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Extreme Activities in Perak

By Angain Kumar

Extreme-based activities are the craze for the young-at-heart, the not-so-young and those wishing to spice up their lives with a little adrenaline rush. To cater to this growing demand, centres offering physically-challenging activities, such as abseiling, caving, canoeing, jungle trekking et. al., have mushroomed at the city fringes. This scribe went on an inspection of these places to unravel the attractions that have many daredevils clamouring for more. Take a deep breath and let us dive into the extreme!



My Gopeng Resort



Wild Woosey (Lost World of Tambun)

Sunway City Extreme Park

The Sunway City Extreme Park has come a long way since its opening in 2007. From just having futsal and badminton courts it now offers activities that would get your sneakers muddy and your spirits running high. It has a paintball arena; a go-kart track and an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) track. The newly-opened Adventure Extreme Park nearby is another additional attraction.

According to manager Muid Kaw Abdullah, the Adventure Extreme Park caters mainly for corporate and government bodies wanting to conduct adventure-type team-building training for their staff. They do accept groups of individuals, as well.

Among the activities offered are a 130-metre flying fox, a 700-metre trek through chest-high waters and mud and rock climbing. However, the rock-climbing walls are due for completion soon. The adventure park, set amidst lush greenery and limestone hills, has 12 chalets and three villas which can accommodate up to 72 people. Cooking and shower facilities are available.

Three-day/two-night and 4-day/3-night packages would cost anywhere between RM1300 to RM1500 per person. Bookings must be made at least a week in advance to allow time for preparation. The management provides tailor-made services to cater for certain needs. However, there is a cost differential. Here are some quotations:

- Paintball war game – RM45 per person for 100 pellets
- Paintball target practices – RM10 for 20 pellets
- Go-kart – RM20 to RM25 for 5 minutes
- All-Terrain Vehicle – RM20 for 5 minutes.



Go Kart

Extreme Park is at Jalan Darul Johan, Sunway City, Ipoh (GPS coordinates: N 4°37'15.316" S 101°8'53.068").
 For details call 05 549 8276 or 012 588 7266.

Continued on page 2

Healthy Activities: A Respite from Technological Gizmos

Lost World of Tambun

Lost World of Tambun is not all about spouting water and heart-pumping roller-coaster rides. There is more excitement to it than what meets the eye. The park incorporates a Team-Building Park, which offers a mix of eco-touristic and extreme activities. It is built against the majestic backdrop of the 400-million-year-old Tambun limestone hills.

Upon entry into the Team-Building Park is the Via Feratta with Natural Abseil, a rock-climbing activity which requires one to scale upwards on a limestone rock wall and abseil downwards to solid ground. The Wild Woosey uses the same rock wall where two participants engage in a trust exercise. They have to lean against one another whilst being urged on by their team-mates below.

Next to it is the Leap of Faith or the Para Jump. Participants have to do a bungee jump from a height of 65 feet. Another attraction is the 13 High Rope Course. It features hanging ropes fashioned into an obstacle course purpose-made to test one's agility, confidence and endurance.

Going further into the park brings you to a lake. A 120-metre long zip line across the water is assigned for flying fox activity. The same lake is used for physically-demanding training such as kayaking, the Triple X Challenge and Super Adventure Race. These are an integral part of the team-building activities on offer. Price ranges are: Zip Line – RM20; Leap of faith – RM35; Wild Woosey – RM80; and Via Feratta – RM120.

Charges do not include the RM50 entrance fee into the Lost World of Tambun theme park. Walk-in prices are limited to three persons.

Lost World of Tambun is located at No. 1, Persiaran Lagun Sunway 1, Sunway City Ipoh (GPS coordinates: N 4°37'32.381" E 101°9'19.048"). For details call: **05 542 8888**.



Zipline



My Gopeng Resort

After a 30-minute bumpy drive from Gopeng, along a winding kampong road riddled with potholes and speed humps, I reached the picturesque entrance of the iconic My Gopeng Resort. The resort offers activities for specific needs, both wet and dry.

The dry activities are found within the Jungle Dry Park. The popular ones are jungle trekking, Rafflesia flower hunt, obstacle course, treasure hunt, survival course and many more.

The wet activities are found within the Natural Water Park. They include body rafting, kayaking, river bug, caving and waterfall-bathing. These activities are being supervised by trained professionals. Extra precautions are taken to ensure the safety of participants.

My Gopeng Resort caters for both corporate and government entities, as well as families and individuals. There are also activities for kids like kayaking, pond-fishing and animal-feeding.

The resort provides lodging and cooking facilities for those wishing to stay overnight. Generous discounts are given for large groups. Price listing:

Prices range from RM155 (for a day trip rafting) to RM268 per pax for an overnight stay with meals and jungle night walks (weather permitting). Individual packages range from RM50 to RM100 and group campfires range from RM10 per pax (with a minimum of 20 pax) to RM250 per group (50 pax and above).

My Gopeng Resort is located at Kampung Geruntom, Gopeng (GPS coordinates: N 4°27'13.64" E 101°12'43.347"). For details call: **05 242 3777**.



Bukit Kinding Eco-Adventure Park



Aqua Zorbing

Managed by Fuze Outdoors, the Bukit Kinding Eco-Adventure Park has organised team-building activities for over 300 companies since its opening in 2011. Activities offered include kayaking, boating, jungle trekking, obstacle course and river crossing.

The park has Malaysia's longest double zip line flying fox. At 486m, the line is being certified as the longest by the Malaysia Book of Records. What makes the place unique is its aqua skipping and zorbing activities.

Aqua skipping is literally skipping across the surface of the water on special hydrofoil wings and fibreglass spring. Zorbing, on the other hand, is where guests are placed in a transparent orb and rolled down a gentle slope. A variation of zorbing is aqua zorbing where the rolling takes place on the surface of the water.

Newly renovated accommodation blocks with cooking facilities are available for large groups. The resort can accommodate up to 600 pax at a time in chalets, bungalows and commando shacks.

Groups intending on making a booking are required to do so online via www.fuze-outdoors.com. Pricing is based on group size and activities chosen. A 3-day/2-night package for a group of 30 individuals costs RM350 per person, inclusive of meals and accommodation.

The park also runs a parallel adventure programme, which is a 5-day hike up Gunung Korbu, Peninsular Malaysia's second highest mountain at 7,186 ft above sea level.

Bukit Kinding Eco-Adventure Park is located at Lot 26302, Jalan Chemor, Bukit Kinding, Tanjong Rambutan (GPS coordinates: N 4°42'19.87" E 101°8'59.36"). For details call: **05 533 1122**.



Flying Fox

Conclusion

Modern information technology has a profound impact on people these days. They prefer to stay glued to their computers and their smartphones rather than wading through treacherous waters and scaling up artificial and natural walls. There is much more to life than being a slave to these gizmos, which are temporary in nature.

It is time to spice up your lives with some adventures, strenuous though they may

be. All you need is some like-minded individuals who are prepared to sweat it out in the open.

So, instead of going to the movies or the pub to unwind, why not add an interesting twist to your mundane lifestyle by engaging in some fun-filled activities at your doorstep. It won't cost you a bomb and, moreover, it is healthy.

IPOHecho

From the Editor's Desk

By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

CORRUPTION

THE BANE OF OUR SOCIETY

If political parties bear the distinction of being the most corrupt institution in the country, which of the several does the name best describe?

Transparency International Malaysia's recent survey which showed Malaysians perceiving political parties as being the most corrupt among several institutions in the country is most disturbing, to say the least. In the past the tussle for the top spot had always been between the Police, Customs and Immigration departments. The fact that political parties have come to replace the erstwhile culprits provides an unpleasant vista on the negativities of our system of governance.

Our Prime Minister's boast that "Malaysia is the best democracy in the world" and his deputy's assertion that our "education system as one of the best in the world" ring hollow. The propensity to make unsubstantiated claims by our political masters, of late, has reached such an incredulous level that today we tend to take whatever they say or do with a not just a pinch but a handful of salt.

Of the 2000 Malaysians interviewed in the survey, 45 per cent said that political parties were the most corrupt followed by the Police (42 per cent), public officials and civil servants (31 per cent) and Members of Parliament (28 per cent). So what does this say of our much-vaunted political parties, especially the 'Yang Berhormats' on both ends of the political spectrum? Can they be trusted to perform the kind of functions that we the *rakyat* expect? If this crisis of identity is never resolved or is allowed to escalate, then we are all in deep trouble.

