

HAKKA VILLA to Reveal Revelational Past

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

It has an impressive facade, standing tall, standing proud and standing out from the rest of the dilapidated shop houses on Jalan Bijeh Timah (Traacher Street). It has withstood the ravages of time, remaining pristine, imposing and mysterious, long having intrigued local residents who have never, hitherto, been privy to set foot inside the front door.

All that will change as *Han Chin Pet Soo* gets ready to allow visitors into its inner sanctum, albeit on a 'book-a-visit-online' basis. This scribe had the pleasure of attending its first unveiling recently when Chairman of Kinta Properties, sponsors of the restoration project, Dato' Lim Si Boon, hosted a buffet dinner there.

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Shadowy figures in the opium den



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Hakka tin miners knew how to 'live it up' in the giddy, heady days when Tin was King

Scheduled for opening on February 5, just before Chinese New Year, this three-storey building has been the home of the Hakka Miners' Club since 1929 when their 1893 traditional shophouse (on the same site) was tastefully rebuilt into today's architectural gem. To the local people, the building has always been a place of mystery, for unless you were both Hakka and a Miner there was no way to get past the caretaker at the main door.

But very soon visitors and locals alike will be able to visit (by appointment) as the restoration is complete and for the first time, be able to witness the eye-opening lifestyle of the Hakka tin miners who really knew how to 'live it up' in those giddy, heady days when tin was king.

The restoration work has been a complete success. For *ipohWorld*, under the passionate leadership of ex Royal Naval Commander, Ian Anderson, supported by a communications graduate and an accountant (Felicia Alexis and Leong Meng Fai), this has been a challenging task. However, from the outset it was tackled as a community project bringing together talented

Ipoh people, like specialist local contractor *Y Cheng Thymes*, to add their skills, showing visibly that "Ipoh has talent"!

Pleasure 'Den'

This is no staid, stuffy museum filled with display cabinets and dusty placards. The gambling room, "dancing" girls and more are all here, life-size mannequins dressed in exquisite period costumes of the era, 'playing' mahjong on original antique



Original porcelain tiles



Dry kitchen

mahjong tables. Visit the opium den where two denizens of yore lying on the opium beds, puff away on antique opium pipes, with fire from simulated candles flickering on and off. Tip toe to the top floor and peek at the mosquito netted antique beds in this cosy hideaway where many a tryst with ladies of the night were clandestinely conducted away from prying eyes and blabber mouths and listen to oohs and ahhs from first-time visitors as they conjure up the scenes from long ago in their imagination.

The food storage cabinets with its netting sides and doors are still here. The kitchen with its charcoal stoves still work, as I'm sure, do the opium pipes, except that its now illegal to check if they do!

Meticulous Restoration

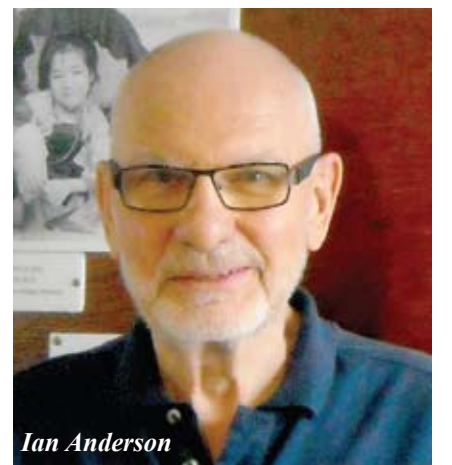
Many a story can be told about the whole restoration process, which was a collaborative effort, between many local talents. When Ian Anderson and his team took over the building, the second floor was only home to rats, pigeons and white ants, having been abandoned by the club years before.

Painstakingly and meticulously, Ian and his team have recreated the look, feel and ambience of the Hakka Club in its hey day. All furniture and artifacts are original items, many of them very rare pieces. Antiques and collectables were almost all bought locally although some very nice pieces have been donated by people living locally.

In order to mount the life-like exhibition and recreate scenes from the old days, the team had to find creative ways around various dilemmas which they faced. As one cannot buy Chinese stature mannequins which are all 6ft plus with European faces, the restoration team had them cut down to size, modified their stance and added new heads with Oriental faces, formed by hand from a local ceramic artist.



Meissen Kimono



Ian Anderson

Hunting for Costumes

Clothes came from anywhere they could find them; Salvation Army shop, recycling shops, antique dealers, local markets and friends who still have their grandfather's or grandmother's clothes even though they had long left this earth.

The Japanese girl (pic left) is wearing a 1930s Meissen Kimono from a flea market in Japan. One of the gamblers is wearing a 1930s Chinese

(horse) riding suit bought from a Penang dealer and all the white jackets, shirts and more had been stored in a house locally for more than 25 years after the owner's demise while the straw boater was Ian's from his naval days in the 1970s.

Stories, Artifacts and Murals

Informational notice boards educate as well as inform visitors and tell the stories of the Hakka people and their origins. There is even a huge notice board with pictures of typical Hakka dishes which are still popular today albeit difficult to obtain.

But this museum is not just about the re-creation of the decadent lifestyle of the Hakka miners. Students of PIA Perak Institute of Art have painted almost 1000 square feet of murals inside the building depicting scenes from the tin mining days. Artifacts and equipment collected over a long period since the inception of Ipoh World in 2004 and from Ian's own personal collection, adorn the colourful landscape of *Han Chin Pet Soo*.

Ipoh World's Impressive Database

Ipoh World was formed as a small group intent on recording as much as they could about Kinta Valley and its history. Spearheaded by Ian who lives in Ipoh with his wife Meng Wai, a true-blue Ipohite, Ipoh World Sdn Bhd a not-for-profit organisation, is sponsored by Kinta Properties and Tenby Schools and has grown by leaps and bounds, although the group remains small with only three members of staff.

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'Some of the members enjoy mahjong while a dancing girl looks on'

• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

The fact that the Council backed down after owning its mistake, spurred Ipohites to go beyond illegal buildings and noise pollution...

I was once asked what really started Ipoh City Watch (ICW). I had the answer but took a while to ponder on the likely reasons for the establishment of this non-governmental organisation.

The new millennium had just descended on Ipoh and talks were rife that the city's boundary would be extended to include areas which were not under the city council's jurisdiction.

Chemor, Gopeng, Jelapang and Meru were some of those considered. From an erstwhile 400-odd sq km the city would be expanded to its current 643 sq km to support a population in excess of 600,000.

The expansion was welcomed by the city's business community, as it would provide better opportunities for business to flourish. However, residents were rather sceptical fearing a dilution in Ipoh City Council's responsibilities with a larger area to cover.

Topping the list was cleanliness, as Ipoh in the 1950s right until the 1970s, was the cleanness town in the country. This distinction was attributable to the Seenivasagam brothers who took pride in making the state capital squeaky clean, both in looks and in governance, to the chagrin of other municipal councils who were in deep slumber, oblivious of the changing times.

Developments taking place in and around Ipoh seemed unstoppable, driven by an irresistible urge to spread. Some of which were never in the city's 5-year structural plan, prompting residents to suspect a hidden agenda.

One very noticeable change taking place was on the vacant lot adjacent to Kinta City along Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah (formerly Jalan Tasek). Although the space was earmarked for a permanent structure, the construction of an entertainment outlet was puzzling, to say the least.

Bali Bali, a night club cum karaoke joint, took shape and it changed Ipoh Garden for good. The club stood where the De Garden shopping mall now stands. Ipoh City Council could not give a reasonable answer why approval was given for its construction. When the entertainment centre began operation in early 2001, people living in the vicinity protested as the din created caused them many sleepless nights.

