



Abdullah CD



Suriani

LOOK WHO CAME BACK TO PERAK

WELCOME HOME FELLOW PERAKIANS

By James Wong Wing On, former MP for Kampar

Who should drop by their old home-state the other day

.... None other than prominent husband and wife veterans of the former Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) – Abdullah CD and Suriani Abdullah.

And it was really a joyful homecoming. Both hail originally from our state.

Now residing in southern Thailand, the couple travelled to Ipoh on Monday, December 10, to meet and greet friends and relatives.

According to Suriani, they also took the opportunity to pay respects at the graveside of one of Abdullah's close relatives.

Abdullah CD was one

of the three CPM veterans who signed the 1989 Peace Accords between the party and the governments of Malaysia and Thailand. The other two signatories are Chin Peng and the late Rashid Maidin (1917-2006).

The '89 tripartite Peace Accords have been hailed internationally as a major contribution to the concept of modern conflict reconciliation. They brought final closure to the recognised 12-year Malayan Emergency (1948 -1960) and the period known as "The Second Emergency" which rumbled on intermittently for more than two decades thereafter.

During the initial Emergency, Abdullah led

the all-Malay 10th Regiment of the CPM's now defunct Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA). Earlier, throughout the Pacific War, he headed a band of 100 armed Malay youths, fighting occupying Japanese forces along the Perak River.

ARMED PARTISAN

Suriani Abdullah, whose maiden name is Eng Ming Ching, was also an armed partisan under the banner of the CPM's Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). She was involved in numerous actions and activities against Japanese occupation forces.



Abdullah and former IGP Hanif Omar: once sworn enemies, now friends.

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From the Editor's Desk

GARBAGE GALORE!

Goodness - what a mounting mess

By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Perak is facing huge waste management problems and new policies and approaches for these are urgently needed.

This was the underlying message conveyed by Dato' Chang Ko Youn, Chairman of Local Government, Public Housing and Public Transport at a special seminar held at the Heritage Hotel, Ipoh, last month.

Dato' Chang provided the seminar with a list of alarming statistics to support his presentation.

Of the estimated 261 waste landfills in Malaysia, he said, only 150 were still operational. Within this context, Perak had just 20 landfills and 70% of these were already functioning at critical levels.



Dato' Chang Ko Youn

LOW SUCCESS RATES

Although measures to reduce the amount of waste disposed daily were in place, the success rates being achieved by these are proving relatively low.

For example, only about 3% of the state's waste is being re-cycled as opposed to some 20% being achieved in Western countries.

Public apathy, according to Dato' Chang, is largely to blame for this dismal recycling picture and, indeed, for much of the overall waste disposal problems.

What was needed, he claimed, was a long term plan to change

public attitudes and mindsets. "We need to start with the school children," he added, as poor civic consciousness was now a critical issue.

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

The seminar on solid waste management at which Dato' Chang spoke was jointly organised by the Perak State Government and the European Union (EU). It was called to review case studies



On top of the mounting pile at Bercham landfill, Ipoh's overworked and solitary waste disposal site.

and best practices on waste management as applicable in EU countries. These, in turn, were then examined against urban environment policies and practices operational in Malaysia.

Some 40 participants, representing both public and private sectors' agencies and non-governmental organisations, were present for the one-day forum. In attendance were experts from the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark.

MIND-BOGGLING FIGURES

Also on the panel was the Mayor of Ipoh, Dato' Mohamad Rafiai bin Hj Moktar. He provided some mind-boggling figures; all of them largely absent from previous open-forum discussions on related subjects. His statistics on the following are clearly worth careful consideration:

* The physical size of Ipoh city has expanded from a mere 137.5 sq km in 1990 to 387.63 sq km in 2001 and then to 642.57 sq km by December 2003.

* The population of Ipoh has increased with the passage of time and size of the city from

441,100 in 1990 to 529,906 in 2001 and to 612,600 by December 2003.

• The number of council staff involved in waste collection and disposal is 908.

• Of the 122 council vehicles used for waste disposal only 64 are on the road daily.

• The amount of waste disposed in 2006 was 184,910 tons. At end June, 2007, it was 114,078 tons - an apparent annual increment of 2 per cent.

• Statistics show that each member of Ipoh's population is responsible for a daily waste figure of almost 1 kg - 0.85 kg to be exact!

• Domestic waste accounted for 67 per cent of total sum disposed.

• 19,422 illegal rubbish dumps were cleared in 2006.

The mayor spoke at length on Ipoh's only landfill at Bercham. The dump site is located along the Bercham-Tanjong Rambutan road. It was commissioned in 1986 and is 112 acres in size. The Bercham landfill has a lifespan of ten years but due to controlled usage it is operable till 2010. A new 200-acre site

has been identified in Lahat.

COSTINGS

A sanitary landfill, one that is hygienic and non-hazardous, costs RM200 million to build. "Getting federal funding is desirable, as it is too costly for the city or the state to foot the bill," said the mayor. The Bercham landfill and those throughout the country are traditional-type landfills. They do not possess any safety and health features. Their impact on the environment is only too obvious.

Chang reiterated that the scrapping of the Barga incinerator was made not due to public opposition but to a cost factor. "As the cost is prohibitive building an incinerator in Perak is no longer an option," said Chang. This augurs well for the anti-incinerator lobbyists.

PAY AS YOU THROW

To encourage recycling, the "pay as you throw" policy, as observed by some EU countries, should come in handy. "However, since the poor generated the most amount of waste, such a policy is not appropriate at this moment in time," said Chang.

Policies on solid waste management are being deliberated and formulated at federal level. Conducting open forums as a prelude to a decision is a step in the right direction. How these policies will affect our lives in the future is a major concern for all and sundry.



see Editorial on page 4.



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Something must be done about the garbage crisis, and done quickly. Not a single household in the city's greater population area can escape its effects.

If you have views and observations on how this crisis developed and sustained, write to the *Ipoh Echo*. Better still, if you have suggestions on how the crisis should be tackled from this point onwards, let's hear from you. Address your comments to:

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TRAVEL

ISLAND MEMORIES

To this day, Merv Sprague thinks: Hold that Tiger!

It all started with the idea to conserve ready cash. Ken Sutton, Paul Joliffe and I had returned to our base in Penang after another tour of duty in the jungles of Borneo. Indonesia and the newly formed country of Malaysia were locked into what was politically termed a "Confrontation" or "Konfrantasi" in the local lingo. Whatever the leaders of the time elected to name the situation, it was simply just another war where people lied or died. Or made profits.

THE BEATLES AND TIGER BEER

As British soldiers we were caught up in the defence of Brunei, North Borneo [Sabah] and the southern State of Sarawak. It was 1963 and all we really knew or cared about were The Beatles, Tiger beer and pretty bar girls. Our combined experiences of previous leave periods taught us that the latter two categories cost money.

In a dazzling display of economic rationalism, the decision was made to spend half of the allocated fortnight on the summit of Kedah Peak (now Gunung Jerai) and

squander the rest of our funds the next week. In the end, the result would be exactly the same. We would end up penniless.

Our platoon commander was enthused by our idea and readily agreed to sanction sufficient field rations for our expedition. He was perhaps glad to know that there would be three less to worry about for a few days. To our mutual delight, he even offered us transport to the base of the mountain, which we gratefully accepted.

KEDAH PEAK

Rising 4,140 feet above the Straits of Malacca, Kedah

Peak is clearly visible from the island of Penang. For centuries, Indian traders from

we began the gruelling trek to the peak. The steep seven miles of twisting road took

alone a heavy signals pack to shoulder, it was a breeze after the mountainous paths of Borneo. An added bonus was that in the tranquillity of the then King George V National Park, we were unlikely to run into an ambush. We felt safe with a machete apiece.