In the days following Merdeka on August 31, 1957, the *wakil rakyat* was someone whom we kids in the kampung revered. The reverence was understandable as the *wakil rakyat* was the learned one, the guy who represented our kampung in parliament, a faraway place in Kuala Lumpur which we read in the vernacular papers and overheard



over our battery-operated radios at home.

I can still recall the MP for Kerian, Rahman Rauf whom we fondly called Pak Rauf. He was a simple man; someone who went around visiting his constituents in his battered Morris Hillman, which had definitely seen better days. There was no air of arrogance and officialdom surrounding him nor did he exude a master-serf persona so evident among politicians today.

The fact that Pak Rauf remained our MP for over a decade till his untimely demise in 1966 was a testament to his skills as an astute and lovable politician, something grossly missing in today's *wakil rakyat*.

If political parties bear the distinction of being the most corrupt institution in the country, which of the several does the name best describe? I do not wish to be crude by pinpointing the culprits.

According to Dr Wong Chee Huat of Penang Institute (Perak's equivalent of Institut Darul Ridzuan), the perception suggested that there is an acute awareness of political parties' power in horse-trading, sometimes even "collusion between the

Barisan National and the Opposition".

"It's a pervasive sense of helplessness. The *rakyat* simply have no control over those in power although, theoretically, voters can punish parties through the ballot boxes," he lamented.

This explains why you need not be a rocket scientist or a Stanford scholar to be a wily politician in Malaysia. With the right connections and backing, the sky is your limit. That is why in Malaysia a well-connected politician is prepared to give his arms and legs to be in the power loop. I need not say more.

In The Name Of My Father's Estate

Episode 30 by Peter Lee

Despite Michelle Lee's (Lee Sr's daughter) plea to her Company Secretary to transfer her father's shares of 70% in three of the family companies to her mother Mrs Patricia Lee, her Company Secretary still refused to do so because Michelle could not produce her father's Letter Of Administration (L.A.) and at the same time the Company Secretary knew that Connie (Lee Sr's 2nd wife) is going to lay claim to the shares. In view of this, Michelle asked her Company Secretary to resign. Then she searched for other Company Secretaries who were willing to assume the role as the new Company Secretary to execute the transfer. However, all the Company Secretaries she asked told her that she has to produce the L.A. and distribution must be based on Intestacy Law. With no choice, she proceeded by trying to submit the pre-signed share transfer forms herself to the stamping office but it was blocked as these transfers have to be done by the Company Secretary.

She then met up with her mum, Mrs Patricia Lee and brother, John Lee to inform them about this. As usual, Mrs Patricia Lee was very annoyed and said "You people have to do whatever it takes to resolve this or else our family wealth in these three Companies will be fragmented." In response, John said "Mum, you can see that Michelle has exhausted all avenues to have these shares transferred. So, it looks like our option now is to follow the distribution of father's estate according to Intestacy Law." In response, Michelle said, "Are you sure that's what you want for our own family?" John shot back and said "So, what else can we do?" Michelle then said, "I think you are the only one now who can talk to her." John immediately responded in anger and said, "I think you are out of your mind to consider this option especially after you assaulted her like that the other day. For that incident, let me remind you that there might be a possible police case against you."

Mrs Patricia Lee then interrupted and said, "Ok John! I think I have heard enough. For the sake of our family, I beg you to try and talk to Connie just one more time about these shares." John then said, "I think this is ridiculous. Ok! If I am going to be the so-called mediator, then what can we offer her now? As you all know, she wants her entitlement to all of father's estate especially these shares. We have told her that the total value of the Companies shares is worth about RM20 million, subject to the final audited accounts. Bear in mind that most of our asset properties in our Balance Sheet have not been revalued. Mrs Patricia Lee then asked "What does that mean?" John replied, "What it means is that the RM20 million is quite a conservative figure but if the assets are revalued in the Balance Sheet then the value would be much more than this. In response, Mrs Patricia Lee said, "Ok! Let's pay her entitlement in cash based on the RM20 million valuation." John responded, "I will try but that is provided she does not discover the hidden value." Immediately, Mrs Patricia Lee said, "Just do whatever it takes to distract her from these hidden figures."

To be continued...

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 excelsccms@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

AMAUROSIS FUGAX

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about transient visual disturbance.

Amaurosis Fugax (AF) is derived from the greek language. "Amaurosis" means "to obscure or darken" and "fugax" means "fleeting". Hence, the term *Amaurosis Fugax* essentially describes a brief or transient loss of vision in one or both eyes that may last from a few seconds to minutes. It is sometimes referred to as "Transient Monocular Visual Loss" if it effects one eye or "Transient Binocular Visual Loss" if it effects both eyes. Fortunately, in most cases the visual loss occurs in one eye.

WHAT IS SO IMPORTANT ABOUT AMAUROSIS FUGAX?

Such episodic or transient visual disturbance or loss may be a warning of a serious underlying condition such as an impending stroke or a decrease in blood circulation to the brain or eyes. In most cases, by the time a patient with such episodic visual loss presents to the doctor, the symptoms may have resolved but this does not mean that it can be taken lightly as it will need a thorough investigation to look for sinister causes of such transient visual loss.

SOME CAUSES OF AMAUROSIS FUGAX

1. Carotid Artery narrowing: The carotid artery on either side of the neck supplies blood from the heart to the brain and eyes through small branches. These blood vessels can get stenosed (narrowed) due to plaques in the walls of the vessels. Should these plaques break off, it may prevent the blood from reaching the eyes. Several causes of vessel narrowing include hypercholesterolemia (increased cholesterol levels), diabetes mellitus, hypertension and smoking.
2. Clots from the heart valves or walls of the heart can get dislodged and block the vessels of the eye.
3. Certain blood diseases like sickle cell disease and anaemia.
4. Acute angle closure glaucoma is also one of the causes of such sudden loss of the vision.

INVESTIGATIONS THAT MAY BE DONE

Should the clinician consider your condition to point towards *Amaurosis Fugax*, then it would not be surprising if you are sent for a battery of investigations. The checks and investigations include a dilated retinal examination, ultrasound doppler examination of your carotid arteries, an MRI or CT Scan of the brain to look for a stroke, a thorough cardiovascular examination, a blood test to check for diabetes mellitus and hypercholesterolemia.

TREATMENT

Once the clinician determines the cause of *Amaurosis Fugax*, then the appropriate treatment will be administered. Blood thinning anti-platelet medication like aspirin may be given in order to reduce clotting. Systemic conditions like diabetes mellitus and hypertension will need to be rapidly stabilized. If there is a blockage of the carotid artery, then surgery of the artery (carotid endarterectomy) will need to be performed.

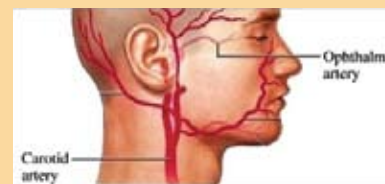
SOME TAKE HOME POINTS

Get a prompt eye examination should you be having symptoms of transient blurred vision. If you are diabetic or hypertensive, then take your medication without fail and make sure it is well controlled. Avoid smoking as this increases risk of serious problems many fold.

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



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



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A-G-1, No. 1 Persiaran
Greentown 2, Greentown
Business Centre, 30450
Ipoh Perak Darul Ridzuan.
Tel: (605) 249 5936
Fax: (605) 255 2181
Email: editorial@ipohecho.com.my

EDITORIAL

Fathol Zaman Bukhari
G. Sivapragasam

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Rosli Mansor Ahd Razali
Luqman Hakim Md Radzi

MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Deanna Lim

FREELANCERS

A. Jeyaraj
Emily Lowe
Serena Mui
Susan Ho

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Taman Sri Batu Caves,
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USEFUL CONTACTS

Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD):

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Malaysians need quality education, not quantity education

When the results of the Teluk Intan by-election were announced, the residents of Teluk Intan were euphoric. During the campaign trail, the Federal government in Putrajaya had told the electorate, that if they voted wisely, they would be blessed with an institute of higher education; Teluk Intan University (TIU). The Teluk Intan residents have something to look forward to in the coming months.

Naturally, TIU has divided opinion among the people. Some said that the building of the university would create jobs in the construction industry and increase business for trades like provision shops, restaurants, clinics and health facilities. In short, TIU would spur development.