A group of disgruntled residents, led by a lawyer, whose house was a stone's throw away from the club, decided to take matters in their hands. A formal complaint was lodged with Ipoh City Council and a meeting with then Mayor Dato' Taalat Hj Husain was arranged.

Lawyer Ernest Balasingam's perseverance prevailed. The 'seedy' Bali Bali night



club was demolished much to the delight of the public. Ernest had alluded to the council's by-laws on entertainment outlets to strengthen his case.

The fact that the Council backed down after owning its mistake, spurred Ipohites to go beyond illegal buildings and noise pollution. They planned on something larger – a platform to be their sounding board against an insensitive Council prone to making contradictory decisions and statements at the behest of Ipohites.

That was how the idea behind the formation of Ipoh City Watch came into existence. A gathering of like-minded people was called and sometime in late November 2002, the first meeting took place at YMCA Ipoh hall. I was among the 11 who turned up.

Bobby Yin was elected president while the rest made up the committee.

We adopted a confrontational approach in dealing with problems affecting Ipohites. I remember making calls on the mayor, the council secretary and department heads to voice residents' dissatisfactions. And when that did not work we tried drawing the attention of the Mentri Besar and the Executive Councillor for Local Government.

When that too did not work we sought the press for assistance. The Sun was kind enough to provide us with a weekly column to vent our frustrations. And the rest is history not worth mentioning. Over the years the fire in us dissipated leaving a void never to be filled until recently.

When the society was de-registered in 2013 by the Registrar of Societies for non-submission of its accounts, I thought that was the end of ICW. But circumstances were to prove me wrong. It was re-registered in April 2014 with a new team at the helm.

Today under a very dynamic president, Associate Professor Dr Richard Ng, Ipoh City Watch is set to make waves. The society was re-launched during a simple ceremony held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel, Ipoh on Friday, January 23.

Richard's conciliatory style seems to work. His "3 Es" principle – Engage, Explain and Educate could be the panacea. At last count there are nearly 60 highly-motivated individuals in Richard's WhatsApp group, "ICW Watchaa". And that includes some notable names such as Gerakan's former chief Chan Ko Youn, former mayor Roshidi Hashim, academician Victor Chew and even Opposition lawmakers, Howard Lee and Wong Kah Woh. My phone hasn't stopped vibrating and squeaking ever since I was roped into the group.

EYE HEALTH – WARNING SIGNS OF EYE PROBLEMS

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about EYE SIGNS that must not be ignored.



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

People ask me why is it that their eyes are just not the same like they were before. It's because our eyes are not isolated from medical problems (diabetes, hypertension and other conditions), from the effects of aging or even from the environment that we live in with all the sun exposure, smoke and dust around us. Eye problems may occur at any age but they are often more common in old age. Always be wary of the warning signals and take proper action should that occur. In many cases quick intervention is important to avoid permanent vision loss.

Some Warning Signs

There are some symptoms and signs that may indicate a medical emergency. In most cases, you should seek professional help quickly:

1. A Red Painful Eye with Blurring Vision:

This is often a sign of an acute glaucoma (angle-closure variety) attack often associated with nausea, vomiting with a throbbing headache as well. Left untreated, this may result in permanent irreversible blindness. It may sometimes be mistaken for acute gastroenteritis (food poisoning) because of the symptom of nausea and vomiting. Seek quick treatment for this.

2. Blur Wavy Vision in the Centre Part of Vision:

This may be an early sign of macular degeneration (AMD). The macula is the central part of the retina where all the fine vision takes place. When this is affected, the vision appears distorted, lines appearing crooked or wavy and in the late stages the vision is lost centrally. The sooner treatment is instituted the better.

3. Vision Blurring in part of your Field of Vision:

If the vision loss appears like a curtain falling or like water rising from the floor, this may signal a detaching retina. This may be preceded by a sudden shower of floaters. The retina is a layer of nerve tissue in the back of your eye that receives the images that you see and transmits it to the brain. When this retina gets detached in some portion the vision gets lost in one part of the field of vision.

4. Blurred Vision with Haloes around Lights:

These vision changes may be due to glaucoma when there is a higher than normal eye pressure. Watch out for these subtle symptoms that occasionally occur with a mild headache or mild eye discomfort. Be especially on the look for this symptom if you are already a diagnosed glaucoma patient or have a family history of glaucoma.

5. Sudden Blurring and/or Floaters in Diabetic patients:

In diabetics, this may be a sign of bleeding in the eye because of diabetic eye disease. Regular eye exams are important if you are diabetic regardless of whether you have blurring vision or not. Do not wait for eye symptoms before getting your eyes checked.

These are only some of the warning signs. Seek professional help soon should you experience any unusual eye symptoms.

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

Personality



Jeyaratnam Celebrates 90 Years

It was a joyous occasion as old friends gathered to celebrate Tan Sri Jeyaratnam's 90th birthday. Tan Sri was in a jocular mood as he cut his birthday cake surrounded by old friends, daughter Jeyamalar and son Jeyarajah.

Dato' Yap Lim Sen who hosted the party in his magnificent home, and who has known Tan Sri Jeya for more than 60 years, in his speech, gave guests an insight into Tan Sri's almost legendary achievements in his illustrious career. As the longest serving Chairman of the Perak Turf Club, Tan Sri has broken a world record of sorts when he took over the helm in 1983. Dato' Yap lauded him for his indefatigable energy on all his charitable causes and shared instances of his brilliance as a lawyer during the period when he was practising.

Guests sang and danced the night away and a good time was had by all.

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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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Alam, Selangor.

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Protect the Children from Paedophiles



It is very hard to convince people that children are more likely to suffer sexual abuse from the people whom they trust, such as relatives and close friends, than from strangers. Adults who commit a sexual crime, involving children, are breaking the law. They cause extreme distress to the families of the victims and they cause severe damage to the children whom they sexually abuse.

On January 16, it was reported that an engineer from Ipoh had been found guilty of sexually abusing 31 boys, who were aged between 11 and 15 years old, in Singapore. He had arrived on the island, in 2009, to work as a quality assurance engineer. He committed his sexual crimes between November 2009 and June 2012.

The charges are manifold. Yap Weng Wah was found guilty of 12 charges of sexual penetration of a minor. He was also told that an additional 63 charges of sexual penetration would be considered against him, as well as one for acquiring a child, to commit a sexual act.

On his arrival in Singapore, he used different identities on Facebook to groom the children by befriending them first. He won their trust before meeting them and abusing them. He committed his indecent acts in a variety of places, including public places such as swimming complexes, a public park, the public toilets in shopping complexes, his apartment and also hotel rooms.

To add to the trauma of the children, Yap recorded the sexual abuse on his mobile phone before storing the explicit scenes and details of each victim, in his laptop. Over 2000 videos of the indecent acts were discovered by the police during a raid, following a police report that was made against him.

It was also reported that some of his victims continued to be his friends, despite the abuse. This is another trait of the sexual predator. They have interests or hobbies which match those of the child. They also offer presents to the child to win his affection.

Whilst there is much anger and revulsion against the acts, we must be clear that the people who commit these sexual crimes against children, must be pursued and punished.

So how do you protect your child against these sexual predators?

Instead of creating more alarm in your child, try and talk to him and tell him that certain parts of their body are private and that if anyone touches these parts, they must tell their parents or someone whom they trust.

Some of the tips include telling children that they must not keep secrets, which make them feel uncomfortable. They should also be told of the dangers of the internet and that some bad adults may pretend to be children, to gain their friendship.