We discovered an old open hut that served as a base camp. Should the heavens have opened up, we would have some shelter. Over the next day or so we found a disused and seemingly abandoned colonial rest house. Our only companions being the ever-chattering monkeys and, later, some wonderfully coloured butterflies and moths.

It was cold enough at night to light a small fire. A

sleeping bag would have been a nice addition, but the British Army had a policy regarding creature comforts.

SIDETRIPS

None of our intrepid trio had bothered to shave, so we decided to walk down to the small kampong at Gurun to find a suitable barber. Chins glistening in the tropical sun and stinging from aftershave, we caught a local bus and headed to the Kedah State capital at Alor Star. Looking back, it probably was a risky thing to have done, as the town was a known hotbed of Communist support and we three unarmed and dressed in jungle greens!

After a meal, my two fellow travellers decided to go to a local Chinese cinema. Considering neither spoke Mandarin and struggled with English, I wondered why they bothered. In the meantime, I hitched a lift to the Thai border town of Changlun which really wasn't worth the effort, except to say that I had been closer to Bangkok than either of my mates.

continued on page 11



Kedah Peak as seen from Penang island.

the Bay of Bengal had used it as a navigational tool as they sailed their boats to the Malayan coast.

At the base of the mountain was a small lodge. It had a Malay caretaker. Parting with our transport,

us through virgin jungle where Dusky Leaf monkeys busily chattered and hustled about their daily routines. Numerous varieties of native trees provided some shade.

Without arms or ammunition to carry, let

continued from page 1



Hari Raya Aidilfitri is celebrated with "open house" at Suriani and Abdullah's southern Thailand home.

At one point she was captured by the Japanese and underwent torture sessions for a period of six months immediately preceding the end of the Pacific War in August, 1945.

Suriani was raised in Sitiawan where she attended the Nan Hwa school. Later she studied at Ipoh's Methodist Girls School.

Abdullah was born in October, 1923, and lived as a youngster in Perak's Parit district. He attended a Malay primary school in Parit and an English intermediate school in Tapah. Abdullah completed

his Standard 7 at Kuala Kangsar's Clifford English School.

The couple married in 1959 while the Emergency was still underway.

As a result, Suriani gave birth to a daughter, Karimas @ Xiao Hong, in the jungle.

Suriani and Abdullah now live at Ban Chulabhorn 12, in Sukhirin, southern Thailand.

Yearly they hold "open house" at their home to celebrate Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

Abdullah has written two Malay language books on the history of the anti-colonial

struggles of the Malay left and the CPM.

Both titles, *Perang Anti-British dan Perdamaian* (Anti-British War and Peace) and *Darut dan Kemerdekaan, 1948-60* (The Emergency and Independence), were first published in Hong Kong in 1998

WEDDING DINNER GUESTS

Prior to their Ipoh trip, Abdullah and Suriani also attended a private wedding dinner held at the Crown Plaza Mutiara Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, on Sunday, December 9.

There they met, among other prominent guests, Sultan Azlan Shah and Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah as well as former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Hanif Omar and the current Minister for Rural and Regional Development, Aziz Shamsuddin.

Aziz Shamsuddin, who is also a former political secretary to ex-PM Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, is a cousin of another legendary veteran of the CPM, the late Rashid Maidin who hailed from Kampung Gunung Mesah in Gopeng, Perak.

Before the KL wedding dinner began, the male host,

who is a close relative of Abdullah CD, personally announced the presence of the veteran communists as his honoured guests.

That immediately made Abdullah and Suriani, the focus of much attention from their fellow guests.

The dinner, served with Western food, also saw the performance of traditional Malay dances as well as Chinese and English songs. This writer also attended the dinner as a guest.

see Editorial on page 4.



James Wong, the writer of this fortnight's lead story, will henceforth be a regular contributor to the Ipoh Echo. As representative for Kampar, James served in Malaysia's 8th Parliament. Out of politics, he now much prefers concentrating on journalistic pursuits. He is an award-winning journalist.



Suriani and husband Abdullah share some happy moments with Federal Minister Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin.

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Editorial

ABDULLAH CD

The 'Emergency' dominated a substantial part of pre and post Merdeka history. It dictated and perhaps even moulded early Malaysian social, political, economic and cultural thought and values. The Peace Accords brought closure to this episode.

Once bitter enemies, the ex-warring parties are now able to meet, socialise and acknowledge each other as friends. This is the mark of not only civilised human behaviour but the Malaysian trait of forgiveness. They all began with one common mission - to rid society of foreign dominance. They differed, however, in their choice of what social, economic and political order would best benefit the people of their society. But there could be no serious doubt that each burned with idealism, held their beliefs honestly and acted with commitment. Loyalty to a cause and the willingness to walk the talk is all too rare a quality.

It is reassuring to observe past combatants treating each other with dignity and respect. As warriors who shared a common arena they undoubtedly have an affinity that only those with common experiences can.

A MOUNTING CRISIS

A very substantial portion of Ipoh City Council's assessment revenue is expended on the collection and disposal of refuse. This is an important, if not THE most important, function of the Authority. Indeed, the Council's very origins can be traced back to this precise activity.

A primary concern in urban administration must be public health and nothing has a more direct bearing on this than refuse management. Even the most forgiving citizen of Ipoh - once acknowledged as the Nation's cleanest town - would agree that refuse disposal must be better managed. The local council came into existence as a consequence of a disease outbreak. Hopefully another epidemic isn't needed to persuade action.

While there can be little dispute that the Authority can and must do better, citizens have to recognise that they, too, have a role to play if the crisis - and that is exactly what has occurred - is to be overcome. Regrettably, the community's attitude seems to be that payment of assessment rates puts the entire obligation of keeping the city clean on the Council.

The issues involved are complex. Urban centres continue to expand as the community becomes more affluent. Increased garbage, thus generated, consistently overwhelms existing resources. Addressing the problem clearly requires a major element of cooperation and assistance from the public. In this respect it is surprising to learn that the poor generated the most amount of waste. Is this true? Or is it just that areas where the poor reside seldom get visits from garbage collectors?

People need to become environmentally conscious. Space for landfill is becoming scarce and traditional forms of garbage disposal have been found to have negative environmental consequences. With environmentally friendly garbage disposable systems being expensive to setup and operate, the only option available is embracing a culture of 'reduce, reuse and recycle'. For this to work the authorities need to set up systems and an infrastructure that supports and encourages this culture. Sadly, little or nothing has been done in this respect.

Aside from that, the meaningful realisation of this would also need a community responsibility. In our society, 'compliance' is not a common value especially in the private sector. There is little or no realisation that rules and regulations are made for the benefit of society and that everyone has, not only the obligation to adhere, but a right to its observance. Our culture is to surrender this right to the authorities for enforcement. There needs to be a mindset change where the community assumes responsibility and actively ensures that there is compliance by all members of society.

The Terrible Toll-Gate Toll

By Nisha Devina Roy



The early morning accident between a bus and a latex tanker at the Jelapang toll plaza on December 11 last has rocked the community. Eight people have been reported killed this time, and another 10 injured.

Twelve people have died and 74 others have been injured since 2003 along the downhill highway segment from Menora tunnel to the Jelapang toll point. This highway section is now widely referred to by locals as the 'killer stretch'. These statistics are unacceptable.

Equally unacceptable is the appalling time-lapse that has occurred since it was first decided something had to be done to correct major

was the plaza location correct? None of the relevant questions posed have ever been satisfactorily answered publicly by the authorities.

Those involved in the placement and planning of the Jelapang position have never been asked to explain why such obvious potential vehicle-handling problems were not recognised at the outset of the highway's construction.

"BREK TAK MAKAN...!"

Of the 142 accidents in the past 10 years, 87 have involved heavy vehicles suffering brake failure. The driver who careened his bus into the latex tanker at the Jelapang plaza site was

so. There are also a number of internationally recognised road construction measures - absent on that downhill highway stretch - that could have been introduced to lessen the likelihood of brake failure accidents.

SAND TRAP

At one point it was decided to install a sand-trap off the left shoulder of the highway on the downhill run, a short distance from the plaza position.

From then onwards, motorists experiencing brake failure were expected to veer left towards the trap entrance during that final downhill run to the plaza.

Unfortunately the sand trap introduction has proved all but useless. If the downhill lanes are heavily occupied by vehicles, motorists encountering brake failure find it almost impossible, in times of emergency, to veer left across packed lanes without causing further accidents.

FROM NOW TILL JULY

While we are awaiting the opening of the replacement facilities, temporary measures must be taken to prevent a continued spiralling of the accident rate. Many suggestions have been made by concerned citizens. For example, more signage, accident awareness reminders and emergency instructions should be put in place starting from tunnel exit and extending all the way down to the toll plaza itself. Drivers should also be made to decelerate and shift into lower gears well before they approach the toll booths. At the same time, the instal-



Signs of a collision at the booth.

design faults inherent in the highway's Jelapang toll operation.

Four years will have gone by since experts first presented their advice that the plaza had to be relocated. Still another 6 months or so will pass before motorists will begin paying toll charges at a designated new plaza location.

Talks on the urgent need to move the plaza began in early 2004. Subsequently, Works Minister, Datuk Seri S. Sami Vellu, stated the toll structure would be repositioned 800 metres away from its present site.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

In the past 10 years, the Jelapang toll plaza has witnessed a staggering 142 accidents. All along questions have repeatedly been raised on safety matters related to the toll's functioning. Had enough thought been given in the planning stages? If vehicles were required to travel for several kilometres down a long, steep and winding hill prior to reaching the toll-paying position,

reported to be shouting, 'Brek tak makan...brek tak makan!' (The brakes are not working), as he exited the Menora tunnel. If this was the case, his passengers experienced an unimaginable, downhill horror dash before what must, to them, have seemed the inevitable final, fatal crash.

The fact that brake failure is the cause of most of these



The questionable trap.

accidents should give a hint to government departments such as Puspakom and the Transport Ministry. Harsher, more meticulous and efficient checks should be made to ensure that brakes function when they are required to do

lation of state-of-the-art surveillance equipment should be considered.

And, of course, firm action must be taken against reckless drivers - be they seated behind wheels of buses, trucks or ordinary family cars.

HAND - DELIVERED TO READERS



First stop: Polo Ground

To ensure that readers in Ipoh did not miss their free copies of the first issue of the new-look Echo, the editor and his staff went

around the city distributing the paper on Saturday, December 1, 2007. Their first stop was Polo Ground where they handed copies to joggers and visitors. They also went to Kinta City and Slibin. Everyone agreed the revamped Ipoh Echo looked "fresh" and "pleasant". Copies were also sent to Taiping, Kuala Kangsar, Gopeng and Kampar.

Thumbs Up

DOING SOMETHING

Have we ever thought of whether we, in the private sector, could do something to prevent crime?

A small community of primarily senior citizens have been pondering the issue. More importantly, THEY HAVE DONE something

officer. He kept resisting and ignored even warning shots. He kept advancing and in the chaos that followed was shot.

Subsequently, the residents decided to organise themselves and formed a committee to further prevent



A bit of community effort has improved life for residents of Jalan Serindik.

about it. Tired of the break-ins in their area, they have formed The Jalan Serindik Neighbourhood Committee.

BREAK - INS

One of the most common crimes around their area was house break-ins. The most common trick was through the roof and then an escape through the back door. Somehow the thieves knew the right time to strike which meant there was a scout keeping an eye on the area.

The positive and proactive attitude of the Jalan Serindik residents is most encouraging. Their efforts actually led to the capture of a suspect a year ago. Some of the residents had noticed a stranger in the neighbourhood several times and they compared notes. On the fifth time the stranger was noticed loitering in the vicinity a call was made to the Sg. Senam police station who promptly attended the scene. The suspect would not cooperate and, cornered, turned violent. He had a knife and started wielding it, wounding a police

incidents in their area. A list of preventive steps were agreed upon and minuted. One of the suggestions was to fix a siren in the house (this was optional), switch on the porch lights when a siren is heard and inform one's immediate neighbour if one is going away for a few days. It is basic team-effort.

IN TANDEM

A meeting was also held with the Police team from Sg. Senam. The phone numbers of assigned police personnel were provided to the committee. Residents were advised to call these assigned officers if they sighted "suspicious persons, vehicles or crime in the area".

The efforts of this group have actually led to a reduced incidence of crime in their neighbourhood. It is hoped that this article will encourage more Ipohites to set up "neighbourhood watch" teams in their areas.

JAG

Ingenuity and little hunch paid off for Zulkifli Mohd Desa when he decided to switch from using a prawn to a frog as bait. The decision made him RM3,000 richer when he clinched the top prize at the Ipoh Fishing Competition held in conjunction with Ipoh's 19th anniversary as a city.

A seasoned angler, who has more than 40 fishing rods at his disposal, Zulkifli said he had to study the types of fish at the Gunung Lang Recreation Park before deciding on the baits to use.

AMAZING CATCH

The intrepid technician caught a whopping 4.74kg catfish, beating 650 other competitors. His catch amazed the panel of judges and some 500 visitors who thronged the park.

Zulkifli, 33, said he was a first-time competitor. He was too busy at work in the

past. He said: "Fishing here has its challenges. My fishing



Time to pick the winning prize catch.

line was caught a few times among the thick underwater plants." That nearly foiled his chance of getting the catfish, he explained, adding that he had to use thicker line to prevent it from snapping.

Zulkifli declared he would definitely take part again next year as he managed to make many new

friends. He also learned a few fishing tips from his fellow competitors.

OTHER WINNERS

The first runner-up, Roslan Mohd, won a cash prize of RM2,500 and a hamper. His catfish weighed 4.215kg. Mohd Asmundi Shaharuddin was third, taking home a cash prize of RM2,000 and a hamper. His catfish was

3.69kg. Chong Chai Fuat (pic) who won RM100 for his



As happy as the top anglers

catch, said he would share his fish with friends.

Councillor Phang Tzu Pin who headed the event's organising committee said he was pleased to see the overwhelming response to the competition which attracted both professional and amateur anglers.

Peter Khiew

THOUGHTFUL CHEER

No sleigh driven by reindeer. No Arctic snow either, just your typical Malaysian drizzle.

For the guests gathered at the Bukit Kindang Resort on December 9, 2007, the sight of 'Santa Claus' arriving by paddleboat was a different treat. A lake scene



Children taking their turn posing with "Santa".

featuring 'Santa' in the middle of Bukit Kindang was the highlight of the Portuguese-Eurasian Association of Perak's (PEAP) Christmas party.

In his welcome speech, Association president Jude Monteiro said that as 'Serani' - as Eurasians are

usually referred to - they have become a small closely knit community.

REFLECTION

The fact that they come from mixed cultural backgrounds, he remarked, has made them more aware of the importance of inculcating in the younger generation the importance of respecting the beliefs and traditions of others.

He exhorted his audience to think of the needy while enjoying the evening's bounty.

The dinner spread was sumptuous. Carols were sung. There were dances and games. A band played Christmas songs.

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SPORTS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Largest spa in the city, rooftop swimming pool, tennis court, squash court and gym.

THE WAY IT WAS ... 100 YEARS AGO THIS FORTNIGHT

Thursday, 2nd January, 1908

Local & General

A Gazette Extraordinary has been issued by the Straits Settlements Government directing that dogs in the island of Singapore be kept either chained or muzzled till further orders, in consequence of an outbreak of rabies there.

* * * * *

Parit, in Kuala Kangsar district, has been placed under the operation of the Sanitary Board Enactment of 1907.

* * * * *

The suit brought against the Government of the Straits Settlements by a Chinaman for the pressure which the defendant is alleged to have put upon the Johore Government to cancel an opium contract with the plaintiff will be heard in March next.

* * * * *

The charge for the feeding and

care of an Indian Immigrant in a Government Hospital has been fixed at the rate of 24 cents per diem.

* * * * *

'The motor-car is the apotheosis of 10,000 years of human progress' said Canon Lambert the other day. 'Nothing more approaching a living being has yet been achieved by human hands.'

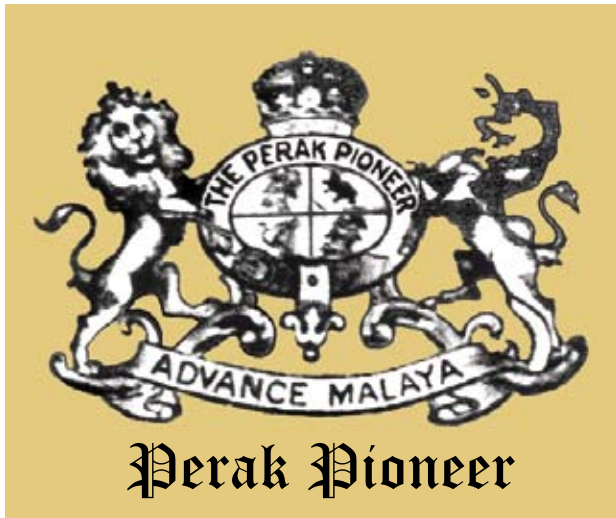
* * * * *

The Assistant Commissioner of Police, Taiping, has been appointed Protector under the Women and Girls' Protection Enactment, 1902.

* * * * *

In view of the large number of Malay and Tamil prisoners in the Taiping Gaol, we are surprised to find that the list of Visiting Justices for the district of Larut published in the last Gazette does not contain any Tamil or Malay name. We hope the omission will be soon rectified.

* * * * *



Perak Pioneer Established in 1894 'The oldest and most widely circulated newspaper in the F.M.S.'

Kuala Kangsar Notes

(From our own
Correspondent)

January 2nd, 1908

The Annual Sports of the Kuala Kangsar Malay School, and those of the adjoining villages, were held yesterday on the recreation ground, in front of the Reading Room and Pavilion. The sports were started by the Dato Sri Adaka Maja, I.S. and Hadji Abdulla, Angla Vernacular Teacher, punctually at 2.30 pm. A large number of spectators from all the neighbouring villages were present to witness the sports.

* * * * *

Saturday, 4th January, 1908

Editorial

It is difficult to realise the full significance of the statement recently made by the Birmingham 'Daily Post' that the Imperial Government is in consultation with the Indian authorities in regard to a scheme for providing better conditions for natives in the towns of the Federated Malay States.

The Government of India would be naturally interested in the well-being of the Indians who emigrate to these regions. But its solicitude on their behalf is mainly directed to secure the good treatment of the thousands of South Indian labourers who annually come over to the Straits and the F.M.S. The Indian Government has consistently adhered to its policy of prohibiting emigration to countries where Governments have not made adequate and suitable provision for safeguarding the welfare of labourers recruited within its jurisdiction.

The Indian Immigration Enactment in force in the Straits and Federated Malay States ought to satisfy even the most fastidious administration that the lot of the coolie employed in these countries is a comfortable, if not an enviable one, compared to the treatment accorded to him in other countries and less favoured regions. One might have expected

that the Imperial authorities would have consulted the local Government in the first instance, in preference to seeking the advice of the Indian Administration in regard to a scheme for bettering the conditions of the natives resident in towns.

The Government of India has not been conspicuously successful in its efforts to eradicate the slums that are such a distressing feature of even Indian Presidency towns, and presumably its hands are quite full in taking measures to improve the sanitation of the numerous towns whose conditions demand close attention. The treatment of Japanese and Chinese aliens who land on these shores has all along been characterised by the broadest tolerance, compatible with the safety of the receiving community.

As the Indian Government has been hardly troubled with an alien immigration question, we fail to see how it can offer any suggestions for changing in a useful direction the policy hitherto so successfully followed by our local administrators.

There is the astounding statement that it is intended to give the local authorities larger powers in dealing with the native and alien questions.

Whatever extension of powers to these respects might be granted to the local authorities of the self-governing colonies, it is almost incredible that the Colonial Office which has centralised within itself all administrative powers in the Crown Colonies, will consent to part with even a shred of the same, in virtue of any ostensible scheme of decentralisation that might be elaborated.

* * * * *

Local & General

Mr Elton Bell, Veterinary Surgeon of Penang, while experimenting with a mad cat, was attacked and seriously wounded by the brute. He has started for Saigon for treatment at the Pasteur Institute.

* * * * *

It is reported that the Government of the Dutch Indies intend to commence the demonetisation of the Straits dollar on the East Coast of Sumatra from the 1st of February next. From that date dollars will be received in exchange for guilders at a given rate.

* * * * *

The arrival of the Chinese Commissioner for Foreign Trade, H.E. Yang Shi Khi, from Penang, accompanied by Mr Foo Chuo Choon, was a wonderful spectacle at Ipoh Station on Friday last, every tradesman, miner or dealer throughout 'the hub' seemed to be in attendance on him, while the collection of motor-cars, bicycles, carriages, dogcars and other vehicles will long constitute a record in these parts.

No reception (not even excepting the Anti-Opium Delegates and Commission members) ever approached it, the streets on both sides being lined throughout with large crowds of interested natives of all communities.

The distinguished visitor left for Kinta House, the headquarters of the Perak Planters' and Miners' Association, in Gopeng Road, which residence has been put at his disposal during his stay here in the company of Towkay Foo Chuo Choon. With D. Edgar acting as chauffeur, a short tour of the town was made in the interim, and H.E. expressed himself more than surprised at the progressive and advanced state Ipoh had arrived at, and he really only spoke the truth.

* * * * *

Wednesday 8th January, 1908

Local & General

Yesterday morning the Penang police launch Penguin suddenly listed and sank in the harbour in nine fathoms of water, after having run too far on to the bank near Swettenham wharf.

* * * * *

The Penang Chetties are calling in all their outstandings in view to render financial assistance to a big

Chetty firm of Rangoon which is reported to have failed. The failure of three Chetty firms in Singapore taken in connection with this incident is a significant indication of the sign of the times.

* * * * *

The Ipohites who grumble at their Lux lights ought to be thankful, for the following excerpt by Dr Oppenheimer, in 'Zentral Zeitung fur Optik' Berlin. 'The tremendous illumination of the streets in large cities constitutes a grave danger to the eyes. This is disastrous for the eyesight, and the day is not far distant when we shall all have to wear smoked glasses when out at night.'

* * * * *

We think that the time has arrived for discontinuing the old custom of conveying Chinese prisoners to the police station by leading them by their pigtales.

If Malays and Tamils could be conducted to prison in security without this extreme precaution, there is no reason why the Chinese should be subjected to such a needless degradation.

Yesterday evening a couple of detectives were seen escorting half a dozen Chinamen tied together in pairs by their pigtales.

* * * * *

The Kuala Lumpur Sanitary Board are evidently fully conscious of the extreme scarcity of the water supply in the town.

The other day in approving an application for establishing a steam laundry it did so on the express condition that no water would be supplied to the laundry until the public supply is sufficient for all purposes.

When such a happy consummation will be reached it is impossible to say. The promoters of the laundry company will therefore have to adjourn their project *sine die* while the residents of the Federal capital continue, subject to the exactions and dilatoriness of the dhobis who are now fully masters of the situation.

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Ipoh Facts and Fancies

by Ho Tak Ming

Ipoh's Sanatorium

An isolated retreat its caretakers wanted to keep for themselves

It is not generally known that, at one time, Ipoh had its own sanatorium, on the summit of Gunung Kledang in Menglembu. It was one of the lesser hill resorts of Malaya in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although the elevation was only 2,826 feet above sea level, the atmosphere was decidedly brisk and invigorating, and a brief stay where the temperature was a few degrees lower than that of the plains below, was refreshing.

There were two bungalows, the larger one built in 1892 and a smaller one built in 1902. There was a trigonometrical station nearby. Conifers were planted all around the bungalows. This patch of temperate vegetation could be seen from Ipoh.

A WINDING JOURNEY

Permission to occupy one of the two government bungalows there had to be obtained from the District Officer, Kinta. The traveller usually made his way from Ipoh to Menglembu by rail, then went by rickshaw to the foot of the hill, a distance of about two miles. He then

commenced on a winding ascent of nearly five miles, past some tin mines, the biggest of which was the Bukit Kambing mine. Anyone in fairly robust health could easily accomplish this by walking, with some pauses in between, but for an invalid, arrangements had to be made for him to be carried up in a chair.

Numerous rough garden seats were placed at intervals all along the way for weary travellers. As one progressed higher, beautiful scenery came into view – including small waterfalls and streams. Nearer the summit the road skirted deep ravines and forested slopes. The roadway was marked out in quarters of a mile so that one could keep track of progress made. The journey, on average, took two hours.

A SECLUDED WORLD

Both the bungalows were comfortable and roomy. They were well furnished with the necessary furniture and cooking utensils but the visitor had to bring along bed linen and blankets. He had to come with other personal supplies

as well, like beverages and food requirements.

A stay of extended duration therefore required some planning – porters to carry the necessary stuff, and preferably a cook. The caretakers were assigned only the upkeep of the bungalows and to tend the vegetable and flower gardens. Unfortunately, the caretakers became so protective of their surroundings that they ended up quite territorial. (Someone complained in the visitors' book, "The boys gambled all night and most of the day, and the rats made sleep impossible.") There was a grass tennis court for those who desired strenuous exercise.

PANORAMIC VIEW

From the top of Gunung Kledang one had a panoramic view of the whole Kinta Valley: every township, river and watercourse was spread out as if enjoyed from a hot-air balloon. The scene was particularly beautiful at night when the lights of Ipoh and the smaller townships twinkled and scintillated in the distance like a host of



Landmark welcoming visitors to Menglembu

Photo by Rosli Mansor

fireflies.

NOT YOUR AVERAGE STOP

From a rough beginning (one entry in 1892 in the Visitors' Book read, "The Sanatorium ada banyiak kotor"), it was eventually made comfortable enough for those desiring to regain their health. Nevertheless, in the early days, getting there itself could be an adventure. As

someone wrote in the book in 1901, "On the way up we saw a tiger, were chased by 7 buffaloes, saw a centipede 10 inches long, a leech 16 inches long and finished up by finding a big snake in a tree over our heads."

Because of its isolation and relative lack of amenities, the Kledang Sanatorium did not become very popular as a health resort. From time to time, guests willing and content to be self-sufficient

would spend a brief holiday there. But these parties certainly did not come in droves.

Nevertheless the premises of the Ipoh Sanatorium at Menglembu was one of Perak's prettiest showplaces then and certainly deserved more attention. The two bungalows were closed for reasons of economy during the slump of the early 1930s. They were allowed to sink into disrepair.

REVIEWING THE OLD YEAR – WELCOMING THE NEW

The world as seen from Perak on New Year's Eve, 1907

**The Perak Pioneer
editorial
Tuesday,
31st December, 1907.**

The closing year has been characterized by memorable events, which would leave their impression on the history of the world for generations to come.

Except for isolated instances of local disturbance, the peace of the world has been preserved, though there were so many ominous symptoms of the outbreak of hostilities between one or more powers.

The meeting of the Hague Conference was heralded by loud expressions of hope that the reign of universal peace was at hand.

The conference met and dispersed after having passed a series of resolutions tending to mitigate the horrors of war; but it failed to come to

an agreement on the subject of the use of mines and the dropping of explosives from balloons in time of war. . .

France and Germany nearly went to war over the former's attempt to reform Morocco single-handed. Through the pacific intervention of Great Britain, an international conference was held at Algeciras, with the result that all the powers were to have a hand in the undertaking. The result has been an outbreak of anarchy and bloodshed in that distracted country. . .

In Russia, the Czar has, after two dissolutions of the Duma, and violently tinkering with the constitution, found an assembly to his liking and the reign of re-action has recommenced in that terrorised country.

Persia, too, was granted a Parliament by the Shah who subsequently sought to undo his work of popular reform.

But the youngest of the world's Parliaments seems to be endowed with a vigorous vitality and is evidently holding its own against the efforts of the reactionaries. . . .

In the United States the commercial world has been almost shaken to its foundations by the great and unprecedented financial slump, through the throes of which the country is even now passing.

Sanguine hopes are entertained that the coming new year will bring with it a new and unbroken era of revived commercial confidence. . .

Referring to affairs at home the colonial conference proved practically a failure, as anticipated by all who were aware of the irreconcilable hostility of the ministry to any form of a colonial preference tariff.

The Employers Liability Act, the constitution of a

Court of Criminal Appeal, the Agricultural Holdings Act and the legalisation of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, are among the notable achievements of the last session of Parliament.

The millionaires are not likely to retain a very grateful recollection of the services of Mr. Asquith, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has enhanced the Death Duties on a progressive sliding scale up to a maximum of 14 percent.

Next Year the British elector will be called upon to record his vote on the powers of veto now vested in the House of Lords

In India, the wave of unrest that swept over various parts of the north was firmly put down by repressive legislation accompanied by the grant of moderate concessions. But the extremists were far from satisfied, and were determined to push matters to the bitter end. . . While

Indians fail to get a footing in the self governing Colonies in the Empire, the Japanese fully hold their own in Canada as well as in the United States. The Governments of both countries are now engaged in negotiations with that of Japan to restrict the number of future immigrants of Japanese into their territories.

What a strange contrast is this with the treatment accorded to Indians and Chinese. But all are free to come into the Straits at their own pleasure.

This spirit of tolerance must account to a great extent for the marvellous prosperity of the F.M.S. It is true that the latter part of the year was marked by a slump in tin prices, which, it is hoped by those in a position to judge to be but temporary, and that brighter days are in store for the tin miner.

The successful Agri Horticultural Show which

was held in Kuala Kangsar in August last, clearly demonstrated the great potentialities of the agricultural industry of the country, notably that of rubber which has been progressing by leaps and bounds during the past year.

Though an Opium Commission is now in our midst, we do not apprehend that anything detrimental to the interest of the country will be the result of its arduous labours and careful investigation. In the fullest hope and trust that the coming year will usher in a new era of a bright and happy future for nations, communities and individuals alike, we would wish one and all of our readers, constituents, friends and the good people of Perak, the enjoyment of:

**A
Happy and Prosperous
New Year.**



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See Foon

ADDICTED TO THE MOBILE PHONE

“what was that I just heard?”

FREE TRAILS

Your phone provider even lures you into buying ring tones by giving you free trials without your consent. I only discovered this when a friend called me recently and said “Oh what a hip lady you are.You have rock music on your phone”. I said, “Huh?, I do?” And promptly called my mobile from the landline and sure enough, instead of the usual ringing tone, there was this rock music blasting in my ear. I switched it off immediately!

So, what can we do about curing ourselves of this addiction?

SELF-HELP

I am proposing the formation of a new 12 - Step, self help programme (with apologies to AA -Alcoholics Anonymous) to be called M.M.A which stands for Mobile Maniacs Anonymous: **Step 1** – We admit that we are powerless over our addiction. **Step 2** – We come to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity (namely “the Powers That Be” such as our spouses, our parents, our best friends, our bosses, our teachers, restaurant managers, club managers etc.)

Step 3 - Make a decision to turn off our mobile phones when we’re in social gatherings, business meetings, weddings, funerals, seminars, workshops etc.

Step 4 – Check for messages only when we’re alone or, if expecting an urgent one, to excuse oneself before checking.

Step 5 – Admit to ourselves and to others (include God if you wish) how we’re allowing the mobile to interrupt our lives and how we’re spreading noise pollution and interrupting other lives.

Step 6 – Be entirely ready

to keep your phone on silent mode most of the time when busy.

Step 7 – Ask your friends and associates to text you rather than phone and set times at regular intervals during the day when you check for messages. Only call when urgent decisions need to be made.

Step 8 – Don’t give a mobile phone to your 6/7/8/9/10/11/12-year old even if he/she swears that the whole class/world has one. (Yes I am rather old-fashioned!)

Step 9 - Do be short and sweet on the phone in public and in company. Spend as much time chatting as you wish when in private.

Step 10 - Do encourage children, relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues and business partners to spell full words when writing emails or letters or notes and not use sms (short message service) abbreviations. The English language - already corrupted by Americans- is being massacred by text messaging!

Step 11 - Don’t change your mobile phone with every new model that comes out. You’re contributing to the global pollution caused by the mountains of discarded electronic goods.

Step 12 - Remember that the phone vendors and service providers are laughing all the way to the bank, while we, buyers and subscribers, are being impoverished by claims of faster, smaller, lighter, sleeker models and cheaper rates, packaged deals, email on the go, picture postcards, etc.

I salute the Royal Ipoh Club for disallowing the use of mobile phones in their main dining room.

Alas, The Royal Perak Golf Club did have a similar ban in their main dining room but their members have vetoed it. So there, mobile phones still reign supreme!

Wishing you all a happy 2008!



Kafe Paprika’s



Chicken Ballotine

This dish can be prepared up to the end of step 3 the day before serving; store covered in refrigerator. This recipe is unsuitable to freeze or microwave.

THE SOCIAL SCENE
around town with Caroline Wong



Caroline

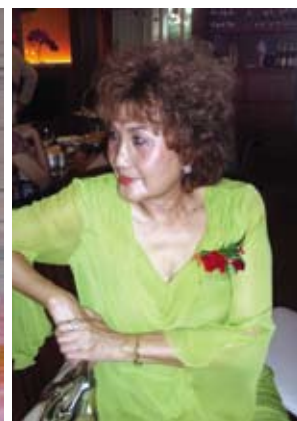
The well-written press release was headed: ‘Modest Maria’s goes metropolitan to woo city taste buds.’ The news - of Ipoh Maria’s Restaurant Cafe opening an outlet at Metropolitan Square at Bandar Damansara Budaya in Kuala Lumpur - received warm reception from the many friends of Maria Tan, past president of Ipoh Ladies’ Hour, a group known for charity fund-raising activities and community work. Delighted regulars of the three-year-old restaurant at Greentown Business Centre travelled to KL to wish the vivacious restaurateur the best for her new venture.



Much goodwill at the KL opening: vivacious Maria Tan (extreme right) with well-wishers.



Yang Mulia Raja Puan Sri Dato' Noora Ashikin



Datin Janet Yeoh



Margarita Lee



Datin Seri Sandra Lee



Mary Ann Tan (left) and Regina Lim

- 12 chicken drumsticks
- 2 carrots
- 2 sticks celery
- 4 small zucchini
- 60g butter
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 300ml carton cream
- 1 tablespoon brandy
- 2 teaspoons seeded mustard

Method

To prepare the drumsticks, use a small, sharp knife and scrape the meat away from each end of the bone.

Pull meat off the bone; as you do this the meat will turn inside out with meat still inside out, hold onto the white tendons and scrape the meat away until the tendons are released. Turn meat so that the skin is to the outside.

Cut carrots, celery and

zucchini into thin straws about 10cm long. Take 3 of each and insert them into the chicken drumsticks.

Heat butter in large frying pan, add chicken, fry on all sides until chicken is golden brown.

Add wine, bring to the boil, cover, reduce heat.

Simmer 10 minutes or until chicken is tender.

Remove chicken, keep warm. Add cream, brandy and mustard to pan, bring to the boil, reduce heat.

Simmer uncovered 3 minutes or until reduced and thickened slightly.

Pour sauce over chicken before serving.

Serves: 6

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VIEW FROM A DISTANCE . . . thoughts of home from Malaysians abroad

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN TEN YEARS?

On a wintry day in England, Leon Sing Foong ponders the issue of right choices, goals and youth's uncertainties.

The idea of freedom is seductive. It induces us to leave home. Freedom here encompasses many levels – physical, intellectual, spiritual. Many Malaysian students in the UK feel less restrained by the yoke of parental pressures. They find themselves exploring the endeavours they have been longing to pursue.

Freedom is what defines youth, and the experiences we derive from it determine the tone and the character of our later years. The pivotal question is: at 18 or whatever age we leave home, are we sufficiently mature to meet its challenges?

After three and a half years in the UK, I realise there is no such thing as true freedom. Wherever we are, there will always be forces of coercion. In the UK we may be less bound by political and family pressures but then we subject ourselves to a whole new social coercion.

The idea of freedom rather than freedom itself is the force that draws so many of us overseas. What is important, I think, is to be honest with ourselves when faced with options. How do we handle any given situation?

GOALS

Ten years ago, whenever someone asked me where I thought I would be in 10

years, I replied readily that I would be attending a world class university and having fun.

Over a dinner conversa-

seeks to bring a homegrown beverage into the UK market. Response has been fairly positive and I believe, with some luck and proper

It is important to immerse and assimilate ourselves in new environments, while embracing our heritage, which differentiates us from

to believe in this potential.

NO TO APATHY

Youth is beautiful. It is

its *tau-fu fah* and *hor fun* and being a location shoot for one of Ang Lee's film.

Perhaps a more apt question to ask is where we all see Ipoh – and Perak – in 10 years? That is the crucial question we should all ask ourselves as 2008 unfolds.



Longed-for homecoming scene viewed from a car: the beloved hills of one's childhood

tion a couple of weeks ago, the same question was posed to me. I struggled for an answer. I did not have the slightest clue. Later, I reflected: perhaps, it is the uncertainty that keeps us going now. This is what youth is all about – if our paths were clearly drawn out for us, would we be as enthused about the things we are doing?

I do know that I am going to try and achieve something over the next few years. Currently, I am working on an entrepreneurial project that

support, this product can be a huge hit, placing Ipoh on the international map.

I believe my efforts are just a start. There are others with their own projects.

GLOBALISATION

The new face of globalisation is going to take on an Asian face. With India and China growing at rapid double figure rates, we should not ignore the Eastern influence on Western cultures and societies.

the rest.

This Winter break, I will be heading back to Ipoh. Again, I will be taking the route up the North-South Highway from KLIA. It is saddening to see that there are no longer flights from KL to Ipoh.

I shall appreciate the mystic charm of Ipoh's valleys during the drive there. There is a lot of potential in the small town which used to be a mining hub. There is definitely no shortage of talent as well. What we should do is

bursting with energy, hopes and the naive belief in happy endings. Let us inject some of that energy back into where we come from. Where do I see myself in 10 years? I honestly do not know. But what I know is that indifference is dangerous and whether it is now or in the future, we should get rid of apathy. Ipoh has a breathtaking landscape, delectable food, and the people are extremely affable.

What we should do is to elevate its status beyond a town that is just famous for



Leon Sing Foong is a former student of ACS Ipoh (2000 to 2003). He is presently in Oxford University reading Economics and Management. The Malaysian beverage which Leon Sing is promoting in the U.K is called *Enchante*.

HOW ARE YOU?
Other Malaysians abroad are invited to send in their contributions to this column.

Email ipophecho.ndr@gmail.com

Or fax: (605) 2552181

Among Us, '20 - somethings'

PROMISES, PROMISES

The trick is to have realistic goals and put a spin on the positive

A new year has begun. You have made up your mind. You say to yourself: New Year, new life.

You keep telling yourself: I'm finally going to: be prompt, lose weight, listen more, quit smoking, read a lot.

The list is endless. Your promises are both big and small.

We traditionally assign the first few days of a new year to mull over the promises we have made for ourselves. We compare New Year's resolutions.

We like talking about starting on a clean slate, whatever this means. It is here again: the time when we can discuss the prospect of achieving something worthwhile.

Again – because haven't we been here before?

How many times have January resolutions dissipated into delusions by February?

resolution to drink less alcohol and get to the gym more often. In January he paid a whopping

What are your New Year's Resolutions?



HUMBUG RESOLUTIONS!

Many of us make resolutions we cannot keep. In 2007, my friend Daniel made a

amount of money to join a state-of-the-art gym. He was determined to go regularly. In fact he was so committed about going to the gym, he inspired a few friends in our

circle to join as well. While he was on his new health kick, he also managed to cut down his alcohol infused nights out to once a week. Even then he kept his alcohol intake low – two beers a night! We were all very impressed!

Needless to say, come mid-February, Daniel was his easy going self again. He started to miss gym sessions and "Happy Hour" became his favourite phrase. In any case, Daniel continued to pay his monthly gym fees with all intentions of going back again. It is now December, and Daniel has been to the gym about twice since February. Perhaps this year, 2008, Daniel's New Years Resolution should be "Don't waste money!"

continued on page 10

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continued from page 9

KEEPING RESOLUTIONS

After much research into the matter - a hundred websites later - there is so much information on how to keep your New Years Resolutions. For example: HealthyMinds.org states, "Everyone has made, and broken past resolutions, that does not mean that you won't succeed this time. Start with a positive approach, including thinking about what has disrupted your good in-

tentions in the past. Don't discourage yourself with a negative outlook. Try again."

Most of us who make New Years' Resolutions tend to be over zealous. We come up with too many resolutions and our goals become too hard to achieve. Making one or two realistic resolutions to be achieved within a reasonable time frame is beneficial.

Further research has revealed that experts, whoever they may be, say it takes about 21 days for a new activity, such as exercising, to become a habit, and six months for it to become part of your personality. It may be the hardest

six months of your life, but if you really want a change, it is worth the effort.

The bottom line, in trying to keep a resolution, we have to be truthful with ourselves in deciding if we really want to make a change in our lives.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

In an effort to swim against the usual current, ditch the customary "I shall NOT ..." and try making a pledge to GET MORE out of life! Perhaps resolve to have more fun, to spend more time with your family and friends or even recycle!

My New Years' Resolution is to be less stressed out and go to the beach more often - my haven of peace.

This is a new year and a time for all to look forward into the future. Last year may have been either really great or even really terrible but what matters most is the time we have at this moment. Let's celebrate 2008 - another chance - in Oprah's words - to get it right. NDR

YOUNG PERAK
 A section of interest and action for the youth of our state

Students from participating schools are invited to share their thoughts with others. E-mail articles to ipohecho@gmail.com **attn: Peter Khiew**

DAILY PRACTICE REWARDS RAVINDRA

A two-day equestrian competition for the inaugural Tan Sri Dato Seri V Jeyaretnam Challenge Trophy was organised recently by the Perak Turf Club Equestrian Training Centre. Fifty students from nine states, including Kelantan, participated in the meet that had prizes for both team and individual efforts.

Perak B team won the Challenge Trophy. Kelantan was runner-up and Trengganu

placed third. Rueven Ravindra, who rides daily, outclassed fellow students in the show jumping category and earned the individual "Champion Rider Class".

The Pony Club and Riding School Programme was established in 2003. Together with the Malaysian Equine



Council, it aims to introduce students to the joys of pony-riding and encourage them further to participate in state, national and international competitions.

Left photo: Ravindra (centre) and his pony Bold Hero with fellow aspiring riders.

THANKS TO YES

YES Malaysia is nothing short of a miracle worker. What could be more miraculous than the dream of many youths - to visit another country and savour its culture - into a reality? In every student exchange programme, there are many factors that have to be attended to before an exchange student is sent away. These include the inevitable funding, travel arrangements, proper documents and the numerous forms that need filling in. The most important aspect, however, is the decision on the host family.

AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR

A host family is the exchange student's moral support away from home. I was lucky. My host family, the Bloodworths, welcome me to their fold

Ashvin in America

continued on page 12

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TRACKING DOWN 'CRAZY GUY ON A BIKE' ALONE AGAIN



The scholar-cyclist in Shandan, China

Law Tzou-Hann is back to talking to himself again. Dad has left to return to Taiping - much to the delight of Mrs Law who has been worried sick about her husband and son cycling in wintry China.

They had been through a lot and his old man's departure called for "some sentimental stuff and the runny nose bit" but Tzou-Hann says one cannot afford to be maudlin about these things. He has put on a slightly nonchalant tone to the memory of his father's

departure after the two had been cycling in tandem for about a month.

In his words: "We take the bus to the station and after a few words - 'You take care. See you in Thailand.' Seven words, exactly - I am off, no looking back. After all, home is in the forward direction."

Law Tzou-Hann is now in Shandan, China. He has now cycled 19, 291 kilometres. He has been delayed a few days because he came down with a bad case of the flu. He

Those who wish to donate to Tzou-Hann's Charity Ride in aid of SMK St George Taiping Development Fund, the National Cancer Society of Malaysia and the MAA-MEDICARE Kidney Charity Fund should send their contributions to: OGA- Longwayhome Charity Ride, c/o No 36, 1st Floor, Jalan Pasar, 34000 Taiping, Perak, Malaysia.



Last outing before Dad left for home.

reports to feeling much better - "after buying fruit, paying 80 Chinese cents for Vitamin C and getting some sleep in

a sketchy looking but warm hotel room". This means, he is on the road again! No stopping the young engineer.

continued from page 3

A kindly Border police officer at Changlun gave me a cup of sticky warm coffee and a potted history of his life and times complete with a glimpse of a faded photograph of his family.

It was getting late and I had to find some means of returning to Gurun.

Deliverance came in the form of a local garbage contractor who was en route to the kampong. I returned, perched on top of a ripe amalgam of other people's waste.

AGITATED

Reaching the lodge at about 9 pm, I met the agitated caretaker who kept repeating the word 'tiger'. Too much beer, I thought.

Not long into the climb, I became aware of company. From the dense jungle slopes I distinctly heard the low grunt. The creature seemed to be following my progress.

Whenever I paused for a breather, so did the grunt. I decided it was some wayward pig. The full moon did not allow me a sighting of my covert guardian.

Sometime after midnight, I found Sutton and Joliffe still awake. Over a coffee and cigarette, I related my adventures. They were not impressed.

CLOSE SHAVE

Two days later, it was time to return to the delights of Penang. With lighter packs, we began the descent to pick up our transport. About half way down, we were heard the sound of an engine. Within a minute or two, a Land Rover driven by a European eased its way through the maze of hairpin bends.

It transpired that the driver was up on the mountain to perform routine maintenance on the microwave station. We chatted on about our experiences. Did we see a tiger a couple of nights back?

I recalled the supposed wild pig and the alarmed caretaker in the lodge. Our new acquaintance told us that, earlier on the night in question, he had seen one of the largest tigers he had ever seen in the headlights of his Rover.

IN MEMORY

Sutton – in whose memory I dedicate this vignette – and Joliffe were now impressed.

There I was, a survivor with a tale to tell my prospective grandchildren. Not quite a hero. But awfully close to being one. In truth, I was more

than happy not to have been a menu item that night.



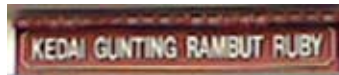
Merv

Merv Sprague served with the 1st Battalion Green Jackets as a regimental signaller on three tours of duty in Borneo and Brunei between 1962 to 1965. On his return to the UK, his outfit was posted to Berlin during the height of the Cold War. Following his Army Service, he entered the nefarious world of forensic psychiatry. In 1988 he forsook nursing to take up the role of a Probation and Parole Officer in Sydney. Now retired, he is the National Liaison Officer, Malaysia, for the Australian National Malaya Borneo Veterans' Association.

If you would like to receive a copy of the IPOH ECHO, please contact our office.

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TAIPING'S OLDEST BARBER SHOP

At 57, Ruby is Taiping's oldest barbershop and Penysilvam, its owner, has been my barber for as long as I can remember. He knows my preferred haircut, my likes and dislikes.

I came to Taiping together with the Third Battalion Royal Rangers Regiment in 1970, after a year-long tour of duty in Sarawak. At that time there were a few girlie barbershops and one Indian barber.

After a couple of months in the jungle, we had to pamper ourselves. Where else to go but to the girlie barbershops? We simply loved the face cleansing and the hair shampooing. With their soft feminine touch, we would doze off. The quality of their haircut, however, was something else. Anyway, whenever we wanted a regimental haircut, we headed for Ruby.

FATHER'S BUSINESS

Penysilvam's father started the business in 1950, renting the shop lot for RM40 a month. It is RM800. today. A haircut in those days

all time high of 12 workers, Penysilvam presently employs only four.

THE FUTURE

When asked about the future of his business, Penysilvam said he could still survive. Each of his workers crops an average of between 15 to 20 customers on weekdays but more on weekends and public



Penysilvam in his 57-year-old shop.

cost ten cents. In the 60s it went up to fifty sen and a ringgit in the 70s. Today, it is RM8 – still inexpensive compared to a haircut in the more fashionable hair salons. In the 1950s and 1960s, business at Ruby's flourished because of the British and Commonwealth Forces based in Taiping. When the forces left after the end of the Emergency in 1960, business nose-dived. From an

holidays. Being a barber is all Penysilvam knows – a passion he learned in his youth.

He says he will manage the business for as long as he is able and will leave it to his children to decide whether to continue it. He laments: "Youngsters these days are more interested in cushy jobs which are not too stressful."

Rizal Abdullah



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Sport

THE FRONT OFFICE

by Steve Darby

I often try to read different books that will help me in my football profession. These include The Prince by Machiavelli (a great reference for football politics in Malaysia) and The Art of War which is a great tactical handbook. I have recently been reading a number of books about Basketball and American Football. The recurring theme in these books is the value of "The Front Office" to the success of a sporting team. The Front office is basically the administration of the club.

unsociable hours doing the millions of unseen things that need to be done to keep a professional football team in operation.

NEGLECTED

AREA



They function in an area often

SAME JOB FOR TWO MEN

When I was at Sheffield Wednesday a team that ran only four teams, the same as Perak, the administration consisted of over fifty full time people. These included administrators, marketing, media, and sales and ticketing staff.

The reality of football in Malaysia is that while in many ways we are operating a similar business in Perak we have in fact only two full time Office Staff. They are Izham Firdaus bin Jamaludin Suffi and Zairinatul Akmar Bt Ahmad Helmi who operate all areas of the administration and in fact do a brilliant job. They work long and often

neglected by people within the game. Players, coaches and referees attend courses to upgrade, but it is quite rare to see administration courses.

I find it ludicrous when I see many "administrators" going to the World Cup as a fact finding mission, in other

words, a junket! Why not send (working) administrators to see the best J league and K league operations? A lot more relevant and cheaper.

I have yet to see any benefit from any administrator who has gone to a World Cup. Let's be honest: all the work

has been done by then.

NEED FOR COURSES

There are some excellent administrators in Malaysian Football such as Dato Paul Mony and Windsor Paul John; surely it would be of

greater cost

benefit to get these type of people to run administration courses.

I think one only has to read the back pages of the major daily newspapers to see how many national associations are in-fighting or making horrendous administrative errors.

The Americans are right,

the Front Office is vital to success on the pitch.

Perak has got the quality; we just need the quantity now.

An example of an administrative initiative that has been a success is the launching of the Perak FA blogspot (perakfa.blogspot.com). This has developed into a daily channel from the organisation to the fans, giving the fans what they want, such as pictures of the players, interviews, and examples of the training sessions that the players undertake. The fans are also photographed so that they have ownership of the site.

HARD WORK

Again the success of the blogspot does not come by accident and is down to the hard work and enthusiasm of the webmaster Yusrie Zulkiflie. His work drives the daily updates and he knows what the fans want. I

also respond to fans' letters but maybe I'm getting old - I only respond to people who put their names and not some crazy computer pseudonym.

Read about the guys (left) on our new blog: Perakfa.blogspot.com

The Millennium Heart Caring Society is holding its charity dinner on January 5, 2008 at Florex Restaurant. Proceeds will go to: Bone Marrow Transplant Welfare Fund Society, Klinik Choong Wah Perak, Ray of Hope, Woh Peng Cheang Seah Haemodialysis Centre, The Perak Society For the Promotion of Mental Health, Ipoh Buddhist Welfare Society, Sekolah Semangat Maju, Batu Gajah, Salvation Army Children's Home. For details, call: 012-5389989; 016-5517171; 019-5562889 or 019-5752893.

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continued from page 10 to the point where the line between student guest and host family was virtually erased. It is undeniable that the host family plays a crucial role in the shaping and nurturing of the host student throughout his/ her stay in the US. Leroy and Connie Bloodworth, my host parents, exposed me to life as they lived it and to American culture as they embraced it.



At the Bloodworths in South Carolina

'HOMESICK'

To this day, not a moment goes by without my heart longing to see 'my family' again. I want to sleep in their house again and to wake up to the aroma of Mrs Bloodworth's cooking. Aside from the time I spent with them, I also experience various aspects of American life and culture through many YES-organised excursions. From these outings, I

learned many things. A student exchange programme is a time of growth and learning. It is a channel through which invaluable knowledge is gained. I valued - I still do - my stay in America.



In Florida
Ashvin Nambiar
Youth Exchange and Study Program to the USA