The building of TIU would also compel the state to improve communication links to Teluk Intan. As one resident said, "What use is a university if there is no direct highway linking it to the major towns for the students, the teaching staff, and the parents who wish to visit their children?"

Others said that the increase of people would create congestion in the town, and bring about social ills. The influx of people would also raise land and house prices, though some argue that as students require accommodation, rooms or homes could be rented out and provide a side income for some people.

One senior citizen said, "We will wait and see. If the prices of food go up or the cost of local seafood increases, then what good is that for me? My pension does not stretch that far, especially when prices of everyday items have spiralled."

Whilst the residents argued about the pros and cons of TIU, one online newspaper compiled a survey on the existing educational facilities. In the vicinity of Teluk Intan, there are two university branch campuses – Universiti Teknologi Mara Teluk Intan Campus of the Faculty of Medicine and the RM15 million Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Teluk Intan Campus Community Health Centre, nestling on a five-hectare site.

The township also boasts of the Teluk Intan Community College, which the winner of the by-election alleges he helped to establish.

About 50km to the north-east of Teluk Intan, is Kampar, which houses the Perak Campus of the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). About 105km away, and to the south-east of Teluk Intan, is Tanjung Malim, where the University Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) is based. UPSI is one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the country, and was established in 1922 as a teachers' training college.

With 20 public universities, 414 private colleges, 37 private universities, 20 university-colleges and seven foreign branch campuses in Malaysia, students and parents are spoilt for choice.

A teacher, whose child is in secondary school, said, "We have so many universities which are third class or do not have any global ranking. Gone are the days, when our universities, in the 60s and 70s were world class and recognised for their academic brilliance and quality of students. Why build another university when the degrees of some of these universities are not worth the paper they are printed on?"

A mother, whose child is studying at a university in another state, said, "I worry about my daughter's safety. I don't want to sound xenophobic, but I am told that some foreigners, who enrol at local universities, are dealing in illegal activities. The educational bit is just a front to dupe the authorities."

One parent said, "What we want in Malaysia is not more universities but good teachers and good teaching facilities. The money ploughed into building another university should instead, be invested in good teachers. We need better institutions of higher learning, not more places with dodgy facilities and low quality teaching staff. When will someone recognise the need for quality education, not quantity of educational places?"

A Human Resources manager, in a foreign manufacturing firm based in Ipoh said, "I receive hundreds of applications from local graduates but most are binned. As we deal with many foreign buyers, we need graduates with proficiency in written and spoken English. The few who come for interview do not impress me. I would pay good money to employ graduates who are able to communicate well, but they are like gold dust. It is a big issue for my firm and other multinationals."

One parent argues that more vocational schools should



THINKING ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar

be built. She said, "I went to university and after graduating, became a teacher. I had always wanted to be a teacher,

just like my mother; but many of my friends, from my university days, are struggling to find jobs. Those who have jobs are employed in menial roles. Many wish they had enrolled at a vocational college instead."

The father of a child, at a foreign university, said, "Making it easy to enrol in a university diminishes the value of a good education for all. A university degree will not make these people more employable or more intelligent. I started off in vocational school and learnt a useful skill in electrical work. I found work easily, after I finished vocational school."

Another person who went to vocational school agreed, "A skill equips you for life. It is good for the child and for the country. Not every child is academic, but many are good with their hands and can put their interests into practical work. There is carpentry, woodwork, electrical work, hairdressing, social work or car mechanics and roofing. A good plumber can probably earn more money than a university graduate."

His business partner agreed, "A vocational college is not to be scoffed at. What we need are more vocational schools, to start young adults on the career ladder. A good skill, a good apprenticeship and a professional trade qualification is much better for work ethics and fulfilling aspirations."

Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

Bloating, Belching and Flatulence

Bloating, burping and passing gas are natural and are usually caused by swallowed air or the breakdown of food through digestion. You may experience symptoms only occasionally but when symptoms interfere with your daily activities, there may be something wrong.

Bloating – gas buildup in your stomach and intestines

When gas doesn't pass through belching or flatulence, it can build up in the stomach and intestines and lead to bloating. With bloating, you may also have abdominal pain that can vary from mild and dull to sharp and intense. Passing gas or having a bowel movement may relieve the pain.

Bloating may be related to: eating fatty foods, which can delay stomach emptying and make you feel uncomfortably full; drinking carbonated beverages or eating gassy foods; eating too quickly, drinking through a straw, chewing gum or sucking on candies, resulting in swallowing air; stress or anxiety; smoking; a gastrointestinal infection, blockage or disease; irritable bowel syndrome; or lactose intolerance in which the intestines aren't able to digest and absorb certain components of food.

To reduce bloating, it may help to avoid or reduce the amount of gas-producing foods you eat. Many carbohydrates cause gas, and the following items are common culprits: beans, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carbonated drinks, cauliflower; chewing gum; apples, peaches and pears; hard candy; lettuce; milk and milk products; onions; sugar alcohols found in sugar-free foods (sorbitol, mannitol and xylitol); and whole-grain foods.

Belching – getting rid of excess air

Belching or burping is your body's way of expelling excess air from your stomach. It's a normal reflex caused by swallowing air. You may swallow excess air if you eat or drink too fast, talk while you eat, chew gum or suck on hard candies, drink carbonated beverages, or smoke.

Gastroesophageal reflux disease can have the same effect. If stomach acid backs up into your esophagus, you may swallow repeatedly to clear the material. This can lead to swallowing more air and further belching.

Some people swallow air as a nervous habit – even when they're not eating or drinking. In other cases, chronic belching may be related to inflammation of the stomach lining (gastritis) or to an infection with *Helicobacter pylori*.

You can reduce belching if you: eat and drink slowly; avoid carbonated drinks and beer; skip the gum and hard candy; don't smoke; check your dentures – poorly fitting dentures can cause you to swallow excess air when you eat and drink; and treat heartburn.

Flatulence – gas buildup in the colon

Intestinal gas is typically caused by the fermentation of undigested food, such as plant fibre, in the colon. Gas can also form when your digestive system doesn't completely break down certain components in foods.

Other sources of intestinal gas may include: food residue in your colon; changes in intestinal bacteria due to antibiotics or other medications; poor absorption of carbohydrates, which can upset the balance of helpful bacteria in your digestive system; swallowed air that moves to your colon; or constipation, since the longer food waste remains in your colon, the more time it has to ferment.

Sometimes, gas indicates a digestive disorder, such as irritable bowel syndrome or lactose intolerance.

To prevent excessive gas, it may help to: avoid the foods that affect you most; eat fewer fatty foods; temporarily cut back on high-fibre foods; eat slowly; and exercise.

When to see your doctor

Consult your doctor if your symptoms don't improve with changes in eating habits or you notice: diarrhoea; persistent or severe abdominal pain; bloody stools; unintended weight loss; or changes in the colour or frequency of stools. These symptoms could signal an underlying digestive condition.



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 Ginla Chew

When the taste of soya sauce becomes mundane, I find my taste buds hankering for Thai food where the medley of fish sauce, fresh lime, lemongrass and fresh cut chillies inevitably injects my jaded palate with renewed vigor and I am ready for a fresh bout of “foodie-ism”.

With my ever ready Foodie guide Ginla Chew by my side and a new recruit in the person of Malathi Rama who happens to live in Seri Botani and who knows the best eats in that area, we descended on Sawasdee Thai restaurant, armed with our insatiable appetites and a yearning for the tang of Thai.

I went on two occasions in order to sample a fuller range of dishes. Opened and helmed by Thai Chef Ah Eng (a Chinese nickname probably given to her by her husband) the restaurant is a fan-cooled corner shop on Jalan Lapangan Siber 10, just off the main road of Seri Botani. Both times I went into the kitchen to plead with Ah Eng to lay off on the MSG which is so ubiquitous in food these days. As I am prone to bloating and severe oedema of my legs and ankles after ingestion of MSG, I stressed to her how toxic this was to my system (and to most people's system as it is a neurotoxin and cumulative-a fact that most people choose to ignore!)