If possible, children should never go into a public toilet on their own and that they should go to school, with a friend. Finally, parents should always know the whereabouts of their children, who they are with and what they are doing. All too often, parents do not have a clue who their children are really with, when they claim to be with a friend.

Sometimes, despite doing the best we can to protect

our child, the judicial system betrays both the victims and their families. It is widely known that sex offenders are frequently not punished.

Child sexual abuse is rampant and although various NGOs will support both the victim and their families through their psychological trauma, it may be several years before a case goes to trial. The long wait and the hope for justice, does not help the victims. As one social worker said, "It seems that the judge has more sympathy for the sex offender than for the child victim."

Source: <http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/01/19/Paedophile-caught-in-Spore-Malaysian-engineer-pleads-guilty-to-having-sex-with-31-minors/>



by Mariam Mokhtar



CHILD HEALTH

Dr Shan Narayanan

Consultant General Paediatrician, Hospital Fatimah

Children in Need

All children need care, love and emotional, health and educational support, to grow, develop and flourish in order to bring out their potential.

The first look at the phrase 'Children in Need', will remind many of the famous BBC UK Charity. This charity, "Children in Need, since 1980, has raised over £600 million to change the lives of disabled children and young people in the UK. One of the highlights is an annual telethon, held in November every year and televised on BBC.

Beyond the charity, Children in Need are children arising from the circumstances of a situation. The circumstances of the situation are variable. They, however, have one thing in common, they are all deprived of their basic needs, that is, care, love and support. The following groups of children are Children in Need: children who have lost their parents; children living in poverty; children from broken homes; children living in violence, abuse, neglect and maltreatment; children with conduct problems; children with disability; children living in violence; sexually exploited/abused children; child soldiers; and child workers. This is not an exhaustive list.

In Malaysia as of 2007, 8.1% of children under 5 (178,400 children); 9.4% of children under 15 (724,900 children) and 10% of children under 18 (820,000 children) were living in poverty. From the proportion of children under 15 living in poverty, 285,700 were from the urban areas and 439,200 from rural areas. The highest number of children living in poverty is from the state of Sabah. (Reported by Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, December 2012).

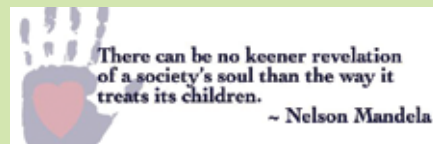
These children generally live far away from school and health facilities. Education is compulsory in Malaysia and we have an affordable and accessible public health system. However, due to the lack of awareness of their parents, these children are deprived of schooling and health care. There is much to be done for these children, starting with creating awareness among their parents of the available services and how to access them.

Children from families who are unable to provide the support due to financial, family conflict or disciplinary problems are put into care. There are government and private facilities that provide care for these children. Government facilities provide care for abused, abandoned or poor children; children under provisional probation by the court; children who commit crimes but are not sentenced to jail; teenage girls accused of "vice" activities; and children with disabilities. Private facilities provide care for abandoned, neglected and orphan children (reported by Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, December 2012).

Our children are fortunate but there are many unfortunate children. Donating money and material things is what most of us would do, however, understanding their plight and respecting them is equally important.

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MUSINGS ON IPOH FOOD

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



SeeFoon Tattles over Tea and Titbits

When you're faced with 140 different kinds of tea, it is easy to become dazed by the plethora of choices and options and if it wasn't for the enthusiastic intervention of Aven Ng, I would have had no clue as to what to order. As we were a group of five, it was easy to settle for a tasting of five different teas on the recommendation of Aven who is one of the partners in this newly-opened **Tea & Tattle** Cafe in De Garden.

Aven who is a self-professed tea "fetishist", is a walking encyclopedia on tea, and as I thumbed through the voluminous tea tome masquerading as a tea menu under the title of **Premium Tea List**, I was impressed by the useful information given in each section, that provides a tea novice like myself some guidelines as to the differences between Black, Green, White, Oolong and Rooibos. There is also a tempting list of **Wellness and Herbal** infusions for those who are into healthy brews. Readers of this column will have to go to Tea & Tattle and read up and sample for themselves as space limitations dictate here and I have to move on to describing the various tastes!

Although tea is the main offering at Tea & Tattle, coffee lovers need not panic as Ethiopian and Kenyan coffees are available. But back to the tea, the name and concept cleverly developed by two brothers James and Aven Ng and a third partner Arik Chew and one or two others who have chosen to remain in the background and who each contribute their specialty knowledge into making the whole place gel together. Like the Chef, Jeff



Thong who has patiently endured hours of experimenting in the kitchen, adopting some startling fusion combinations and change his plating skills to get a dish just right. Or the patissier, Ipoh boy Ah Leong who had to throw out all his previous recipes and embrace new ones, resulting in ethereal creations for which even a die-hard non dessert eater like myself had to succumb. Like the 'Snowflakes', a featherlight coconut cream cake, topped with dessicated coconut and served with coconut ice cream; or the Oreo Cheesecake with double chocolate ice; or have you ever heard of **Strawberry Nachos**? Where you're expecting a cheese dip, instead you get chopped strawberries marinated in 7-year-old Balsamic vinegar (which for some unknown alchemical reason, releases the flavour and sweetness in the strawberries and instead of more tartness, the strawberries are more flavourful and sweet) served with crispy thin cookies passing as nachos.

But I digress. Back to the teas. And Tattle. What better background for a good tattle than good ole' mouldy oldies from the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole and a host of others, six-hours-long of recorded music from the jazz era, music that warms the heart and loosens the tongue. All of Tea & Tattle's teas come from the USA, Europe or S. America. Their best blends are all winners at the North American Tea Championships and detailed descriptions of each in their tea menu speaks volumes about Aven's love of tea.



Still on the subject of tea, the brewing pots are very special and have to be sampled, as words defy description. The whole tea service is a ritual, coming with its own miniature hour-glass timer; a 3-minute timer for Green tea, a 5-minute for Black and a 7-minute one for herbal infusions. The pot may be replenished with hot water an unlimited number of times with some of the teas actually tasting better and mellower with each successive steeping, some up to three or four times. Unlike a lot of other cafes where the crockery is just thrown together haphazardly, the tea cups too are special here, all hand blown double glass to keep the heat, running a risk of easy breakage and yet a delicate touch that shows the dedication of the proprietors to true quality service.

And while here enjoying your teas, have your breakfast, lunch or dinner at a leisurely pace. You can have an all-day breakfast no matter the time of day. Choose an **Eggs Benedict with Smoked Salmon**, served with asparagus spears – **RM16.80**; or the **Italian Baked Eggs**, two eggs baked in a marinara sauce and topped with mozzarella, parmesan and basil and served with crusty bread – yumilicious at **RM14.80**; and wash it down with **Sweet Memories**, a green jasmine and white peony tea blended with rosebuds containing lychee essence and osmanthus, the most popular tea served here and which took second place in the North American Tea Championship in 2012 – **RM10.80**.

A 'must-have' here is their **Air Fried Chips**. Order it as a standalone snack – **RM8.80** or have it come with your burgers, or your pressed sandwiches. These chips (more like wedges) which are crispy and salted just right and with nary a hint of oil (great for you dieters out there who love chips) have to be eaten piping hot, dipped into either a **Sriracha Dip** (I had to ask for extra Sriracha as mine was not spicy enough) or cheese sauce. It is useful to point out here that the Sriracha sauce here is the American variety, produced in USA and not the gooey sweet variety found locally or in Thailand.

