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INSIDE !!

Perak Tourism News
Supplement



Perak Ready For VMY 2014

by James Gough

Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2014 was officially launched throughout the country on January 4 with much fanfare with visitors arriving into Malaysia being greeted at all entry points from Bukit Kayu Hitam to Kota Kinabalu Airport and KLIA; in Perak it was held at the Pangkor Jetty. In Ipoh itself, a small welcoming event was held at Sultan Azlan Shah Airport on January 1 when the first arrivals of the year touched down on Firefly Airlines' first flight of the year. The New Year visitors were greeted by cultural dancers and were presented goodie bags by State Exco for Tourism YB Nolee Ashilin Mohd Radzi and outgoing Tourism Malaysia Perak Director Ahmad Kamarudin. A small start towards a very busy year but which could in all probability see the beginning of more visitors to our silver state from this year onwards.



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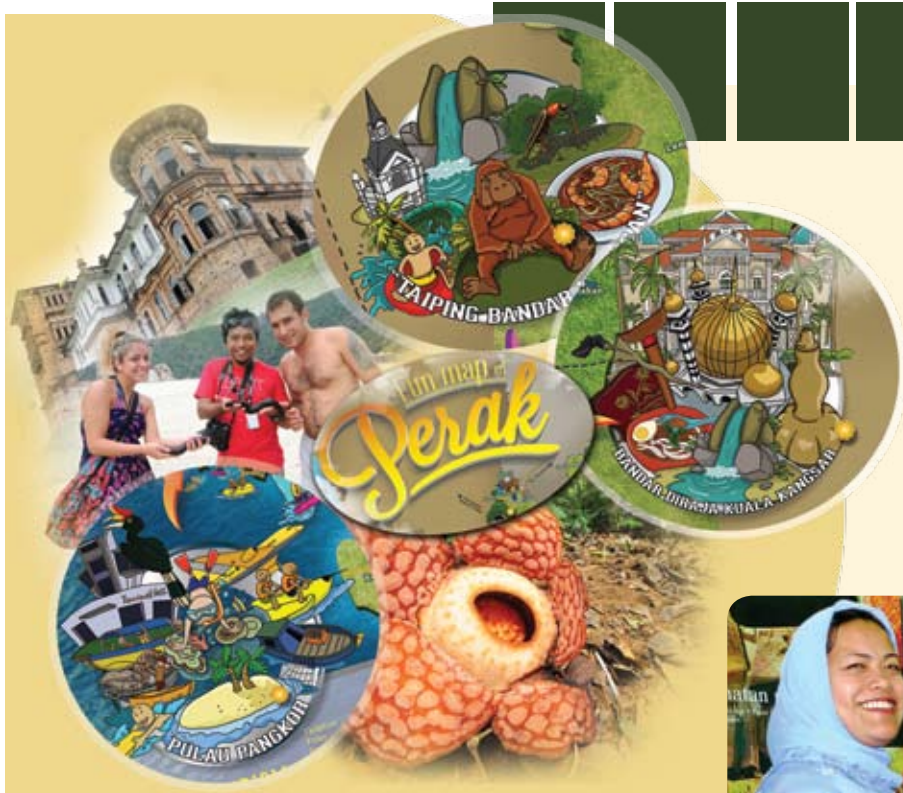


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Perak targets 5 million visitors and receipts of RM1.5 billion

Pangkor Island is a product by itself with facilities ranging from chalets to five and six star accommodation and activities that attract visitors regularly on weekends and school holidays.

Interestingly, Gopeng is another stand-alone product that has promoted itself as an eco-adventure destination which sees its occupancy filled by corporate visitors participating in team-building activities throughout the year.

These clusters will be promoted on billboards under the slogans of 'Eco-Tourism, Fun and Family' (for theme parks), 'Sun and Sea' (for Pangkor Island) and 'Culture and Heritage'.

Within these main products Tourism Malaysia has created package brochures from bicycle tours, angling and an upcoming eco-adventure brochure tour for Royal Belum and Gopeng that provides visitors with various options and costs to tour the product sites.

One of the brochures 'Discover Perak Cycling Packages' has 12 packages from 'Ipoh Heritage Walk and Cycle' to 'Gopeng and Ipoh City Tour' which are organised by different tour agents. The brochure has contact details of the agents which will enable the visitor to select the tour of his choice.

Business Matching to Create Inbound Packages

These package options being offered by the various tour agents is what Nolee refers to as 'business matching', a strategy picked up from Tourism Malaysia to create inbound packages which should ultimately attract more foreign tourists to visit Perak.

Nolee explained that in previous promotions the state could not sell packages as they were not the license holders. To develop a package you need the agent, accommodation and a product. Once the packages are ready it will be promoted through fairs using Tourism Malaysia's network of overseas tour agents to promote and sell the packages.

The State recently promoted packages to Singapore, a market which contributes 50 per cent of Malaysia's visitors each year. Singapore visitors traditionally only made stopovers in Ipoh just for food.

Last November Nolee did a 'business matching' with Singapore agents to create activities for their visitors. The package consisted of the Ipoh Food Trail from Ipoh to Tanjong Tualang and sightseeing activities to Kellie's Castle, Gua Tempurung and Gaharu Tea Estate.

Interestingly, the business matching included local bus and food trail operators. The most important factor for Perak Tourism and the Singapore tie-up was to have the visitors stay in Ipoh for 3 days 2 nights. Once the packages are ready they will be promoted at the promotion fairs this year.

For 2014 there will be more trade shows and 'business matching' which is the plan for the state government together with Tourism Malaysia to sell Perak. Nolee explained that different markets have different preferences where the Europeans have a preference for Royal Belum and eco tourism while the Japanese and Koreans seem to favour homestay packages.

"All of these promotions are going to begin this year so we don't expect to see any drastic visitor increases until 2015," added Nolee.

Facilities and Services

Overall Nolee is comfortable with the facilities such as accommodation and tourist services. Her concern though is about maintenance of the products such as cleanliness of premises and toilets, a concern shared by outgoing Tourism Malaysia Director Ahmad Kamarudin.

Ahmad summarised that the importance of maintenance is to show the world that we are serious and aggressive in promoting our Perak products. "If product owners and operators do not maintain their products they will lose the most important aspect of their promotion, the repeat visitor."

Tour guides too needed to be upgraded to be able to provide more details and stories about the product locations and indicated they plan to work with subject matter experts such as Malayan Nature Society for Royal Belum.

Regarding Ipoh being the gateway to the state, Nolee added that Ipoh City Council would have a big role to maintain the city and mentioned that the Tourist Information Centre needs to be upgraded. Additionally, the state would help to promote the Old Town area and added that *Balai Seni Visual* would be operating their art gallery behind the Town Hall by the middle of this year.

Overall though, Nolee is happy with the cooperation being received from the stakeholders such as theme park operators, hoteliers and tour agents.

In summary, Perak has everything going for it. The products and facilities are ready. The airport may be a setback but is temporary. Combined with the structure being set up now to create packages for inbound tourists, Perak is on its way to receiving more tourists year on year from 2014 onwards.

Fourth VMY Promotion

At a subsequent press conference the media was informed of Perak's plans for VMY 2014 and given a brochure highlighting the calendar of events for the whole year and a Fun Map of Perak. Perak has targeted 5 million visitors and receipts of RM1.5 billion.

VMY 2014 is the fourth Visit Malaysia Year promotion. The first was held in 1990 followed by another in 1997. The third VMY was held in 2007 and registered 20.97 million visitors contributing RM46.1 billion in receipts. The Ministry of Tourism this year has targeted to achieve 28 million visitor arrivals and receipts of RM76 billion.

Perak's Fascinating Products

A quick stock take of the products we have in Perak is a fascinating discovery of the quality of attractions we can offer to visitors.

1. The Royal Belum Forest Park is a 130 million year old tropical rainforest of unspoilt natural beauty. It spans 300,000 hectares and has over 3000 species of flora and fauna and is home to the Malayan tiger and Sumatran rhino. A pristine eco adventure destination.
2. Lenggong Valley was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site on June 30, 2012. It is the home of the Perak Man, Southeast Asia's oldest most complete human skeleton dating back 10,000 BP, who was found in the Gua Gunung Runtuh cave site. A similar series of caves and open air sites along the Perak River in the Lenggong Valley provide testimony of human habitation of the area from the Palaeolithic to the Metal age period from 1.83 million years ago to 1700 years ago and represents one of the longest records of early civilization in a single locality in the world.
3. The Royal Town of Kuala Kangsar where the palace of the Sultan of Perak is situated with the regal Royal Mosque and other royal institutions within its neighbourhood.
4. Taiping Heritage Town, the first capital of Perak and one of the oldest towns in Malaysia that has managed to maintain its historical features.
5. Gua Tempurung or Tempurung Cave at Gopeng is the largest limestone cave in the peninsula with five high-ceiling caverns. The location of the cave is surrounded by eco-adventure activities galore from white-water rafting to abseiling.
6. Pangkor Island, located off the coast of Lumut, is Perak's sandy-white beach, sun and sea paradise island.
7. Ipoh and the Kinta Valley is where one can appreciate the heritage of the state and feast on food found nowhere else in Malaysia.