As it was, the dishes that were served had no need for MSG (which makes me wonder why so many restaurants use it almost unconsciously and to think that even Indian restaurants with all their delectable mix of spices will use it!) The fresh squeezed lime, fresh cut chillies, shallots, lemongrass, cilantro and garlic provide just the right mouth-drooling appeal to the salads or “Yum” dishes which it is called in Thai. Noteworthy and ‘must haves’ include the **Yum Woon Sen** or glass noodle salad topped with generous helpings of blanched fresh squid and coriander sprigs – **RM10**;

the **Yum Green Mango** topped with crispy fried *ikan bilis* or dried anchovies – **RM7**; and the yummy (pun intended) **Nam Tok** which is a sliced pork salad tossed in an inimitable fish sauce laced with dry fried rice granules, red chilli flakes, shallots, lime juice and a dash of sugar – one of my all time favourite dishes whenever I go to Thailand – **RM12**.

Then we come to the hot dishes. Naturally no Thai meal is complete without the irresistible **Tom Yam Koong** or spicy soup with prawns. This requires a bit more skill to produce without the benefit of MSG but this she did admirably, the soup tart, searing and tempered with some sugar (which is always inevitable whenever you request for no-MSG). The prawns were medium sized and fresh, the oyster mushrooms lending texture and tomatoes imparting its characteristic flavours to the soup. Of course no Tom Yum soup is complete without the added flavours of kaffir lime leaves, galangal and lemongrass. Served in steamboat tureens with real charcoal keeping the soup warm completes the Thai authenticity – **RM22**.

Fresh fish of the day can be cooked any style. I chose **steamed red snapper** with garlic and lime and the usual garniture on the first visit – **RM24** and a **Siakap** which was fried and served with a **Gaeng Som** sauce which is the Thai equivalent of our Asam except that the vegetables used are cauliflower and long beans,

SeeFoon gets Thai'd up



the **Yum Green Mango** topped with crispy fried *ikan bilis* or dried anchovies – **RM7**; and the yummy (pun intended) **Nam Tok** which is a sliced pork salad tossed in an inimitable fish sauce laced with dry fried rice granules, red chilli flakes, shallots, lime juice and a dash of sugar – one of my all time favourite dishes whenever I go to Thailand – **RM12**.

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on the second – **RM40**. Both fish were fresh and delectable.

Again, no Thai meal is complete without the pandan leaf wrapped chicken and the green curry. Here at Sawasdee, they do both to perfection. The **Pandan Chicken** was well marinated and succulent to the last bite – **RM10**, while the **Green Curry** was smooth, with a thick gravy, redolent with the fragrance of fresh coconut milk with a hint of chillies – **RM12**.

Finally, we finished off with **Pineapple Fried Rice** which came fluffy, each grain of rice separate and not a bit oily, the pineapple chunks lending a touch of crunch and sweetness to the whole dish – **RM4.50**.

All in all, this is a Thai restaurant that does not disappoint. Every dish is cooked fresh and every dish is tasty with its own unique flavours. This is one place I would return to again and again.

Restoran Sawasdee

37 Jalan Lapangan Siber 10, 31350 Bandar Siber, Perak
Off Persiaran Lapangan Siber (main road)
N 04° 32.578' E 101° 06.687'
Business hours: 12.30pm-10pm. Closed two days a month.
Tel: 016 562 6448



HAWKER FOOD Greentown Corner

2 Persiaran Greentown 10,
Greentown Business Centre, Ipoh.
Operates from 7.30am to 4pm.

There are not many coffee shops where almost every food stall is good – at most you'll only find three or four. Greentown Corner is one such place. One is spoilt for choice as there are close to 10 different food stalls where the food is tasty and delicious.

- Flavourful **Chicken Rice** at RM3.80 is value for money.
- **Ipoh Soup Kuey Teow** – RM4.50, and **Curry Mee** – RM5 are from Wah Nam Ipoh Kuey Teow/Curry Mee (daytime only).
- **Special Claypot Noodle** has a nice broth – RM4 and RM4.50 with egg. Also: pork, seafood, drunken chicken and drunken prawns. Prices range from RM4-RM5.50.
- **Wonton Noodle** comes with tasty wontons – RM4.20 with *char siew*.
- **Pan Mee** comes with crispy deep-fried *fu pei* and accompanying *sambal belacan* – RM4.30 and RM5 for Chilli Pan Mee. There are several other types available.



- **Yeong Liu** (stuffed bean curd and vegetables) of Tai Kar Rock fame are priced at 70 sen each and accompanies either soup or curry noodles – very popular.
- **Chee Cheong Fun** – *har mai* (dried prawns) and *sar kot* (yam bean) – RM3.20.
- There is also **Prawn Mee** – RM4.20 and **Mee Goreng**.

VWSL

Nosh News



Something's Brewing

Coffee, tea, pastries, snacks and light meals. This sounds like items you can find in a typical cafe. However, there is a different cafe in town. It doesn't only serve the usual drinks and food but also 38 kinds of unusual loose-leaf teas. They serve Coconut Oolong tea, Chocolate Chai tea, Masala Chai tea, Vanilla Bean Black tea, Tangerine Ginger and a whole host of other exotic teas. For tea lovers, you need not fear being kept awake all night after consuming their tea for they serve caffeine-free tea too.

With cafes offering free Wi-Fi usage trending everywhere, *Something's Brewing* is the first in Ipoh to provide super fast services.

Though some restaurants and cafes have been charging for Wi-Fi usage or providing free limited Wi-Fi to their customers, *Something's Brewing* believes the internet is for the people. *Something's Brewing* cafe

provides fast, efficient and consistent internet speed to their customers.

Finding a perfect homely spot to camp out all day with tea refills, a variety of food and drinks while you work on your laptop is not easy. *Something's Brewing* offers a place for those who need to escape from their cramped homes or those who have no office to get their work done. They welcome laptop users by providing a minimum of two power points for each table.

The owner, Vincent Ng, is an IT specialist from Australia and he makes sure the internet is always up and running. He was motivated to open a cafe which provides consistent internet speed after a series of bad experiences he had back here in Malaysia when his complaints were always being shrugged off by the various managers he encountered. His target customers are freelance videographers, photographers, designers, journalists and anyone who needs high speed internet facilities in a comfortable ambience with great refreshments thrown in.

Susan Ho



Community

Towards a Cleaner Environment

In conjunction with Visit Malaysia 2014, Ipoh City Council has started its own campaign for a cleaner Ipoh. At the city council's full-board meeting on Monday, June 2, issues relating to tourism and illegal dumping were raised and discussed.

Rubbish dumping near touristic spots such as Ipoh's heritage trail and the Medan Kidd bus station could have a negative impact on tourism. Empty lands around housing estates are also used as dumping sites for unwanted furniture and household rubbish.

Mayor Dato' Harun Rawi said that the council would take appropriate measures to clear these illegal dumps. He urged the public to be on the look out for litterbugs and report them to the council for punitive actions. However, he was silent on past reports made in the media, especially in Ipoh Echo and complaints to the council's website.

"We're taking one step at a time," he told reporters. "The public should work together with the council to ensure a rubbish-free environment."

Besides keeping the city clean, the council plans to increase its greenery by embarking on a long-term plan to plant trees and flowering plants.

Yvette



A Child's Wish Granted

To an ordinary child, a trip to the zoo means nothing but to Muhammad Iffat Badrul Hisam, 5, it means the world. Diagnosed with leukemia, it has been Iffat's dream to see live animals up close but never had the opportunity to do so for a number of reasons, his parents' disposition being one.

Iffat's wish was finally granted when a day trip to the petting zoo at the Lost World of Tambun in Ipoh was arranged recently through the generosity of the Children's Wish Society of Malaysia and the Lost World of Tambun.

Iffat with father Badrul Hisam Hasim, 35, mother Rosnani Abdul Rahman, 35, and younger sister, Nawal Qistina Hisam, 3, journeyed from Jeniang, Kedah to the theme park at Tambun, Ipoh. It took them almost five hours to reach their destination but it was worth the effort.

According to Iffat's mother, her son was found to suffer from leukemia after a routine check-up at the Jeniang government clinic last December. "Iffat's gums were bleeding and there were bruises on his body and hands. After further examinations at the Gurun Hospital, we were shocked to learn of his cancerous condition."

"Incidentally, none of our family members have a history of cancer," said Rosnani to reporters covering the visit. "It's most unfortunate that this misfortune has befallen our child."

Although their son is at the fourth stage of the disease, Rosnani and her husband have not given up hope on him. They are determined to provide Iffat with the best medications that they can afford. This is despite doctors' decision to stop medication a month ago because Iffat's cancer is already at its final stage and there is nothing more they could do.