For mains, Aven is especially proud of their **Strawberry Glazed Salmon**, a salmon steak marinated in strawberry compote, baked to perfection and served on a bed of strawberry salsa. Strange bedfellows, some may say, yet it appears to be one that is made in heaven judging by the oohs and ahhs at the table when we tucked in. And a final taste note, the two salmon dishes I tried, **another with a garlic dill sauce**, was cooked just right, not dry and overdone as I've experienced elsewhere – **RM37.80 & RM35.80**.

I could wax lyrical about their **stuffed paninis**, their **Etouffee** (a dish found in both Cajun and Creole cuisine typically served with shellfish over rice. The name which means smothering in French describes the thick sauce which is served with it) and their **Gelatimio Italian ice creams** which are 99% fat free, but I won't. What I will suggest is for you dear reader, to go and sip tea, swoon over the music and satiate on small or large bites.

Tea & Tattle, for talk, tea and taste.



Tea & Tattle (Pork Free)

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One-off chance to step back in time, visit the opium den, meet the gamblers and their dancing girls and experience a Kinta Valley tin mine...
(continued from page 2)



The first objective was to create a database of photographs and documents that reflected the history of the Kinta Valley that would be available worldwide for students, researchers, authors, documentary makers, and would-be tourists to Perak. Today, that database at www.ipohworld.org contains more than 7000 entries showcasing over 14,000 photographs, plus postcards, historical documents and personal stories. Next came the interactive blog and naturally social media such as Facebook.

However, there was also a long-term desire to set up a permanent heritage centre for both education and tourists alike. Although this is still in the pipeline, as an interim, a number of short-term heritage exhibitions have been staged and these have become progressively more sophisticated and longer as the project gained experience.

First Permanent Exhibition

Han Chin Pet Soo is the first of these permanent exhibitions. Guests may visit the club and exhibition by appointment only via the *ipohWorld* website below and there are up to four appointments available per day from Tuesday to Sunday with a maximum number of 50 guests per appointment. Admission is free, but donations are welcome to help in the upkeep of this historic building.

This is a one-off chance to step back in time, visit the opium den, meet the gamblers and their dancing girls and experience a Kinta Valley tin mine. So, book now at: <http://www.ipohworld.org/reservation> to avoid disappointment.



The 1920s bedroom



Tin Shed Team



Dulang Washer and the Tin Shop

Private Function: Unique Opportunity

There is also the unique opportunity to book the building as a movie set or for private functions like themed dinners, corporate events or wedding photography, etc. The size of the building forces a limitation on numbers for such events and the guidelines are a maximum of 20 pax for a buffet dinner and 8 to 14 pax for a sit-down dinner. The programme can include a guided tour of the exhibition, cocktails on the balcony (weather permitting) and dinner in the all-original club dining room. Enquiries for such events should be made directly to the Events Manager by telephone +60 (0)5 529 3306 or events@ipohworld.org.

Next Project

Having successfully completed their first restoration project and flushed with success, the *ipohWorld* team has moved next door (to No. 1) for a second, more challenging restoration, sponsored by Hovid Berhad. This will lead to another new exhibition, the amazing story of how one man, Dr Ho Kai Cheong rented a single room at No.1 and formulated, packaged and sold, from his bicycle, a herbal tea, with the noble intention of helping people to good health. Today, that tea, Ho Yan Hor, is famous around the world. So do keep an eye on www.ipohworld.org for the details of how to visit this exhibition when complete. Details will also be published in the Ipoh Echo as soon as they are available.

To book online go to: <http://www.ipohworld.org/reservation/> or scan the QR code below.



News

Centre Records Highest Number of Visitors

Since it was opened two years ago, Perak's Urban Transformation Centre (UTC) has recorded a total of 4.5 million visitors. This was revealed by Deputy Finance Minister, Datuk Chua Tee Yong who said that this is the highest number achieved in all eight centres plus two mini centres throughout the country.

According to him, UTC Perak also won the 2014 Prime Minister's Innovation Award (AIPM) based on its efficiency and effectiveness. "With this achievement, proceeds collected from all the services provided at UTC Perak increased by RM187 million. This calculation was based on a total collection of RM566 million in 2014, compared to RM379 million in 2013.

Chua, who met with the media after his working visit to UTC Perak on January 12, expressed hopes that the performance by UTC Perak is maintained at a consistent level. He added, "Importance should be placed on consistency to provide the best possible service to the community."

Also present were State Executive Councillor Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon and manager of UTC Perak, Shahruhnizam Jaafar.

Chua also disclosed that at this point, with eight UTCs and two mini centres in Malaysia, four states are still without one. They are Kelantan, Terengganu, Negeri Sembilan and Perlis. "We're still in the midst of discussion with the respective state governments to identify a strategic location to establish a centre, one that is accessible to the public," he said.

Luqman



Betty's Book Launched



"If you are in distress, seek help immediately and get in touch with your secure base. Talk to someone close and trusted." This is the message that Betty Ong hopes to convey through her book, "Ripples".

Betty is a registered counsellor with an Advanced Diploma/Certificate in Counselling at the University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom, covering client-centred, psychoanalysis, existentialism and postmodernism perspectives.

She is a dual-registered nurse in both general and psychiatric nursing. In addition, she is a Specialist Nurse in substance misuse, and a nursing activist. Now retired and back home in Ipoh, her last posting was with the Central North-West London NHS Trust for eight years.

Speaking at the launch of "Ripples", organised by Perak Academy, Betty advised all present to take charge of their mental health. "Ripples" is a resource book on rich life influences that nurture strong mindsets and meaningful lives. With a healthy mind, one would be able to lead a happier and more fulfilling life.

Betty said, "We live in a world of inescapable stressors, which can be divided into maturational and situational. Meeting with stress is part and parcel of living. Nobody can lead a stress-free life but how well we handle it depends on our response in that given situation.

Whatever our crisis, it is important that we talk about it openly and honestly, whether with family, friends or counsellors. Getting it off our chest not only helps us to look at the situation more clearly but also move towards a solution and decrease distress.

Unfortunately, many people do not know whom to turn to, or refuse to seek help because of stigma. They overreact and build up their own anxiety. Malaysians must change their mindset to learn to think differently so that mental health is not seen as taboo in society."

The launch was officiated by local philanthropist, Koon Yew Yin, who sponsored the publication of the book. A substantial number of Betty's book was snapped up by those attending the event.

The event was held at Symphony Suites Hotel, Ipoh on Saturday, January 24.

Emily

Helping Out Needy Students



A total of 136 students from 15 secondary schools in Ipoh received RM100 each from the Rotary Club of Ipoh recently. Club President, Gavin Tang, said that the money was to lessen the burden of the parents in managing their children's schooling needs.

"This project was established in 1971 by Past President Teerath Ram for schools in Kinta Valley. Since then, our club has initiated a scholarship fund for secondary schools. Interest generated from the fund is combined and distributed in the form of annual scholarships for the schools involved. Recipients of the scholarship are selected by the schools based on academic performance and their financial background."

Priya Shantini and Shafiqah Azreen Mohd Nur Aidil, both 15, from Methodist Girls School (MGS) shared their happiness in receiving the scholarship for the first time. "We wish to thank Rotary Club Ipoh for this scholarship. Part of it will be used to purchase schooling essentials while the balance will be saved up," said Shanti.

Kong Then Hoa, 17, of SMJK Sam Tet, who promised to use the money on revision books, said that the RM100 was very meaningful to him. "It'll spur me to work harder to achieve even better results," he said. The event was held at SMJK Perak Girls, Jalan Kampar, Ipoh recently.