Based on these products Perak Tourism has clustered these products into packages. According to State Exco for Tourism Nolee Ashilin, the products of Royal Belum, Lenggong Valley and Royal Town of Kuala Kangsar are a cluster and will be promoted as a 5-Day 4-Night (5D4N) package.

Similarly Ipoh and the Kinta Valley will be packaged as a 3D2N package with activities that include heritage, culture and Ipoh Food Trail from Ipoh to Tanjong Tualang.



Tourism

Ahmad Leaves for Milan

Tourism Malaysia (Perak) bade farewell to their Director, Ahmad Kamarudin Yusoff (pic, third from right), who now assumes the post as head of the Tourism Malaysia office in Milan, Italy.

The outgoing director thanked Tourism Malaysia (Perak) staff for their support during his brief tenure as director of the Perak chapter. Perak has a special place in his heart and he would continue to promote the state when in Italy.



"Let's bring the Italians to Perak," he proclaimed to the rousing cheers of the audience. Ahmad had previously worked at the East Asia Tourism Malaysia office before being transferred to the training unit of Tourism Malaysia. He took over as Director of Tourism Malaysia (Perak) in June 2013.

The function, held at Syuen Hotel, Ipoh recently, was also attended by Ahmad's replacement, Hj Ibrahim Seddiqi bin Talib. Ibrahim is a seasoned veteran in the tourism industry, having worked in different capacities during the course of his career. He was in Tourism Malaysia's training unit for 10 years and was directly involved in Visit Malaysia Year 2007. He cherishes hopes of achieving the 5.6-million tourists target set for Perak during Visit Malaysia Year 2014.

The new director thanked the media for their support. "The cooperation between the tourism sector and the media plays a vital role in enhancing the industry," he said.

Kumar

Roshidi's Swan Song

I know perfectly well how it feels to stand on a podium and address an audience consisting of both loyal and dissenting followers on the last day of one's tenure in office. The feeling can be one of melancholy and utter sadness or one of remorse with a measure of joy.

I was overcome by these sentiments when I stood in front of my soldiers on the final day of my term as the commander of a Territorial Army regiment some 16 years ago in Seremban. Words alone cannot describe the thoughts that ran through my head. It is not something easy to commit to writing.

I believe Dato' Roshidi Hashim, the former mayor of Ipoh, must have felt the same when he chaired Ipoh City Council's last Full Board Meeting for Year 2013 on Monday, December 30, 2013. That was his saving grace; his swan song, to be precise, before the inevitable happened – his departure from office.

Dato' Roshidi Hashim took over the reins of a sufficiently well-managed city council on June 6, 2008. It was, in all honesty, a time of political upheaval following the March 8, 2008 General Election when Perak became one of the five states that was wrested by the Opposition.

The position of mayor was a matter of contention, as the issue of local council elections was being hotly debated both in the media and in the streets. It eventually culminated in the appointment of an equitable number of notable figures from non-governmental organisations and the civil society to make up the 24-member council.

It was an interim arrangement put in place to placate an indignant populace riled by an administration that was beginning to lean a little to the right and riddled by accusations of corruption and cronyism involving those in high offices.

It was during this period of volatility that Roshidi was appointed the eighth mayor of Ipoh. He could not have acquired a more sensitive post as the attention was definitely on him being the odd guy in the crowd. But it was never a time for reflection or gratification, as the job of making the capital of Perak a liveable city was high on the agenda, political correctness notwithstanding.

Not many are aware that the Kedah-born Roshidi was 'groomed' for the post over a decade before him assuming the appointment of mayor. He was the assistant director of the state economic planning unit in October 1996 following a brief stint at the Finance Ministry.

In December 2003 he was appointed personal secretary to Tan Sri Tajol Rosli, the then Menteri Besar of Perak. From the MB's office Roshidi radiated closer to the Ipoh City Council when on February 16, 2007 he took on the post of Secretary of the city council, a



job he held till he was made acting mayor on June 6, 2008.

Roshidi's confirmation as holder of the august appointment came barely two months down the road. Not bad for a career civil service officer who had just turned 52. The doting father of five (four girls and one boy) had everything going for him, a loving wife who was a teacher by profession and an equally loving family who had by then become accustomed to the high-profile lifestyle of their affable father.

Niceties aside, the post of Mayor of Ipoh is not something to brag about. No doubt it is a high-placement appointment, a Jusa C post reserved for PTD (*Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomati*) Officers of the elite Malaysian Civil Service, it comes with a

caveat. One has to be strong enough to take the challenge head-on. With a crew of over 2700 personnel, some on contract some on permanent basis, ensuring that the council ticks is easier said than done.

Pleasing a population of almost 700,000 spread over 640 square kilometres of rough terrain and concrete jungle is definitely not for the faint-hearted. Any lesser mortal would have shriveled under such pressure.

The pressure comes in different directions – from above and from below. It is the pressure from above that is most taxing. Being a serving civil servant the mayor is answerable to his immediate boss, the state secretary, the one who appraises his performance through the annual confidential report.

Then comes the political masters who exert as much influence and power. Any signs of disobedience will be construed as insubordination. And not to mention the royalty that sits at the apex of the pecking order. It would be bearable if he has the support of the senior staff. But this is not often the case. They are not called 'Little Napoleons' for nothing.

Roshidi may claim credits for the many success stories attributed to him. He leaves a legacy – a rapidly expanding Ipoh evidenced by the numerous developments now taking shape. But he is equally culpable for the many sins left behind. His promise of a clean and vibrant Ipoh fell short of expectation, and so was his insistence that illegal dumping, illegal hawking and illegal parking would be a thing of the past.

His critics may have nothing good to say about him. But having known the man, I find Roshidi to be honest, friendly, easy-going and very articulate. He makes a good politician. His parting words when we last met at a media dinner in November 2013 exemplified his character. "I've no plans yet for my future. I'll take each day as it comes," he enthused.

For Ipoh's longest serving Datuk Bandar, the end came with a bang, literally, as he said adieu on December 31, 2013.

In The Name Of My Father's Estate

Episode 25 • by Peter Lee

While both the wives of Lee Sr, that is, Mrs Patricia Lee (1st wife) and Connie (2nd wife) claimed their legal rights to Lee Sr's joint bank account in ZNA Bank, Singapore, which was opened under the names of Lee Sr and Mrs Patricia Lee, the manager of ZNA Bank scrambled to check with his legal department to establish who has the rights to claim the amount in the account which has a sum of S\$3 million. This was due to the sudden presence of Mrs Patricia Lee in the bank to claim the amount and Connie's legal letter from Malaysia to freeze the account pending Lee Sr's application for Letter of Administration (L.A.) in Malaysia. Mrs Patricia Lee returned to ZNA bank after being promised by the bank manager the previous day to give her the answer whether the bank could release the money to her. When she met the bank manager, she was told that she could withdraw the entire sum of money in the joint bank account with her husband due to the 'joint survivorship clause'. Upon hearing this, she jumped for joy. However, the manager said, "Mrs Lee, this does not mean that this is applicable in other banks if you and your husband have this type of account with other banks as their policies may vary." To this, Mrs Patricia Lee said, "Don't worry about that and thank you for the information." She then asked the manager, "Can you release the money to my account in this bank now?" In response to this, the manager said, "Ok. My officers will process the release of the money to your account."