"They told us that our son can only hold on for another six months. We've resorted to giving him homeopathic medicines to help him cope with his sickness. All that's left now is to pray to the good Lord for salvation," said a teary Rosnani. "Meanwhile, we'll do our best to fulfil his wishes and that's why we're here today."

Rosnani and Badrul Hisam were appreciative of the efforts taken by the non-governmental organisation and the management of the theme park for realising their son's wish. "We thank those concerned for making this trip possible."

The petting zoo at the Lost World of Tambun has a variety of animal species both foreign and local. Ipoh's only theme park, covering some 100,000 sq ft and built at a cost of RM60 million, was opened to the public in 2004.

RM



Charity Begins at Home



Students of Tenby Schools Ipoh gathered to support a family day food fair in aid of the Kampong Simee Old Folks Home recently. The food fair was officiated by Dato' Chang Ko Youn, adviser to the Menteri Besar, who is also the patron of the home.

Present at the event were the Perak Director of Welfare Services, Dato' Chong Phaik Kee and Bishop Sebastian Francis from Penang. Over 40 volunteers helped to sell tickets and man the stalls. Girls were tasked to manage ticket sales and assist at the stalls while the boys served as waiters.

The Tenby volunteers were drawn from sixth formers (Cohort 9), the Debating Society and the Interact Club.

"The poor and the marginalised exist in every society, so charity for us in Ipoh begins at home," said Tenby Schools Ipoh's Sixth Form Council President, Sanika Renganadan. Ding Zu Ron commented that nothing meant more to him than volunteering to help the needy. Ding was also the emcee for the day along with his schoolmate, Nicole Fong.

Yvette

Dangers on Ipoh Roads

Ipoh is a city of elegance where the old blends with the modern. However, poor road conditions, in and around the city, is a huge turn-off for motorists. Potholes and incomplete road signs make driving problematic.

The conditions of some roads and sidewalks are worrying, to say the least. They are the primary cause of accidents. Besides being a hazard, they endanger walkers too.

"Responsible agencies should maintain these public facilities to prevent accidents from occurring," said M. Pandian, a concerned Ipohite to Ipoh Echo.

"Law-abiding citizens feel threatened when irresponsible motorists choose to drive on the wrong side of the road," exclaimed Pandian.

Ipoh Echo urges motorists to keep a sharp eye on the roads when driving and report irregularities to the respective government agencies.

Yvette



Buy SeeFoon's Food Guide to Ipoh

1. Popular Bookstores
2. MPH Bookstores
3. SS Mubarak & Sons, Jln Sultan Yussuf (Old Town). Tel: 05-2540416/2431362
4. Manaff Store, Jln SA Lingam, Ipoh Garden South. Tel: 05-5459648
5. Lourd Enterprise, Canning Garden. Tel: 05-5459299
6. Indulgence, Jln Raja DiHilir. Tel: 05-2557051/2426297
7. Royal Ipoh Club, Jln Bkt. Gantang. Tel: 05-2542212/2545646
8. Burps & Giggles, Jln Sultan Yussuf (Old Town). Tel: 05-2426188
9. Citrus Wine & Dine, Ipoh Garden East. Tel: 05-5451010
10. Barbeza, Bandar Baru Medan Ipoh. Tel: 012-5205877
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. Khimzian Enterprise, 75 Jln Yang Kalsom. Tel: 05-2427381
17. Sunway College Ipoh, Psrn SCI 2/2, Sunway City Ipoh. Tel: 05-5454398
18. Break the Code, Greentown Business Centre. Tel: 05-2420484
19. Symphony Suites, Jln Lapangan Symphony. Tel: 05-3122288
20. Olympia College, 18 Jln CM Yussuf. Tel: 05-2433868
21. Ibis Styles Ipoh, 18 Jln Chung On Siew. Tel: 05-2406888
22. Ipoh Echo's office

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Education

Medical Graduates Receive Parchments

University Kuala Lumpur Royal Medical College of Perak (UniKL RMCP) celebrated the coming of age of its students when 96 passed their final examination in March.

At the presentation of temporary parchments and the oath-taking ceremony, Chairman of UniKL RMCP, Dato' Dr Adham Baba said that he was proud of the students' achievements. The temporary certificates allow them to be employed as interns. "Today marks another successful chapter in your life which you should be proud of," he said. The Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programme, he said, was meant for those who have a caring spirit and are committed to the well-being of society.

Dean's Award winner, Dr Siti Syuhada binte Abdul Rahman, in her speech, expressed her gratitude to the university lecturers and staff for their assistance throughout their five-year sojourn at the college. The event ended with the presentation of awards to nine outstanding graduates in recognition of their academic excellence.

There are 40 medical colleges in Malaysia producing over 5000 doctors annually. Most are absorbed as medical officers in government hospitals and clinics throughout the country.

Ed



Advertorial

Peugeot 408 – Value for Money

Peugeot 408 provides a generous blend of elegance and performance, so says the brochure. I visited the only Peugeot showroom in Perak at Jalan Maxwell, Ipoh recently to test drive the car and ascertain the claim.

Peugeot 408 comes in four variants, namely the 2.0L which is priced at RM109,888; 1.6 TS – RM118,240.00; 1.6 turbo TE – RM128,888; and 1.6 Griffé – RM128,888.00 (including RM12,000 worth of extras: GPS, reverse camera, 18" rim, etc.).

From the outside, Peugeot's signature pug-like front with feline-looking headlights and a sloping bonnet, gives it a sleek and modern look. The 17-inch alloy rims, 8-spoke Melbourne for 1.6L Turbo and 5-spoke Rinjani for 2.0L, complements the car's elegance. As an addendum, the Turbo has a dynamic and sleek Euro body kit with an aerodynamic boot lid spoiler.

Both models are fitted with a 4-cylinder DOHC 16 Valve with Variable Valve Timing (VVT) and have an auto adaptive gearbox with Tiptronic and Sport mode. Both are fitted with ventilated front disc brakes and solid disc rear brakes. Their suspension system is augmented by MacPherson-type struts and anti-roll bars. The similarities, however, end here as the Turbo has a Twin Scroll Turbo High Pressure with Direct Petrol Injection engine capable of producing 163hp with a maximum torque of 240Nm. The 2.0L tips the scale at 145hp with a 200Nm torque.

The interior of the car is spacious, as there is plenty of room to accommodate a driver and four passengers comfortably. The dashboard features a classic-looking analogue meter and two separate LCD instrument panels.

I was given a quick run-through of the various controls in the car. There is one each for cruise control, sound system and air-conditioning. The car has a two-zone-air-conditioning system covering those in front and rear. The sound system is by World in Peugeot Sound and comes with 6 speakers. The Turbo has additional enhancements such as leather seats, auto dimming rear view mirror, centre armrest with 2 cup holders, leather-wrapped steering wheel with aluminum inserts and aluminum pedals.

Both models have airbags for the driver and the front passenger. They are fitted with Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake Distribution (EBD), Emergency Brake Assist (EBA), Anti-Whiplash front seats headrest and mechanical child safety locks on rear doors. Turbo models have enhanced safety features including Electronic Stability Program (ESP), Anti-Skid Regulation (ASR) and additional front and rear curtain airbags and side airbags for the driver and front passenger.

Having driven Japanese and Malaysian-made cars most of my life, this French-made car has a firmer grip on the road due to its weight factor. The amount of torque generated by such a heavy car and its ability to accelerate effortlessly, provide a comfortable ride for anyone behind the wheel. The steering responds delightfully giving a certain measure of satisfaction to the driver. What surprises me most is the relatively low fuel consumption. At 8.2litres/100km for the Turbo and 8.6litres/100km for the 2.0L, the car is definitely a saver.

For an extra RM12,000, Peugeot offers the Griffé upgrade, which enhances the car's look both inside and outside. It comes in six colours. The Griffé upgrade offers an additional colour option.

Peugeot 408 is tailored for those seeking a comfortable ride and speed to match. With its European-designed safety features, the car is a notch above its Asiatic counterparts. And having driven one, I feel it is a real value for money.

Angain



Advertorial

From One Parent To Another: Skills, the Toolbox of Life



While interviewing some candidates for employment, I asked one of the most commonly asked questions, "So what do you understand about teamwork and please share how you have demonstrated it in your life?" Most of the candidates answer with phrases like "to work in a team", "to respect other people's opinion", "to delegate tasks". However, often the answers start and end with "umm".