RM

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News

Illegal Dump Sites on the Rise

Some 1263 illegal dump sites have been identified by Ipoh City Council and these sites are set to increase in number if nothing concrete is done to arrest their proliferation.

According to Council Secretary, Mohd Zakuan Zakaria, actions to clear these illegal sites are underway. "Clearing will be done on a monthly basis," he told media representatives after returning from a tour of illegal dumpsites in the city.

"The areas covered are Halaman Ampang Mewah, Jalan Lasam, Jalan Tun Dr Ismail and Lorong Rani. The clearing involved 30 council workers and dumpsters belonging to the council," he said.

Zakuan attributed the cause to residents' apathy and habits. "Although wrongdoers have been fined and compounded, old habits are difficult to overcome," said Zakuan. He suggested enforcement officers to move about the city incognito, as a possible solution. "Their job is to spy on potential culprits," he added.

Over 200 illegal dump sites were cleared during the blitz on Thursday, January 22 which saw the Secretary heading a hurriedly-formed team consisting of officers and men from the health, enforcement and community departments.

The after-effects of illegal dump sites are environmental degradation and the breeding of mosquitoes. The primary cause of dengue is traced to these sites.

The council calls on residents not to dispose their rubbish at their whim but to place them in bins and let the council dumpsters pick them up on the scheduled dates. A fine of between RM100 to RM150 will be imposed on those found disposing rubbish illegally.

Ed



Announcement

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Asia Leadership Seminar 2015

Cliché as it may sound, Samuel Kim, Chairman of Asia Leadership Trek cum President of the Centre for Asia Leadership Initiatives, quoted John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what the country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," in his opening address at the Asia Leadership Seminar 2015 at the Lost World Hotel in Ipoh recently.

The seminar, organised by the Sunway Education Group in conjunction with the group's hosting of Harvard's Asia Leadership Trek 2015, a programme by the Asia Leadership Committee under the auspices of the Centre for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, expounded on "Opportunities and Challenges in 21st Century Asia".

The conference, aimed at providing an extraordinary opportunity to learn from Harvard-trained workshop facilitators and local esteemed leaders, saw a strong attendance of 230 young professionals, leaders and students from 15 to 26 years of age.

Conference participants had the opportunity to attend specially conducted workshops on Addressing Cognitive Biases in Decision-Making, Authentic Leadership, Design Thinking and Innovation, Improving Performance and Outcomes, just to name a few.

There were also career mentoring and professional development sessions on building resume, interviewing skills, career in consulting, legal, medicine, and other vocations.

A special workshop was also conducted on application and admission processes to Harvard and other top American universities for those interested to pursue their tertiary education in the United States of America.

The 42 delegates, or better known as Trekkers, representing 14 nations, were all graduate students from the Harvard University, Tufts Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). They were on a month-long tour of Asia and visited Tokyo, Seoul and Jakarta before arriving at Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh. They then proceeded to New Delhi, Bombay and Kathmandu.

While in Perak, some of the tourist attractions they visited included Kellie's Castle, the 6th Mile Cave at the Lost World of Tambun, the Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat and a night tour of Ipoh city.

Kim added, "We are in Asia to acquire a first-hand insight through an experiential journey, in which we have directly investigated political, economic, industry and societal issues through engagement with relevant leaders and organisations across six countries. We Trekkers also have great hearts for doing something good for society, and so we would like to leave behind a positive legacy of helping organisations and individuals to actively engage in their communities with actionable insights and skills.



"We seek to open up discussions, share our lessons based on our past and present experiences, convey best practices on how to identify our own opportunities and to brainstorm and build up plans that could turn downsides into upsides. Let's share and learn how we can become effective change agents of our own society and communities we represent and care.

"I know all of us stand united by this common desire to make our world a better place, believing that we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to contribute and make a difference."

Kicking off the half-day leadership seminar, the first in Ipoh, was a forum with the topic "Social Change Agent: Roles and Responsibilities".

It was moderated by Dr Foo Yin Fah, Director, Sunway Institute for Social Entrepreneurship at Sunway University. This was followed by David Rose's talk titled "Overcoming the Expectations of Others". David is a candidate for Master in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government as well as a Master of Business Administration candidate at the Harvard Business School.

Emily

News

Children Get New School Bags and Socks



Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK) recently purchased from Persatuan DAYBREAK (Disabled Adults and Youths Being Rewarded Encouraged and Accepted in Kinta) a total of 3500 sets of school bags containing stationery and school socks as part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programme. These were distributed to the school-going children of both their skilled workers and children from the villages in the vicinity of their plantations. The funding, obtained as a result of the purchase from KLK, will go a long way towards supporting the running of Persatuan DAYBREAK.

Susan

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MISSING DOG

Family dog, Tubby, a medium-sized male mongrel (light beige and light brown) was missing along Lorong Pinji, Taman Mayfair, Ipoh. He was wearing a dark brown collar with a blue badge. If you have any information on his whereabouts, please call 012-5086829. Thank you



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24. Ipoh Echo's office



Wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Bioresonance Therapy

Wong Jia Jian, a 13-year-old male student in Ipoh, is living testimony to the fact that BRT or Bioresonance therapy really works despite scepticism as to how it can. This groundbreaking medical technology using electromagnetic vibration to diagnose and cure without side effects with pinpoint precision is known as Bioresonance Therapy or BRT for short and this writer has written a few articles on her personal experience with it. It is painless and most relaxing and she can vouch for this, having had countless sessions of this therapy.

Jia Jian came to the Oasis of Hope in January 2014 having suffered from eczema since he was 7 years old. Having been to many skin specialists, he and his family were at wits end as to what to do next especially for the affected areas between his toes and fingers. The creams that he would be prescribed by the medical specialists would relieve the situation but they remained short-lived.

During 6 months of treatments with BRT with a total of 24 treatments, there was a gradual improvement for the skin condition and now he has been completely healed from eczema for both of his fingers and foot. Besides, his constipation problem had resolved and his bowel movement became regular. His MSG allergy also has been reduced as his lips wouldn't swell after ingestion anymore.



Before



After

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Community

Pongal and Thamilar Thirunal Celebrations Around Ipoh

The Pongal festival is celebrated by Tamils all over the world on the first day of *Thai* month in the Tamil calendar which normally falls in mid-January. Though it is a harvest festival it is observed as the Tamil New Year and also celebrated as *Thamilar Thirunal* or Tamils' Festival by all Tamils regardless of their religious background.

Pongal in Buntong

DNS Movie Productions and a number of NGOs in Buntong organised Pongal Festival for the residents in the Maha Mariamman Temple. Forty families participated in making pongal.

T. Sangaralingam, organiser of the function said that this is the first time this event was organised. It is mainly to promote Tamil culture. This is an occasion during which men and especially women and girls wear traditional dress. Making pongal brings out the creativity of women in making *kolams* (drawings with rice flour) and other decorations to beautify the pongal pot. It also encourages social interaction.

All participants were given gifts and provided traditional lunch with pongal.

Thamilisai Vilaa or Tamil Musical Festival

Perak Tamilar Thirunal Association (PTTA) organised a Cultural Tamil Musical Festival to celebrate Thamilar Thirunal in Mariamman Temple Hall. Participants comprised of Hindu, Christian and Muslim Tamils showing that this is a festival for all Tamils.

In his welcome address, M. Mathialagan, President of PTTA said that the event was organised to let the Tamils know that *Thai Pongal* is also *Thamilar Thirunal* and is celebrated to promote Tamil culture and language.