Once she received the money, the bank informed Connie's lawyer with their explanation on the bank's legal stand on the 'joint survivorship clause' and also the fact that Connie's proof of her marriage to Lee Sr with birth certificates of her three children was not sufficient. Upon hearing this news, Connie was furious and called John Lee (eldest son of Lee Sr). She said, "John, I have received news from ZNA bank, Singapore that your mother has withdrawn the entire amount of S\$3 million from your father's joint account with her. I thought you said in our earlier meeting that she was willing to distribute your father's 50 per cent in that account according to Intestacy law. Did you know about this and what are you going to do about it?" John replied, "In the first place, I didn't know about this and I am surprised you knew. Are you telling me that you have also tried withdrawing the money behind our backs even after our meeting the other day?" In response, Connie said, "No. What I did was to inform ZNA Bank to freeze the accounts pending our application for L.A. on my suspicion that your mother was going to withdraw it. Guess what? I was right. I want you now to remind your mother that if she wants our application for L.A. to be smooth, then she must consider seriously releasing the amount which my children and I are entitled to." John then said, "Let me get back to you once I have spoken to her." John then immediately contacted his mother and asked, "Mum, I just received a call from Connie saying that you have withdrawn the entire S\$3 million from your joint account with father. Is this true?" In response, Mrs Patricia Lee said, "Yes. The bank said I am entitled to all of it due to their policy on the 'joint survivorship clause' but they have also told me that it may not be the same with other banks." John then said, "We better meet up to talk about this because Connie will not give us an easy time as she wants her entitlement."

To be continued...

Wishing all readers a very Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He can be reached at: 012-5078825/ 05-2554853 or excelsecns@gmail.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>. His Book "To Delay is Human but to Will is Divine" (96 pages, RM28) is available at his office: 108 (2nd Floor), Jalan Raja Ekram, 30450 Ipoh; Rashi Mini Market (019-510 6284), 37 Jalan Perajurit, Ipoh Garden East; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.

EYE HEALTH – TAKE THOSE BLINKING BREAKS

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about ways to avoid eye strain.



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

In today's digital world, the man on the street has not been spared from using one or all forms of digital gadgetry like a mobile phone, a tablet, laptop, a television, a smartphone, an MP3 player, gaming tablets and fablets. In fact, one can walk into any store, train, hospital, airport or restaurant and you will invariably find people staring at their mobile devices. No wonder the electronic industry is thriving!

On a recent trip to South Korea with my wife, we were on the MRT one day and were very amused to see how the young and old stared at their mobile devices as they traveled. Even for those who had no seats, they held the railings with one hand and a mobile device in the other. On top of that, no one spoke but everyone was keying away on those gadgets! There I was, holding my mobile device too and busily taking photos with no one paying any notice to what was happening (see adjacent pic). My wife watched in amusement as I became an unpaid paparazzi to these unsuspecting South Korean commuters.

Here in Malaysia, we are not spared from this digital 'screen staring' phenomenon either. It is no wonder that we now have a condition called 'digital eye strain' characterized by dry, red, irritated eyes, usually accompanied with headaches along with shoulder and/or neck pain. All of these, thanks to a rapidly progressing I.T. world where some smart phones have even been made waterproof, as if people would like to use their phones while taking a shower! Regardless of the kinds of gadgets we may use, one thing is for sure and that is we will not be able to avoid using them. Therefore, it would be in our best interest to use them correctly in order to avoid getting caught with 'digital eye strain' that may be caused by digital media from the way in which we hold such devices, the distance from our faces and how long we stare at them.



3 WAYS TO USE DIGITAL MEDIA WITHOUT STRAINING YOUR EYES

1. Take Blinking Breaks

Blinking is very important for the eyes as it spreads a tear film on the surface of the cornea and cleans it up like the wipers of a car windscreen. In one minute, a person would typically blink his eyes about 15 to 20 times. This blink rate reduces to half the number of times when we stare concentrating on such devices. This reduction results in the eyes getting red, tired and fatigued. In short, remember to take a break and blink!

2. Remember 20-20-20

The 20-20-20 rule is good to follow – every 20 minutes, look away 20 feet for 20 seconds allowing for the eyes to blink and relax.

3. Keep Screens Further Away

This minimizes the glare and contrast of an electronic screen to the eyes which eventually causes eye strain. The closer the device is held in front of the eyes, the more the eyes have to work.

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah (05-545 5582) or email gilleyeccentre@dr.com.

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Thinking Aloud Ipoh – When “Dressing Up in Tin” Will Still Be King?

The news of the Ipoh Special Area Draft Plan (RKK or *Rancangan Kawasan Khas – Ipoh Bandar Warisan Bijih Timah 2020*) being opened for public viewing and consultation first reached us on December 17, 2013, after a five-day lag from its launch, which is not long relative to the normal shelf life of a bureaucratic project. But for a five-week long session (December 12, 2013 to January 8, 2014), it is about 14 per cent of substantial time loss, not discounting weekends and Christmas/ New Year holidays yet.

Never mind all that, since the RKK could have been made available online. Unfortunately, as of the time of writing, only a 33-page Executive Summary is made available for download from the city council’s website, which doesn’t do justice to the RM3.3 billion draft plan that has a significant spatial and social impact on the cityscape.

Such a skeletal plan inevitably evoke questions as to the missing components, potential trade-offs and design choices of the plan: Why no mention of improving bus and taxi stops? Is there a better alternative to the choice of *Senibina Tradisional Melayu* in Kg. Kuchai? Why are the pedestrians sharing the walkways with bicycles?

It further raises the question of whether such consultation should be designed to include, as stakeholders, the Ipoh diaspora, who in many ways still maintain social and voting links to the city, when the full range of information can only be obtained by physically visiting the Ipoh City Council foyer.

It is equally confounding why a plan that is still at the drafting stage has been merchandised as coffee table books, which would also be less accessible for the lower income group, when it should be disseminated widely and freely for public consumption and feedback.

Bearing resemblance to the transformation programmes at the Federal Level, the RKK is structured by eight entry-point projects (EPPs) that smack of New Urbanism ideals and language, at least on the surface. It has projects on heritage conservation and preservation, developing green belts and cultural zones, and improving walk-ability and bike-ability.

However, a closer look at the figures reveals a certain sense of disproportion to the plan’s priorities, when 84.4 per cent of the planned budget is allocated to EPP 6: ‘Redevelopment of the Promotional Planning Zone of Ipoh’ (ZPP), which consists of three infrastructure-intensive mixed development projects covering a land size of 67.36 hectares and the remaining 15.6 per cent to the other seven EPPs, averaging a miniscule 2.2 per cent for each.

While a 40-60 per cent public-private partnership is proposed for the entire RM3.3 billion RKK, no further breakdown of public funds is provided at the project level. There is also no indication whether GLC contributions (e.g., MB Inc and SEDC) would be classified as public or private funds.

Should the selected brownfield site of KTM, a very nice part of the city, be developed from an affordable, low density area to become a high density mixed development project? Will it cause gentrification for the poor and low-income people currently living there? Will the Land Conservation Act 1960, listed as one of the implementation approaches, be used to acquire land there? How many parcels of land and who will be affected?

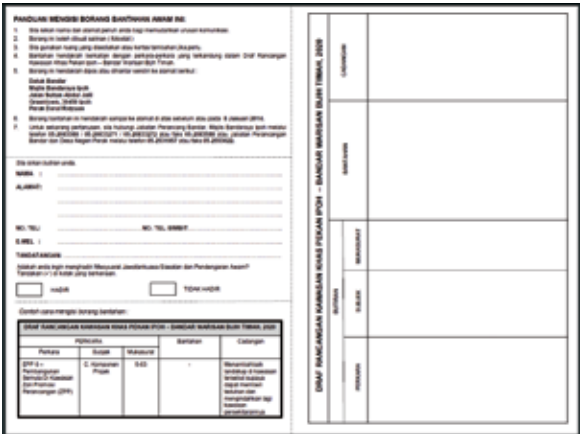
Lopsided numbers and lingering questions aside, the RKK’s core strategy seems to be heavily hinged on using heritage, culture and environment to generate monetary returns from tourism. A GNI return of RM25.62 billion is projected for 2020-2030, near to eight times the RKK initial investment, perhaps provided as justification for the proposed plan. But this needs to be critically re-examined, not only in terms of the assumptions and methodology behind the GNI projections (which are very often unrealistic and overly optimistic), but also the entire philosophy and thinking behind the RKK’s seemingly monotonic approach to the city.

The development and building of a city should be centred on the people who live, work and play in the city, contrary to the RKK’s primary focus and preoccupation with tourism and economic returns. Hence, the proposed plan’s appreciation of heritage, culture and environment lacks depth and looks skin deep with the suggestion to dress up the old Ipoh city centre with a tin mining cloak (Dulang waterfront, *kapal korek* miniature, monuments of tin miners, etc.).

Should a city be themed up artificially and be reduced to a single identity without deeper excavation of the complexities, multiplicities and identities of the past, present and future generation of Ipoh-ans both living in the city and abroad?

A different understanding of the city would suggest a different set of principles and policies relating to heritage, culture and environment. The proposed projects that have been brought up in the RKK such as the restoration of identified historical monument and the development of Sungai Kinta into a green belt are all very relevant, but the direction and emphasis is unfortunately not geared towards the revitalization of the city in its totality, that is, social, health, safety and living standard dimensions of the workers, commuters, women, elderly and children.

For example, walking paths shouldn’t just be designed and constructed merely as a heritage trail for tourists. What about the analysis and understanding of the everyday path and mobility behaviour of the students and city dwellers in the surrounding



area? Similarly, a green open space along the riverfront can also be designed as a hangout space for workers’ lunch break or for school children to carry out extra-curricular activities after school or on weekends.

From a place-making point of view, there are also questions about the proposed land use change from residential to solely commercial status for some heritage buildings as well as turning a specific area into a singly-defined cultural zone, that is, Little India. Traditionally and in some countries presently, it is actually more important to use land use and zoning to create cities where people of different backgrounds and income classes live, work and play within the core of the city.

Complexities and robustness are the key ingredients that make a city a city. The famous Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck once said, “a house must be like a small city if it’s to be a real home; a city like a large house if it’s to be a real home”. It cannot be stripped down to a mono-functional zone for commercial or touristic purposes. A city plan must also make room for common, public space to nurture communities, shape individuals and educate citizens and not turn the entire Ipoh city centre into a monotonic, commodified space meant only for tourists. Tourism may add value, but is not the totality of value.

How then should such a city centre in Ipoh be redeveloped? For a start, perhaps the existing consultative mechanism for the RKK has to be broadened to allow for more meaningful and deeper inputs, reflections and conversations about the city from all stakeholders, broadly defined. The current ‘*surat bantahan*’ available for download seems to serve as the only feedback mechanism and only allows for comments tied to a specific proposal in the RKK.

Ipoh City Council is a participant of Local Agenda 21, which is “an approach based on participation which respects the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of the present and future citizens of a community in all its diversity and which relates that community and its future to the regional, national and international community of which it is a part.” A genuine public participation in the RKK formulation needs to adopt and uphold the approach of Local Agenda 21 to bring about a genuinely bottom-up, locally-owned, and development-from-within city redevelopment, flourishing in all its totality.

Alex Lee, Foo Hui Ping & Christopher Choong

Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis simply means “inflammation of the liver”. Hepatitis B is a specific type of hepatitis that is caused by a virus. In Malaysia, about 5 per cent of the population is affected by hepatitis B. This rate is highest among the Chinese.

HOW DO I BECOME INFECTED WITH HEPATITIS B?

- **Mother to infant** — Hepatitis B can be passed from a mother to her baby during or shortly after delivery. This is the most common route of transmission among Malaysians.
- **Sharing contaminated needles** for recreational drugs (dadah), tattooing, acupuncture and ear piercing.
- **Sexual contact** with someone who is infected with hepatitis B.
- **Close contact** — Hepatitis B can be spread through close personal contact. This could happen if blood or other bodily fluids get into tiny cracks or breaks in your skin or in your mouth or eyes. The virus can live for a long time away from the body, meaning that it can be spread by sharing household items like toothbrushes, or razors.
- **Blood transfusion and organ transplantation**

SYMPTOMS

In most cases, hepatitis B causes no symptoms for many years. Everyone with chronic hepatitis B is at increased risk of developing complications, including liver scarring (cirrhosis) and liver cancer.

Acute hepatitis B — after a person is first infected with hepatitis B, they are said to have acute hepatitis. Most people with acute hepatitis B recover uneventfully.

However, in about 5 per cent of adults the virus makes itself at home in the liver, where it continues to make copies of itself for many years. People who continue to harbour the virus are referred to as “carriers”. If liver damage develops because of longstanding infection, the person is said to have chronic hepatitis.

Chronic hepatitis B — chronic hepatitis B develops more commonly in people who are infected with the virus at an early age (often at birth). Many people with chronic hepatitis B have no symptoms at all; other people have symptoms of on-going liver inflammation, such as fatigue and loss of appetite.

Hepatitis B cirrhosis — this is the advanced stage of the disease and may happen many years after on-going inflammation of the liver. The symptoms associated with liver cirrhosis:

- Jaundice
- Distended abdomen due to accumulated fluid
- Confusion
- Vomiting blood
- Passing black faeces

DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosed by a **blood test – HBsAg test.**

HEPATITIS B TREATMENT

In people who develop chronic hepatitis, an antiviral medication might be recommended to reduce or reverse liver damage and to prevent long-term complications.

Antiviral therapy — several antiviral medicines are available to treat hepatitis B. Not all people with hepatitis B need immediate treatment. If you do not start treatment immediately, you will be monitored over time to know when hepatitis becomes more active.

PREVENTION

- Discuss the infection with any sexual partners and use a latex condom with every sexual encounter
- Do not share razors, toothbrushes, or anything that has blood on it
- Cover open sores and cuts with a bandage
- Do not donate blood, body organs, other tissues, or sperm
- Anyone who is at risk of hepatitis B infection should be vaccinated.
- Do not share any injecting drug equipment
- All infants in Malaysia, regardless of the mother’s hepatitis B status, will get the hepatitis B vaccine at birth, at 1 to 2 months, and at 6 months.

For more information call Saravana.K Gastroenterologist and Liver Specialist Clinic at Hospital Fatimah (05-5487181) or email gastrosara@gmail.com.



MUSINGS ON FOOD



By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Pics by VWSL

SeeFoon Explores Punjabi Cuisine in Bercham

I recently explored the nuances of Punjabi cuisine where I discovered its diverse range of dishes. Within the Punjab region which is now divided into Punjab Pakistan and Punjab India, there are different preferences. The main masala in a Punjabi dish consists of onion, garlic and ginger. Tandoori food is a Punjabi specialty especially for non-vegetarian dishes. Indeed, before the 1947 partition, tandoori cooking in India was traditionally associated with the former undivided Punjab. According to Wikipedia, many of the most popular elements of Indian cuisine as it is marketed to non-Indian customers (such as tandoori, naan, pakoras and vegetable dishes with paneer) is derived from Punjab.

I recently had the pleasure of discovering a Punjabi restaurant in Bercham known as **Trio Cafe**. Established by Major Suwaran Singh Dillon with two partners, the Trio Cafe is keen to showcase Punjabi cuisine to a wider audience. "I'm particularly keen to introduce Punjabi food to the Chinese. Having grown up in Bercham, a lot of my friends are Chinese and I speak fluent Cantonese. I also want to attract the working class and introduce my beloved cuisine at prices which they can afford in a congenial ambience."

Indeed, on one of the days when I was there, a group of office girls were celebrating a birthday and having a whale of a time, testimony to the fact that Major Suwaran is achieving his goal. With set lunch prices ranging from RM10-RM15 for a 7-8 item meal, he's certainly bringing in the working crowd with his reasonable pricing.

But as we all know, just reasonable pricing is not enough to sustain a restaurant.



The quality needs to be good enough to bring back repeat customers and this is where Trio Cafe succeeds. All their masalas and pastes, chutneys and spices are hand ground, mixed and produced in their kitchen. Their coriander, mint and yoghurt chutney, which is served with all their tandoori dishes, is tangy and full of flavour and every time I was there I would ask for extra as it would disappear so quickly.

They have a wood-fired tandoor in the kitchen which is the secret to their delectable tandoori dishes, all redolent with the smoky aroma that only wood can impart to baked dishes. The ubiquitous **Tandoori Chicken**, which in some places can be dry and stringy, arrived juicy and succulent on the bone, the spicing subtle yet with enough bite to entice — **RM11 for 3 pieces**. The same applies to the **Fish Tikka** which was tender, with no lingering fishiness — **RM12**. The **Paneer Tikka** (homemade cottage cheese) was equally hearty, bite-sized pieces of firm white cheese given the full tandoori treatment — **RM12**.

The menu at Trio Cafe is extensive with a wide choice of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. No pork or beef is served and to cater to different taste buds, customers may ask for their dishes to be spiced up or toned down. I will list here the dishes that I have enjoyed.

For starters, some unusual items were interesting and delicious. Their special **Masala Papad** is fried poppadom (made from chickpea flour) topped with chopped tomatoes, onions, chilies and coriander leaves. I laughingly called it the Indian Bruschetta, the Italian appetizer which is served on crusty bread minus the coriander! In fact this appealed even more to my taste buds as the poppadom is thin and crisp and when fried, acts like a small cup which catches the juices of the chopped ingredients. They must be eaten the moment it arrives at the table before the poppadom turns soggy — **RM5**.

The next appealing appetizer is the **Pani Puri**, small bite-sized homemade fried breads which are filled with potatoes and served cold with a mint/*belacan* sauce. [Yes they do use *belacan* (shrimp paste) in India!] — **RM5 for 6 pieces**.

Twenty three selections of homemade bread items make for a dazzling selection, ranging from stuffed Naans to Parathas, to Rotis using a mix of different flours. Of the ones I tasted, the **Amritsari Kulcha** which is a Naan topped with coriander seeds and leaves and whole pepper corns is piquant and hearty — **RM5**. One of my favourite accompaniment to curries is the **Rumali** (handkerchief) **Roti**, an extremely light paper-thin flatbread cooked on an inverted wok over the fire — **RM3**. With so many breads to choose from, I'll have to come back many times to sample the whole range.

And now to the 'wet dishes' and curries. Again, there is a dazzling array and I shall only mention here the 'must try' dishes. These begin with the **Mutton Roganjosh**, a dish with Persian origins, boneless mutton cooked in a mildly spiced sauce redolent with onions. There is enough sauce here for dipping the various breads — **RM 19**. The **Mutton Varuval** is the drier, more robust, more fiery sister mutton dish, the spicing very different from the Roganjosh, with hints of cumin, fennel, cinnamon, cloves and star anise lending its exotic flavours to the meat — **RM19**.

Sixteen chicken dishes tempt the palate and the two I tasted were worth every bite. The **Jungle Chicken**, chicken pieces cooked in a spicy gravy chock full with ginger and oodles of cracked pepper was a great favourite at the table (**RM14**) while the **Chicken Lababdar**, boneless chicken pieces cooked in a mild curry, laced with cream, butter and cashew nuts, was also in the running for favourite chicken dish. This is a curry from the royal kitchens of North India in the days of the Raj and is very rich and satiating — **RM16**.

I could go on and on with the menu but alas there is only so much space on this page! Do try their **Chicken Biryani**, **Palak Paneer**, and their **Vegetable Jalfrezi**.



Trio Cafe

22 & 24 Leboh Bercham Selatan 2/1
Bercham East Gate (Behind Bougainvillea Club Ipoh)
GPS: N 04 37' 31.63" E 101 07' 53.69"
Tel: Major Suwaran Singh 019 279 2473
Manjit Singh 012 534 6654/05 541 2462
Business Hours: Daily noon to midnight.

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Community

Crime Awareness Programme



The Lahat Police Station organised a crime prevention and awareness programme for the benefit of residents of Bandar Lahat Baru recently. It was held at the local Rukun Tetangga centre. The event was aimed at establishing a healthier relationship between the police and the people of Bandar Lahat with the hope of curbing crime in the area.

The event featured a blend of communal games, talks and awareness banners. One such talk was on sexual harassment and domestic violence by ASP Kamariah. She highlighted cases like rape, abduction and domestic violence and stressed the victims' rights to report and to defend themselves. Booths were set up by the local neighbourhood watch group and *Rakan Cop*. The local fire brigade provided a fire engine for demonstration purposes.

DSP Dzaffir Mohd Yussof, the guest of honour, conveyed the words of the Ipoh Police Chief. The crime index in Lahat, he said, had fallen by two points from 37 in 2012 to 35 in 2013. He thanked the residents for their efforts in making the programme a success.

Organiser Hussin bin Awang, hailed the event a success judging from the huge turnout. He hoped with programmes such as this, people would be comfortable to work with the police. The day-long activity ended on a high note with a lucky draw and a buffet lunch for all participants.

Kumar

School of Magic Dance Drama



D'Artiz Dance Studio performed in a dance drama, "School of Magic" on New Year's Eve. The event started at 9pm at MH Hotel. The dance drama depicted wizards having to go through obstacles to save their classmates who were kidnapped. Romance and comedy were also part of the drama. They applied interesting songs and dances which included the famous Thriller by Michael Jackson.

Besides the drama, they gave their students an opportunity to perform. There were also guest artists performing Latin, Belly and Hip Hop dances by Susan Dance Academy. There were also singing performances by Top Starz Academy and students of D'Artiz, Renee and Queenie. Guests were given vouchers sponsored by Secret Garden at the Question and Answer session.

Everyone stayed back for the New Year countdown and partied the night away, ending with a dance by D'Artiz Studio.

Susan Ho

There is Life After a Stroke

NASAM (National Stroke Association of Malaysia) held a Winter Solstice, Christmas and Birthday celebration on December 20. The 3-in-1 celebration started at 10am, followed by a short speech by senior physiotherapist, Irene Teng.

The strokees (a term coined by them) of NASAM were given some glutinous rice dough to make Tong Yuen (sweet dumplings) for the Winter Solstice festival. This is to encourage them to use both their hands more and create awareness despite having hands affected by stroke.

The strokees then sang and danced to Christmas songs with the Senior and Junior therapists (Irene Teng and Kathiravan), Mahsa College students (Victor, Eric, Eugene and Pei Ling) and the volunteers. They even did the Chicken Dance! They indeed showed the world that there is still life after a stroke.

Christmas gifts were given out upon arrival of Santa and Santarina. They sang and danced together with the strokees before celebrating birthdays for those whose birthday fell between July and December. Cute cupcakes made by Ms Lam Woon Nee, daughter of strokee Mr Lam Chik Choon, were given to the birthday strokees, together with presents from NASAM.

There was a dress code (Polka dot and stripes) for the day and there were four winners in the best dressed category. Mr Joginder Singh, Mr Hah Kuang Yoong, Ms Norsiah Mat Jane and Mdm Yap Ah Kim walked home with prizes. Mdm Yap has been a winner for three years in a row.

Before everyone moved to the buffet table for their fellowship, Mr Wong, husband of strokee Mdm Tan Guat Bee, came out front to sing a song of friendship to end the event.

Susan Ho

Orthopaedic Health

Dr Suresh Siva
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Stem Cells in Orthopaedic Surgery

In recent times much has been said about the promise of stem cells to heal and improve the quality of life of patients. As individuals grow older and lead more active lifestyles, orthopaedic surgeons are increasingly being called on to use their surgical techniques to improve patients' quality of life. Earlier solutions to orthopaedic disorders required the use of metals and plastics to improve the mechanical environment for orthopaedic tissues. Newer research has aimed to improve the biologic environment for healing. One area that has shown a promising future is the use of stem cells to regenerate or repair tissues.

Stem cells or *Pluripotent Stem Cells* (PSCs) in broad terms, are cells that can self-replicate and differentiate into any cell line in the body. In this country, stem cells are usually taken from the patient (Adult Stem Cells) or from the umbilical cord (cord blood cells).

Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) are a subset of PSCs which are already committed to differentiating into muscle, bone, ligaments or tendons. Most orthopaedic research has been conducted using adult MSCs.

Fracture Healing

Fracture healing occurs through an organized process by which bone cells lay down bone. In certain traumatic situations, the defects are extensive and cannot be healed via the normal biologic process.

Several researchers have been able to isolate and purify MSCs from bone marrow and use them to heal these defects.

Intervertebral Disc

Disorders of the back and back pain result in significant morbidity and loss of productivity to our society. Most therapeutic solutions rely on conservative or nonsurgical treatment. In certain situations, removal of the degenerated intervertebral disc (IVD) and fusion can lead to a successful result.

Understanding the causes of degeneration and developing treatments to regenerate the IVD may help prevent these problems. When autologous MSCs were transplanted into a rabbit model of degenerative disc disease, the treated rabbits improved and achieved 91 per cent of the height of their discs 24 weeks after transplantation. However, research in using this technology in humans has been limited.

Sports medicine

Injuries related to disruption or inflammation of ligaments or tendons are common and can result in significant morbidity to the active individual. When these tissues heal, the resulting scar tissue is of inferior quality. Cell-based therapy is actively being investigated as a new method of treating these injuries. MSCs have also been studied in the repair of meniscal injuries. Tears in the inner third region of the meniscus have a limited capability to heal due to the lack of blood supply. A recent study found that MSCs transplanted into this region of the meniscus in an animal model can result in tissue with better bonding capabilities. New studies are beginning to examine whether these same techniques can be used to improve the results of human meniscal repair.

Arthritis

The treatment of early stage arthritis or damaged cartilage and bone with MSCs has received a lot of interest in recent times. In fact, a paper from Stanford University (2011) showed that stem cells reside in multiple tissues in the body and participate in the repair of damaged tissue. These cells are replenished from the bone marrow and are transported to the injury site when needed. Therefore a promising strategy that we use is to reinforce the inherent healing capacity of the body by delivering MSCs harvested from the patients own body to the site of injury. These extra cells provide an added 'boost' to the healing process and support our concept of **instant stem cell therapy**.

As we orthopaedic surgeons attempt to improve patients' quality of life, we will need to expand the techniques we use. In the past, surgeons used a combination of instrumentation and surgical technique to maximize results. As we improve our understanding of the biology of degenerative processes, we may turn to newer agents and more sophisticated techniques to improve quality of life.

For more information, call Siva Orthopaedic Clinic at Hospital Fatimah
05 548 6380 or email: info@sivaclinic.com.



News

Syuen Hotel's 20th Anniversary

Syuen Hotel Ipoh celebrated its 20th Anniversary recently. The Syuen Hotel, with 290 rooms, is one of Ipoh's largest hotels located in the heart of Ipoh and was officially opened in 1993 by the then DYMM Yang Di Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah. The Syuen, one of Ipoh's more resilient hotels, has seen Ipoh during its heyday and experienced its share of downturns along with the city.

The event, held at its 1200-sitting Grand Ballroom was a dinner function held in appreciation of its suppliers, contractors, corporate and government guests, staff and family members. Those present on the night included its founder Mr Yan Kock Yeun, Dato Hj Omar Hj Abu Ipoh's first Mayor, G. Sivapragasam and Director Yan Gak Lok.

The night's speech was delivered by Master Yan Wai Siong the young grandson of its founder Mr Yan Kock Yeun, who in his address stated that the event was to express the management's gratitude to the hotel's supporters and to instil a family spirit among the guests and staff.

One of the main events of the night was the presentation of long service awards to their staff who had been with them for 20 years and more, one of whom was its Director Ms Maggie Ong Mooi Kee. Founder Yan later joined the long serving staff to cut the anniversary cake to commemorate the auspicious event.

JAG



Khazanah Health Fund



Pantai Hospital Ipoh organised a high tea to thank patients, doctors and non-governmental organisations and the hospital's major beneficiaries of its many CSR (community-service responsibility) initiatives, for their continued support.

Financial assistance for the hospital's many CSR projects is made possible through the newly-incepted *Khazanah Health Fund*, launched in July last year. To date over 170 medical cases were referred to the Pantai chain of hospitals throughout the country.

The fund has helped treat those suffering from a wide variety of medical conditions, including cleft lip and palate, cataract, breast cancer and heart diseases. Angiograms and mastectomies are some of the operations performed.

Potential recipients have to fulfil certain criteria and are required to undergo a thorough vetting process before being recommended for coverage by the health fund. Applications are managed by selected non-governmental organisations, which act as third-party referrals.

Cancer treatment, according to resident consultant medical oncologist, Dr Mohd Syahizul Nuhairy, costs anything between RM20,000 to RM60,000. "The fund provides patients with a second chance in life. It provides them hope, above all," he said.

Dr Chan Chong Guan, a consultant cardiologist, echoed Dr Mohd Syahizul's sentiments and went on to say that it makes a doctor's life more rewarding to see these needy patients getting medical treatments they could barely afford.

The *Khazanah Health Fund* has benefited some 62 people. Over RM1.2 million worth of medical treatments and services have been expended on them. It will continue to dispense funds until current monetary resources are exhausted.

Kumar

Announcements

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

Jing Yan Cantonese Opera Performance from Hong Kong in conjunction with the launching of Tin Tower in Farlim, **January 14-18** from 7.30pm to 11pm at Tin City, Farlim, Ipoh. Open to the public. Free admission. Call **05 282 7888** or **05 282 1888** for more information.

Animal Adoption Drive (organised by ISPCA together with Noah's Ark Ipoh, Malaysian Kennel Association, GBBM, Lions Club Subang Jaya, Lion Club of Evergreen, ARMS, Shine Foundation and YMM), **January 18 and 19** at De Garden from 10am till 3pm. There will be 85 dogs for adoption; 90% of these are females. These are poodles rescued from an illegal breeder. Each adopter is required to pay RM200 adoption fee which will be used for the Trap Neuter and Release programme. It is compulsory for the adopted dogs to be neutered once they have recovered from their trauma. Pet shops are not allowed to adopt. For further information, contact: ISPCA **012 518 6916**.

Walk Hunt in Ipoh organised by Treasure Hunting Society of Malaysia (THS), **January 19**, 9am to 12pm. Membership entitles you to at least 4 hunts a year. Entry fee for each hunt is RM10 only. A one time fee of RM20 and an annual fee of RM50 will qualify you as THS member. Go to website www.thsmalaysia.org for information about THS. Entry fee is RM40 for non-members. After the 3-hour hunt (somewhere in Bandar Baru), there will be a lunch at a local eatery (RM15) after which answers presentation and prize-giving will be held. The hunt is especially suited for beginners and each team consists of 2 pax. Obtain entry forms from jay1men@gmail.com or call Jay at **012 420 1364**.

Ipoh Stamp Group meeting, Sunday **January 19**, 2pm at Purple Cane Tea House (next to Kamdar). For information, contact: **0111 648 5259**. Facebook: [Ipoh Stamp Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/ipohstampgallery). All philatelists and stamp collectors welcome. (See page 8 for story.)

YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club Meeting, Wednesday **January 22**, 7.45pm at YMCA first floor. Contact: Pak Peter **019 574 3572** or CG Huan **012 558 1012**.

1985 Graduates of MGS Ipoh & 1987 Graduates of ACS Ipoh CNY Gathering, Monday **February 3**, 8pm at St Mike's Bistro. "Time to get together and meet up after so many years!!" RSVP Irene Yip **012 520 1993**.

Half-Day Seminar on the 'Personal Data Protection Act 2010' organised by MICCI (Perak Branch), **February 12** between 8.30am to 1.30pm at the Impiana Hotel, Ipoh. The Act came into effect on 15 November 2013. For further enquiries, call the MICCI office at **05 253 2233**.



Chinese New Year

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Arts & Culture

A Musical Offering

Arunagirinathar Mandram, a society dedicated to improving spiritual knowledge amongst Hindus and presided by renowned musical enthusiast, Dr Jayabalan Valliappan, held a compact disc launching ceremony at the Mahamariamman Temple, Ipoh recently.

The disc entitled, "Thithithikkum Thiruppugazh" a musical offering based on Saint Arunagirinathar's works was introduced in the presence of Malaysia Hindu Sangam's National President, Dato' Mohan Shan and other eminent Hindu leaders.

An elaborate programme was drawn to celebrate this historic occasion. In the opening ceremony, disciples of Swaralaya Sangeetha Kalalayam performed a vocal rendition followed by a live musical dance drama by Panbarasi Govindasamy and her students.

The hour-long Bharatanatyam Indian classical dance drama, composed and choreographed by the teacher herself, showcased the saint's life and his works in a theatrical setting earned the appreciation of audience and the invited guests.

In his opening speech, Dr Jayabalan thanked the more than 500 audience and the organising committee for their commitment. He said that the compilation of the songs, alongside the story narration done with the aid of artistes from India, was a dream come true, in every sense of the word. "The objective of creating awareness of the saint's works among the present generation has been met," he enthused.

Kani



Community

All Things Philatelic

Like most people, the extent of my knowledge on stamps, is that you lick it and stick it! That is basically how you get your mail to the intended party, all over the world. Although a good percentage of communication is now done online, the postal service is still very much alive and well, even in the 21st century.

I was recently invited to attend the Philately (the study and collection of stamps, postal history, post marks and other related items) club meeting in Ipoh and since I very much enjoy making new friends, I jumped at the chance to broaden my circle of friends in Ipoh. Although for the most part, I was left quite confused (and unfortunately a little bored), my interest, was soon tickled when I observed just how passionate the members of this little club were about their stamps, postcards and other memorabilia. Some of the members came with folders, albums and other materials, all carefully collected, which clearly showed their commitment, passion and love for all things postal.

The Ipoh Philately club was founded in November of 2011 by a small group of enthusiasts, headed by Austin Foo, Khor Kok Keong and Bernard Loh. Since its



inception, it has drawn quite a few new members, one of whom is award winning philatelist Vera Radnell. Her contribution to the club has been both inspiring and awesome as she tirelessly helps the members delve deeper into the

world of Philately. There is also a group of high school kids from SMJK Sam Tet, who are very active philatelists, and are currently working on their own thematic exhibition about Perak State to be presented at an upcoming event. The SMJK Sam Tet philately members work hard under the guidance of Vera to come up with a collection that is worthy of respect and acceptance on a world class platform.

Also present at the meeting was a committee member from the Malaysian Philatelic Society (PSM), Mr Tan Chee Hui, to lend a helping hand by way of providing ideas and vital information on how to organize exhibitions in Ipoh, to create awareness and attract visitors to the Ipoh stamp events planned for VMY 2014.

These philatelists usually meet on the last Sunday of every month to exchange information and new discoveries connected to anything philatelic. They are a very warm and welcoming group, and would love to have new members join in the fun. If you would like to be a part of this very interesting club (which is certainly more than the 'lick it and stick it' mindset I previously had), come and join them and be a part of this new and exciting growth.

For information, contact: 012 329 1747 or 011 1648 5259.
Facebook: Ipoh Stamp Gallery.



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11. Impiana Hotel Ipoh, Jln Raja Dr Nazrin Shah. Tel: 05-2555555
12. Ipoh Downtown Hotel, Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Tel: 05-2556766
13. D'Eastern Hotel, Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Tel: 05-2543936
14. YMCA Ipoh, Jln Raja Musa Aziz. Tel: 05-2540809/2539464
15. Meru Valley Golf Club members' desk
16. Ipoh Echo's office



RPP RM29

Health

BRT — The Gentle Path to Wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Remember Dr McCoy in the hit series Star Trek with his machines that can diagnose and treat all the people on the Starship Enterprise? Just a zap and up they go, healed and whole again. That was science fiction or was it? Medicine just got exciting and thanks to German and Russian scientists, the future has arrived in Ipoh.

This groundbreaking medical technology is using electromagnetic vibration to diagnose and heal without side effects yet with pinpoint precision. It is known as *Bioresonance Therapy* or BRT for short. It is painless and most relaxing. I can vouch for this, having had 8 sessions of this therapy. (*More on my personal experience in the next issue – IE182.*)

Bioresonance is a therapy that addresses a person's imbalances in the body caused by irritants, toxins, pathogens and environmental pollutants. The objective is to activate the body's ability to regulate and heal itself. The BICOM® (Biological COM-puter) device, a German-made machine, is the world's leading device in providing bioresonance treatments. Its use is already very common in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Just in Germany alone, there are more than 7000 practitioners, the majority of whom have orthodox medical training as well. In China, bioresonance therapy is used in most children's hospitals. In Australia it is used as a complementary treatment to conventional medicine. President Putin of Russia uses it and the Department of Health in Russia has approved it for wide use across their nation, as does the Russian space programme for their cosmonauts.

BICOM Therapy is a biophysical technique based on concepts of acupuncture, homeopathy and quantum physics. Most orthodox and complementary medicine use chemicals (pharmaceuticals herbs) to alter the body's biochemistry. Often times this is akin to using a cannon to kill a mouse.

However, biophysics research in Germany, British and American universities have shown that living organisms generate tiny electromagnetic fields which naturally regulate their biochemistry and that these can be used for a drug-free and non-invasive therapy.

The therapist uses the BICOM instrument to pick up electromagnetic waves from the patient, modifies them and sends them back to improve the body's ability to regulate its own physiological processes. Although it can treat all kinds of diseases BICOM Therapy is best known for success with allergic and chronic diseases.

With over 12,000 BICOM devices sold worldwide there are now many alternative



practitioners who are treating people on a daily basis with conditions such as hay fever, allergies, digestive and skin problems, autoimmune diseases, diabetes support, hypertension, along with many other conditions.

Parasites have been known to cause many of the conditions we experience. Bioresonance has been able to eliminate these invaders without drugs. Cancer patients have been treated along with conventional treatment with ground breaking results.

A study done by the The Asthma Research Center of Jinan Children's Hospital in China in 2003, to treat 415 children suffering from asthma, 300 of whom were treated with desensitization therapy using the BICOM device, showed a total effectiveness rate as high as 93.3 per cent while the Allergy

Department of the same hospital study of 79 cases of allergic skin diseases showed a cure rate of 74.7 per cent and an efficacy rate (significant effect) of 89.9 per cent.

Bioresonance, by its very nature of reducing toxic strains in our bodies, also treats symptoms such as headaches, bloating and inflammation in the small and large intestine, dental problems, joint pain and fatigue.

Weight loss is an added benefit of BICOM Bioresonance Therapy as reducing the toxic load in the body naturally speeds weight loss and increases energy. An Anti-Smoking programme is also available and is based on the allergy inversion method of bioresonance treatment. They use acupressure points in the body to help detoxification and stop cravings.

Although people may present with similar symptoms, all BICOM Bioresonance Therapy treatments are individualised to each person and generally a few treatments are recommended to help complete detoxification.

BICOM Bioresonance Therapy (BRT) has been tested and approved throughout Europe and Canada, and it is in use in 85 countries worldwide. In Germany, where it was developed by Regumed, BRT has been in use for over 25 years.

Now available in Ipoh, the BICOM treatments are given by trained therapists at the Oasis of Hope centre, a branch of the same name from Singapore, situated conveniently in the Greentown Business Centre at: A-2-01A Second Floor, Wisma MFCB, #1 Persiaran Greentown 2, Greentown Business Centre, 30450 Ipoh, Perak, Tel: +605 2415 122. URL: www.bioresonancetherapy.com.sg and email: contactus@bioresonancetherapy.com.my.

Next issue IE182:

SeeFoon's Personal Experience with Bioresonance using BICOM in Ipoh.



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Education

A First in Perak

Keris College held a media luncheon recently in conjunction with the launch of the college's latest Bachelor of Business Administration Hospitality Management course. The 3-year course, conducted by Victoria University, Switzerland here in Ipoh, provides students a better exposure to the world of business and prepares them for managerial roles in the hospitality industry.

Executive Officer for Admin and Student Services, Maggie Yee, said all assessments and lecturer accreditations would be monitored by Victoria University. Examination papers would be sent to Switzerland for evaluation. "Keris College is the first in Perak to offer a hospitality degree programme of this kind," she told reporters.

Upon completion of the course, students have a choice to have their graduation ceremony either in Malaysia, Switzerland or Hong Kong. With an enrollment rate of almost 200 students annually, Keris College targets 20 students for the January intake. For Keris College diploma holders the fee is RM16,800 while those from other colleges, the amount is RM18,800.

Members of the press were later treated to lunch prepared by first-year-hospitality students at the Keris Coffee House. For details call Keris College at 05 241 6666.

Kumar



News



Mariani's 'A' Certificate of Cleanliness

Mariani's Italian Restaurant located at De Garden Mall Ipoh, recently received its 'A' Certificate of Cleanliness from Ipoh City Council (MBI). The certificate was presented by outgoing Ipoh Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim who thanked the owners Datin Wendy Choong and Kim Goo for complying with all the council's guidelines for clean food outlets.

Ipoh City Council had up till December 2013 approved and awarded 200 'A' Certificates out of a total of 1910 premises. Of this number 59 were given a 20 per cent incentive rebate off their annual license for maintaining their certification for another year.

MBI's requirement for clean food outlets requires owners to instal a grease trap and to maintain a cleaning schedule in order to keep clean and hygienic premises at all times and covers food storage and work areas to clean toilets in order to qualify for the 'A' certification.

JAG

Christmas Roundup

Healy Mac's Christmas Party

It was all smiles for the more than 200 kids from eight children's homes in Ipoh when they were invited to lunch at Healy Mac's Irish Restaurant. The Christmas charity event was an outreach programme by the management in the spirit of giving.

Not only were the children and their guardians treated to a delicious meal, they also had the opportunity to check out police patrol vehicles and fire engines, especially arranged for them, with support and co-operation from the police force and fire brigade. Two pedigree dogs from the police K9 unit also put up an amazing demonstration leaving the children and passersby in awe at their prowess.

The children were from Praise Home Orphanage, The Salvation Army, Good Shepherd Home, Praise Emmanuel Children's Home, Vision Home Orphanage, Pertubuhan Kebajikan Harapan Baru and Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Yatim Bahagia. Amidst joyful Christmas carolling, Santa Claus made an appearance, distributing cookies and candies. The kids, to their delight, also each received a bagful of gifts.

According to the restaurant chain's Group Head of Marketing Anne Das, Healy Mac's like to give back to the community and what better time than during a festivity like Christmas. She said, "We selected all the neediest homes in Ipoh. Hopefully, we can reach out to more children in our next event."

Emily



Christmas is a time of joy both for giving and receiving. Many events and activities took place over the festive season to reflect the spirit of generosity to bring cheer to the less fortunate.

Silent Night in Japanese

The dinner guests at the Christmas Eve Dinner, held by St Peter's Church, were delightfully surprised to hear the familiar carol "Silent Night" sung in Japanese! Led by Mr Takeichi and his wife, better known as Ta-san and Chi-san, the Malaysians in the group confidently sang the song to the applause of the 700 guests at the Lee How Fook Restaurant.

SK Teoh



Christmas at KPJ ISH

More than 300 doctors and staff of the Ipoh Specialist Hospital celebrated Christmas and New Year Lunch on January 4. The lunch was sponsored by the Christian consultants. Prizes were given to the wards or clinics with the best Christmas decorations. Popular carols were sung by the staff.

The Christmas Lunch is one of the festive lunch gatherings in Ipoh Specialist Hospital. Tuan Asmadi Mohd Bakri, the hospital CEO, welcomes the function as one of the ways for goodwill and harmony among the staff of different races and religions. Dr S.K. Teoh, the organising chairman, spoke on the 'Fables, Facts and Faith of Christmas'.

SK Teoh



OMPH Church



The Church of Our Mother of Perpetual Help held a 'reaching out' gathering for the non Christians within its Parish to participate in the joy of Christmas.

OMPH Parish is made up of 36 BEC (Basic Ecclesial Community) groups. Each BEC was required to invite five non Christians from their neighbourhood to participate in a Christmas high tea at the church hall.

According to Organising Chairman Francis Lopez, the purpose of the event was to reach out and communicate with one's neighbours and share the joy of Christmas with them at the most appropriate time.

The response was a positive turnout with over 300 parishioners and non Christians showing up for the event. Each BEC including their guests were expected to put up a performance whether a dance or a karaoke which contributed to a fun evening.

The best ice breaker was contributed by parishioner Abby Choong whose chicken dance got Assistant Parish Priest Fr Joseph Stephen and other guests on the dance floor for a fun evening.

JAG

Upcoming Event

Charity Run

On January 19, 6.30am, there will be the St Andrew Charity Run (SACR) organised by St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Ipoh at the Polo Ground.

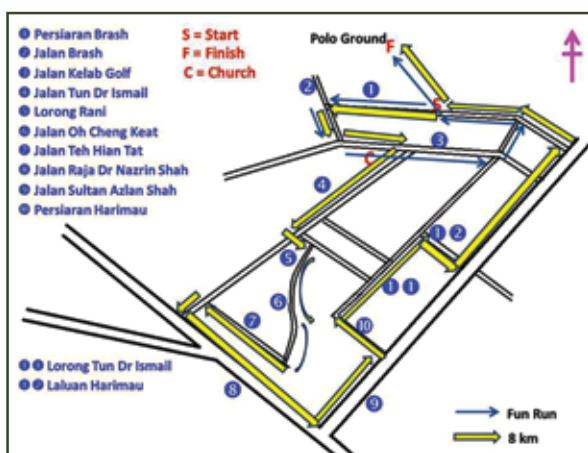
The objectives of the charity run are: (1) raising funds for the needy children from Rumah Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Negeri Perak and The Network for the Needs of Children with Disability (Perak) and creating the social awareness on the plight of under privileged children, (2) working together with the local Brooks Running Club in promoting a healthy society and good lifestyle especially to the working class, (3) raising funds for the church building fund at the same time.

The major sponsors of this SACR charity run are Pusat Tusyen Alfa Omega and Brooks Running Club. Other sponsors are 100 Plus, Malaysia Marbles, Kuang Huat Taman Ipoh Jaya, Hovid Berhad, Yee Kong Coffee Products, In Style Eyewear, Hijau Abadi, Bread Espresso Dessert and others.

The running distance of this SACR is 8km along the Polo Ground. The charity run is divided into six groups with a 8-km run: Group A and B are male and female seniors respectively, Group C and D are male and female open, Group E and F are male and female students, and Group G is a fun run with only 2km. The registration fee for Group A to D is RM30, Group E and F is RM20 and Group G is RM15.

The first five finishers for Group A to F will be awarded product vouchers from Brooks and the 6th to 10th finishers will be awarded trophies. In addition, there will be lucky draw prizes for those registered under Group A to F. The organizer will also give away the marble finishing medals to those who complete the run. There are also goodies from sponsors to be given to the participants.

The registration form can be downloaded at <http://standrewrun2014.wordpress.com>, or requested via email: ippbtc47@gmail.com. Those interested may also contact Ms Leong 05 547 2420 during office hours, Mr Lim 012 519 0438 and Mr Chuah 019 414 5166.



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Sport

The Perak Closed Chess Championship 2013

The Perak Closed Chess Championship 2013 was organized by Persatuan Catur Negeri Perak (PCNP) on December 28 and 29 last year at Dewan Jabatan Belia dan Sukan, Ipoh.

Ninety-four players took part in this 9-rounds 45-minute time-controlled tournament over two days. The participants comprised a diverse crowd with boys and girls as young as 10 and adults as old as 60. One observer expressed her admiration at the friendly rivalry among the Malay, Chinese and Indian players. It was usual for them to analyse the completed games with each other after each round. The passion for chess is evident among the players.

The competition ran smoothly over the two days by an experienced team of arbiters. The Fong family from Kampar sent five family members for the competition and got the lion's share of the prizes. Yit San, Eddy Fong's second son, who defended his title in the recent National Under-20 Junior Championship held in Johore, won 1st place while Mi Yen, elder daughter, who was National Women's Champion in 2011 won 3rd placing. Yit Ho, the eldest son and runner-up in the recent Junior Championship his younger brother



won, achieved 4th placing. Mark Siew, after a long absence from Perak, returned to finish 2nd.

The winners will be given consideration when PCNP selects the Perak players for national events like the National Closed and the annual Merdeka Chess Festival usually held in Kuala Lumpur. PCNP thanked all participants and the organising team for making this event a great success.

Tourism

Perak Tourism Awards 2013

The third Perak Tourism Awards 2013 event held before the close of the year was another glitzy affair attended by the multiple stakeholders from the tourism industry throughout the state.

Held at Hotel Casuarina@Meru it was graced with the presence of Perak Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir. Also in attendance was the State Exco for Tourism, Health and Culture Nolee Ashilin Radzi and Perak Tourism Association Chairman Hj Mohd Odzman Abdul Kadir.

The annual Perak Tourism Award presentation is held each year to recognise and acknowledge the contributions of various players in the tourism industry. These include the government agencies both state and federal, private companies, NGOs and individuals who have worked hard to improve and develop the tourism industry in the State.

Zambry in his address said the state had plenty of international products from the pristine forest of Royal Belum to million-years-old limestone hills and jungles. Our buildings of colonial architecture and mesmerizing historical products are unique and cannot be compared with KL and Penang as we are in a category of our own. Acknowledging that the industry cannot progress without the participation from all players, we therefore need to merge our commitment and expertise to develop our tourism industry.

The awards that night were presented to 22 recipients. The recipients per category were:

1. Best City Hotel: Grand Kampar Hotel, Kampar
2. Best Eco Resort: Tiger Rock Resort, Pangkor Island
3. Best Budget Hotel: Ipoh City Hotel, Ipoh



4. Best Homestay: Home Stay Bagan Datoh
5. Best Chalet: Nipah Guest House, Pangkor Island
6. Best Tour Agent: Aidel Tours and Travel Sdn Bhd, Ipoh
7. Best Tourism Product: Belum-Temenggor Rainforest Complex
8. Best Potential Tourism Product: Kellie's Castle
9. Best Malay Restaurant: Restoran Tasik Raban, Lenggong
10. Best Chinese Restaurant: Restaurant Yum Yum Ipoh
11. Best Indian Restaurant: Samy Curry House, Chemor
12. Best Local Food Product: Yee Hup Biscuits
13. Best Tourism Publication: Perak Tourism News, Ipoh Echo
14. Best Tourism Event: 33rd World Congress of Poets
15. Best Innovative Government Agency: Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Perak Office
16. Best Innovative Local Government Agency: MBI
17. Best Innovative Corporation: Gaharu Technologies, Gopeng
18. Best Innovative Organisation: Perak Heritage Society
19. Best Tour Promoter: Encik Zukni bin Yusof
20. Special Awards for Tourism Personalities were awarded to:
21. Puan Putri Zanina bt Megat Zainuddin for travel reports on Perak products
22. Dr Kevin Lazarus of Zoo Taiping for consistently promoting and upgrading Zoo Taiping.

The Organising Chairman for the event, PTA Chairman Hj Mohd Odzman, said the selection criteria was based upon the award recipients' contribution to the industry. Odzman made special mention of the 33rd World Poets Convention which was voted Best Event of the year having attracted participants from 30 countries which was more than even the annual sports events.

Indeed the Tourism awards event has provided a snapshot highlight of the potential of Perak's tourism industry which is just waiting to be discovered.

Ipoh Echo is particularly proud to have won the award for Best Tourism Publication which is the second tourism award won.

JAG





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