We can broadly categorise educational experiences to address three general areas. Knowledge (the information acquired), Skills and Values. Education has evolved to be much better at refining the techniques of acquiring, processing and presenting knowledge. However, our ability to develop skills in our students remains very much in question. When asked about skill delivery in schools, educators often answer "of course, we teach skills in our programmes". Scratch beneath the surface and often we will find grave deficiencies.

When asked, many educators often reply that skills are gained along the way, a by-product of the educational experience, placing faith in the accidental accumulation of an attribute that today we know to be critical to our children's future. Should we place their future in the hands of chance? Shouldn't skill development in educational systems be intentional, systematic and structured?



In *Fairview International Schools, a comprehensive set of skills were compiled, analysed and then distilled into a unique programme. Fairview researched academic scientific literature and compiled a set of models that addresses over 150 skill areas ranging from reflection to time-management. For example, when a student learns about leadership in primary school they would learn the basics of leadership,

evolving to a model called "situational leadership" in secondary school. The student may learn more about other more advanced leadership theories in the future but Fairview aims to ensure that every student will learn the fundamentals in every skill to act as a solid foundation towards future skills development.

The same skill models are then embedded into every subject so that while these skills are taught explicitly in a special class they are also practised contextually. For example, after a student learns "Belbin's" teamwork model in a homeroom class, the student may be tasked to complete a Biology group assignment to present their findings and research about lung cancer as a team. Each student is assessed on their ability to apply teamwork skills to complete the assignment as well as gain essential experience of working with others. By consistently applying this model of skill development in a structured, systematic and intentional manner over 13 years of education, Fairview students emerge with an unstoppable toolbox of skills, ready to face any future.

This article is the third of a 6-part series on education. More exciting articles to come!

Dr Vincent Chian is currently the IB Diploma Director of Fairview International School. A former medical doctor working in psychiatry he now spends his time championing emotional and effective development in education.

* Fairview International School currently has 4 IB World Schools across Malaysia; KL, Subang, JB and Penang. Fairview Ipoh will be an international school, with enrollment open for August 2014. For more information, call **05 313 6888** or email: enquiries_ipoh@fairview.edu.my.

Upcoming Event

The Fun of the Fair

The adventure continues into the local stamp scene, hosted by the Ipoh Stamp group, it's all happening at the **Perak Stamp Fair & Exhibition** in the heart of Ipoh Town at the Urban Transformation Centre (UTC) Perak from (Friday-Sunday) **June 20 to 22**, 9am to 10pm, three days of stamps and fun! Nine hundred pages of stamp exhibits will be on display in frames on loan from the Philatelic Society of Malaysia, rare Perak postal history, as well as traditional and thematic exhibits for viewing including some at junior level. A very special initiative is the 'One Page Exhibition' competition, where a single A4 page is created to tell a complete story using stamps. This competition was advertised online and there will be entries from China, Australia, Singapore, UK and Malaysia. Judging is by popular vote, meaning, *You*, the audience are requested to choose your favourite page. Voting extends over the three days, and votes will be counted and winners announced on Sunday afternoon.

Children and early birds arriving Saturday and Sunday receive free stamps. Friday morning will have colouring competitions for primary school kids, *Word Search* and *Spot the Difference* puzzles. Others are: *Guess How Many* stamps in the Jar; easy to win lucky draws; PowerPoint presentations on Perak Postal history (4.30pm Saturday) by Anthony Morris, a well-known local historian; Malaysian birds on Malaysian stamps (2.30pm Sat & Sun) by local bird photographer Connie Khoo; and at 12.30pm Saturday & Sunday, local philatelist Vera will tell you the intricacies of thematic stamp collecting. Stamp dealers from Singapore, Kedah, Penang, Ipoh, Teluk Intan will all be there and there will also be Vintage Perak Postcards with displays of Ipoh and Environs and Tin Mining supplied by *IpohWorld*.

BARRED DOUBLE RING 'F.M.S.' CANCELS

This cancel was in wide use (50 offices recorded). The earliest was at Kuala Kangsar (1921) but the majority (40) made their appearance during the period 1927-33. They succeeded the 'Barred Double Ring' cancels and continued in use until 1941.



MERU DESA PARK – A Wholesome Family Retreat

If you long for a place of peace and tranquility, minus the hassle of city living where the air is crisp and fresh, go no further. Meru Desa Park, ensconced in a tasteful part of Meru Raya in Jelapang, is the place for you and your family.

This wholesome family retreat, scheduled for completion in 2015, will provide the kind of healthy living you aspire for. It is the most ideal location to plant your roots, especially those who plan on settling in Ipoh.

Chairman of Meru Desa Park, Dato' Yong Chai Seng, intimated that choosing the park as a place of residence is most appropriate, as the environment is clean and the ambience pleasant. Moreover, it is ideally located with facilities within easy reach of residents.

The park's proximity to the Amanjaya bus terminal, Mydin Hypermarket, Tenby International School, government buildings and offices is its major selling point. An animation theme park, projected for completion also in 2015, is another attraction.

The housing project, a flagship of Kinta Real Estate Sdn Bhd, is gated and guarded and comes with clubhouse facilities as well, offers the following types of houses for sale:

- Seventy one (71) units of Double Storey Terrace House (22' x 78') - price starts from RM448,800.
- Twenty seven (27) units of Double Storey Terrace House (24' x 80') - price starts from RM511,800.
- Forty six (46) units of Three Storey Terrace Houses (24' x 78') - price starts from RM658,800.
- Ten (10) exclusive units of Double Storey Semi Detached Houses (min size: 40' x 90') - price starts from RM778,800.

Property value in Meru Raya has appreciated by almost 40 per cent since the area was actively developed in 2010. It will be on the rise in the years ahead. So, there is every reason to acquire a property here.

There can never be a more opportune moment to own a property in Meru Raya and Meru Desa Park provides that opportunity.

Rosli Mansor



Thumbs Up

A. Jeyaraj

Improved information system at Medan Kidd Bus Station



Recently, I was at the Medan Kidd Bus Station and found that their information system for passengers has improved greatly. The departures of the buses are announced through a loudhailer. Previously, the bus conductor stands at the entrance of the bus and calls the passengers who have to be nearby to hear his call.

There are route maps of buses going to each destination. There are also notices showing the major places through which the bus goes. There are big banners in front of the counters. While I was walking along, staff from the bus companies asked where I wanted to go. This is a good gesture.



However, the place looks rundown. Only about half of the building is being used and the other half is not maintained. There are a number of advertisements for vacancies for bus drivers. Since there is a demand for bus drivers, a training centre must be opened to train local bus drivers and also drivers for other heavy vehicles. By providing proper training the number of bus accidents could be reduced.

Thumbs Down

A. Jeyaraj

Tripping Hazard in City Centre



Along the middle of the pedestrian walkway at Jalan Sultan Idris Shah (Brewster Road) in front of the Yayasan Perak office, there are four bolts about three inches high sticking out of the ground. They are foundation bolts for a pole which has not been installed. This is a tripping hazard in a busy road in the centre of the city.

These bolts must be removed before someone trips and gets injured. Since this is in front of the Yayasan office, I wonder why none of the staff have taken action. Or is it a case of the habitual blind eye that is sported by Ipohites?



News

Malaysia a Shared Nation?

Perak Academy's 15th Lecture Series on Friday, May 9 held at Syuen Hotel, Ipoh, saw renowned social activist, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, speaking on a controversial but relevant subject, "Malaysia – A Shared Nation?" She spoke to an enthusiastic crowd numbering over 300 who were all ears listening to her take on the issue.

Marina started by outlining two major quantifiers that served as challenges to Malaysia being a shared nation.

The first was education. She reminded the crowd that as Malaysians we have a say in our country's destiny. She alluded to the declining education standard and the risks it presents to the future of the nation – a high unemployment rate being a major consideration. Students who undergo the current education system would be at a disadvantage, as they would not be able to compete in the international arena with their counterparts from abroad.

The high rate of unemployable graduates, especially Malays from UiTM, is a case in point. "Last year alone over 50,000 MARA graduates couldn't find employment. This is worrying, as the consequences can be disastrous."

On a similar note, Marina stated that racial polarisation in schools is on the rise in recent years. This would not have happened had a single school system been in place. Although abolishing vernacular schools is the best bet in eradicating racism from schools, she insisted that it is the education syllabus that needs revamping.

"It's pointless to put children of different races under one roof if they don't mix and mingle. The syllabus should be tailored in such a way that it promotes integration and the breaking down of racial barriers."



Responding to a question about a race-related discrepancy at SMK Anderson, Ipoh where motorcycle parking lots for students are being allotted according to race, she answered, "I've heard of horror stories regarding racial polarisation in schools but none like this. This is apartheid" she replied to a rousing applause from the audience.

Her next point was on the politics of race and religion.

She warned that spiralling racist and religiously insensitive remarks would one day cripple the country. The best way to address these gripping anomalies is for civil society and the *rakyat* to start taking charge. She gave examples of movements like *Buku Jalanan* and *My Constitution* which promote a better understanding of national issues and provide a platform for discussions by laymen.

On religious bigotry, Marina was of the view that issues were often hyped up for the benefit of certain quarters to gain political mileage. "A real Muslim is always moderate," she enjoined.

Marina ended the night by autographing copies of her book, 'Telling it Straight'.

Angain

Internet Connectivity Worrying

Poor internet connectivity in Perak is causing much concern among users, especially those in the business sector. This shortcoming was raised to the Menteri Besar himself who has instructed KPerak to investigate the matter and find the cause. "The problem is becoming endemic. KPerak will conduct a forensic audit," he told reporters after chairing the weekly executive committee meeting recently.



Theft of telecommunication cables could be the reason behind the problem. There has been an increase in the number of incidents of late, according to the Police.

Poor internet connectivity can have a negative impact on the state's economy. Menteri Besar Dato' Seri DiRaja Zambray Abd Kadir fears that this could be a deliberate act of sabotage by persons unknown and that is worrying.

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission would undertake measures to improve internet connectivity by increasing the number of high-speed internet stations in the state from the present 23 to 46. Plans to build 12 more 1Malaysia internet centres in the state are also in the pipeline.

Dato' Shahrul Zaman Yahaya, the Executive Councillor for Sports, Communications and Multimedia, said that results of investigations by KPerak would be tabled at the coming executive committee meeting.

RN

Looking for Loving Homes



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My Say

By Jerry Francis



The Unsung Hero of Taman Tinggi

Seventy-four-year-old retired lorry driver, Yeoh Say Bah, has become a celebrity in Taman Tinggi and surrounding housing estates in Ipoh. Every morning from Monday to Friday, if the weather permits, he is seen keeping the children's playground and its jogging track near his house clean and tidy.

It began about six months ago when he decided to pick up a *cangkul* and started to trim the grass around the track, as well as collecting litter and ensuring the drains were not clogged. Dressed neatly in short pants and shirt, he begins the routine at 5am and finishes at about 8.30am. He starts by collecting litter and pieces of broken bottles and checking the drains.

In the beginning, everyone thought Say Bah was just an eccentric. While most of the senior citizens are taking a morning walk around the track daily, he is keeping himself busy by cleaning it.

Not only does he clean round the 400-metre circular jogging track once but goes a second time. The residents, particularly the estimated 50 regular morning walkers and joggers, frequently stop to have a friendly chat with this old talkative man with a mission. They are very appreciative of his work. Some have even raised a small contribution to get him a new *cangkul*.

Driven by curiosity, I set out to find what had driven Say Bah into carrying out the task, which the Ipoh City Council should be doing? I interrupted him recently while he was busy trimming the jogging track and posed the question.



"No-one prompted me to do this. I was just dismayed over the city council's failure to properly maintain the playground and jogging track and decided to do my part," he explained. "I can't bear to see all the litter, clogged drains and overgrown grass around. By doing something, I am also getting some morning exercise," he added in a positive spirit.

"I'm glad the residents in this area are appreciative of what I am doing. I hope I can inspire them to keep the area clean and tidy," he said. He hopes to set a good example through his effort.

Say Bah has personally appealed to the youths who frequently '*lepak*' in the playground, not to litter and smash bottles on the concrete jogging track as the pieces of glasses could hurt those using the track, particularly children. He told them that he would not mind collecting the litter daily if they could leave them in one place.

He was amused when some city council's health inspectors came to check on aedes mosquitoes in his house. "I'm disappointed with the city council," said Say Bah, who is very vocal in his criticism of the city council.

"Why inspect the houses which have no mosquito breeding grounds? They should first inspect the drains around the housing estate and clear the overgrown bushes and the rubbish dumps regularly," he stressed.

He claimed that the city council was not efficient. "If only I can write I would send complaint after complaint to the city council and the state government every day," he said.

Say Bah is one of the many civic-conscious residents in the city. There are other similar "unsung heroes" like him – doing the work for the city council, to prove that the residents do care about keeping the city clean.

Environment

Kanthan Hill in Perspective

Kinta Valley's limestone hills are a major attraction and also an economic contributor for the state of Perak. The hills and caves also support a number of animal, insect and plant species which are considered endangered. The Kanthan Hill in Chemor is a fine example.

Preserving the fragile ecological system within the caves in Kanthan Hill from destruction by quarrying activities of cement factory, Lafarge Malaysia Berhad, has been the focus of environmentalists of late.

At a press conference held at MH Hotel recently, Ipoh representatives from Lafarge Malaysia Berhad formally announced the results of a study conducted by University Malaya.

University Malaya's study team, consisting of 13 researchers, was led by Prof Dr Rosli Hashim, Head of the Institute of Biological Sciences. The study covered a total of 150 hectares of Kanthan Hill done over a period of ten months.

According to Senior Vice President of Industrial Operations, Jim Ruxton, Lafarge would abide by the findings of the survey and would implement its recommendations. "Lafarge supports efforts to promote environmental conservation and will work with local stakeholders in ensuring this," he told reporters.

Kanthan Hill is divided into four sections, namely Area A, Magazine Area, Area C and Area D. Area D, where the cave is located, is where the sensitive ecological system is concentrated.

The team made four recommendations, namely the establishment of an in-situ and ex-situ conservation areas, research on endemic species, awareness-creating programmes and the publication of biodiversity reports on the cave in journals and magazines. Area D, according to the researchers, should be designated a special scientific site.

The recommendations have been conveyed to the state government and a special committee has been formed to oversee quarry activities around the hill site.

"Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir has instructed the Director of Lands and Mines to head the committee and work closely with Lafarge," said Ruxton.

Kanthan Hill, incidentally, is home to a variety of plants, insects and arthropods. The endemic trapdoor spider is a case in point. It is primarily found in the Kanthan Hill caves and nowhere else in the country.

Yvette



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.

GP Symposium: Managing Depression in Primary Care (for General Practitioners only) by Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Marvin Chong, Sunday **June 22**, 7.30pm at ibis Styles Hotels Ipoh. Contact Hospital Fatimah customer service: **05 545 5777 Ext. 214**.

English Language Communication Skills Training by Perak Women for Women Society (PWW). This 3-month course, scheduled for July, is tailor-made for women wishing to improve their command of written and spoken English in order to secure better employment and business opportunities. The course, funded by CIMB Foundation, is free and will be held on Saturdays between 9am to 1pm. Closing date for application: Saturday, **June 28**. To apply call Rachel of PWW at **05 546 9715**.

Fatimah Challenge: I FEEL GOOD Weight Loss Programme Launch, Saturday **June 28**, 2pm at Hospital Fatimah, Conference Room, 4th Floor. This a 12-week weight loss group challenge programme (maximum 10 members per group). Open to those aged 21-55 years old with BMI of more than 30. Participants will be medically supervised by doctors, dieticians and physiotherapists. Contact customer service: **05 545 5777 Ext. 214**.

Wesley Methodist School Ipoh's Fundraiser 'The Sound of Music', **July 12**, 3.30pm and 8pm at Syuen Hotel Ipoh. For further enquiries, call: **05 254 5122** or **012 500 5033**.

Public Forum on: (1) Liver Cancer; (2) Alcohol & Liver by Consultant Physician and Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist, Dr Saravana Kumar, Saturday **July 19**, 2pm at Hospital Fatimah, Conference Room, 4th Floor. Contact customer service: **05 545 5777 Ext. 214**.

Perak Stamp Fair & Exhibition, **June 20-22**, 9am to 10pm at the Urban Transformation Centre (UTC), Ipoh. General enquiries: Mr Loh **012 329 1747**, Mr Ng **012 505 9131** or Ms Vera **011 1648 5259** (see page 7).

Malaysia Dance Festival (Perak) 2014. If you are an avid dancer and is between 16 to 35 years old this is one opportunity you should grab. The state-level Malaysia Dance Festival 2014 will be held at the Perak Arts and Culture Department complex on Saturday, **June 21** commencing at 8am. Competition is divided into two categories – Traditional and Street Dance. Attractive prizes, including cash, await the winners. Get your entry forms from the department or call Pn Fairus at **013 993 9091** or **05 252 7001** for details.

SMK Methodist (ACS) Ipoh's Annual Play 'Charlie's Auntie', Friday, **June 27** at 8.30pm, Saturday **June 28** at 3pm (matinee) and 8.30pm, and Sunday **June 29** at 8.30pm. Shows will be held at the school's auditorium. For reservations and enquiries call: Manjit Kaur **012 418 4073** or Looi **012 536 3662** or Kong Sheng **016 565 8030**.

MATTA Fair Taiping 2014 organised by Matta Perak Chapter with Taiping Tourist Association, **July 4-6** from 10am to 9pm at Hotel Taiping Perdana. Visitors will have a chance to win a holiday package worth RM2000. For enquiries contact: En Abdul Halim **012 298 4061** or David Chong **012 505 0209**.

Shiv yog: 'Durga Saptashati Shivir' (in English) by His Holiness Avdhoot Baba Shivanandji, **July 17 & 18** (6.30pm-10pm) and **19** (9.30am-1pm) at Maha Mariamman Temple Hall, Jalan Sg. Pari, Ipoh. Registration is free, age 12 years and above. Compulsory attendance on all 3 days with prior registration by June 30. Register at: Lord Krishna Temple, Lahat Lane, Ipoh (Tuesday 2.30pm-5pm); by email: shivयोगipoh@gmail.com; or call: **017 570 6215** or **012 518 4691**. Website: www.shivयोगmalaysia.com.

Blood Donation: A Gift of Life, organised by Hospital Fatimah and Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Saturday **July 26**, 8.30am till 12.30pm at Hospital Fatimah Lobby, Ipoh. Free general blood screening for all donors. Contact customer service: **05 545 5777 Ext. 214**.

Postponement of Ipoh International Run 2014. Out of respect for the recent demise of HRH Sultan Azlan Shah, Ipoh International Run 2014, scheduled for Sunday, June 22, is now postponed to Sunday, **November 16**. The run will commence at 6.30am at its start line at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh. Entrance fee ranges between RM10 to RM35 per participant depending on his/her category. Closing date for entries is now revised to Friday, **October 10** before 5pm. Entry forms are available at the Information counter Ipoh City Council Building. For details call Ipoh Run 2014 Secretariat at **05 242 2743** or **05 241 0969**. You can also register online via www.ipohrun.com.

Young Perak

Learn Through Play

In conjunction with World Play Day on May 28, Hospital Fatimah's community development team hosted a fun health workshop appropriately named, "Learn Through Play". The theme was picked by the hospital's consultant pediatrician, Dr Shan Narayanan who has an interest in child development.


"I chose this theme because playing is fun, and if it's constructive play, kids can learn a lot," said Shan to Ipoh Echo.

There were plenty of games and activities created and conceived by the community development team. And these activities were being actively pursued by the kids. The highlight of the workshop was the talk by Dr Shan about playing and learning.

The children had a session on food by dietician, Ms Mok Wai Keng who explained the various food items in the show basket and their nutritional values.

Hospital Fatimah organises a kid's camp twice annually during school holidays for children aged between 7 to 12 years old. The participants at the latest workshop comprised mostly members of the Fatimah Kids' Club consisting of those who were born or treated at the hospital.

Ameira

A group of approximately ten children, mostly of South Asian descent, are sitting on a light-colored tiled floor. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. Several of the children are holding up small, white rectangular cards or certificates. The children are dressed in casual clothing like t-shirts, a jacket, and a patterned dress. The background is slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with some furniture or equipment.



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Advertorial

KAMPAR PUTRA township – Students Haven and Investors Dream

Imagine investing in a property that is always in demand by students. An investment which provides a return that is better than keeping your money in the bank without you having to bother with financial and management woes, as you watch your property value appreciate over time! The property in question is in Kampar Putra.

Kampar Putra is the brainchild of Dato' Jimmy Lai, the person responsible for the day-to-day operations of Gegaran Lagenda Sdn Bhd and Amal Development (M) Sdn Bhd. These two companies have built several units of single and double-storey terrace houses in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Kampar Putra.

To further enhance the development of the township, Dato' Jimmy Lai has teamed up with Scanwolf Development Sdn Bhd. The partnership will result in the evolvement of Kampar Putra into a lifestyle township consisting of a mixture of 3-storey shop lots, 3-storey terrace houses, 3-storey small-office-home-office (SOHO) units, townhouses and apartments.

Investors' administrative headaches will be taken care of by Enigma Variety Sdn Bhd, a company set up by Scanwolf Development Sdn Bhd to manage properties within Kampar Putra. So instead of working for your investments have them work for you instead. The company will ensure that your properties are being constantly rented (at the best possible returns), collect your rents and ensure that your properties are being properly maintained thus saving your time and money.

Enigma Variety Sdn Bhd provides internet service, weekly room and house cleaning service, electric sub-meter reading and daily shuttle service to UTAR, KTAR and Dataran Kampar from 7.30am to 9pm.

Kampar Putra Township is located approximately five minutes away from UTAR and Westlake International School. It is just 10 minutes to TAR College.

Cost of a single-storey house begins from RM198,000 while a 3-storey unit with eight rooms starts at RM498,000. SOHO units (606 to 623 sq ft) with two rooms and



furnished are priced between RM153,800 to RM168,800. Ground-floor shop lots are priced at RM368,000 each.

Facilities available in SOHO units include air-conditioned rooms, individual bathrooms, wardrobes, beds, study tables, pantries, and kitchen cabinets with built-in electric stoves and hoods.

Incidentally, Kampar Putra has its own shopping mall and a sport and recreational complex for the convenience and comfort of its residents.

Developments in the pipeline for Kampar, which is within striking distance of Kampar Putra, are a semi-government hospital, a new access road to Tanjung Tualang, Batu Gajah, Sitiawan and other townships in the area, a bus terminal, private colleges and Giant Hypermarket.

Sport

Perak Excels in Taekwondo

Members of the Kinta District Taekwondo Association brought glory to Perak when they won five gold, six silver and six bronze medals at the National Self Defense Championship 2014 in Putrajaya recently.

Perak, led by Chief Instructor Khoo Bu Leong, performed outstandingly in the championship. SMJK Yuk Choy's student Ivy Choo, who bagged four gold medals from a recent tournament in Hong Kong, won a gold and silver in the 1st Dan Black Belt category.

"After the Hong Kong tournament our students showed tremendous improvement. Those with 1st and 2nd Dan are doing well. However, we're still lacking in the 3rd and 4th Dan categories," said Khoo.

The association did equally well in the junior category. The Under-15 sparring event was won by Hong Chun Fei despite sustaining a leg injury. Minister of Youth and Sports, Khairy Jamaluddin was in attendance and supported the participants throughout the tournament.

The championship was organised by the Minister of Youth and Sports in conjunction with the Putrajaya Youth Festival 2014.

Yvette



Aussie Wins Malaysian Amateur Open



Australia's Cory Crawford was crowned champion of the 112th Malaysian Amateur Open held at the Royal Perak Golf Club recently. Crawford, who led from day one, breezed into the final rounds after a phenomenal third day score of 6 under 66. He carded 2 birdies; one on each nine and 4 bogeys en route to victory.

The Aussie youngster won the Championship with a total of 280 strokes putting him ahead of his nearest rival by 5 strokes. He was thrilled that his short game had been good throughout the 4-day tournament. "My short game is excellent. I'll try to keep it up and be ready for the next tournament," he remarked.

Marc Ong of Singapore was second best with a 1-over 73 on the final day. Marc's tally of 285 strokes was five more than Crawford. Marc told the press that he had a tough day on the links.

"I was trying hard to catch up with Crawford but I was running out of holes," he enthused.

Zihao Chen of China finished third along with Australian, Jarryd Felton. Zihao carded a superb 4 under 68 on the final day for a total tally of 286 strokes.

Three Malaysians made it to the top ten. They were Muhammad Wafiyuddin with an even 288 strokes at 5th place followed by Low Kai Jei with 290 strokes and Solomon Emilio Rosidin with 291 strokes finishing 7th and 8th respectively.

Angain