Events included singing competition of motivational songs, *bharata natyam* (dance) performance, literary play and poetry recitation. Winners of the singing competition were



given cash prizes and all participants received mementos.

The highlight of the event was the cash presentation to deserving poor students from five Tamil schools in Ipoh. Guests were served delicious pongal.

Pongal Get Together

Perak Indian Chamber of Commerce (PICC) held a Pongal get together for its members and friends at its premise in Jalan Iskandar Shah. K.S. Munusamy, President of PICC announced that former President of India, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has accepted the invitation from PICC and would be coming to Ipoh later this year. He requested all Indian organisations to work together to make his visit a success.

During the function, Yakub bin Harun, Ketua Penolong Kanan Pembangunan Kemajuan Negeri Perak presented a mock cheque for RM50,000 to PICC. The PICC Annual Calendar was presented to all guests.

A. Jeyaraj



For a Good Cause



Over a hundred members of the public volunteered to donate their blood during a blood donation drive recently. The event was held at the concourse of Aeon Kinta City, Ipoh on Sunday, January 18. It was jointly organised by the National Association of Malaysia Life Insurance and Financial Advisers and the Y's Men's Club of Ipoh.

The objective of the drive was two-fold. One was to replenish the depleted Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun's blood bank. The other was to encourage the public to donate their blood for a worthy cause. Judging from the response, the aim was achieved although there was not much publicity.

Out of the 100-odd who volunteered only 81 were accepted. The remaining was refused for a number of reasons – poor health being a major determinant.

Present to oversee the operation was Dr Balraj Singh Sidhu of Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun. He was assisted by two nurses and four medical staff.

The blood donation drive is an annual affair undertaken by the Y's Men's Club of Ipoh and like-minded non-governmental organisations.

Ed



Pantai Hospital Helps Out

A team of medical service providers from Pantai Hospital Ipoh recently provided free health screenings at the Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health's halfway home in Batu Lapan, Ulu Kinta, Perak.

The session began with light refreshments followed by bone density screening, body mass index measurements and blood pressure check-ups. There was a diet counselling booth where residents and staff were given advice on healthy eating habits. The Pantai Hospital team was led by Harith Idris with the support of CIMB Ipoh Branch headed by its manager, Teoh Chen Gaik. A total of 50 residents and 20 staff participated in the programme.

Vice President of the Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health, S. Sundralingam, thanked both Teoh and Harith for their assistance which benefited the residents of the halfway home.

The duo was taken on a tour of the home. Teoh was fascinated with the facility and pledged to assist in whatever way possible. Harith too promised other forms of assistance as available.

It was a fun-filled day for the residents who were happy to receive free health-screening services from professionals. The event provided them with information in the field of care and wellness.

Ed

Community

New Hostel for Children's Home

The 35 children of RumahKanak-Kanak Yatim dan Miskin Anning (Anning Children's Home) in Ampang will be accommodated in a new hostel equipped with a library, by the middle of this year.

Principal of Anning Children's Home, Loke Wai Loon, said that the dream will be fulfilled if their various fund-raising efforts are successfully implemented. "This project was inspired by Mok Soon Sang, a retired headmaster who is now the vice president of our home. So far, 50 per cent of the construction is completed.

Although we receive donations from individuals and associations, we are still short of funds. We hope that more would come forward to contribute to our project to help us realise it. The three-storey building will cost about RM600,000. The ground floor will be the library while the first and second floors will be the hostel," he told Ipoh Echo when met recently.

Anning Children's Home was founded by Venerable Chan Kong under the auspices of Bao En Shi Temple. In operation since January 2009, it now has two more branches in Taiping and Kuala Lumpur. Besides children's homes, Bao En Shi also established the Anning Old Folks' Home for senior citizens.

"In addition to running our own recycling centre, we also receive an allocation from



the state government through the Perak Social Welfare Department.

"The management will organise a 'Walk For Children In Need' event on Sunday, March 29. The walk is inspired by a volunteer, Dr Shan Narayanan, a paediatrician at Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh. Funds collected from this charity event will go towards construction of the hostel," Loke added.

Participation fee for the walk is RM10 for children and RM20 for adults, inclusive of a free event T-shirt. Readers interested to join in the walk, or donate towards the cause, may contact **Loke Wai Loon at 05-311 1223.**

RM

Donation to Flood Victims

Flood victims in Perak received a bonus cheque of RM10,000 when Meru Valley Golf Resort donated all the proceeds of their New Year's Eve dinner on December 31, 2014. A cheque presentation by General Manager Ms Florence Foo to Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) Perak Chairman YB Dato' Haji Mohamad Rafial Mokhtar was held at MRCS hall recently. Also present at the ceremony were Dato' Dr Chin Gan Chee, MRCS Vice Chairman and Yau Kin Mun, MRCS Director.

Ed



Business

Ground-Breaking Ceremony

"Ipoh, which was known as a sleepy town, is long overdue for its property development. The momentum began some three to four years ago. Medical facilities have expanded and there are full amenities that can offer the convenient living that many people would want," said MBM Land Sdn Bhd director Koh Tse Ming to Ipoh Echo at the ground-breaking ceremony of *The Signature @ Greentown Ipoh* on Friday, January 23.

MBM Land Sdn Bhd and Perak Turf Club are the development partners for developer Greentown Junction Development Sdn Bhd.

Among the dignitaries at the meaningful event to mark the start of the construction of the project were Chairman of MBM Land Sdn Bhd and Greentown Junction Development Sdn Bhd Dato' Mohamed bin Hamzah, Deputy Chairman of Perak Turf Club Dato' Cheah Choon King and Director of Greentown Junction Development Sdn Bhd Yap Jek Nan.

Poised to be the epitome of urban living, *The Signature* is a contemporary serviced residence that denotes ultra-modern living.

Located strategically in the bustling commercial address of Greentown, opposite the iconic Ipoh City Council building, it is a stone's throw away from Ipoh Parade shopping mall.

There will be two towers, one with 28 floors, the other, 21. Each floor consists of five to eight residential units, with a combined total of 356 units with three types of unique designs.

The Signature also offers two retail floors. Other amenities available are a swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna room, gymnasium, BBQ area and children's playground.

At the time of writing, about 50 per cent of Tower B has already been booked since its launch in December 2014.

The Signature @ Greentown Ipoh is scheduled to complete by mid-2018.

Emily



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Finance

Inequality and Financial Crisis

Quoting philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it", Dr Lim Mah Hui cautioned that the next financial crisis is in the making. His opinion was shared at the Perak Academy Lecture "Inequality and Financial Crisis: Cause and Consequences" recently.

Dr Lim is a former international banker and academician currently a board member of Penang Institute. He is also a councillor with Penang Municipal Council and a consultant to South Centre, Geneva, the think tank for G-77.

He previously worked in major banks such as the Chemical Bank in New York, Credit Suisse First Boston in Singapore, Deutsche Bank and Standard Chartered Bank in Jakarta and the Asian Development Bank in Manila.

At the Perak Academy-sponsored lecture held at Symphony Suites Hotel, Ipoh, Dr Lim explained how inequality contributed to the current global financial crisis and how current monetary policy, especially quantitative easing, is causing greater asset inflation and bubble, exacerbating even greater inequality and distribution of wealth.

Inequality is both a cause and consequence of the recent Great Financial Crisis that was just experienced. These are mega trends faced in the 21st century, amongst all societies. Although the talk was general and global in perspective, many of the issues touched were relevant to the Malaysian economy.

