rabbit!



YOU CAN GET DEPENDENT ON EYEGLASSES

When you are prescribed a pair of spectacles to correct your vision because you have blurred vision, excessive use does not weaken your eyes. Wearing prescription glasses allows you to see clearly and puts less strain on your eyes. It does not make you get dependent on the spectacles but rather, it just allows you to enjoy good vision.

NOTHING CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT VISION LOSS IN OLD AGE

If you experience any eye symptoms such as blurred vision, eye pain or floaters, do get professional help. There are many causes of eyesight loss or blurring vision. Most can be treated especially if detected early enough.

READING IN DIM LIGHT IS BAD

Reading in dim light does not cause permanent harm to your vision but it can cause eye fatigue that can affect you significantly. It is best to avoid reading under dim light mainly to avoid unnecessary eye fatigue. Going through the day results in enough fatigue in itself, so do the right thing in reading with proper lighting. If you do get tired, simply stop what you are doing for a while. The **20-20-20 rule** is helpful – **take a break every 20 minutes for about 20 seconds by looking at objects that are 20 feet away from you.**

COMPUTERS DAMAGE THE EYES

When someone works on a computer, he or she tends to blink less times in one minute. This causes discomfort especially when you work with a computer for long. It is because the eye lubrication gets compromised and the person’s eyes end up feeling dry, gritty with a burning sensation. Again, the key is to take a regular break in between computer work, applying the 20-20-20 rule. Applying lubricating eye drops is helpful. Also, reducing the brightness of your monitor to a comfortable level is also key as this helps to minimise the blue light exposure that can disrupt good sleep.

DOING INTRICATE WORK WEARS OUT THE EYES

If you have weak eyes, doing fine-print reading does not make them worse. The eye is not a muscle. The eye is like a camera. Therefore, it will not wear out just because you use it to take photographs that have fine detail.

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

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Are Car-Free Days Achieving Their Objective?

People who drive into Ipoh, around 7am on the last Sunday of each month may be in for a rude shock. If they want to drive into Jalan Raja DiHilir (Tambun Road), at the fountain roundabout, they may find their way barred, and the road blocked right up till the Jalan Hospital (Ashby Road) roundabout.

This includes those who are visiting friends with homes along this particular stretch of road, patrons of the library, those who need to get to the Ipoh Specialist Centre and those who use this arterial road to reach Canning Garden, Ipoh Garden or Tambun. If you are unfamiliar with the area, then you will waste an incredible amount of time, navigating side lanes to avoid this stretch of road, or taking an alternative, longer route, to arrive at your destination.

One person from Kampar, whose mother was taken ill, and wanted to take her to the "Accident and emergency entrance" at the Ipoh Specialist Centre found himself in this situation.

Although he eventually arrived at the hospital, he wondered what would have happened if his mother's case had been a matter of life and death, and time was of the utmost urgency. He said, "Is this the best choice of road for Car-Free Days? The road has a major hospital, library and houses along it."

In January 2016, when it was first announced that Ipoh's Car-Free Days would be a permanent fixture in the calendar, Ipoh City Council urged motorists to leave their vehicles at home and adopt a healthier lifestyle by walking and cycling at the weekend. It also hoped that the reduction in vehicles on the road would reduce environmental pollution caused by noxious gases and soot, from exhaust fumes.

The Council allocated specific themes to particular days and many people dress-up for the occasion. After the Merdeka Day celebrations, people were bedecked in the Malaysian flag. After Hari Raya, people came in *baju kurung* and *baju Melayu*. Around Chinese New Year, lion dances were top attractions. Other themed days were recycling of rubbish and International Book Day.

Apart from cyclists, joggers, walkers and skateboarders, stalls are set up by various individuals and companies to sell food, services, phone services and to disseminate information.

In the Ipoh Echo article, "Ninth Car-Free Day", published on 16 August 2016, Ipoh Mayor, Zamri Man, his wife and other Ipoh City Council staff were seen bicycling along Jalan Raja DiHilir, enjoying the car-free morning.

Zamri told reporters that one of the things he liked best about Car-Free Days, was seeing Malaysians of all ages and races mixing and mingling, with one another and "having a sense of connection".

Pleased with the turnout, he hoped that more people would take advantage of the Car-Free Day at future sessions and said, "It's more than just a family outing, it's about bringing the community together."

The mainstream papers have covered some of these Car-Free Days and published photos and comments from various people, who have taken part, and enjoyed these events. Rarely has a bad word been said about these Car-Free Sundays, but does that mean everyone likes them?

Apparently not! Like the man from Kampar who had to go to hospital, and probably had a moment of panic to find that the access was blocked.

One housewife who declined to be named said, "I am not impressed. I don't like to encourage children to play or cycle on the roads, especially with cars plying the 'Car-Free' road. I suppose the cars belong to people who live in the houses around here or perhaps, they need to go to the hospital."

Her friend, Aminah said, "This major road connects one part of the city with another. When you close this road, you create traffic jams on other roads, because people must find alternative routes to their destination."

"If we are encouraging people to have a healthier lifestyle, with cycling and walking, that is not happening. I saw people driving here, then parking indiscriminately on the grass verges. They then unload their children and bicycles from their cars or pick-up trucks."

"The carbon footprint is not really reduced. Why can't



people cycle from where they live, instead of using the car?

"Why can't we have the Car-Free Day near the Stadium, or around Taman DR Seenivasagam, or the Old Polo Ground? There places have car parks, some food stalls and ample space for more stalls to be set up."

A teacher, Kamarul, said, "From what I read, Car-Free Days are normally enforced in city centres. Not residential roads. Why can't the roads surrounding the already pedestrianised Concubine Lane be shut, so that part of town can be explored on foot or bicycle. Restaurants and food stalls in the area, would receive a boost. People can then wander off to the road where the flea

market is located, a short distance away."

A civil servant who declined to give her name said, "I cannot understand why the Car-Free day should be stopped during Ramadan. They make a mockery of the religion by stopping activities, just because it is the fasting month. We are not here till the hot midday sun."

A retired lawyer said, "I'd like to know the cost of holding this event. Rela is involved and are the Rela staff getting triple wages on Sunday? Isn't that a waste of public funds?"

Student Vincent said, "If Car-Free Days are supposed to reduce our carbon-footprint and reduce smoke emissions from vehicles, shouldn't the mayor plan for bicycle lanes throughout the city? He should encourage safe cycling in Ipoh, not just for a few hours each month."

"Having the Car-Free Day outside the Mentri Besar's house, gives the impression that this road, with its many fun-filled activities, is like the MB's personal theme park."

"Zamri should improve the public transportation system into Ipoh. It is good that for three hours every month, the levels of nitrogen, carbon and sulphur dioxides and soot are reduced, as no cars are plying that stretch of road, but that is hardly noticeable, is it?"

"The bottom line is that we need to improve the overall quality of air, by ensuring a decent and effective public transport system, so we can leave our cars at home and take the bus to work, or to the shops. Reduced dependency on private cars will result in fewer accidents and make a major contribution to a reduction in air pollution."

ABOUT LASIK

Dr Lee Mun Toong
Consultant Eye Specialist Surgeon KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital

RANGE OF APPLICATION:

FEMTOLASIK is suitable for correcting the following refractive errors:

- Myopia: Distant objects appear blurred.
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The 4 steps of the FEMTOLASIK procedure

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- Step 4: Easy Aftercare
If necessary, your operative eye is protected with a contact lens for one day. Special eye drops promote healing. During the first few hours after the procedure, you should not rub your eyes. You should also avoid contact sports (football, basketball, etc.) and hot tubs and swimming pools for some times. There are no visible traces of surgery on the eye. An eye doctor who is not looking for the procedure could even miss it with instruments.

The risks of laser surgery

We wish to openly explain the risks associated with refractive error surgery, even if their appearance is very rare these days. The FemtoLasik® methods have reduced the already minimal number of risks associated with laser surgery. These days it's easy to say that with FemtoLasik® laser surgery, getting rid of spectacles is a very safe procedure!

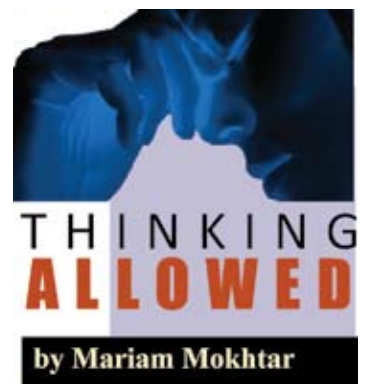
1. Drying of the eyes

Drying of the eyes after FemtoLasik® laser surgery is quite common but the length of time it lasts will vary from individual to individual. For this reason, it is recommended that moisture drops are applied to the operated eyes for a three- to six-month period.

Most patients report, however, that they no longer need moisture drops for more than a month or two after surgery. About 10-15% require moisture drops for a period longer than three months. Since the eye is part of the skin, it requires moisture care the same way as skin otherwise – so drops are good for the health of the eye.

To be continued...

For more information, readers can call Lee Eye Specialist 05 254 4388 or email at ishkpj@gmail.com. Also visit their Facebook page: LASIK Services at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital.
Opening hours: 8.30am-5pm (Mondays to Fridays), 8.30am-1pm (Saturdays).





ON IPOH
FOOD



By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen
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SeeFoon Checks Out Possible Den of Iniquity

Pics by Tan Mei Kuan



A restaurant with a name like **Opëam**, is bound to raise eyebrows, or it will have people queueing to check it out. Especially if it's also housed in a bungalow behind a discreetly lit sign posted above the entrance. I had to turn my car around as I passed it without noticing the sign. Instructions from Foodie Kaki Ginla Chew was "bungalow opposite DeGarden" and sure enough there it was, a bungalow, on the corner of Lebu Hock Lee facing the Korean Restaurant Daorae.

Of course as we all know, opium is illegal but eating and drinking is not (thank God) and that is what Opëam is all about. Good wholesome eating and drinking in a conducive ambiance. Calling itself a Restrobar, Opëam is the brainchild of young chef/entrepreneur **Nicole Gan**, from Seremban, who after obtaining a degree in mass communications from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman took off for the bright lights of Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia for 10 months.

There in the US, she developed a passion for all the exciting baked items she was exposed to and with her inherent love of baking and cooking, she returned to Ipoh where she started **Patisserie Boutique** in Old Town along Jalan Sultan Yusuff, a cafe which quickly garnered a faithful following, especially for its delectable pastries, cakes, and simple fare.

That was four years ago and now with the opening of Opëam, this enterprising young lady has moved into the food and beverage industry big time. It is hard work for her, dividing her time between mornings at Patisserie Boutique and evenings at Opëam, baking, cooking and offering a small menu with an emphasis on quality of produce and a 'less-is-more' style of preparation.

Despite not having had any formal Chef's training, Nicole succeeds in dishing out beautifully prepared and plated items, coming from her love of baking, cooking and most importantly, a discerning palate which helped her pick up menu ideas during her sojourn in the US. Hence the cuisine is reflective of the Californian style where menu items are light with minimal oil and with little aid from sauces, reliant purely on the light touch and seasonings by Chef Nicole.

Specialties of the house here aside from the food items are their cocktails. **Moscow Mule**, a concoction using lime, ginger beer and vodka was refreshing, while the **Rum and Orange** tended to the sweet side – **RM28 each**. My favourite was the **Pineapple Daiquiri** which came frozen and served with a spoon – **RM32**.

As a group of five, we ordered a selection of two pizzas for starters. Listed as **Skinny Pizzas** on the menu, the first to arrive was the **Truffle and Cheese**, ultra thin crust oozing with melted cheese, fresh mushrooms and paper thin slices of black truffles, it's fragrance wafting in wild abandon. Topped with fresh rocket leaves this was a unanimous favourite with our group – **RM28**. This was followed by the **Kimchi Pizza** (how's that for a mix of east and west?) which generally did not find favour around the table – **RM26**. All their pizzas are topped with Gouda and Marta mozzarella cheese.

The **Penne with scallops and prawns** with homemade Pesto sauce, fresh dill and pine nuts was absolutely delicious. The penne was cooked al dente and the generous



portions of large sea-fresh prawns and scallops was a treat. I haven't had a better pasta since Italy – **RM55**.

The **New Zealand Lamb Rack** served as two chops per order was tender, juicy and flavourful, paired with a homemade mint sauce, charred Brussels sprouts and grilled cherry tomatoes – **RM65**. This was followed by air-flown **Salmon Steak** served with salmon roe (Ikura), which was cooked to perfection, the centre still pink and the skin crisped and crackling dotted with mixed nuts and topped with salmon roe which lent its umami saltiness as each egg bursts open in the mouth – **RM45**.

The pièce de résistance which came next was the **Wagyu Steak Marble 6**, a generously sized portion of well marbled beef, tender and fragrant and grilled perfectly, topped with a dab of herb butter and served on a bed of mange tout or pea pods. Accompanying garnitures were grilled cherry tomatoes and a whole baked garlic. The searing was expertly done and the steak was well seasoned. **RM160 for Marble 6 and RM210 for the Marble 9**. The steak is served with a truffle butter sauce on the side.

Before dessert we decided to sample the **cheese platter** which came attractively plated on a wooden flat spatula offering a choice of imported Gouda, Emmental and Fontal cheese accompanied by strawberry preserves, mixed nuts, mixed fresh berries, olives, raisins, crackers and sliced Chorizo sausages. This can be a meal in itself – **RM38**.

Then came the highlight of the evening. A dessert which caught my eye was the **Salted Egg Yolk Croissant with Vanilla Gelato**. This was a true fusion effort, appeasing the Malaysian penchant for salted egg which they use for everything! And combined inside the croissant served with the velvety smooth gelato was heaven in a mouthful – **RM16**.

The menu items vary from week to week so do ask for the daily specials.



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Progress of Visit Perak Year 2017 . . . continued from page 2

“We can’t rely solely on Tourism Perak to do the promotional work.”

Zamari suggested more cultural performances to be held at major entry points such as at railway stations.

“We can organise cultural performances or busking at these points. We can engage with the tourists by distributing pamphlets and brochures to them.

“By intensifying the promotional efforts, it’s not impossible to achieve the target of tourist arrivals of eight million for VPY 2017. We’ve to work together with Tourism Perak and the state government to help promote the state,” he said.

Tourism and Media Welfare Department head of Taiping Municipal Council, Hanim Ramly, said the number of Zoo Taiping and Night Safari visitors had increased in the first five months of VPY 2017. The number can only be revealed in July.

“For me, the first six months of VPY 2017 is neither a failure nor a success, but progressive efforts have brought many improvements to the state. VPY 2017 brings many foreign travellers to Taiping and Perak.



Hanim Ramly



Zoo Taiping and Night Safari

“We need new approaches in our promotional efforts, as the current ones are too predictable and overused. There is an increase of tourist arrivals between January and March. However, we cannot deny that the country’s current economic climate has affected VPY 2017.”

What do the Tourists Say?

Perak has two types of tourists – the day-tripper and the weekender. The day-tripper would come to enjoy the food or some attractions and return home. He or she would not mind spending the whole day at one part of Perak but would not stay for a night.

Why does this happen? According to Nolee, it’s something Tourism Perak and the state government have to accept, as it is largely due to the prevalent economic situation.

Upcoming Events

PCCCI: 110th Anniversary Dinner and Much More

Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) announced the next in the series of events celebrating 110 years of the NGO’s existence during a media conference on Saturday, June 3. It was held at its premises along Jalan Tun Sambanthan.

Coming on the heels of the Tour de Perak 3 Days Cycling (June 10 to 12), Jungle Trail Race (July 9) and Ipoh Cultural Parade (July 23) is the culmination of it all: the **110th anniversary dinner** to be held at the soon-to-be-completed Ipoh Convention Centre (ICC) on **Thursday, July 27**.

The same day at the same venue will see a **food and culture fair** running on the theme “Since 1907” at **5pm** to be followed by the dinner at **7pm** with Menteri Besar, Dato’ Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir as the guest of honour. PCCCI will become the first ever to hold an event at the upcoming ICC located just next to the city council building.

There will be 35 booths, replicas of shops back in the olden days, at the food and culture fair in which a portion of its proceeds will be contributed to charity. True to its nostalgic theme, visitors are encouraged to come dressed in clothes of the era and the tokens exchanged for spending at the fair are made in the form of the ancient Chinese coinage.

As for the dinner, there will be 200 tables with a total of 2000 seats, making it the grandest ever in conjunction with the Visit Perak Year 2017. Priced at RM300 per seat, interested readers can call the PCCCI office at **05 242 1366** for reservations.

The lineup also includes hosting the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) 71st annual general meeting to be held on Friday, July 28 at WEIL Hotel. The event will be opened by Prime Minister Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak. Delegations coming from all 17 affiliated chambers around the nation will gather at this national-scale meeting starting at 9am.



Gunung Lang

“People are more cautious when it comes to spending. But on the flip side, Ipoh can offer them an alternative – a budget vacation. For the day-tripper, Ipoh has much more to offer in terms of food and places,” said Nolee.

Nurul Hawa Hussin, 29, comes to Ipoh on a day trip to enjoy its delectable food, which she cannot get in Kuala Lumpur.

“I don’t mind going to Ipoh as early as 6am to have my breakfast at its popular place and spending time with my family at Gunung Lang and walking around Old Town,” she said.

Martin, from United States, described Ipoh as a perfect place for a stress-busting and romantic weekend.

“After working in Kuala Lumpur for a week, my wife and I booked a three-night stay at the Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat, based on an internet research and backed by good word of mouth. We’re blown away. Located within a dramatic limestone and jungle setting, the place surprised us. We became happier each passing day.

“Ipoh is truly a nice place for a long weekend. It’s not far from KL and it’s pretty accessible,” he said.

Conclusion

VPY 2017 has definitely seen an increase in the number of tourist arrivals to the state. But whether it is enough to attract eight million visitors by year end, is still debatable.

It cannot be denied that the country’s economic climate has affected the tourism industry in Perak. With our weak ringgit, Malaysians are definitely more cautious in their spending. Although this has increased the number of foreign travellers to Perak, the sentiment, however, is not shared by domestic travellers.

Future Plans

For the second half of VPY 2017, Nolee plans to promote Movie Animation Park Studios (MAPS), the first animation park in Asia, to bring in more tourists from other parts of the country and the world.

“We’ll negotiate with airlines to arrange for direct flights from other countries like Brunei,” said Nolee.



“PCCCI was founded in 1907. Perak is one of the oldest chambers, the third oldest after Penang and Selangor, if I am not mistaken. Hence, we’d like to organise meaningful events for this auspicious year,” said Dato’ Liew Sew Yee, president cum chairman of PCCCI.

Another huge event, the first-ever Ipoh International Food and Beverage Fair, is expected to be held next year. Stay tuned to Ipoh Echo for the latest updates.

Mei Kuan



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Community

Animals Poorly Treated

A concerned Ipohite contacted Ipoh Echo via our Facebook page and expressed his fear for the safety and well-being of animals at the Gunung Lang Park.

Upon checking, we found that the problem lies with the enclosure where the animals are kept. It needs to be repaired, cleaned and maintained for the betterment of its occupants namely, deer and ostriches.

Due to ongoing repair works the two species are forced to stay in the same enclosure. Although the enclosed area is huge and can accommodate both bird and mammal, it is not being adequately maintained. There is no shade to protect them from the elements, no trees to shield them from the sun, while the filth and stench are overpowering. Far worse, the occupants have no access to fresh water.

Although signboards are aplenty warning visitors not to feed the animals, the pathetic sight prompted many to do otherwise. Visitors are seen feeding them with stale bread, fish pellets (sold at the ticket counter) and other edible items. There are no minders monitoring the animals' well-being. Other animals, especially the small birds, are more fortunate since their aviaries are located near the jetty where human movements are more pronounced.

Then there is the downside, the lush green expanse attracts wild monkeys from the nearby forest. The primates roam freely in the park and would not hesitate to steal food from visitors. The problem is being compounded by those who feed these 'freeloaders' although they are not supposed to.

The deer and ostriches need help, and if nothing is done the probability of them succumbing to disease and malnutrition is great.



Gunung Lang is fast becoming a major attraction in Ipoh. The 'tidak apa' attitude, a denigrating Malaysian malaise should be replaced by a more caring stance. After all, these 'neglected' animals did not ask to be there in the first place.

Over to you, Ipoh City Council. Don't let indifference inhibit your decision.

Ili Aqilah

Han Chin Pet Soo

Impress your guests with your own private dinner party in a museum setting. Enquiries should be made to the Events Manager at 05 529 3306 or events@ipohworld.org



Looking Your Best

Dr. Leow Aik Ming

Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon
Pantai Hospital Ipoh and Pantai Hospital Manjung

This is the first in a series of articles on Plastic Surgery with Dr Leow Aik Ming, Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, MBBS (MAHE), FRCS (Edinburgh), MS (Plastic Surgery) (USM), AM (Malaysia), Fellowship in Craniomaxillofacial/Craniofacial Surgery (Germany/Taiwan).

Facial Contouring (Facial Sculpting) Surgery for Asians

The shape and characteristic features of facial skeleton and its soft tissues are the fundamental determinants of facial appearance. A balanced proportion and symmetry of the forehead, nose, cheek, chin and jawline translate into a desirable and beautiful face. Variation in facial skeletal features, cartilaginous structures and soft tissue supports are the most important factors distinguishing people of different ethnic background. Caucasian faces tend to be longer and narrower than that of Asians. When seen in cross section, it has relatively greater anterior projection and decreased width. The Caucasian noses are typically with high nasal bridge, straight, well defined tip projection and narrower nostrils. Conversely, the Asian faces tend to be wider and shorter when observed from an anterior view. When seen in cross section, it has less anterior projection, and the transverse dimension is wider. Asian noses are generally shorter, poorly defined tip, broader nostrils and sit shallow on the face.

The facial appearance can be dramatically changed through facial contouring surgery by either augmenting the deficient areas or reducing the over prominent areas. Reduction is usually done by reducing the bony areas, cartilage or soft tissues that are prominent, whereas augmentation is done by filling in areas with one's own tissue (bone, cartilage or fat grafts) or with implants. The main objective in facial contouring surgery is to create an ideal facial profile and restore facial harmony that suits individual needs and ethnicity. Facial contouring surgery should not be excessively performed to attain "Caucasian beauty" which is often perceived as "ideal human beauty" but rather to maintain an ideal non-ethnic specific beauty. In other words, its aesthetic goal is to create an attractive face based on the patient's identity that blends harmoniously and not to create attractive Caucasian features on an Asian face.

Depending upon the requirements, facial contouring surgery can be done either as a single procedure or in combination with several surgical procedures. The list of facial contouring surgical procedures that are frequently performed to change facial skeletal, cartilaginous and soft tissue structures include:

Facial Skeletal Changes: Forehead contouring surgery (feminization surgery), cheek augmentation or cheek reduction (zygoma reduction), mandible angle reduction, corrective jaw or orthognathic surgery and chin reduction or augmentation called genioplasty.

Facial Cartilaginous Framework Changes: Rhinoplasty (reshaping nose), alarplasty (narrowing of too-wide nostrils) and otoplasty (ear correction)

Facial Soft Tissue Changes: Blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery), canthoplasty (changing the corner of the eye position), lip augmentation or reduction, masseter muscle reduction (for jaw line), buccal fat reduction (decrease fullness in the cheeks and face) and fat grafting.

*** All these procedures mentioned above will be discussed in coming issues.**

For more information on the procedure mentioned in this article, please visit the following website (www.elegantplasticsurgery.com).

Online consultation is also available if you have any enquiries, please email: elegantplasticsurgery@gmail.com.

Elegant Plastic Surgical Centre, **Pantai Hospital Ipoh**,
Tel: +605 5405457 (Receptionist) or +605 5405458 (Direct Line)

Elegant Plastic Surgical Centre, **Pantai Hospital Manjung**,
Tel: +605 6898624 (Receptionist) or +605 6898697 (Direct Line).



Before Facial Contouring Surgery



After Facial Contouring Surgery

Community

Charity Concert



In an effort to raise funds to support women and children suffering from abuse, violence and discrimination, Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) organised a charity concert titled, 'A Walk Back in Time'.

The show was held at Syeun Hotel Ipoh on Friday, May 26 and Saturday, May 27 in conjunction with International Women's Day.

Starring talented singers Angela Saik and Kam Fatt, the event featured theme songs from various Hong Kong television series and Cantonese pop hits from the 70s, 80s and 90s. It took the audience back in time to the glorious days of Cantopop.

The audience was also enthralled by three-time Malaysia Elvis Impersonation Competition champion, Paul Lee, who performed a couple of compositions by 'the King'. A Chinese folk tale called 'The Butterfly Lovers', enacted by students of City Ballet, was the other highlight.

Established in 2003, PWW is an apolitical, not for profit non-governmental organisation whose objective is to enhance the status and lives of women in Perak regardless of race, religion and social background. It also provides assistance to women and children suffering from violence and discrimination.

The society offers temporary shelter for victims of abuse, violence and any other situations that warrant help. Since the services are provided free of charge, PWW is dependent on public donations to function.

Readers wishing to contribute in kind can channel funds (cash or cheque) to its RHB account: 2081 0000 36125.

Here are details of the society:

Perak Women for Women Society (PWW)

Address: 52 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, 31400 Ipoh

Phone: 05 546 9715; **Fax:** 05 541 5721

Email: perakwomenforwomen@gmail.com

Website: www.pww.org.my

Leanne Tan

Education

Tenby Schools Ipoh Triathlon 2017

Organised by Live More Events, the Tenby Schools Ipoh Triathlon 2017 will be held in the vicinity of Tenby Schools Ipoh on Sunday, July 16. The event will be the fourth of a seven-event series, called the 'Live More Kids Triathlon Series'.

Contrary to its name, the series is not just for kids. It also caters to adults who are young at heart, or as we call, "kids of all ages". David Spence, founder and chief volunteer of Live More Events, or more commonly known to colleagues and friends as the 'Summit Seeking Sherpa', believes that people should not stop being kids, in terms of enthusiasm and youthfulness, once they get older.

"This triathlon is rather special as participants can choose to team up or register as individuals. So those who can't swim or cycle can now team up with a friend or family member," said Spence.

Divided according to gender, the triathlon is split into a number of categories: U6, U8, U10, U12, U15, U18, Student Open (18 & above), Open (18 & above), U15 - Relay Team, U18 - Relay Team, Student Over 18 - Relay Team and Over 18 - Relay Team.

Spence anticipates about 250 entries, mainly from the Ipoh community, before registration ends on Friday, June 23. As of beginning this month, he had garnered close to 100 entries, 99 per cent of which were from Klang Valley.

Interested readers can register online at <http://livemorekidstriseries.checkpointspot.asia/>.

Race routes will be released to participants in the race information packs, which will be given out a week prior to the event.

A skills clinic to help participants better understand and prepare for the race will be conducted at Tenby Schools Ipoh on Saturday, July 15.

Readers who wish to support or volunteer as helpers or medics during the event can write in to info@livemoreevents.com.



Established a few years back, Live More Events, an organisation that specialises in adventure-orientated expeditions and events, is the brainchild of Spence. He came up with the idea after participating in various events such as triathlons.

"The events I participated made me feel like I lived more, although they can't make me live longer. I wanted to share this feeling with others and so I came up with this sporting series," Spence told Ipoh Echo.

Leanne Tan

Arts and Culture

Remy The Musical

The overwhelming response to the musical, "Remy" staged at the Perak Department for Arts and Culture auditorium between May 19 and 21 showed that theatrical plays are still a hit with Ipohites.

All three shows were fully subscribed, leaving many fuming as they could not get a ticket.

Producer Yusop Najmi Othman, said that the play was a fitting tribute to the late Tan Sri P. Ramlee for his contributions to the national art scene.

"The play is an adaptation of the life and tribulations of actor-singer-director extraordinaire P. Ramlee. It tells a tale of romance, happiness and sorrow detailing the artiste's life journey in the form of a musical.

"The show combines both modern and classical concepts, from an artistic point of view. It focuses on the character in conveying the story. Besides that, we try to recreate the nostalgias of P. Ramlee from his high points in Singapore and his lows in Malaysia," he said.

The play, lasting one hour and 45 minutes, was directed by Ard Omar. Actor Arja Lee's impeccable portrayal of the protagonist was much appreciated by his fans.

According to Lee, when he was offered the role of Remy he felt reluctant but acceded knowing it would be a real challenge.

"After reading the script, I felt no difficulty in portraying the character of Remy. I am impressed by this new concept, as it's an amalgam of both old and new in terms of dialogue and storyline.

"This is my tenth theatrical play but the P. Ramlee musical is my first. I wish to thank my fans for their undying support," he concluded.

Rosli Mansor



Finance

Curbing Global Tax Evasion

In an effort to curb global tax evasion, effective July 1, 2017, new bank account holders in Malaysia will have to furnish a Certificate of Residence in their application. Current bank account holders will be given a year to comply with this new requirement. The reasons are to enhance global transparency and ensure tax compliance.

Account holders are required to fill the certificates correctly. Should there be any discrepancies, they will be tried and if found guilty will be fined between RM20,000 to RM100,000 or be imprisoned for a period of six months or both.

Malaysia is one of 99 countries that have signed the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement. The agreement, which is reciprocal in nature, allows for the exchange of information regarding financial accounts with other signatories on an annual basis.

Wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Heartburn or Heart Attack?

According to Dato' Dr Yeoh Huat Chee, Gastroenterologist and Consultant Internal Medicine Specialist at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital, determining whether you're having heartburn or heart attack is critical in saving lives.

Most of us have had heartburn at some time or another in our lives. An over-indulgent meal, with heavy oily food, cream, cheese, fries, spicy food, alcohol will do it for some (especially this writer) but according to Dr Yeoh, there are ways to ascertain what that burning sensation is; to first eliminate the dangerous possibilities and then treat the discomfort after.

Dr Yeoh who received his FRCP from both Glasgow and Edinburgh and has been practicing in KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital since 1993, says that cardiac pain will travel up to the jaw and radiate to the left inner arm and at the first sign of this it is imperative to get to a hospital or the Emergency department. An ECG or Electrocardiogram and blood test called Trop T to diagnose heart attack will show whether the person is having a heart attack. This is especially important for people who have any of the following indicators like a family history of heart attacks, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and who smokes.

Another type of gastric pain may be caused by gallstones or a problem with the gall bladder, in which case the pain may radiate up the right shoulder and to the back. Again if the pain is intense, affecting sleep, and sometimes vomiting, then a trip to the hospital is advised where an ultrasound scan will determine whether gallstones are present or other gallbladder issues.

Other types of gastric pain may be caused by *Helicobacter pylori* (H. pylori), a bacteria that burrows into the cells of the stomach lining and cause gastritis. H. pylori is a common cause of gastric ulcers, gastritis and duodenal ulcer. Also, those infected have an increased risk of duodenal ulcer, stomach cancer and lymphoma.

An invaluable piece of advice from Dr Yeoh on avoiding infection from H. pylori is to be meticulous in your hygiene. "Never share food or drink. This is the most common way of getting infected. When you're eating at communal dinners, always use serving spoons," he emphasised.

So what about kissing I asked cheekily? "No problem," was the reply, "because the oesophageal sphincter is not open." That is not kissing and eating/drinking at the same time, where the gastric juice with H. pylori re-fluxes into the mouth.

"The good news is that H. pylori can now be detected very easily through a simple breath test which is 98% accurate. If you do have the bacteria, it can be eliminated with prescribed antibiotics," he added.

The same cannot be said for an ulcer which needs to be diagnosed through a gastroscopy both for the stomach and duodenal ulcer. This is not such a dreaded procedure as it is now done under mild sedation while the doctor inserts a scope down your throat into the stomach and along the way looks at the condition of your oesophagus.

"If everything looks normal from a gastroscopy, then non-erosive reflux oesophagitis (primarily heartburn) and has to do with lifestyle factors such as alcohol, coffee, tea, oily rich food and spicy food consumption but most importantly it is stress which causes the cardio oesophageal sphincter – which is the 'door' between the stomach with all its strong acid and the oesophagus – to not close properly, allowing the acid to spill over into the oesophagus and back up to the throat area giving rise to the burning sensation we call acid reflux".

So what can we do to minimise heartburn other than making lifestyle changes I asked Dr Yeoh?

"Well for starters I would advise people to avoid taking Chinese Rheumatic medicine. They contain steroids and NSAIDS (non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) which create havoc with your digestive system. In fact I would recommend that people over 60, to avoid NSAIDS.

"For those who have been prescribed Proton Pump inhibitors (PPI) like Nexium or the Histamine 2 Blockers like Zantac, I would recommend that they go for a gastroscopy if their symptoms have not subsided after 2 weeks."

Gastrointestinal cancer is another 'big C' issue that Dr Yeoh confronts on a regular basis and the advice he gives is to avoid eating too much red meat. Do avoid seared, smoked, preserved and barbecued meats, salted fish, salted vegetables and don't eat too many deep fried foods.

"H. pylori combines with the nitrates used in preserving meat as in sausages, hams and other items and turns into carcinogens in the stomach. Grilling, barbecuing and frying create compounds called heterocyclic amines (HCAs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), advanced glycation endproducts (AGEs) and these have been linked to cancer.

"In general, my advice is to eat healthy to stay healthy. Add some regular exercise and go for a check-up when you have gastric pain," Dr Yeoh concluded.



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Consultant Physician
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Education

Certificate Presentation Ceremony

“Learning a language is something that takes a lot of time, and probably forever to master,” claimed Ryan Khoo Sheng Xian at Ipoh Learning & Training Institute’s (ILTI) 16th Cambridge Certificate Presentation Ceremony held at Syeun Hotel Ipoh on Sunday, June 4.

Acknowledged as the best student of ILTI, the 18-year-old passed the Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) examination with flying colours. He attributed his success to his parents and teachers at ILTI.

According to Ryan, he first attended ILTI in 2015. As English was commonly spoken at home, he initially thought that it was a waste of time. However, he soon realised that he still had much to learn.

“The most challenging part of my journey was picking up new vocabulary. I had to refer to the dictionary a little too often,” he revealed.

Ryan’s advice for those wishing to improve their English proficiency is to read a lot and watch English shows without the help of subtitles.

“English isn’t just a language of opportunity; it’s the language of science, mathematics, medicine, engineering, trade, commerce, etc. Undeniably, English has become the most widely used lingua franca in the world,” said Ryan who will be taking up a Foundation in Law programme at Multimedia University in Malacca. He hopes to be able to pursue a double degree in law and accounting in the near future.

Ryan along with 205 students, who sat for the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations end of last year, received their certificates at the presentation ceremony. Among those present were Thomas Kok, ILTI Principal; Dato’ Richard Small, founder and academic advisor of ILTI; and Hajjah Rahimah bt Mohamed, Head of Academic Sector at the State Education Department.

According to Hajjah Rahimah, the Ministry of Education has introduced the Dual Language Programme to enhance English proficiency among government school students.

Thomas’ book entitled, ‘Newspaper Articles for English Practice: Book 4’, was also launched during the presentation ceremony.

Leanne Tan



International Understanding Day 2017

Interact Club of Seri Keledang Secondary School, Menglembu, proudly organised their annual International Understanding Day 2017 themed ‘Japan Cherry Blossom’ at the school’s multipurpose open hall. This year the club aimed to provide knowledge about culture, customs, youth trends and the way of life in Japan. According to Principal Mr Sit Wai Yon, this International Understanding Day gave a platform for interactors to showcase their leadership and organising skills. It was indeed a meaningful activity for interactors to spend quality time and meet new friends.

The school also held its 27th Annual School Sport on April 21. It was officiated by North Kinta Chief Education District Officer, Tuan Haji Hasni bin Hasshim and attended by Mr Ng Ah Chye, PTA Chairman and his committee; Ms Kok Sin Yee, Alumni Chairman; ASP Pillay, Seri Keledang Secondary School Police School Liaison Officer and parents.



Camp Millionaire for Little Millionaires



Pui Yee and Cheron Ng. Both experienced the negative consequences of having poor financial education and parental guidance. They saw many young adults who had gone broke trying to look rich and ending up as bankrupts.

Little Tauke believes that financial education teaches more than just being rich but is a tool to achieve happiness and success in life.

The concept originated from USA in 2002. It has taught over 15,000 children, teens and adults on how to develop a mindset and skills to achieve financial freedom, and now it has arrived in Ipoh.

The programme offered is “Camp Millionaire”. The core subject is “The Money Game”. It provides values on financial wisdom which are useful for a lifetime.

Little Tauke organised a Camp Millionaire recently at Algol Management Services involving 25 participants, aged between 3 and 13. The two-day camp, loaded with fun games and activities, promoted learning such as, ‘How to Make and Manage Money’, ‘How to Save’, ‘How To Invest’, ‘Teamwork’, ‘Public Speaking’ and more.

The subjects were taught by trained educators and trainers. Responses and approvals from parents were most encouraging.

The next Camp Millionaire will be held in Penang on August 5 to 6 at Wawasan Open University. For more information, visit Little Tauke’s website at www.littletauke.com.

Vivien Lian

“Education begins at home. You can’t blame the school for not putting into your child what you don’t put into him.” – Geoffrey Holder

Some of you may already be familiar with the best-selling personal finance book of all time, “Poor Dad Rich Dad” by Robert Kiyosaki, a must-have for wealth building. The book advocates the importance of financial independence through real estate investing and owning businesses, as well as increasing one’s financial intelligence.

Not many, in the past, are offered opportunities in receiving a proper financial education, as its importance is often overlooked, given that most of the parents themselves have not taken up any financial education.

Financial education has long been considered as knowledge that is learned outside the school. We’re speaking about financial intelligence besides Accounting, Economics and Finance. With the recent explosion of information technology, it is hard not to see the importance of financial education and intelligence in order to stay competent.

“Little Tauke”, a new start-up from Ipoh, is the brainchild of two young entrepreneurs,

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Beyond Remembrance Week

The annual June remembrance week began with the service at the Kamunting Road Christian Cemetery at Taiping on Thursday, June 8. Organised by the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA), the attendees placed red poppies on the gravestones of the dearly departed.

"This blood red poppy, a traditional emblem of sacrifice, connects us with the 28 young Australian diggers (soldiers) and others who died in the defence of Malaya, and Malaysia, against Communism," said **Ken McNeill**, International Liaison Officer of NMBVAA. The 78-year-old Ken was enlisted at the age of 17 in the Royal Australian Air Force. He first came to Malaya in 1962 and has been involved in the Taiping remembrance service since 2007.

Ian Holthouse, the state president of Naval Association of Australia (Western Australia Section), was here for the first time. Ian, alluding to the age of the fallen soldiers, commented, "Do you think we'll ever learn to live in peace with each other?"

"I was part of the Australian Air Force and served in Malaysia from 1963 to 1966. I've been coming here four or five times now for the service. I hope to return next year," Allen J. Fraser, vice chairman and trustee of Lions Clubs International said.



Kamunting Road Christian Cemetery

The entourage then dropped by the Malayan Emergency Monument & Gallery at Sungai Siput Estate. Built by the Malaysian Palm Oil Association, the monument is dedicated to the gallant planters (European and Malaysian), security forces personnel, staff, workers, their family members and civilians who lost their lives during the Malayan Emergency (1948 to 1960) and its resurgence (1973 to 1989).

The killing of three European planters in Perak on June 16, 1948 prompted the British colonial government to declare Emergency. The first killing took place at the Elphil Estate followed by the second at Sungai Siput Estate (formerly Phin Soon Estate) half an hour later.

"The gallery is the actual site of the bungalow where J.M. Allison and his assistant lived. They were forced to kneel in front of their workers and shot," **Harchand Singh Bedi**, local historian cum curator of the gallery, recalled. A Ford Lynx Ferret Scout Car designed in 1941 and a GMC Armoured Personnel C15TA (complete with bullet marks) are on display too.



Malayan Emergency Monument & Gallery

Here for his first visit was Brian Sweeney, a relative of Ken's. "I'm here to support Ken and to attend the service for the first time," he enthused.

The programme continued at the Ipoh Cenotaph on Friday, June 9. "After almost 47 years, the replica of the crown of King George VI, is up there. The original went missing

probably in the 1970s. It's encased in a stronger and theft-proof metal casing," said **Dato' R. Thambipillay**, 87, president and patron of Wira Association Malaysia.

The four-faced cenotaph, built in 1926, has five plaques, each representing those who gave their lives in WW1, WW2, the Malayan Emergency and the Thailand/Burma Death Railway. ACP Razali bin Ibrahim, representing the Chief Police Officer of Perak, was the guest of honour.



God's Little Acre

On Saturday, June 10 in Batu Gajah, a service at the Holy Trinity Church preceded the wreath-laying ceremony at God's Little Acre. It was in memory of planters, miners, police and military personnel who were interred there.

"I've been here every year for 17 years. Each passing year, the number of people gets less. That's the sad part," Commander (Rtd) Ian Anderson, Director of ipohWorld sighed.

Ipoh Echo spoke to a lady gardener who keeps the place well-manicured year round. "I've worked here for 40 years. Every day, I'll come to trim the grass, plant the flowers, clean gravestones and inscriptions. I'll bring my family along to help," she said.

The other highlight was the unveiling of the Gurkhas Roll of Honour, a granite marble plaque erected next to the new Gurkhas Cenotaph at the Gurkhas' cemetery at Camp Syed Putra, Tambun. It displays the names of 29 Gurkha warriors who gave their lives during the Malayan Emergency. **His Excellency Dr Niranjana Man Singh Basnyat**, Ambassador of Nepal, **Jeyasingam Ratnasingam**, president of Wira Association Malaysia and **Dato' R. Thambipillay** were given the honour.

The veterans, most in their 70s, are an inspiring lot. For instance, 72-year-old Hendrik Willem Hol and his 71-year-old wife, Kampar-born Mee Yoke Hol.

"I met my husband at Terendak Camp, Malacca. He was with the 3rd Royal Australian Regiment. We've been staying in Melbourne for 52 years now," Mee shared.

She spoke of the energy-sapping journey to get to Ipoh annually. "Living in a little town outside Melbourne, we've to travel to the airport to catch the flight to Kuala Lumpur. From KLIA we hop on a bus to Ipoh. That's a whole day's journey." Although Hendrik has to use a walking aid to move about, the spirited couple looks forward to return next year.

We, the younger generation, must look beyond this single week to really appreciate these veterans' sacrifices.

Lest we forget.

Mei Kuan



Gurkhas Roll of Honour

Politics

Connecting Perak MPs and Public Online

‘Connecting Perak MPs and Public Online’ was a research paper presented by Amnah Khalid Rashid (PhD researcher), Department of Political Science, International Islamic University Malaysia at the recent 4th IDR Annual Research Seminar held at Impiana Hotel, Ipoh.

Research Objectives

The objectives are based on a larger research on all 222 Members of Parliament (MPs) in the current government. Data from 24 Perak MPs were used to find:

- How Perak MPs use their personal websites to share information?
- How Perak MPs use their personal websites to engage the *rakyat*?

Research Problem

Change in popular vote between GE8 and GE13 indicates two things:

1. Shifting political culture with greater awareness from free flow of information and discussion in society.
2. Shifting political efficacy or trust in government and institutions.

False information blamed, especially online, where no mode of correction possible, only managing of image and share of new information.

Politicians’ and MPs’ careers depend on image and service. They have gone online since 2008, using newer forms of technology from blogs to Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

Government long-term policy on Wawasan2020 has encouraged connecting via internet and massive e-governance policies are underway for ease of governance, improved services and transparency.

No policy to connect e-governance with those governing like MPs who gain legitimacy to their seats in parliament.

Most MPs are unclear on their roles as legislator, party and constituency representative in the use of social media.

A research was conducted to understand the use of personal websites by Members of Parliament 2012-2015.

Most research on social media focus on Facebook, Twitter, but this research choses personal websites for reasons like, standardised methodology to study political websites compared to others, no way of confirming likes, comments authenticity or delete of account or information or accessing year-old information. Besides, by these medium, foreign multinational can gain access to all political information between people and politicians easily.

Therefore, this research is based on personal websites where contents are stable, structured for political use and accessible by all.

Findings

The results of survey were, 42 MPs responded, 90% males and 10% females in the age group of 51-60 years and with bachelor degrees; 25 were from BN and 17 from PR parties. They adopted the internet for political purpose since 2008.

In Perak 19/24 MPs were on Twitter, 16/24 on Facebook and only 5/24 on personal website; one belongs to BN and four to PR.

The results of website use in the larger research show, information and link assistance were sufficiently shared but not engagement.

In Perak, the five MPs had a dismissal use of website with most websites ineffective for purpose, only 2/5 would be better off but not good. Information share was only 2/5,



engagement provided was 0/5 and link was also 0/5.

The sample size was small, internet penetration creates digital divide. Training in ICT use for aged MPs and their adaptation and skill is required. The funding for website and feedback mechanism is unclear.

Recommendations

- Encourage proper use of personal websites to make them a single point of information and engagement for public, media and researchers as MPs are public officials.
- Political parties must have structured use of social media to make public officials available to people.
- Establish relationship by communication and interaction and less on campaigning to gauge public opinion and sentiments.
- MPs awareness of role as a representative of party, constituency and as a legislator reflecting social media use instead of image building.
- Funding for public social media use in form of maintaining website and parliament mobile app (application).
- V-power, a US-based company, has developed an app to connect with politicians and MPs. It is widely used in US for campaigning purposes and is also used during Indian elections. Each customised app costs US\$800.

This topic is timely since GE14 is around the corner. In Perak only a few MPs have websites and most are not up to scratch. In this digital world all MPs must have their own websites. It is surprising to note that most MPs are unclear on their roles as a legislator, party and constituency representative. Are we voting unqualified people for the job?

As knowledgeable voters we must know our MPs and assemblymen and what our expectations are. We must tell them how they should vote on various issues. We must talk to the candidates who are standing in our constituencies and let them know what we expect of them. For example, we need a second hospital in Ipoh immediately. This is one burning issue, there are plenty more.

I know my MP and assemblyman personally, as I have been working with them before they were elected.

A. Jeyaraj

Personality

Shahirah Mohd Nasir

She may look like your typical girl next door, but make no mistake. Thanks to her accidental meeting with Projek Rabak 5 years ago, Shahirah or her stage name, ladsheer, is slowly making a name around the local arts scene with her writings and poetry.

“I first met two of Projek Rabak’s co-founders, Riduan A Dullah and Seyn Jukey while working as a tuition teacher. They showed me a different world of artistic expression where there are no boundaries and I can experiment in almost any form of arts I wanted to!” said Shahirah, 24.

Currently taking her Master of Economics in UiTM Shah Alam, Shahirah also runs an instashop (Online Shop on Instagram) called *Gunting Batu Kain* where she sells English-cotton textiles.

“I don’t have any kind of ritual before I start writing since I’ll just write wherever and whenever I can. I write when I feel impossible for me to express myself verbally. I have to put my thoughts and feelings on paper, stare at them, have a kind of love-hate relationship with them and then choose the best words and sentences to convey my thoughts. There is something powerful when you put words on paper. Impossible doesn’t exist on paper and my world expands,” added Shahirah.

When asked about her inspiration, this Ipohite admits to being inspired by the people here who appear to challenge her to be a better person to write better and perform better pieces.

“One of my favourite poems is called ‘*I Just Suka Nasib Sendiri*’ (I love my luck). It is where I express how I can fall in love through simple movements and gestures,” she explained.

While currently residing in Kuala Lumpur, Shahirah loves the local art scene here. According to her, Ipoh may look old and vintage, but it holds thousands of young and passionate souls.



“Some people might call Ipoh a city of love, city of slackers, city of hipster cafes but for the local art scene, Ipoh is the lab. It is the place where you can experiment and make mistakes,” said Shahirah who has had a few pieces of her writing published in Tuturloka and Senorita zine.

Together with 10 other writers, this young lady published a novel called Novel Eksperimental. Shahirah will occasionally perform in events held by Projek Rabak, so readers who are interested to watch her show can check Projek Rabak Instagram at www.instagram.com/projekrabak.

Ili Aqilah

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.

Disappointed with Wellness Programme

I have been enrolled as a member of the Ipoh KPJ Wellness Programme since 2010. The medical checkup was disappointing, although an appointment was arranged, the service was very poor. Apart from the long waiting time, customers feel very bad should they be called back again in the afternoon in the absence of a doctor in the morning. No queue numbers were provided to the customers (Heart Department), and customers from other clinics could just enter and get treatment ahead of us waiting. The system and service were totally unacceptable. Also a meal for customers was cancelled. I waited for almost a month and the department has yet to deliver my medical report since my checkup on May 5 this year. What is the use of this checkup, if in a critical case, the customer might have left this world.

It is hoped that the management will look into this, and improvement made.

Chris Chong Phee
Teluk Intan

Ramadan Round-Up

Hari Raya Shopping



Residents of Darus Salam Orphanage, Sungai Rapat, Ipoh did their *hari raya* shopping at Klebang Econsave hypermarket on Tuesday, June 6. Among them was two-year-old Siti Nur Fatin Nasuha (Suha), the youngest of

the entourage of 50. She got to choose her own raya clothing.

"Although she's too young to understand the reason, she's excited, nonetheless," said Norizan Razali, the orphanage's warden.

According to Norizan, Suha's mother handed the child to him and his wife when she was just a month old.

"We treat Suha like our own daughter. The other kids consider her as their little sister and are overtly protective of her," he told Ipoh Echo.

Norizan was appreciative of Econsave's goodwill, as it helped lighten his burden.

"We're lucky to be the recipients. During difficult times such as now, any form of assistance is welcomed, at least the immediate needs of the orphans are met, for the moment," he remarked.

Econsave Manager (Northern Region) Chua Yong said the charity was part of his company's Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

"We don't just help the orphans but the poor, the marginalised and the handicaps, regardless of their race and religion. We give vouchers worth RM50 to each orphan. The amount is small though but we hope it'll brighten up their day."

Jointly organised by Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club, Yayasan Abu Bakar and Excelsior Hotel, the programme was of significance to Rohana Abdullah, 19.

"I'm thrilled to go on a shopping trip. I look forward to this every year. It's not something usual for us," she sighed.

The children were then brought to Excelsior Hotel for the breaking of fast. They were treated to a sumptuous buffet dinner.

Present throughout the event were Tourism Perak CEO Zuraida Md Taib, Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club President Wan Asrudi Wan Hassan and Excelsior Hotel General Manager Ron Low.

Rosli Mansor

Orphans Feted

Over a hundred orphans were treated to a breaking-of-fast dinner at Tower Regency Hotel & Apartments, Ipoh on Friday, June 2.

Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Perak, Zuraida Md Taib officiated the event. In attendance were Ipoh City Council Secretary Zakuan Zakaria, Ipoh City Councilor cum President of Perak Tourism Association, Hj Odzman Kadir and Tower Regency Manager, Mariana Hamid. The guests were from two orphanages namely, Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Yatim Bait Al Amin from Parit and Maahad Tahfiz Al-Ansori from Chemor.

Mariana, in her welcoming speech, said that the hotel had been hosting such events for the past seven years. It was part of the hotel's Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

"We enjoy hosting this much-anticipated event as it provides us an opportunity to reach out to these less fortunate children," said Mariana.

The hotel will organise a special *bubur lambuk* give-away programme on Wednesday, June 21. Over 5000 packets of this tasty rice porridge will be distributed gratis to Ipohites beginning at 3.30pm.

Luqman Hakim



Spreading the Raya Spirit

"Irama & Memori Aidilfitri", an on-going programme that allows shoppers to shop while being entertained by local artists, is being held at Ipoh Parade throughout the month of Ramadan.

Sixteen stalls, selling *hari raya* knick-knacks and clothes, are operating within the mall's concourse throughout the month.

Chairman of Tourism Perak, Dato' Mohamad Kamil Dato' Shafie, said that the objective was to allow shoppers to shop in a cheery and conducive atmosphere. "We hope other malls in Ipoh would follow the example of Ipoh Parade to instil more excitement during festive seasons. "The programme is unique. Hopefully, it'd help boost the local economy while enhancing the tourism industry," said Kamil after launching the programme.

Present at the launch on June 10 was Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Perak, Zuraida Md Taib. The audience was entertained by local singers, Misha Omar and Adibah

Noor. They each sang two popular compositions followed by a festive song.

Shopper Nurul Sarah Hijazi, 33, was pleased with the arrangement giving the thumbs-up to the mall management. "Similar programmes should be held during other festive seasons, as it helps promote harmony and unity among all races," said Sarah to Ipoh Echo.

Rosli Mansor



Raya Clothing for The Needy



Underprivileged children and senior citizens smiled when they walked up the stage in their new *hari raya* clothes during the "iM4U fm Fabrik Kasih bersama Sunway 2017" breaking-of-fast dinner fashion show at Sunway Lost World Hotel, Ipoh on Thursday, June 8.

The 98 recipients were from Pertubuhan Kebajikan Rumah Orang-Orang Tua Islam

Titian Abadi (PEKITA), Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak-Anak Yatim dan Warga Miskin Parit (Bait Al-Amin) and National Autism Society of Malaysia (NASOM) Ipoh. Each was given a set of *baju raya* designed by Tengku Syahmi.

The programme, featured the collaborative efforts of three local fashion designers namely, Tengku Syahmi, Fuzana Mokhtaza and Zakwan Anuar, to mentor 119 students (volunteers) from 12 Giatmara Malaysia in designing and sewing *raya* clothing for the needy.

The 60s Saloma-themed *baju raya* were tailor-made by six Giatmara centres in Perak, under the supervision of Tengku Syahmi, while the fabrics and accessories were sponsored by PKNS Real Estate Company.

In his opening speech, iM4U director Kartini Ariffin said the volunteer programme was aimed at empowering youths to give back to the community.

"It's as a platform to expose youths to volunteerism and allow them to gain relevant experiences and skills while contributing to the needy.

"I'm grateful to see all organisations come together to serve one great purpose," she said.

Tengku Syahmi expressed his appreciation to Giatmara students in Perak for making his journey possible.

"It's an easy and smooth three-month journey for me in Perak.

"They did a wonderful job. I'm amazed by their skills and what they've learnt at Giatmara. We should encourage and expose them to real life experiences," he said.

At the breaking-of-fast cum dinner, residents of the three welfare homes in Perak enjoyed the scrumptious food for *buka puasa* served by the hotel.

Nabilah Hamudin

MBI Round-Up

Nabilah Hamudin

Grading of Food Premises

Ipoh City Council conferred A-grade certificate to 15 eateries in the city. The presentation ceremony, held on Wednesday, May 31 at the council's conference room, was officiated by Mayor Dato' Zamri Man.

The recipients had adhered to all requirements needed in obtaining the certificate. They were general cleanliness (above 86 per cent), food handlers vaccinated against typhoid, had attended the basic food handling course, proper food storage and a clean and well-ventilated kitchen.

To date, said Zamri, 245 food premises qualified to be awarded with Grade A, 1105 premises with Grade B and 129 with Grade C certificates.

Between January 1 and April 30, the council had issued 247 compounds, worth RM55,400, to dirty eateries.

Among the A-Grade certificate recipients were Vivo Food Sdn Bhd, Tan Ngan Lo Retail Stores Sdn Bhd, Each A Cup Sdn Bhd, Yoshinoya Hanamaru Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Fair Park Hotel Sdn Bhd, Snack Lab Plt, Purple Cane Enterprise Sdn Bhd, Symphony Bonanza Sdn Bhd, Nando's Chickenland Malaysia Sdn Bhd, FECCW Sdn Bhd, Signature Delicacies Sdn Bhd, TGV Cinemas Sdn Bhd, Dommall Food Services Sdn Bhd, HM Tea House and Old Town Kopitiam Sdn Bhd.



Car-free Day

Ipoh Car Free Day for the month of May was held on Sunday, May 21 in conjunction with Mother's Day and Teacher's Day.

The designated road, Jalan Raja Dihilir, was filled with booths and fun activities. Over 5000 people joined in the fun. Bicycles, roller skates and the latest craze, hover-boarding, were the order of the day.

People were everywhere, some walked while others jogged. Among the activities organised were Family Fun Walk with mothers and teachers, Classic Bike Rally, aerobics, a drawing competition and The Biggest Loser challenge.

Full-Board Meeting

The monthly Ipoh City Council full-board meeting was held on Wednesday, May 31 at the Council's designated conference hall.

During the meeting, Mayor Dato' Zamri Man said the council had received 348 objections regarding the revised annual assessment rate. Following this, the Council Evaluation Division had conducted four hearings to discuss objections raised by affected property owners.

According to Zamri, the council's last assessment rate revision was in 1982.

"Of the 348 objections, 35 were accepted while the remaining 313 were dismissed. Only 91 of those who objected were present during the four hearings," he said.

On a related matter, Zamri said that the council would start sealing the properties of those who failed to settle their annual assessment rate beginning in May.

Defaulters, he said, are those who do not settle their assessment rate for two terms and more and those who fail to honour their instalment agreement.

The council had issued Notice E beginning March 1 to property owners who did not settle their annual assessment rate by February 28. Notice E warns property owners of the pending action should they fail to settle their dues by the required date. Their properties would be sealed, as stipulated under Section 147 of Local Government Act 1976.

Perak Yang Bersih

Over 1000 people gathered as early as 7am to take part in a mammoth *gotong-royong* organised by the council in Tambun and its surroundings on Friday, May 19.

Armed with garbage bags, brooms, rakes, machetes, trimmers and paintbrushes, council staff, members of non-governmental organisations, civil servants and Ipohites swept roads, cleared clogged drains, collected rubbish, repainted dividers and trimmed grass and trees.

The clean-up, led by Councillor Mazlan Abdul Rahman, was part of the state-level "Perak Yang Bersih" campaign mooted by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir in an effort to improve cleanliness in the state.

The areas involved were Masjid, Taman Tambun Baru, Sekolah Kebangsaan Tambun, SJK(C) Hing Hwa, Pasar Tambun, Tambun police station, Taman Tambun Jaya, Taman Rimba Tambun and Tambun town.



iSpeak

A. Jeyaraj

Financing Affordable Housing

Financing Affordable Housing: Moving towards inclusive development, was a research paper presented by Professor Ahamed Kameel Mydin Meera, Managing Director, Z Consulting Group at the 4th IDR Annual Research Seminar held at Impiana Hotel recently.

Many young couples are finding that buying a house is beyond their financial means. Affordable houses is an interesting topic and Professor Ahamed gave examples from other countries on how they have solved the problem.

Housing is one of the most basic necessities and price of homes have skyrocketed, especially for those living in urban areas.

In the Malaysian context, the affordability standards in the public housing sector are based on the Housing Price to Income Ratio (PIR). The housing price is unaffordable if PIR exceeds three times of the median gross annual household income.

The average prices of houses in all states were given and the figures for Perak had an Affordability Criteria of 4.1 to 5.0 which is seriously unaffordable.

Professor Ahamed discussed the Singapore Model of Housing and Development Board (HDB) as follows:

1. About 80% of Singaporeans live in subsidised public housing built by HDB.
2. The homes are leased out to 'buyers'.
3. Prices of new properties are controlled by the government.

The following proposal by Professor Ahamed is:

1. To identify problems plaguing current homeowners and potential buyers in terms of financing options and availability.
2. To identify efficient and cost effective methods of constructing affordable homes using as much local resources available.
3. To identify financing methods (Islamic) that make it possible for home ownership in a shorter period of time.
4. Lobby for public interest vs developers' interest.
5. To be a one-stop agency for the development of affordable home – eliminate bureaucracy and obstacles that increase the cost of houses.

The Financing Options are:

- Housing Co-operative
- Canadian Model – Ansar Housing Co-operative
- Family Co-operative – Members come together, buy land together, can take financing from Suruhanjaya Koperasi Malaysia (SKM) and develop together.

PROJECT 1: Dana Perumahan Perak

1. To tap into internationally available funds at cheap costs to finance purchase of



affordable homes by Perakians.

2. To make funds available to those who cannot get funds from the banking sector.

PROJECT 2: Establish an Islamic Housing Co-operative

1. Objective is to establish an Islamic Housing Co-operative modelled after Ansar Islamic Housing Co-operative Corporation of Toronto, Canada.
2. Objective is to provide home financing using Musharakah Mutanaqisah contract where members can own home within 15 years.
3. Co-operative can also build homes to cut further construction costs and to generate additional income for members.

Benefits of setting up an Housing Institute

1. Minister is patron to the institute – officiates the annual conference and other events. Good international exposure and networking. Excellent goodwill.
2. Able to address an important issue facing the people. People own home in a short period – Political mileage.
3. Gradually solve the affordable housing issue.

Benefits

1. Overcome current housing crisis
2. Political Mileage for Government

From the reporter's perspective I recall that during the 3rd IDR Seminar held last year there was also a research paper presented on Housing and each participant was given a copy of the book 'Making Housing Affordable', published by Khazanah Research Institute. During that presentation we were informed that affordable houses are built in the Philippines.

Money and time is being spent on finding ways to build affordable houses and how to finance them and I am sure the government of the day is aware of it. I do not understand why the government has no will power to take action. There is lot of talk, but no action.

"When other countries can build affordable homes, why not we."

Sport

Puma Football Academy Tour



For the love and passion for football, international sport brand, Puma came to Ipoh and held their nationwide academy tour at SMK Anderson recently.

The session was attended by the students of SMK Anderson school who shared the same interest in football. The football academy, conducted by Puma, was aimed to inspire more young footballers and serve as a platform for youngsters to gain better exposure to the game and further develop their football skills.

“During the training, our coaches will give them basic training such as passing, defending, how to shoot and all. As Puma is a brand that promotes lifestyle and sport, we do have other academy sports as well,” said Joo Khoo, Senior Marketing Executive and also the representative for Puma during the tour in Ipoh.

While this has been a quarterly event for the past two years, Puma has decided to hold the clinics every month with the hope to raise more interest in the sport, “We are currently focussing only on male football first. The participants who join us today are all secondary students and hopefully in the future, with the support of everyone, including the public, we could be venturing into female football as well,” added Joo.

Aside from providing opportunities to learn football skills, the students were also given a chance to learn from Puma ambassadors who are all football players such as Shahrul Saad, Ahmad Khairil Annuar, Nasir Basharuiddin and Shahrul Nizam.

Ili Aqilah

Financial Planning

The Golden Years

This is Part 11 of a continuing 12-part series on financial planning.

The day has arrived for Adam and Aida to live the life of their dreams – they have both finally retired! To retire or not to retire... that’s not an option! For most of the working population, there is a mandatory retirement age, irrespective whether you’re ready or not.

By saving early in your adult life, you may find that you have enough to enjoy some of your money even before you actually retire. In the case of Adam, he had planned well and is enjoying the fruits of his labour as he had cultivated the habit of saving right from his school days. His top priority was saving 10% of his salary every month and strict adherence to some of the following principles:

- Sign up for EPF on your first day of work and create a personal retirement account by saving at least 10% of your income to supplement your EPF.
- Increase your savings in your personal retirement fund by a certain percentage of your income per year as you age.
- Allocate a portion of each raise or yearly bonus to your retirement savings.
- Review your investment portfolio for retirement annually to ensure that your money is growing according to your retirement plan.

Even though Adam and Aida may have sufficient for their retirement, they hold on to the principle of Prudence – their Retirement Budget continues to focus on prudent investment. For example, Adam is still driving his reliable 10-year-old Japanese car while Aida won’t part with her trusted 15-year-old sewing machine. In addition, they’re enjoying their favourite movies on their large and bulky television set instead of the latest plasma TVs!

So, what do we do if our golden years aren’t really that golden? Some surveys have revealed that about 50% of the people fear that they cannot afford to retire as even EPF reported that its members’ retirement funds last for an average of only three years.

Below are some suggestions to get the most out of your retirement funds.

Re-evaluating the Goal

At times, we have to be realistic about our goals. If the projection shows that funds will not be sufficient to support a certain lifestyle on retirement, necessary adjustments to be made against the originally planned. It is really a matter of expectations and being contented with what we have.

Re-sizing the Home

Downsize your home to generate extra cash or relocate to a less costly neighbourhood to lower your cost of living.

Engage in Post-Retirement Employment/Business

Sometimes, you may have little option but to continue working or venture into your own business. By doing so, you could have a longer accumulation retirement fund and there would be shorter retirement years. Anyway, you’re too young to retire at 55, or for some people, at 60!

Optimize on Senior Citizen Privileges

Our country offers senior citizens many privileges and discounts for selected goods and services which includes: air travel, train & LRT rides, movies, hotel accommodation to various shopping offers in the malls, to tap into the senior market segment.

The idea is to spend wisely, but not to unnecessarily reduce the joy of life by being too conservative in the approach. While money is necessary in today’s world, it is certainly not everything (neither is it the only thing!) Do not make it the sole reason for what you do in your life. Health, family and spiritual well-being are equally important elements that contribute towards a more fulfilling life. We should also make regular donations and contributions, in terms of time and money, to the less fortunate. It is very important to create a balance in your life in order to make it a meaningful one.

Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 543 9411**; 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.

Exhibition on Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), from **June 13-18**, 10am-5pm at **15 Clarke St**, 15 Jalan Sultan Abdul Jalil, 30450 Ipoh. Organised by the Perak Chest Society, Malaysian Thoracic Society and Lahat Road YMCA. OSA screening (sleep study not included) will be conducted by doctors at 10am-1pm. Public talks will be held on June 17 in Mandarin and June 18 in English at 3pm-4pm. Free admission. Pre-registration required. Call **05 255 6302** (Azmeera). Website: www.pcs.org.my.

Sharpened Word June Happenings. TALENTIME – Lessons from the Heart, by Yasmin Ahmad, a special screening, and **TALENTIME – A Talk by Hassan Muthalib – A Tail in Time for All Time**. Saturday **June 17**, 1.30pm to 5pm at Old Andersonians’ Club, Ipoh. Entry by donation of RM15. For details follow us on F/B: www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta.

Kelab Gunung Bakti Kledang Charity Dinner, July 8 at Hotel Casuarina@Meru Ballroom. Donations received will be used for orphanage homes and the homeless in Ipoh. Evergreen performer, Jamal Abdullah will be singing during the show. To book, call **012 501 1599** (Zulkepli Hussin) or **019 351 8854** (Syed Shaiful Nazreen).

Agriculture Technology Seminar Series XV – ‘Promoting Organic Farming in Malaysia’, Saturday **July 8**, 9am-5pm (registration starts at 8.30am) at DDK2, Faculty of Science, UTAR Kampar Campus, Perak. Organised by Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman’s Centre for Biodiversity Research (UTAR-CBR). The aim is to bring a group of imminent agronomy scientists and development specialists to share their knowledge on organic farming. Open to the public. Registration fee is RM50 (public) and RM10 (students) (inclusive of GST 6%, lunch and refreshments). For more information and registration, contact: Dr Kho Chiew Ling (khocl@utar.edu.my) or Mr Sim Kheng Yuen (simky@utar.edu.my). For online registration, log on to: <https://goo.gl/6QAEB2>.

Menglembu Kledang Hill 10-km Jungle Trail Race, July 9, 7am at Menglembu Kledang Hill, Ipoh. Entry forms can be downloaded from: www.kbb.net.my. Online registration: www.checkpointssport.asia. Contact: **019 571 0590**, **012 518 9888** or **012 528 6383**. Email: pccci@pccci.org.my.

Calling all 1976 ACS Kamparians! We are having a ‘Back to the 70s’ reunion and celebration gathering on the **July 15** at Grand Kampar Hotel, Kampar. This will be a fun-filled night of reminiscing our schooldays and showing our appreciation to our teachers besides talent time, stage games, photos from yesteryears, disco, etc. Ticket price is RM120 per pax. Those interested to attend, kindly sign up before **April 30**. For more details, contact Chow **013 360 3338**, Ng CF **016 285 5939**, Ng SC **012 614 5048**, Tham **012 253 5368** or Tan **012 250 2999**.

11th Asian Science Camp (ASC) from **August 20 to 26** at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar Campus. Organised by Kuala Lumpur Engineering Science Fair (KLESF). Members of the public

are welcome to attend the free plenary sessions conducted by four Nobel Laureates as well as top scientists and technologists on August 21, 22 and 24. For participation and more information, kindly visit <http://www.asc2017.net/>.

SMK Anderson Charity School Play: ‘Tengu And The Uchiwa Boy’, **July 22** (Saturday, 7.45pm) and **23** (Sunday, 3pm) at SMK Anderson, Ipoh. Organised by the Japanese Language Club. Performed in English with live ensemble and choir. Tickets: RM20 and RM50 (front row). For enquiries, contact: **012 458 6117**.

“Since 1907” Food and Culture Fair, July 27, 5pm to 7pm at the new Ipoh Convention Centre (next to MBI building) by Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI). With a portion of its proceeds contributed to charity, tokens for spending will be sold. Visitors are encouraged to come dressed in clothes of the era. For enquiries, call PCCCI office at **05 242 1366**.

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. The centre also welcomes volunteers. For more details kindly call April at **05 241 1691** before 5pm.

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.

St John Ambulance Malaysia Perak is recruiting volunteers who are interested to join the Emergency Rescue Unit, Volunteer must be 18 years to 50 years of age. Training will be provided to all volunteers. Those who are interested call up **05 254 5946** or **012 550 4002** Manin Singh for registration and more details.

Free Simplified Yoga for Beginners. Vethathiri Maharishi Yoga. **Every Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday.** Class starts at 6.45am-8am. Place: Buntong Benevolent Fund Hall, Jalan Guntong, Buntong Ipoh, Perak. Must bring yoga mat or mat itself. Please call Sivam **016 670 4285** for free lesson appointment.



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Visit Perak 2017 Calendar



| | | |
|-----------|-------|--|
| June | 18 | Festival Kampar @ UTAR Multipurpose Hall, Kampar Campus (UTAR: 05- 468 8888). |
| | 23-24 | Muallim MTB (Mountain Bike) @ Tanjung Malim. |
| | 30 | 5th Lenggong Carnival to commemorate Lenggong Valley Heritage Site @ Dataran Lenggong (Jabatan Warisan Zon Tengah). |
| July | 15-16 | Ipoh Arts Festival @ Kinta Riverfront, Ipoh organised by PORT (People of Remarkable Talent). |
| | 15-17 | Perak International Drum Festival @ Ipoh (Tourism Perak: 05-249 9966 email: www.tourismperakmalaysia.com). |
| | 30 | Ipoh Cultural Parade @ Ipoh (Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Email: www.pccci.org.my). |
| August | 6 | Ipoh International Run @ Ipoh (Ipoh City Council: 05-208 3333). |
| | 13-14 | Kelip-kelip Kampung Dew Carnival @ Kelip-kelip Kampung Dew Square. |
| | 18-19 | Pau Festival @ Tanjung Malim (Tanjung Malim District Office: 05-456 3410/3420). |
| | 26-28 | Royal Belum International Bird Expedition @ Sungai Tiang, Royal Belum (Perbadanan Taman Negeri Perak, Gerik: 05-791 4543). |
| | 27 | Raintown Half Marathon @ Esplanade, Taiping (Taiping Town Council: 05-808 0777). |
| September | 1-3 | Royal Belum Festival @ Gerik, Royal Belum (Perbadanan Taman Negeri Perak, Gerik: 05-791 4543). |
| | 9-12 | Pangkor International Development Dialogue @ Casuarina@Meru, Ipoh/Pangkor (Institut Darul Ridzuan: 05-241 2670). |
| | - | Zoorama @ Zoo Taiping (Taiping Town Council: 05-808 0777). |
| | 22-24 | Pengkalan Hulu Float Festival @ Taman Tasik Takong, Pengkalan Hulu (Pengkalan Hulu District Office: 04-477 8148). |
| October | 8-9 | Taiping Heritage Fun Ride @ Taiping (Taiping Town Council: 05-808 0777). |
| | 13-15 | Pulau Sembilan Kayak Challenge @ Pulau Sembilan (Perbadanan Taman Negeri Perak, Gerik: 05-791 4543). |
| | 13-15 | Badang Challenge @ Kampung Labu Kubong (Kuala Kangsar District Office: 05-776 1963). |
| | 26-29 | World Ecotourism (Wet) Expo @ Ipoh (Tourism Perak: 05 249 9966 Email: www.tourismperakmalaysia.com). |
| | 27-28 | Pesta Berakit Ulu Slim @ Ulu Slim. |
| | 28-29 | Festival Kesenian Rakyat Perak @ Gunung Lang, Ipoh (Perak Arts and Culture Department: 05-253 7001). |
| November | 25-27 | Royal Belum Anglers Challenge @ Sungai Tiang, Royal Belum (Perbadanan Taman Negeri Perak, Gerik: 05-791 4543). |
| | 24-26 | 7th Classical Car Assembly @ Teluk Batik, Lumut (Persatuan Pemilik Vespa Manjung: 012-385 5147). |
| | 25-26 | Port Fest (Drum & Traditional Arts Festival) @ Dataran Ipoh organised by PORT (People Of Remarkable Talent). |
| December | 4-6 | Border Fest @ Kroh (Pengkalan Hulu District Office: 04-477 8148). |
| | 7-10 | Festival Puisi dan Lagu Rakyat Antarabangsa Pangkor ke-8 @ Pulau Pangkor (Tourism Perak: 05-249 9966. Email: www.tourismperakmalaysia.com). |
| | 31 | Perak New Year Countdown Celebration 2018 @ Ipoh (Tourism Perak: 05 249 9966. Email: www.tourismperakmalaysia.com). |