One of the Structural Macroeconomic Imbalances is the imbalance between the rich and the poor. Functional Income Distribution, another measure of inequality, is how GDP is distributed between Labour (in terms of wage and benefits) and Capital.

Over the past 30 to 40 years, wage share has been declining in most countries. In Malaysia, it has gone down from about low 40% to low 30% of GDP from 1990 to 2008. As a comparison, in advanced countries, the wage share is about 50% of GDP.



The fundamental reason that wage share is declining is because productivity per hour has been increasing but compensation per hour has been increasing at a slower rate. As productivity increases, more of the increase in growth has been skimmed off by capital. As this is happening, there will be an impact on growth and demand.

Policy implications would include the need to fix inequality issues, regulate the financial sector and come up with policies that reduce inequality.

Emily

Tourism

Optimise Opportunities Says Nolee



The Perak State Government urged private companies to work with the three low-cost carriers and Malayan Railways Limited (KTMB) to create new tourism packages to attract tourists to the state, especially domestic travellers.

State Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi said that regular introduction of new packages would see returning visitors from other states in the country, as well as those from neighbouring countries, such as Singapore and Indonesia.

Addressing the media after a tourism programme with the state's tourism industry players recently, she said, "We want to see this flow of visitors to Perak as an opportunity for the private sector to tap. It'll also allow players in the travel industry to form smart partnerships with the private sector to create new packages or promotions.

Perak is a large state and it's not enough to spend just a day or two visiting. The state government, together with Tourism Malaysia Perak, will relook at the Indonesian market and be more aggressive in our efforts to fill up inbound flights from Medan. We'll also step up our marketing of medical tourism via Medan.

Another sector that we'll be looking into is the Japanese market for eco-tourism and homestay experience."

Nolee expressed hopes that these efforts will help local entrepreneurs generate as much income as possible through the tourism industry.

Luqman

Perak Targets Five Million Tourists

The Perak State Government is optimistic of achieving a target of 5 million tourists, domestic and foreign, to the state. The Electric Train Service (ETS) offered by Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) would definitely boost Perak's tourism industry, in conjunction with Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015.

Director of Tourism Malaysia (Perak) Ibrahim Seddiqi Talib expressed confidence that this would not be a difficult target to achieve based on last year's impressive performance whereby Perak recorded over five million visitors.

He also said the state government would continue with its strategic partnership with KTMB and nine local travel agencies to draw up interesting packages for tourists and to improve on existing tourism products.

"To further enhance our services, we're distributing brochures to passengers on ETS, particularly to tourists, so that they could refer to them for information on available activities and attractive destinations to visit within the state," he said at a press conference at the Ipoh Railway Station on Saturday, January 17.

Ibrahim acknowledged that the recent floods that hit many parts of the country, including Perak, affected approximately 10 to 20 per cent of tourist areas in the state such as the Royal Belum Rainforest.

However, he assured that remedial actions had been taken to restore the areas to their original conditions. Therefore, there would be a minimal impact on the state's tourism agenda.

He added that the industry would not experience an increase in prices despite the implementation of the Goods and Service Tax (GST) on April 1. There are several factors to offset the increase, such as the decline in oil prices which will help to defer costs.

KTMB Senior Marketing Manager Noordin Kimi said that routes to two new



destinations namely, Butterworth and Padang Besar, will be introduced in September.

"We hope to attract more passengers to our rail service without them worrying about safety. There's only one fatal accident in 1991," Nordin added.

Luqman

Opinion

By Harold Kong

The Malay Marker in the Non-Malays

I was watching the YouTube of the Taiwanese American musician Wang Lee Hom performing at Genting Highlands an almost flawless rendition of *Getaran Jiwa* marred only by his pronunciation of “irama” as “imara” where the word appeared a second time in the lyrics of the song.

I noted the predominantly Chinese Malaysian crowd screaming their heads off, which unfortunately detracts from the quality of our experience viewing the YouTube video now.

An important point to note is the fact that he sang a Malay song and this struck a chord with the crowd. A Mandarin or an English song would not have triggered such hysteria. It would have been wholly expected of the repertoire of an American who now makes his career in Taiwan. By singing *Getaran Jiwa*, Wang Lee Hom acknowledged their identity as Malaysians. And it so thrilled them, perhaps more so and certainly in a different way from other songs that he sang that evening.

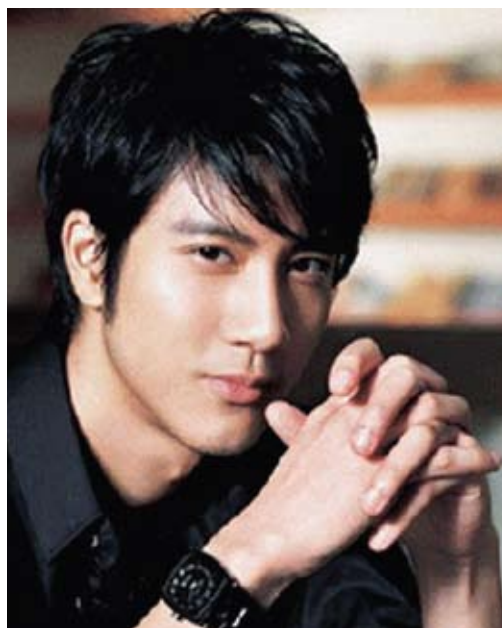
In my view, it is safe to assert of the Chinese Malaysian, that there is a Malay marker encoded in his consciousness and he is dying to express that; to tell the world that he belongs here. He is anxious, to be marked out as different from a Chinese from Taiwan or America or wherever.

This impulse, his *getaran jiwa* if you will, comes from his belief in the values that Tunku Abdul Rahman stood for, the land on which we stand, the water that we drink, the *nasi lemak*, the coconut trees, orchids and spiders that are local to this land, the Malay friends we had in school, the football heroes that we looked up to, and a thousand and one things that are subtle and small.

It is important for both the Malays and the Chinese in this country to know and understand this condition in the latter and turn that into positive energy.

I have, thus far, framed my observations in relation to Chinese Malaysians only because it was prompted by the crowd's reaction to Wang Lee Hom's rendition of *Getaran Jiwa*.

A more important and general statement that can be made without hesitation is that there is a Malay marker in the consciousness of all non-Malay Malaysians. There is no lack of desire on the part of all of them to belong here. But that natural tendency cannot be made more pronounced in a hurry using ill-advisedly hegemonic forms of social engineering, historical revisionism in the negationist sense and other emotionally



coercive methods.

All of us are Malaysians. Each culture is available for others to appreciate and emulate. There needs to be a more profound mutual respect of each other's cultures. And we also have a world culture that we all should be a part of. That mix of possible diversities should be readily available to all of us.

The current Government cultural policy is lost in some bureaucratic misunderstanding of what culture means. It is geared towards keeping the Malays in cultural solidarity and directing the non-Malays to accept the primacy of Malay culture using a set of policy carrots and sticks. This is a misdirection of policy, particularly in a world without cultural borders.

It seeks to restrain one group of people and force another group. Profoundly, it fails to respect what

Nature has already provided, that is, there is a *getaran jiwa* in each of us. Its spirit of sharing needs freedom, it needs attention, affection and arousal. Culture manifests and defines our values. Does current policy deal with culture with a high touch and bring people together?

Culture is best shared with others through friendly interaction with the expectation and hope that both sides will imbibe some of the other's offering. Whether in the long or short run, both sides should accept the prospect of change arising from the interaction.

That spirit of change can be discerned in the fact that it has been Malays who have actively spread the above Wang Lee Hom YouTube video on the Internet and both Malays and non-Malays have commented favourably on it. Malays on the Internet were thrilled to see a Chinese singing *Getaran Jiwa* with such style and sensuousness and found it interesting that the non-Malay crowd was enraptured with an iconic song.

There is another Wang Lee Hom rendition of the same song, a duet with Najwa Latiff who looked pretty in tudung and long dress, performing as his guest on the same evening. All Malaysians were proud to see a young Malaysian talent perform as a work partner of a foreign superstar. It is in these interactions that we feel the *getaran jiwa* of Malaysia. We will not feel it if we stay apart from each other or allow ourselves to be kept apart from each other.

Do view this YouTube video of the Taiwanese American musician Wang Lee Hom performing at Genting Highlands: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAk86k7T5B4>.



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.

St John's Community Help Service is holding an "Open Day & Bazaar" on Saturday, **February 7**, 9.30am - 12.30pm, at the St John's Education Centre, Jalan St John, Ipoh (opposite the Lembaga Air Perak). Come, find out about community services available, receive free medical check & blood test, delight in free drinks & snacks, purchase goods & items at discount prices, and enjoy friendship and fellowship! For more information, contact stjohnschsipoh@gmail.com, Facebook: url.www.facebook.com/stjohnschsipoh or telephone **05 254 8146**.

Public Forum: 'Updates on Stroke', Saturday **February 7**, 2pm at 4th Floor Conference Room, Hospital Fatimah Ipoh. By Dr Swa Beng Wei, Consultant Neurologist & Physician. Entrance is free. For more information, call: **05 545 5777** ext. **276**.

Young Writers' Workshop organised by Aliran in collaboration with the Canadian High Commission. Open to young writers and aspirants (18 to 35 years). Topic: "Gender and Vulnerable Groups". Facilitator: Dr Prema Devaraj of Aliran. The workshop will be held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel and Suites from **February 14 to 15**. Admission: Free.

Those interested can register online at www.aliran.com. For details email to: aliran.malaysia@yahoo.com Facebook: [AliranKesederanNegara](https://www.facebook.com/AliranKesederanNegara).

Flame Society Malaysia is offering a 3-day programme entitled "Leadership for Social Responsibility" to individuals aged 18 and above who are interested in engaging in social action. **February 27 to March 1** held at Flame's premises in Tambun. The programme emphasizes the important mindsets that one needs to have in order to engage in social action effectively. Participants of the programme will also be invited to serve as volunteers in Flame Camps, the flagship activity of Flame Society Malaysia. Flame Camps are 3-day camps targeted at young people aged 12 to 14, instilling in them positive leadership and moral values. Ask for a brochure by emailing Professor Dr Bala Ramasamy at bala.shanghai@gmail.com or call **016 557 6945**.

Census on Eurasian Families residing in and around Ipoh is being carried out by the Portuguese-Eurasian Association of Perak (PEAP). For more information, contact Colin **011 1658 9418**, Gloria **016 500 8925** or Flavian **012 576 7441**.

LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

Trees at Meru Golf Resort

We refer to Jose Voo's letter re the cutting of trees in Meru Golf Resort in IE204. We would like to clarify on two points. The first is that we are not cutting down trees for development. And the second is that we were performing a routine pruning job. We trim the trees so that cars and high SUVs and MPVs don't get scratched by the drooping branches as they proceed. This is part of our commitment as the management of the resort for upkeep and maintenance. Also regular pruning of trees

produce more luxuriant foliage and this is part of our efforts in continual improvement for the resort.

Florence Foo
GM Meru Valley Resort

Flood Management Education Needed

The beginning of 2015 has been plagued by the flood crisis with the next step to reconstruct the basic infrastructures like schools, hospitals, roads and bridges for which the government has allocated RM3.29 billion.

The flood crisis in the country isn't a new scenario but the late 2014 hit was unpredicted compared to the previous ones which I believe is not a new dilemma to a few.

Out of my experience in helping out the victims recently in Kampung Gajah, after asking them a few questions such as, "Is this situation something new to you all?" and the answer will be "No", or "have all of you prepared earlier for the situation?" and the same answer again, "No".

This shows that something is lacking in our society: lack of flood management education?

Among my worst experience helping out the victims was the difficulty of evacuating them out from the pedalaman (interiors) to the relief centres where the basic logistics like the roads are cut off due to the high water level and these victims are mostly from the age group between 60 and 95 years old. They seem to have prepared their minds to losing their lives along with their houses which they have built. This is not right!

We can overcome this if we have the right strategies and mechanisms to educate the people to protect them and to manage the crisis more systematically.

The first aspect is to change their mindset from being 'Myopic' towards dealing with facts. Among the other exposures to be included are,

Before the floods:

- Include flood awareness and preparedness in school programmes.
- Publicise flood risk areas, warning signs and evacuation plans.
- Collect local history of flooding and mark areas affected.
- Educate people about the causes, risks and warning signs of floods as well as the importance to evacuate during flood times.

Conduct Risk Assessments:

- Distribute flood hazard maps so that people know about flood prone areas.
- Flood maps help identify risks to individuals, enable preparation of emergency response plans, and determine where flood protection measures must be taken.
- Prepare a community action plan that explains what to do in case of flooding.

Before year end:

- Related departments should start alerting the people on flood preparedness.
- Remind to transfer their valuables to a higher ground.



Communicate to Stakeholders

It is very important for the district officer and penghulu (village headman) to have a good relationship with the people so that information can be passed on effectively and as a penduduk (resident), they will have to cooperate with their village heads as well.

Once people are made aware about flood management, I'm sure it will be easier to manage as well as to protect some of their belongings instead of losing everything like every other year.

Importantly, we have less than five years before we achieve Vision 2020 and developing a world class mentality is what we all should work towards instead of only working towards world class infrastructure.

I would also like to thank all the government agencies, departments, GLCs, corporate companies, NGOs and all the volunteers who were out on the grounds helping the victims to ease the situation. Well done and thank you!

Dr Venkates Rao.E
President, YouthCorp Malaysia

Nosh News



By SH Ong

Pics by SH Ong & Felicia Alexis

A Li Yaa Island Restaurant & Bar



Ipoh Foodies will be delighted to learn that a new eatery, *A Li Yaa Island Restaurant & Bar*, has just opened its doors to test your taste buds. Ipoh's first authentic Sri Lankan restaurant, *A Li Yaa's* launch has added to a string of exotic food outlets in this already renowned food paradise. The media and invited guests were treated to a generous and sumptuous sit-down lunch instead of the boring buffet usually associated with openings.

Diners were offered most of their signature dishes such as **Fish Cutlets**, **Lamb Rotti Rolls**, **Chicken String Hopper Kothu**, **Devilled Chicken Curry**, **Mutton Curry**, **Fish Sohti**, **Jaffna Prawn Curry**, **Eggplant Sambal** and their numerouno dish of **Sri Lankan Crab** cooked in black pepper. A few more dishes came one after the other. From their repertoire of items on their menu together with a wide range of their own concoction of exotic drinks and reasonable prices a second outing to this outlet is forthcoming.

D-G-R 2&3 De Garden, No. 3, Persiaran Medan,
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Advertising Permit	8456-29/06-2015/0259(P)
Validity Period	25/06/2013 - 24/06/2015
Approved Plan No.	OSCI/221-AJL/6/1/46/740/12
Land Encumbrances	Charged To Malayan Banking Berhad
Total units	100
Exp. Completion date	October 2015
Land tenure	Freehold
Price	Min RM 666,210 Max RM 1,267,800
Approving Authority	Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh