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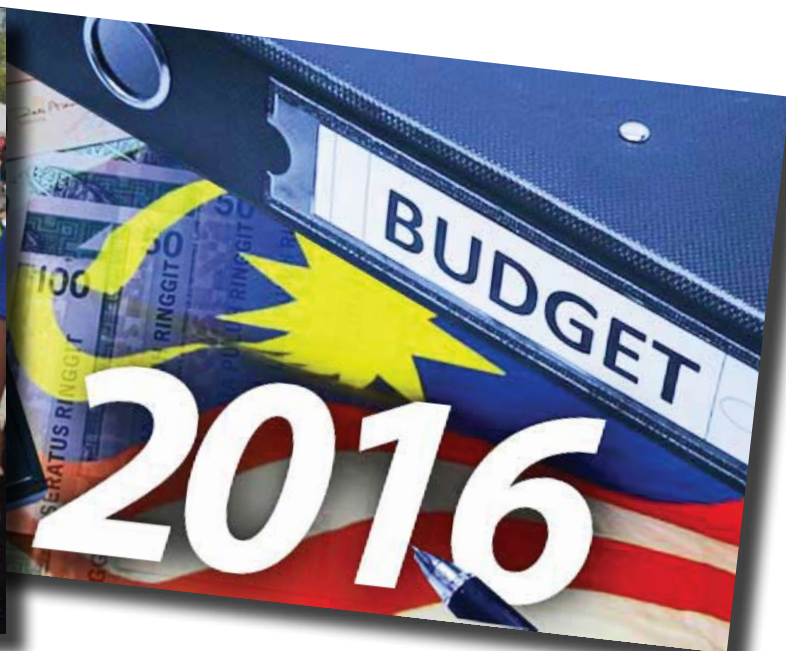
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2016: Hopes and Dreams for PERAKEANS

By Ili Aqilah and Nantini Krishnan



2015 has been yet another interesting year for each and everyone of us. For Perakeans and Ipohites, we witnessed the coronation of Perak Darul Ridzuan 35th Sultan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur who is known for his humble and friendly manner and in August, Dato' Zamri Man was sworn in as the new Ipoh Mayor. We also became the victim of the terrible haze where the Ipoh Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded unhealthy readings of 182. But resilience triumphed and we survived. As this year is about to end, Ipoh Echo sent its team out to the public and asked for their expectations and dreams for 2016 Ipoh.





Laments about rising costs and reduced disposable income causes concerns for most

The biggest lament that was unanimously agreed by all was the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) which has definitely affected everyone especially those with large families.

As a married woman whose main occupation is caring for the family, managing household affairs, and doing housework, **Sundrambal**, 58, doesn't technically have an official job outside her home. According to her, GST effects are great on lower income earners. Other than receiving money from Social Security Organization (SOCSO), she also had to work part-time from home after GST implementation to ensure she could take care of the family and raise her children. "The amount I am getting now from SOCSO is not sufficient for my family after GST. I hope in the coming year that the government will do something to reduce housewives' burden by reducing household prices or maybe the government can consider increasing the SOCSO amount."

Rabiah became a housewife after retiring from active employment. They were living a comfortable lifestyle, but now that her husband is the current and only breadwinner of her household, the escalating prices with GST added is becoming a worry. They also have a child who's in his 20s and studying in a private university in Kuala Lumpur. "As a housewife, I just want the government to reduce our burden by increasing the Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) amount in 2016," said Rabiah, 49.

For newlyweds, **Muhammad Adam**, 32, and his partner, GST doesn't affect them much but it does make them think twice about having a big family. "My wife and I work hard day and night. We even have our own online business. But if we want to have children, we might have to make a new plan. I for one hope that GST will be reduced to a lower percentage or even better, abolished," said the aspiring businessman.

More Job Opportunities Needed

The rising cost of living is forcing everyone to have more than one job to support themselves and their families. Be it part time work or side projects, Ipohites definitely wish Ipoh could offer them more. For **Jason Kok**, 26, from Kuala Lumpur who moved to Ipoh last year, he has set his mind to start his own business next year. "I moved to Ipoh because I couldn't cope with the cost of living in KL. My family is living abroad but I choose to stay and be independent. It is hard but I think I need to do this. I'm currently applying for another job to gain experience before opening up my own business next year," added the lad.

Meanwhile for **Advin**, 27, he is migrating for better job opportunities. Advin plans to migrate to Australia in order to obtain better work experiences as well as improve his academic qualifications. "However, I do have a desire to come back to Malaysia if I get a good job. I hope in the coming year there will be more career opportunities for Malaysians," said Advin to Ipoh Echo.

On the other hand, according to **Susan Ho**, a social media marketer and also piano teacher, it is getting impossible to live in Ipoh with a small salary. "I had to move out and reside in KL. Ipoh's food prices are getting higher, the taxi rates are ridiculous; the charges are way overpriced!" added Susan who also wished for more events to cater to the needs of youth; something in which Ipoh is sorely lacking.

"Ipoh does offer a lot of work opportunities, but salaries are not as attractive so naturally the youth will not stay here. Especially when the living cost in Ipoh has increased a lot over the years while salaries have not risen accordingly," said Susan.

Stronger Country for Better Future

It is hard not to mention the politicians when the public are asked about their hopes and dreams for Ipoh. According to **Raj** who is working as an engineer in Singapore, he is disappointed with the political situation of Malaysia. "However I think that instead of complaining about how bad things are in Malaysia, we should acknowledge and give due credit for what's good, and make contributions to improve what's bad. Every country has its good side and bad side. I will consider going back to Malaysia when the situation improves. I think it will make a great deal of difference if overseas Malaysians can have



Dhinakaran Govindasamy



Rosli Mansor

some faith in our own country and come back to make that difference. I hope things will get better if the country's new blood improves in 2016," said Raj.

"They should stay focused on building this country to greatness instead of involving themselves in unrelated issues. They should stay focused and priorities like on us, the rakyat," added **Sam**, 37, an avid follower of Malaysia's political issues.

"Malaysia now faces economic challenges and the Malaysian Ringgit is reaching lows against the dollar. The economy is now seen to be in trouble, with contracting growth, rising inflation, declining consumer and investor confidence, and a depreciating currency. I hope in coming years, Malaysia will be more stable in its economy. Other than that, I also hope in 2016 our country achieve unity among Malaysians," said **Rosli Mansor**, 45.

"I will say being in oil and gas, I am among the few who will hope for oil prices to improve. The oil and gas industry has been affected badly due to the low oil price, which some expect to dip even further. Many will be losing their jobs if the situation gets severe. Thus, I hope 2016 will stabilise the oil price, not very high, but to a stabilised price about 60-70-USD/bbl," said **Dhinakaran Govindasamy**, 29.

More Attractions and Tourist Spots

For **Annie**, 16, and her friends, they hope that Ipoh would have more tourist spots that suit the teens next year. "Everyone has been talking about the murals. Now we are looking forward to the opening of MAPS theme park!" said Annie. Recently during the official opening of Cititel Express hotel, State Executive for Arts, Culture, Tourism, Communication and Multimedia, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi announced that the theme park will be open to public in May 2016.

"Perak Tourism and Tourism Malaysia are working hard to attract more tourists; both domestic and international, to come and visit Ipoh and Perak," said Dato' Nolee. For three consecutive years, Perak has received more domestic tourists compared to other states in Malaysia.

"I come and travel to Ipoh every fortnight for the food. I am an avid foodie and I have to say Ipoh is the best!" said **Syamimi Adzha**, 25 who doesn't mind traveling from Kuala Lumpur to Ipoh. However she admitted that Ipoh needs to have more tourist spots; something that would be suitable for families or big groups.

More Opportunities for Business Traders

Cheong, footwear trader said that wage increases from RM900 to RM1000 in peninsular Malaysia and RM800 to RM920 in Sabah and Sarawak as announced by the government in the Budget 2016 will likely cause many small traders to be out of business. "Traders are already struggling to pay the RM900 minimum wage. Now with it being raised, additional burdens are being put on our businesses," said Cheong. He hopes the government will reconsider its decision. Another trader, Fahmi said his hope for 2016 is for government to reconsider on GST implementation as well as new wage increases announced in the Budget 2016.

Hopes for a Brighter 2016

Year 2015 has been quite a tough year and one simply can't help but wish for a brighter year with better amenities and facilities and more assistance from the government sector in 2016. We at Ipoh Echo wish 2016 will be a great year for everyone. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for supporting Ipoh Echo and happy new year. Cheers!



Susan Ho



Syamimi Adzha

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• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

HOPING FOR A BETTER YEAR

Developments in Ipoh have been encouraging of late. Mayor Zamri Man proved his mettle by walking the talk...

December is fast descending on us and soon the New Year will be celebrated with much gusto and merriment. It is a ritual many of us would not miss for all the goodies and the miseries this wretched world has to offer. It makes me wonder how Malaysians can still smile when things around them are falling apart. Is this part and parcel of our mental makeover or is it our destiny?

I have no answers for this less-than-favourable condition. Rising cost of living, spiralling out of control exacerbated by an electricity rate revision, will nullify whatever dreams of a better 2016 that many hold on to. It is hopes against hopes just like a grieving Cho-Cho-San pining for her non-returning American naval husband in Puccini's operetta, "Madame Butterfly".

Will this bleak situation dissipate, paving way for a brighter year ahead? Only time will tell. As things are today there is no telling what lies in our path. The opening of our markets with the signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement in 2016, the weakening ringgit, dwindling oil reserves, the never-ending 1MDB scandal and the hastily passed National Security Act are some of the excess baggage the long-suffering *rakyat* have to carry into the New Year.

Notwithstanding this, developments in Ipoh have been encouraging of late. Mayor Zamri Man proved his mettle by walking the talk. His car-free day, conducted on a trial basis, in November has gained traction with the public. The occasion has presented the mayor an opportunity to mingle with Ipohites and to see their problems, first-hand. This has prompted him to find ways to improve the city's neglected infrastructure. Road shoulders are repainted, parking bays redefined, trees trimmed, clogged drains cleared, illegal rubbish dumps reduced, the out-of-commission toilets at the public pools site repaired and the unsightly Kinta Riverfront Park (People's Park) revamped.

The painting job cost RM810,000, toilet repairs RM287,680 while RM150,000 was spent to enliven the riverfront park. It is money well spent and when the Council is transparent when it comes to spending Ipohites' money, no one complains. That should be the way, as making Ipoh a liveable city has long been the aspiration of residents.



Hoi An, Vietnam

I took a deserving break away from the maddening crowd recently. My two-week stint took me to Hanoi and Da Nang in Vietnam. As was the practice, my wife, son, daughter-in-law and grandkids were in tow. It was a family outing, minus the frills. A time for fellowship and camaraderie as is expected out of any closed-knit family unit.

Considering what Vietnam has gone through from the 1950s right through the 1970s, the country's transformation is phenomenal. I can still recall how we were deployed along the coasts of Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and Johor in the late 1970s to stem the flow of Vietnamese refugees fleeing a Communist-overrun South Vietnam following the withdrawal of American troops in 1975.

The moniker "boat people" was given for a reason. The refugees fled with just their meagre belongings traversing the pirate-infested South China Sea in wooden fishing boats seeking a safe haven down south. Many perished and countless bodies were washed ashore. The dead were buried in mass graves along the shores and I was privy to it. Incidentally, I was among the pioneers of Pulau Bidong having been the settlement's guardians during its formative years.

South of Da Nang is the ancient seaport town of Hoi An. The town has been preserved in all its grandeur and was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1999. It is one of the foremost attractions Vietnam has to offer to tourists, especially Westerners who come in droves to enjoy its rustic charms.

If a war-ravaged country like Vietnam, which knew no peace until 40 years ago, could do the unthinkable, I don't see why we could not? Ipoh's Old Town has much to offer. If only the Council could do a Hoi An, Old Town would be Ipoh's star attraction. The ball is in Zamri's court.

This is among my many hopes for the New Year. Wishful thinking! Nope, I am just being a little optimistic.

EYE HEALTH - TAKE IT EASY

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



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

Eye stress affects a large majority of the population especially in this day and age. This of course is no surprise as in today's world, millions of people do their daily work and socialising on a computer, tablet or cell phone. The eyes can of course suffer from eye stress since our eyes constantly are at work. The term **EYE STRAIN** or **EYE STRESS** is frequently used to describe a group of symptoms which are related to use of the eyes. Eye strain is a symptom, not an eye disease. Eye strain occurs when your eyes get tired from intense use, such as driving a car for extended periods, reading, or working at the computer. If you have any eye discomfort caused by looking at something for a long time, you can call it eye strain.

The medical term for eye strain is **asthenopia**. The symptoms of ocular fatigue, tired eyes, blurring vision, headaches, irritated eyes, and occasionally doubling of the vision are brought on by concentrated use of the eyes for visual tasks. Some people, while concentrating on a visually intense task, unconsciously clench the muscles of their eyelids, face, temples, and jaws and develop discomfort or pain from use of those muscles. **Eye stress** affects a large majority of the population. Eye stress is as much **a concern as any other illness of the body**. It makes the eyes tired and you **drained of energy**. Eye stress actually **affects our well-being** because the eyes are used constantly at work throughout the waking hours of a day for various tasks including even socialising!

Briefly, common **ACTIVITIES** that may cause eye strain include:

- Computer use and computer games.
- Reading long hours.
- Watching television for long periods.
- Driving long distances.
- Sewing & Knitting.

Contributing ENVIRONMENTAL factors that can add to eye stress:

- Poor lighting
- Improper lighting
- Low screen contrast levels
- Excessive brightness

PERSONAL factors that may contribute to eye strain:

- Poor and uncorrected vision (refractive errors)
- Poor posture
- Alcohol and drug use



SOME POINTERS:

1. ADJUST THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR SCREEN LOWER
2. AVOID SITTING TOO CLOSE TO THE SCREEN
3. PROPER REFRACTIONS – Get proper spectacles if needed.
4. KEEP THE ROOM BRIGHTNESS OPTIMAL
5. SIT CORRECTLY AT YOUR WORKSTATION
6. CHANGE THE FONT SIZE TO MAKE VIEWING COMFORTABLE
7. TAKE BREAKS
8. GET EYES CHECKED ANNUALLY AND TREATED FOR ANY EYE PROBLEMS

And of course, try to figure out what element of the fatiguing activity is causing the problem and reduce it.

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

In The Name of My Father's Estate

Episode 48 • by Peter Lee

After the Trust Company Representative (TCR) discovered from Dave (Lawyer) that there was an agreement pre-signed by the first family of Lee Sr and Connie (Lee Sr's 2nd wife) on the sale of her share entitlement to Lee Sr's shares of 70% in three companies to the first family for a consideration of RM5.4 million, TCR told Dave that this sale can be executed only after the Letter of Administration (L.A.) of Lee Sr has been obtained. As for the shares in an investment Company which Connie and Lee Sr are holding 50% each, TCR went further and enquired from Lee Sr's first family whether they were willing to renounce their rights of entitlement to Lee Sr's 50%. TCR was informed that the first family was not interested in claiming Lee Sr's 50% in this company as they have ascertained that the company's worth is too negligible.



Once the discussion with regards to the shares in the family Companies were settled, Dave informed TCR that there are three cars under Lee Sr's name. TCR asked "Was there any decision of distribution for these cars? In reply, Dave said "I have informed the family that it will be much easier to sell them and distribute the net proceeds to the families if they want to distribute it according to Intestacy Law. However, there was no decision on this yet." To this, TCR said "I agree to your suggestion. Otherwise, they could choose another option of some family members choosing the respective three cars and the rest of them to renounce their rights to the entitlement."

"For your information, this may be a small matter but the transport department will request for the Letter of Administration (L.A.) to ascertain who is the Administrator. Thereafter, these vehicles will be transferred to the Administrator and this is definitely going to be us. Thereafter, if the decision is to sell, then I will prepare the letter of consent for all the beneficiaries to sign for the sale. However, if some family members decide to own the vehicles, then the rest of the family members would have to renounce their entitlement rights."

"In case the family members decide to buy from each other, then I have to prepare a sale and purchase agreement between the buyer and seller for transfer to the buyer. Anyway, I will confirm with the family members on their decision." TCR continued and asked Dave whether there are any more Malaysian assets involved. In reply, Dave said "No". TCR said "With this concluded, I think I can commence the application for L.A. in Malaysia first. Oh by the way, do you happen to have the death certificate of the parents of Lee Sr. As you know, his parents are entitled to 1/4 of this estate and since they are no longer around then we have to eliminate this entitlement by way of proving with their Death Certificates. In response, Dave said "I have asked the family members and they don't have it." TCR then said "In that case, then I have to see whether he has any other surviving siblings to obtain the Death Certificates because it will be easier and faster. Otherwise, we have to apply for it and in the event if we still fail to obtain them then we would have to apply for presumption of death with the High Court."

To be continued...

Peter Lee wishes our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He can be reached at: **012-5078825/ 05-2554853** or excelsec@ms.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; S.S. Mubarak, Jln Sultan Yussuf; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.

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Before 1Malaysia, there was Yasmin Ahmad

Just before Merdeka, and major festivals, like Chinese New Year, Deepavali or Hari Raya, all Malaysians used to look forward to a Yasmin Ahmad commercial. These short clips were poignant scenes portraying Malaysian society, and most of the adverts, left a lump in one's throat. Many were tearjerkers too.

They often depicted events we once experienced, like the feeling of togetherness, or a future we should not ever lose sight of, one of tolerance and a love for our fellow human beings. Most of Yasmin's stories were of hope, forgiveness and compassion.

The Johore-born Yasmin infused the people of different races and religions, who lived under the Malaysian sun, as one people. She liked to impart a message of togetherness and inclusivity, and of a people united. Despite being of different races, these people grew up with similar goals and ideals, and were gripped by the same fears and anxieties.

Yasmin wanted to show that we were all compassionate and forgiving, and that Malaysians were capable of unity. Perhaps, it would be true to say, that before '1Malaysia', we had Yasmin Ahmad.

In July 2009, at a meeting, with singer Siti Nurhaliza and officials from Media Prima, about a new project, Yasmin appeared to rest her head, on her hands, on a table, as if she was tired. Unbeknownst to everyone, she had suffered a stroke. Despite having brain surgery to alleviate the cerebral haemorrhage, Yasmin died two days later. She was only 51 years old. Malaysia lost an acclaimed film director and a champion of unity. Her films and advertisements are sorely missed, to this day.

Last year, as a special dedication to an inspiring Malaysian, Google dedicated a special doodle to celebrate what would have been her 56th birthday, on January 7, 2014.

Like most highly creative and unconventional people, Yasmin's works, like her films which touch on sensitive issues of race and religion, were appreciated abroad, more than in Malaysia.

She has won numerous international awards, despite being harassed by the authorities at home. She has been mocked by the conservative Muslim clerics in Malaysia, but she remained defiant and said that, "Only God can deter me (from making films)".

In an interview with Reuters, her film, "Muallaf" (The Convert), was singled out for condemnation by Muslim clerics who criticised Yasmin because they deemed that it was un-Islamic for the star, a Muslim actress, 21-year-old Sharifah Amani, to have shaved her head and acted beside a Christian Chinese character.

Yasmin brushed aside the criticism and said, "We have nothing against them (the clerics). We wish they will stop attacking us."

One of her chief critics at the time, was the equally controversial and divisive cleric, the Perak Mufti, Harussani Idris Zakaria, who said, "As Muslims, we should not sacrifice our religion for the sake of wanting to be popular."

Last month, the "Yasmin at Kong Heng" museum, which is dedicated to Yasmin Ahmad, and is situated in 89-91, Old Block Apartments, Jalan Sultan Yussuf, Ipoh, was under threat of closure, because of a lack of funds.

The museum, which was started by family and friends of Yasmin, was inspired by Yasmin's mother, Inom Yon. The museum opened to the public in November 2014 and Yasmin's sister, Orked Ahmad said, "My mother established the museum, so that the spirit of Yasmin lives on".

Orked explained that extra funds are needed to upgrade the displays and services, and allow the museum to open four days a week, instead of only at the weekend. She said, "We want to do many things. We want to create a virtual museum, renovate the materials inside the museum and so on, but the problem is that we do not have enough money."

The museum started fundraising through a crowdfunding campaign, called "Start Some Good", and has set a goal of US\$70,000 (RM293,598) to serve its museum visitors.

The museum has the backing of local, independent film directors, such as director Liew Seng Tat, and musician Pete Teo who said, "Most of us, whether you are aware or not, owe a debt to Yasmin Ahmad."

One wonders if Petronas, for which Yasmin made many of her adverts, will also come to the museum's aid.

(NB: If you wish to donate, the phone number for Yasmin at Kong Heng is 05 241 8977)



by Mariam Mokhtar

Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician, Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

Iron Deficiency Anemia

Iron deficiency anemia is a condition due to insufficient iron in which blood lacks adequate healthy red blood cells. Without enough iron, your body can't produce enough of a substance in red blood cells that enables them to carry oxygen. Initially, it can be so mild that it goes unnoticed. But as the body becomes more deficient in iron and anemia worsens, the signs and symptoms intensify.

Iron deficiency anemia symptoms may include: extreme fatigue; pale skin; weakness; shortness of breath; frequent infections; headache; dizziness; soreness of your tongue; brittle nails; or unusual cravings such as ice, dirt or starch.

Causes

- Women with heavy periods are at risk because they lose blood during menstruation.
- Chronic blood loss within the body from a peptic ulcer, a hiatal hernia, a colon polyp or colorectal cancer.
- Gastrointestinal bleeding can result from regular use of some pain relievers.
- A lack of iron in your diet.
- An inability to absorb iron. Iron from food is absorbed into your bloodstream in your small intestine. A disorder which affects your intestine's ability to absorb nutrients from digested food or if part of your small intestine has been bypassed or removed surgically it can lead to iron deficiency anemia.
- Pregnancy.

Blood test

- Red blood cell size and color, low Serum iron levels
- Hemoglobin. Lower than normal hemoglobin levels indicate anemia.
- Ferritin. This protein helps store iron in your body, and a low level of ferritin usually indicates a low level of stored iron.

If your blood work indicates iron deficiency anemia, your doctor may order additional tests to identify an underlying cause, such as:

- Endoscopy. Doctors often check for bleeding from a hiatal hernia, an ulcer or the stomach with the aid of endoscopy. In this procedure, a thin, lighted tube equipped with a video camera is passed down your throat to your stomach. This allows your doctor to view your esophagus — the tube that runs from your mouth to your stomach — and your stomach to look for sources of bleeding.
- Colonoscopy. To rule out lower intestinal sources of bleeding, your doctor may recommend a procedure called colonoscopy. A thin, flexible tube equipped with a video camera is inserted into the rectum and guided to your colon. You're usually sedated during this test. A colonoscopy allows your doctor to view inside some or all of your colon and rectum to look for internal bleeding.
- Ultrasound. Women may also have a pelvic ultrasound to look for the cause of excess menstrual bleeding, such as uterine fibroids.

Treating underlying causes of iron deficiency

Depending on the cause, treatment may involve:

- Medications, such as oral contraceptives to lighten heavy menstrual flow
- Antibiotics and other medications to treat peptic ulcers
- Surgery to remove a bleeding polyp, a tumor or a fibroid.

If iron deficiency anemia is severe, you may need iron given intravenously or you may need blood transfusions to help replace iron and hemoglobin quickly.

Iron supplements

- Take iron tablets on an empty stomach. If possible, take your iron tablets when your stomach is empty. However, because iron tablets can upset your stomach, you may need to take your iron tablets with meals.
- Don't take iron with antacids. Medications that immediately relieve heartburn symptoms can interfere with the absorption of iron. Take iron two hours before or four hours after you take antacids.
- Take iron tablets with vitamin C improves the absorption of iron.
- Iron deficiency can't be corrected overnight. You may need to take iron supplements for several months or longer to replenish your iron reserves.

For more information call Saravana.K Gastroenterologist and Liver Specialist Clinic at Hospital Fatimah (05 548 7181) or email gastrosara@gmail.com.

Han Chin Pet Soo



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ON IPOH FOOD

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

Pics by Ginla Chew



SeeFoon Changes Her Mind about STG@Old Town



I am a self confessed insatiable Foodie. And curious to boot. Therefore when a new eatery opens, I make it a point to visit and explore. But as my dear readers may be aware, I am totally focused on quality of food and that is what I write about.

The ambiance and decor may be stunning (STG in Old Town is spectacular) but these two features will not get me or my foodie friends returning if the quality of food is not up to scratch. Which was the case when I went for the first time to STG for a meal when they first opened. Never setting foot inside ever since, I was surprised when my Foodie Kaki Ginla Chew invited me there for lunch but to my delight and surprise, I found Jessie Yong, formerly of Indulgence, managing the place.

And has the food quality undergone a complete transformation! With Jessie helming the Food and Beverage side including getting into the kitchen herself to prepare some of the dishes, the difference was almost like night and day.

Yes there are still a few dishes that don't work so well yet but all in all the food quality has improved so much that a meal in STG within this beautifully restored heritage shophouse is now on my "where-can-I-get-a-good-western-meal-in-comfort-and-style" list of restaurants to invite guests and visitors.

So without much ado, allow me to introduce to you my favourite dishes from STG. Firstly the pasta is 'al dente' which for me is the most telling of a good kitchen despite what I'm constantly being told that Ipohites like their pasta soft. My stance is that a good kitchen caters for all tastes. Ask guests how they'd like their pasta and serve accordingly, would be my recommendation. But of course if the kitchen is set up where the pasta is precooked and even frozen, then there is no hope for 'al dente'.

Thankfully STG does not pre-cook its pasta. The **angel hair pasta served with slices of smoked duck** had an added nuance with slices of water chestnuts lending crunch to an already al dente pasta. Chilli flakes and fried Thai Basil lent pizzazz to the dish – **RM26**. Another, a deluxe version of **Rigatoni in a thick cream sauce** with earthy black truffle slices, topped with Danish caviar and infused with truffle oil was yumiliciously rich and creamy, almost too much to eat the whole portion – **RM42**. The secret to the creamy sauce, according to Jessie? Adding egg yolk to the sauce towards the end.

I had on two occasions tried their **soups**, first the **roasted pumpkin** and subsequently

a **Cauliflower soup** with smoked chicken, both umami and creamily smooth with the creaminess coming from the pureed vegetable rather than just from cream – **RM12/13**.

Their pizzas are highly recommendable. I particularly enjoyed their **Roman Anchovy pizza**, with turkey ham, rocket leaves, oven dried tomatoes and mixed cheese. The pizza crust is thin and crispy and do ask for extra chilli flakes to sprinkle – **RM28**.

Of the two **salads** I've enjoyed, I had difficulty deciding which was the better of the two. The **Pomelo with mango**, and fresh prawns had a sesame dressing dressing (RM22) which lent it a fusion touch while their **Smoked Chicken and Avocado** with cheese, pine nuts, green apple, and pumpkin was paired with a pesto vinaigrette – **RM24**. Another starter of note

is their **pan fried fresh mushrooms with basil** which is excellent, firm, and not soggy like in some other places where I've had this – **RM17**.

Of their meats, the one I recommend the most is the chilled **Black Angus Rib Eye**, a generous slab (250gm) of juicily tender steak served with a black pepper sauce on the side – **RM66**.

There will be a special menu for **Christmas Eve and Christmas Day** consisting of a four course meal with the addition of a Mocktail for **RM88+/pax**. A **kid's menu** of two courses and Juice is set at **RM48+/pax**. These will be available throughout the two days.

STG Boutique Cafe@Old Town

18 & 20 Jalan Tun Sambanthan,
Tel: 05 243 3116; 05 253 3116
Facebook: stgboutiquecafe



The Bread Winner



I just love Carbs. Especially bread. Who hasn't been seduced by the smell of freshly toasted bread, slathered with a generous dollop of butter and topped with your choice of jam or whatever. However, for many years in Ipoh, I have had to tolerate flabby soft rolls or indifferent slabs of factory made loaves under the excuse of "well in Ipoh people like their bread like this!!"

Now I have found the winning bread: Chef Sam Lau's **Artisan Handmade Bread (AHB)** which are crusty, robust and hearty breads that have 'oomph' in them. And usually with a sourdough base which according to my research is more digestible than standard loaves and more nutritious too. They also render the gluten in flour more digestible and less likely to cause food intolerance. This is why Chef Sam says his breads are a healthier option and why his Artisan handmade bread (AHB) are a hit with Ipohites.

A classically trained chef who has decided to "come out of the closet" and declare his passion for baking, Chef Sam is all set to offer delicious artisan handmade bread and at the same time educate Ipohites on the niceties and nuances of AHB – the kind that lingers on your tastebuds long after eating; and brings out the best in all the foods you serve it with; the kind that makes your friends ask "...where did you get this?"

What sets AHB apart from other breads is the meticulous and painstaking process to make it. "Unlike the usual bread you can find in any bakery, AHB uses only three main ingredients; flour, yeast and water. I cultivate the sourdough from scratch which takes two weeks for each batch and make each bread with my own two hands," said the passionate chef cum baker.

AHB's main product is its sourdough bread that is good to have alone or with a spread of butter or jam. Currently AHB offers a selection of sourdough bread such as **Rex Bavarian Dark** (Dark Roggena roasted wheat malt flour and barley malt) **RM13**, **Cheddar Cheese** (RM13), **Sundried Tomato/Black Olive/Garlic/Italian Herbs** (RM15), **Swiss Muesli** (RM13), **Rye/Multi Seed** **RM13**, **Tripple Chocolate Chips** (RM15) and December's bread of the month, **Parisian Fougasse** at **RM10**. All their breads are made without artificial preservatives.

Customers who are keen on getting a taste of AHB can contact Sam at **016 597 8922**. The minimum order is three to four loaves and please give two days advance notice to avoid disappointment. Delivery and pick up point for collection on Tuesday and Friday from 12pm to 3pm only. For more information check out the Artisan Handmade Bread page on Facebook.



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COMMUNITY

AEON Official Opening



AEON CO. (M) Bhd (AEON), officially held the grand opening of AEON Mall Ipoh Klebang on Saturday, November 21. The RM66 million retail mall is AEON's 24th mall in Malaysia and the 5th in Perak.

AEON Mall Ipoh Klebang is designed with a different concept and theme. The ground floor features international brands where some of them are first in Perak. The options include high street fashion brands such as UNIQLO and H&M, as well as popular designer brands such as Tissot, Kiehl's and Yoshinoya & Hanamaru.

"AEON Mall Ipoh Klebang is a welcome addition to the fast developing township of Klebang. I also commend AEON for providing an avenue to support the local entrepreneurs by allocating special areas in the mall to sell and promote the local products such as jelly, candies, salted fish and seaweeds," said Dato' Hamzah Bin Zainuddin, Minister of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism.

In conjunction with the grand opening of AEON Mall Ipoh Klebang, the Malaysian AEON Foundation donated a total of RM30,000 to three selected villages – Kampung Sempeneh, Kampung Batu 20 and Kampung Rantau Panjang with each village receiving RM10,000 each.

Dato' Abdullah Mohd Yusof, President of Malaysian AEON Foundation, and Chairman of AEON Co. (M) Bhd said, "Celebrating, giving and sharing the cheer with the underprivileged gives us a sense of accomplishment and purpose in life. We believe little acts of kindness can pave the way for the family of Klebang and enrich their lifestyle."

Nantini

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COMMUNITY

500 Children get Free Passes To Asia's First Animation Theme Park

In conjunction with the year-end school holidays, Movie Animation Park Studios (MAPS) recently surprised 500 children from eight charity homes in Perak with the special privilege to experience the theme park upon its opening in mid-2016.

Under the #MAPSweCare corporate social responsibility initiative, the invitations by MAPS is part of the company's continuous efforts to bring joy to the children and reach out to the community.

Delighted to be part of the list of homes is Rumah Anak-anak Yatim Yayasan Amanah An-Nur Maisarah in Chemor, Perak. During MAPS' recent visit to the home, Dr Fazillah binti Nordin, the Founder, enthused, "The children are overjoyed by the special invitation to visit MAPS, especially, when our Home is just nearby the Park."

Meanwhile, Annie Magaret, the headmistress of Sekolah Semangat Maju (Terencat Akal), Ipoh said, "We are very grateful for having corporate organisations such as MAPS to include our children in their community engagements. There is nothing better than seeing the joy in their faces and I believe that upon completion of the theme park, the children will have a great experience! I truly thank MAPS for the kind gesture."

Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of MAPS, Darren McLean explained, "Through our #MAPSweCare programme, we hope to continue touching the hearts of the people and spread some joy within the community in our unique ways. We welcome other corporate organisations to join us in making a difference within the community and inspire the underprivileged to Live Their Dreams."

The #MAPSweCare programme has collaborated with various organisations for community outreach initiatives. Earlier this year, MAPS together with DYMM Raja Permaisuri Perak Tuanku Zara Salim, visited the Paediatric Ward of Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh during the holy month of Ramadan. In the same month, MAPS also shared the festive joy with the underprivileged students at Sekolah Semangat Maju, a special school managed by the Perak Association for the Intellectually Disabled (PAFID) dedicated to children with slow learning ability.

The theme park will launch its tickets by January 2016. Visit www.mapsperak.com for the latest updates.



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.

Sharpened Word next literary matinee meets on Saturday December 19, 2.30pm to 5pm at Sepaloh Art gallery No. 16 Jalan Sultan Iskandar (Hugh Low Street). Our purpose is to celebrate all things writing and literature, and to open up the inner workings of the writer's mind to a general audience. For more info please visit our face book page: www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta.

Perak Senior Citizens Club (SCC) would be organising the "SCC Zumbalicious Xmas Party" on Sunday, **December 20** at 3pm at No. 2 & 2A, Lintasan Perajurit 11B, Taman Ipoh, 31400 Ipoh. Bring along family members for fun zumba, yummy food and live band carolling! For further info kindly contact Cecilia at **013 438 4388**.

Christmas and New Year Celebration organised by the Love and Welfare Society Kinta, **December 28, 7.30pm** at YMCA Ipoh. Invitations have been extended to various children's homes, senior citizens from old folk's homes, handicapped children and single mothers. Others who wish to join are cordially invited to participate at this annual meaningful festive season. For reservation, contact Dr James Ratnam 012 463 7435 or Pavithra Daniel **010 22 7435**.

YWCA Ipoh Food Fair on January 9, 2016, from 9am to 2pm at YWCA, 132 Persiaran Anderson, Ipoh. Food fair coupons, at RM 10 per booklet, can be purchased from the YWCA Ipoh office. For more information, contact Mrs Linda Goon at **05 241 7635** or **017 503 8328**.

Park jetty closed for renovation. Ipoh City Council (MBI) has closed the Gunung Lang Park jetty for up-grading works for a period of five months beginning Monday, October 26, 2015 to Saturday, March 26, 2016. The boat service in the lake operates as usual from a temporary jetty.

The Dementia Day-care Centre is open daily from 9am till 3pm. The centre also holds support group meetings every **2nd Saturday and Monday of each month**. All carers who have love ones with dementia and others are welcome to attend. These are sharing sessions. For more details kindly call April at **05 241 1691** before 3pm.

Performances of Traditional Songs and Dance every Friday every week from March 25 at 8pm (except fasting month). Held at Kompleks Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Perak, Jalan Caldwell, Off Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh. Come and experience dances like Dikir Fusion, Nego (Kelantan), Joget Kete Lembu, Tangtung, Kollatum, Joget Malaysia and traditional music. Free admission. For enquiries, contact: Puan Nor Fairus Binti Alias **018 958 9049**.

YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club Mission to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth. The group meets every **2nd & 4th Wednesday** at 7.45pm at 211 Jalan Raja Musa Aziz (Anderson Road), 30300 Ipoh. Contacts: Ramesh Victor **016 566 2866**, May Foo **017 466 0943** or Nur Aida **013 346 9490**.

The next Perak Academy Lecture 'The Big Five' by Mohd Khan Momin Khan (Retired Director General of Department of Wildlife and National Parks) will be held at 8pm on **January 15, 2016** at 1 Jalan Tun Sambanthan (Ground Floor), 30000 Ipoh, Perak. Please call **05 241 3742** or **016 221 3742** for more details.



KUALA LUMPUR KEPONG BERHAD – 38 Years of Providing Scholarships to Deserving Malaysians

Eight (8) high-achieving scholars were recently awarded the notable KLK scholarship to pursue their education at institutes of higher learning around Malaysia. The scholarship is in its 38th year and has seen KLK contributing steadily over the years to spur our young children in their pursuit of education.

The 2015 KLK Scholars were selected from a pool of 413 hopeful applicants.

Apart from its existing 30 scholars, these 8 new students will be granted scholarships totaling RM303,250 for the full duration of their studies.

The KLK Scholarship programme was started by the late Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng, the Founder Chairman of the company with the programme continuing under his son, KLK's current CEO, Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian. In its early days, the scholarship was geared towards assisting the children of KLK's employees who came from the lower income bracket as well as

realising the potential of high performing candidates who were in need of funds for their tertiary education. Over the years the KLK Scholarship moved to focus on developing high-potential students to become future talent for the company's expansion and growing need for human resources. As part of their development, scholars are invited to intern with the company and, if successful, are offered a position with the company

where they will be mentored. Previous scholars have successfully progressed to hold leadership positions within the company.

Recognising that there are many factors that contribute to performance at school, scholarships continue to be provided through the Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Foundation for those from the lower-income bracket continuing the culture of giving, something that is ingrained in company culture under the leadership of the Lee family.



Scholars together with KLK Management

Arts & Culture

Second Sharpened Word Flourishes

In the Sepaloh Art Centre on Saturday, November 21, it suddenly dawned on me how fortunate the attendees of the second Sharpened Word session were, to be able to glimpse into three writers' world, each outstanding in their own right.

During the three-hour literary matinee, Ipoh Echo talked to the three featured writers whose literary labour of love had brought the audience on a journey of emotions.

Sixty-year-old poet Bridget Eu Yoke Lin, a peace-loving Ipohite, told Ipoh Echo, "My poetry is meant to make people happy and give hope to people's dreams. Hence, it focuses on love, peace, nature and brotherhood." Being a journalist was her childhood dream but being in the profession of caring, she sees the positive side of life and puts it into words. Currently, the life member of the World Congress of Poets is fully involved in the writing of poetry and has published a total of two books besides having given readings in Japan, San Francisco, USA and Singapore. Following is her advice for other poets out there: "Write with your heart. Poetry is the gateway to your heart and nothing is better than inspiring people."

Bridget's first book, "When Footsteps Merge" which was launched last year, is sold out in all major bookstores. Meanwhile, her second book, "A Horizon of Jewels" which is launched this year is available in local bookstores. Both priced at RM20, interested readers may contact her at bridgeteu@yahoo.com to get copies of her book.

Kuching-born writer-in-progress, Sharmini Segari Gunasagaram has lived in Ipoh for the last 26 years. The mother of a 12-year-old completed the first draft of her first novel, "Stolen Plots" last year. The short story she read that day entitled "The Blue Shirt", was done in 24 hours! "My interest in writing started during my teenage years. I started by writing complaint letters to major newspapers, which I have kept till now!" she shared. Citing Sophie Kinsella's "Can You Keep a Secret" which she has read five times as her favourite, writing funny stories is what she likes to do. "To make people laugh and forget their problems," she added.

Meanwhile, Penang-born 33-year-old playwright Toby Teh Tze Chien told Ipoh Echo what keeps him doing what he is doing since the age of 7: "It's like my heart beating, a part of who I am. When I write, it just comes out, there is no consciousness to it".

Toby's scripts and plays have been featured at KLPAC's open-mic event The Platform, KLPAC Short and Sweet Theatre Festival and the Sydney edition of Short and Sweet. He is currently working on producing full-length plays, a few short film projects adapted from his plays and a young adult novel. For beginner writers, he advised, "Ask and accept criticism from good critics. A lot of junior writers tend to get a bit sensitive when they get criticised."

Reuniting with my former school teacher, May Foo, whose involvement in language and literary education spans three decades, was an added joy. The warm-hearted educator was the facilitator of the day.

Everyone is welcomed to Sharpened Word's next gathering which will be held on Saturday, December 19 from 2.30pm-5pm at Sepaloh Art Centre. There is ample parking along Jalan Bijeh Timah, around the mosque and directly opposite the Sepaloh Art Centre. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta> or email its coordinator, Peter J. Bucher at sharpenedword.kinta@gmail.com.

Mei Kuan



Dancing For Charity

The two-hour enchantment of "Storybook of Princesses" unfolded at Syeun Hotel Ballroom on Sunday, November 22. Clad in shimmering hand-made tutus and costumes, the cast of over 100 dancers from age 3 and above put their hearts into the performance accompanied by powerful spotlight beams, multi-coloured LED and ethereal fog as they moved with grace and panache.

Working hand in hand with City Ballet Ipoh for the first time ever, Jean Chai, President of Soroptimist International Ipoh (SI Ipoh) thanked the institution who agreed to donate 100% of the net proceeds of the show in support of the running costs of SI's long-term flagship project, Edufun Centre. At the end of the day, close to RM90,000 was raised which is more than the targeted amount.

Edufun Centre was founded back in 2012 in the heart of low-cost flats in Buntong, to provide a safe haven for the poor kids in the community. Open from Monday to Friday, from 2pm to 6pm, the children could come and be encouraged academically, socially and morally by a full-time teacher, Mrs Salome.

Before Edufun was set up, the children would loiter aimlessly after school and were therefore at the risk of negative influences, such as tampering with drugs, alcohol and smoking. Some of these malnourished and withdrawn children do not even get to go to school.

In her speech, Jean quoted Frederick Douglass, a social reformer who once stated: "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

"Hence the objective of this project is to break the poverty chain from this generation onwards by empowering these kids through education and awareness of their social responsibility in their young age," she explained.

Meanwhile, Datin Rosalina Ooi-Thong, the principal of City Ballet Ipoh cum President of the Perak Society of Performing Arts advised, "Look beyond the glitz, have faith in yourself and grow into beautiful women at heart because that will make all the difference in this complicated world."

The very special presentation also saw Ezra Tham, who has been featured in Ipoh

Echo's Personality column, playing the role of "Wizard Cedric". Meanwhile, Jean's 11-year-old niece played the role of Princess Sofia, the main character of the story who inspired everyone to find the true princess in their heart.

Two sessions of the ballet received about 500 attendees each and both ended with rapturous applause from the audience of all ages at the end.

Mei Kuan



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Here in their showroom in Greentown, you'll be spoilt for choice and will be dazzled by the beauty and wide array of jewellery. Product offerings are classified under 4 collections, foremost of which is the **Everyday Diamond** collection. Certainly meant to complement your daily apparel at work or an informal outing, the collection aims to elegantly add a little sparkle onto your ears, neckline, hands and fingers. Based on the concepts of subtlety and chic, the pieces may just be diamonds or gemstones of colours befitting your mood for the day, accentuated with diamonds. Prices range from RM500 to under RM10,000. You'd certainly find pieces to start your own collection of jewellery or gifts that will fit your budget for this Christmas.

Or if you feel that your jewellery should stand out and make a statement of its own, while reflecting your penchant and

demeanour for detail, style and elegance, you'd certainly find the **Fine Jewellery by Adris** collection befitting. Based on the concepts of anything and everything beautiful, elegant and exciting, it lets loose a designer's passion for the best.

Finely designed and manufactured, using gemstones of all colours and hues, all shapes and colours of diamonds be it in rounds or fancies, and applying particular emphasis to detail, design differentiation and quality, the pieces are usually one-offs, with no repetitions. Custom orders for jewellery in this category fitting your exact description and needs are their speciality, earning Adris Jewellers the distinction of being a bespoke jeweller.

Going by the popular saying that "it's every woman's privilege to own and to have a solitaire diamond on her left hand fourth finger" as an

expression of her man's gratitude and love for her, for being his life's partner, for being the mother of their children and for being there for him through thick and thin. Says Mr Choola, "Diamonds are fragments of eternity that never loses its lustre and appeal because of its supreme hardness, hence the saying 'diamonds are forever'. Since ancient times diamonds have always been a symbolic expression of a man's eternal love". Be it for an engagement, anniversary or a special moment of expression close to the heart, Adris Jewellers carries a large

collection of **GIA Certified Diamonds** of all sizes, shapes and prices that best suits your needs. Solitaire diamonds of larger sizes have today also moved on to depict the success of a woman by her own rights and efforts. Popularly called the 'right hand ring' it is worn on any finger of her right hand, symbolising one's success through one's own effort.

It wouldn't do not to have Pearls to complete your collection of jewellery. These quintessential treasurers of the sea are probably the most demure, yet alluring of all gems to be worn. Mr Choola associates the wearing of pearls to an expression he wittingly tells his customers "If you are invited to a party and if you are not sure whether you should look demure or alluring with your jewellery, wear pearls. Somehow pearls have the tendency to impart both exceptionally well."

Adris Jewellers are brand carriers of **Hodel Pearls of Switzerland**. Perhaps one of the oldest pioneers of South Seas pearl farming, each piece of pearl jewellery from Hodel pearls comes with a certificate authenticating that the pearls have not been enhanced or doctored in anyway. The range of pearl jewellery offered are made up of Akoya Pearls and South Seas pearls. Akoya pearls are the pearls cultured off the coast of Japan, while South Seas pearls are those cultured off the equatorial belts of Australia, Tahiti and the Philippines. They come in colours of white, black and gold respectively, from these belts. Prices range from a couple of hundreds onwards, and are in the form of pearl jewellery or strands.

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Arts & Culture

Vritecar Vasan's Arangetram

'Arangetram' is the name given within the South Indian dance tradition Bharatanatyam to a dancer's debut performance. For Dato' Dr Vasan Sinnadurai, there would be no expense spared to present his 'baby' daughter to friends and family as she gave her first public performance at the Town Hall, cheered on by her mother Dr Amalorpam Mary Joseph and applauded by an audience of more than 450 and

very ably emceed by her older sister, Vindeya Vasan. The orchestra was flown in from various locations and a vegetarian buffet spread was waiting for guests at the end of the performance.

Performing solo throughout the gruelling four hours, Vritecar kept up the pace and wowed the audience with her versatility and skills. Despite her tender age (15) her performance showed a maturity beyond her years, thanks to her teacher Guru Puvaneswary who devoted a lot of her personal time in teaching and training Vritecar.

Vritecar, a self professed 'playful' person and a senior at Tenby, finds time in between her studies to practise her art which she has been honing from the tender age of five. Says her proud father Dato' Dr Vasan, "I am proud of both my girls. My older daughter had her arangetram a few years back and now my 'baby' is ready. They will continue to further their skills and eventually I plan to establish an



Academy of Fine Arts under the leadership of the two girls."

"Indian Classical dance, in particular Bharatanatyam is a tradition that needs preserving and by setting up the Academy, we hope to assist in its flourishing and encourage more young people to dedicate themselves to learning this art form. Learning classical dance is certainly a more worthwhile activity than being glued to digital devices."

SFCK

Nosh News

Ili Aqilah



One can't simply deny the fact that Ipoh is heaven for food lovers. Especially for this year end issue, we bring you three upcoming eateries that will guarantee to satisfy your hunger. From unique western, fusion to Thai, get ready to spoil yourself with choices!

Foodlab.Ipoh

She used to be a journalist, a make-up artist and a photographer, but now Saidatul Emma is venturing into food with Foodlab Ipoh, a new upcoming cafe that will guarantee to satisfy the cravings of those who love food.

Foodlab Ipoh started small, with only a few tables set together with a hair salon, but due to the massive support they received, Foodlab is now an established cafe located at Taman Cempaka. Using interesting names such as Burger Sarang (Burger with nest-shaped egg), Monkey Burger (Burger with homemade patties stacked with fries), Chicken Run (Cajun Spiced Grilled Chicken Chop) and chef's recommendation, 'Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs', a pair of crispy yet juicy meatballs served with fries at RM6.90.

Aside from the quirky fusion menu, the cafe also makes a selection of one-of-a-kind milkshakes. Instead of the regular milkshakes, customers will be amazed not

only by the presentation but also the taste. Spoil yourself with 10 different milkshakes: Peanut Butter, Coffee Addicts, Unicorn Poop, GreenTea Latte, Hazelnut Macchiato, Vanilla Snow, Oreo, Royal Caramel, Candy Club and recommended by the staff, Willy Wonka Choc. All milkshakes are priced at RM8 nett.

The cafe also provides lunch box deliveries where customers are welcome to try their Thai menu cooked by a Thai native. From Kau Pa Pau (Crab fried rice, RM12) to Kau Krengken Telee (Seafood fried rice, RM12). Foodlab Ipoh can't wait to cater to foodies.

Foodlab Ipoh opens every day except Thursday from 4pm till 12midnight (weekends until 1am). For



reservations and bookings contact Emma at **012 446 5714**. For Thai-menu lunch box contact Siti Hajar (**013 408 2827**) and for western-lunch box, contact Yuya (**011 2642 2120**). Customers can also check out Foodlab Ipoh's facebook page and instagram at [@foodlab.ipoh](#) for the latest updates on the cafe.

Gomok

When Azim Azmi, Akmal Zharif and Mahadhir Mohamad decided to open a restaurant, they didn't expect the crowd. Gomok, a restaurant built by the three childhood friends with no experience in the food and beverage industry, is slowly gaining its popularity among locals and tourists who crave indulging food in big-sized portions.

Gomok (which in Malay means fat) offers a range of unique western meals such as Duo Chicken: a combination of grilled chicken thigh and chicken escalope accompanied with potato cake and spinach cream at RM35; or Jumbo Fish & Chips, deep fried white fish fillet with seasonal crumbs with a side of highlander salad, golden fries and strawberry tartare sauce at RM30; and for steak lovers, Pure Black Angus Beef Steak, grilled sirloin topped with tablet cheese, with mushroom cappuccino, baby corn, tomato relish, purple mashed potato and truffle oil at RM61.

According to Mahadhir, the name Gomok was a nickname they used to call each other growing up because

the boys shared a common interest of eating good food. Other than varieties of western food, customers are also encouraged to try Gomok's unique snacks such as Gangnam Chicken, Korean deep fried chicken slices with potato wedges served with Karage sauce at RM14 and be sure to wash down your meal with Gomok's wide range of drinks such as Gomok Cooler (RM7), Virgin Mojito (RM8), Virgin Pina Colada (RM8), Mango Tango (RM9) and many more.

Gomok also provides lunch box deliveries with 5 special menus as well as catering service. Opens every day except Tuesday from 5pm till 11.30pm, Azim

recommends customers to call and make reservations. Call **05 241 3619** or **013 348 2636** for bookings and check out Gomok's Facebook page, Gomok Ipoh or Instagram at [@gomokipoh](#).



New Eat On the Block



Looking for a new *tempat* to whet your appetite? Eurasia Café in Bandar Baru Medan Ipoh just opened its doors about three months ago to the public. Ipoh born, New Zealand/Australian trained chef, Raymond Khoo has just returned home to set up his own café after being away for more than 20 years. With his homemade sauces and condiments Raymond can whip up some delicious dishes to satiate your tastebuds.

We were four and ordered one dish each. First came the soups, Minestrone and all-time favourite Crème of Mushroom followed by the main course of Chicken Parmagiana, Chicken Scallopini, Chicken Neapolitana and Fish and Chips. Spaghetti, char grills and other dishes are on offer in the menu. If you are looking to dine in quiet ambience, without having to use a loudhailer to talk to each other, and reasonable prices, head to Eurasia Café.

Eurasia Café

28 Jalan Medan Ipoh 3,
Bandar Baru Medan Ipoh, 31400 Ipoh.
Open: Monday to Sunday, 11am-10pm; Tuesday, 11am-4pm
Contact: Raymond Khoo
Tel: 05 545 5102

SH Ong

Thumbs Down

A. Jeyaraj



Paving Way For Garbage



Lately due to frequent rain, the water level in Sungai Pari is high and garbage, mostly plastic stuff get stuck at the low deck bridge along Jalan Raja in Kampung Manjoi and restricts the smooth flow of water which causes flooding.

A number of times, MBI has sent lorries and tractors to clear the garbage. The tractors have damaged the concrete wall along the bridge. Now there is a big opening in the wall. If the water level gets high, the floating garbage would be strewn onto the road. This is what happened during the major flooding in 2012 when the river water overflowed the bund. The height of the bund has been raised, but a new opening at a lower level has been created.

The damage in the wall has been there for some months and the gap has become bigger. MBI staff visit the site regularly and must have seen this, but nothing has been done. Are they waiting for the garbage to overflow

before repairing the wall? The water is also eroding the soil beneath the bridge, exposing the buried pipeline. The side of the bridge must be fortified.

There used to be a siren warning when the water reaches the danger level, informing residents on the possibility of flooding. There is no siren now and I am told that it has been stolen. The flooding normally takes place late in the evening or early night when people are least prepared for it.

The low deck bridge was identified as one of the main causes for the major flooding in 2012 and it was to be upgraded. There was an allocation of RM50 million for flood mitigation works. So far no action has been taken. This problem would be there until the bridge is upgraded.

It looks like the residents have to wait for another major flooding before upgrading will be done.

IPOH ECHO x THE HAVEN



Winners for October and November of Ipoh Echo x The Haven contest! Congratulations!

Check out our Facebook page to stand a chance to win 2D1N stay at the Haven for 5 persons!



Education

A Fitting Send-off

SMJK Perempuan Perak organised a Bollywood-themed send-off for their retiring senior assistant of co-curriculum, Jaswinder Kaur a/p Nahar Singh on Friday, November 6.

Earlier, Ipoh Echo had an exclusive one-on-one with the gentle and soft spoken teacher.

Born and bred in KL, she started teaching in April 1980 with SMK Tengku Ampuan Rahimah in Klang being her first school. Specialising in Mathematics and Additional Mathematics, she has been in Ipoh since 1985 and was posted to SMJK Perempuan Perak in September 2011.

A mother of three, two girls and a boy, Jaswinder thinks that Ipoh is the best place to bring up children. She added that it is easier to go from one place to another too.

When asked what she likes most about teaching, this is what she said, "It's never boring. It's really a joy to impart to the children knowledge and life lessons. I like to make my classes fun and have rapport with my students."

Her proudest moment is when she reconnects with former pupils on Facebook and sees that they are doing well with their own families. She has met a few over forty years of age who still remember her and thanked her for all that she had done.

Next is her advice for all the young teachers out there. "You must be willing to learn and experiment on the job as well as not be afraid of new responsibilities."

"After retirement, I just want to take it easy for a while, travel, try doing some charity works and spend time with my children," she said.



Mei Kuan

Sport

Perak MGTF Makes State Proud



RTC Gopeng recently become the place for over six hundred participants from various ages and gender battling against each other in 2015 National Community College Taekwondo Championship on December 5.

Over three hundred and forty eight medals were up for grabs in sixty nine different categories. Officiating the event was Dato' Seri Grandmaster Professor Dr Sabree Saleh, the founder of Malaysia Global Taekwondo Federation (MGTF).

"This is the second year for us. The first championship was held in Johor where there were only two hundred and sixty eight medals. We have added eighty more medals for this year and hopefully more in the following years," said Dr Sabree in his opening remarks.

The event saw Perak MGTF crowned as the overall winner with forty six gold, fifty two silver and sixty bronze medals, grabbing the majority of one hundred fifty eight medals out of the total amount. Ivy Choo Yean Nie from MGTF Perak won best female athlete for black belt category followed by Yeo Yong Shuan from Ang Dojang Pahang who received the medal for the same category for male.

Ili Aqilah

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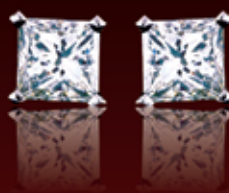


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Christmas Round-Up



Ili Aqilah

As December 25 is around the corner, Ipoh Echo is making yet another set of Christmas Buffet Round-ups to help you decided which place you should go to celebrate the merry festival. Feast your eyes and call them now! Ho! Ho! Ho!

The Haven Luxury Resort

Come and stay at The Haven and celebrate this merry festival with wellness and health. Exclusively for this Christmas, The Haven is offering three different packages; Reindeer Package at RM2300++, Santa Package at RM2600++ and Snowman Package at RM2920++, a unique stay of three days and 2 nights including Christmas Dinner and Breakfast buffet for four persons.

The Haven Christmas Dinner buffet is prepared using natural ingredients with no added preservatives or MSG. One of Haven's signature dishes, The Haven Fried Rice (Seafood) will be served during the dinner including succulent Roasted Turkey, Shepherd's Pie, Turkey Ham Pasta Carbonara, Roasted Potatoes and many more. Special for Christmas, a live grilled BBQ station will be set up where New Zealand Lamb Shoulder, Australian Beef Steak, Grilled Chicken Pieces, Grilled Sea-bass and Fresh Prawns will be served to the guests while enjoying Christmas carollers and Santa's Dancing Sessions.

Guests of the stay are welcome to invite the public to join them for this Christmas spread. The buffet will be served from December 24 to 26 (Thursday to Sunday from 7pm to 10.30pm at Haven's Cuisines Clubhouse. For inquiries and reservations, please call **05 220 9000** or **1700 8 17000**.



Meru Valley Resort

Golf enthusiasts, head to Meru Valley Resort to enjoy their Golf Promotion exclusively for Christmas. For RM150++ inclusive of green fee, buggy and golf insurance, patrons will definitely have a great time playing golf with luscious green scenery surrounding the resort.

The offer is valid from December 1 till 31 from Monday to Wednesday (except Public Holiday). Tee Off will start before 2pm and surcharge will be

applied for a single ride buggy. The promotion is not valid for a tournament. For enquiry and reservation, please contact the golf reception at **05 529 3300** or **05 529 3333**. And to send off the old year and welcome the new, what better way than to get out your masks and come to the Masquerade Ball at the Dome restaurant. (See page 14 for full information.)



Impiana Hotel Ipoh

In the spirit of Christmas, Impiana will be having their Christmas Buffet Dinner at The Coffee House for two days; December 24 and 25 from 7pm to 10.30pm. Among the long list of food that will be served on the day, guests can feast on Salmon Wellington, seafood platter on ice, baked lamb shoulder, the classic Christmas mince pie and Yule Log. The price per adult is RM88 nett and 50% discount is applied to children (aged 6-12) and senior citizen (aged 60 and above). Christmas hi-tea will be served from December 25 till 27 from 12pm to 4pm. Adult will be charged RM44 while children (aged 6-12) and senior citizens (aged 60 and above) will get to enjoy 50% discount.



The hotel will also be organizing a New Year countdown party on December 31 at 7pm. The fare for the event is RM100 nett for adult while 50% discount is applied for children (aged 6-12) and senior citizens (aged 60 and above). There will be a cover charge (from 11pm onwards) of RM50 nett where guests will receive two complimentary drinks and party packs.

For more information and reservation, call **05 255 4364**.

WEIL Hotel

Tiffin, WEIL's in house restaurant is having a lavish Christmas spread buffet exclusively for the visitors of WEIL Hotel.

Guests for Xmas Eve Buffet (December 24) Dinner will be spoilt with delectable menus such as Salmon

Gravlax Platter, Roasted Beef Prime Ribs, Roasted Chestnut Veloute (soup), Braised Brussel Sprouts, Honey Glazed Winter Vegetables and Christmas Pudding with Vanilla Sauce. RM148++ is charged per adult, RM80++ for children. Guests who book before December 20 will get to enjoy a special price for adults (RM118).

Tiffin's for Christmas Lunch (December 25) priced at RM48++ for adults and RM28++ for kids or Christmas Buffet Dinner at RM98 for adults and RM54++ per child. WEIL's Yuk Sou Hin and The Deck Gastrobar are also having special festive dinner set and set dinner. For reservations and more information, call **05 208 2228**.



Healy Mac's Irish Restaurant and Bar



Exclusively for this Christmas, Healy Mac's will be offering a special Christmas menu for its patrons and guests.

Indulge in their three-course Christmas menu where visitors will be served with Homemade Mushroom soup with garlic bread for a starter and for the main course, choose between Christmas Turkey, Pan-seared Salmon or Grilled Stuffed Pork Loin served with delicious sides. While enjoying the performance by Healy Mac's live band, guests will be served with traditional apple crumble with fresh cream and strawberry coulis for dessert.

Christmas eve dinner will be held on December 24 from 6pm until 10.30pm. For more information and reservations, call **05 249 3627** and book your seat at Healy Mac's today!

Kinta Riverfront Hotel and Suites

Celebrate your Christmas with seafood delights and a fusion Asian and Western cuisine when you dine in at Kinta Riverfront's in-house cafe, Palong Coffee House. With more than 100 dishes including appetizers, mains and desserts, guests will get to enjoy fresh sushi made by chef from the hotel's Japanese restaurant, Shinjuku. Christmas Eve Buffet dinner (December 24) will comprise of assorted seafood on ice, roasted lamb leg served with Rosemary sauce and Mint sauce, herb spice lamb cutlet, assorted french pastries, mince pies and many more.

On Christmas day (December 25), visitors are welcome to Hi-Tea session where assorted Malaysian, Western and Chinese cuisine will be served from 12pm to 5pm.

For Christmas eve dinner, adults will be charged RM65 while RM35 is applied for kids aged 7-12. For Hi-tea session, RM38 is the price for adult and RM20 for kids. Children below the age of 7 years will not be charged. Reservation can be made now at **05 245 8888** or **05 245 8817**.



Tourism

Perak Tourism Award 2015

It was a night of celebration at Kinta Riverfront Hotel & Suites on November 13 as Tourism Perak Malaysia throws its annual gala dinner to celebrate everyone involved in promoting tourism in Perak.

Guest of honour, Chief Minister of Perak, YAB Dato' Seri Diraja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir who officiated the night congratulated the guests for their tremendous effort to make Perak a must-visit-place in Malaysia.

"The industry of tourism has been playing a major part in building up the economy in Malaysia and Perak. Perak state in particular has held several international events such as Pangkor International Dialogue (PIDD), World Civilization and Islamic Thoughts (WCIT) and so many more," he said in his opening remarks.

"We are also trying to improve the state and facilities of Sultan Azlan Shah Airport to welcome more domestic and international tourists. As for now, there are four operational airlines; Firefly, Tiger Airways, Malindo and YouWings flying forty one times per week. The state is working on adding more destinations in the future such as China, Indonesia and other ASEAN countries" added Dato' Zambry.

For three consecutive years, Perak has received the highest number of domestic tourists in the country; 5.6 million in 2012, 6.01 million in 2013 and 7 million in 2014. The glittery black and white gala saw the presentation of twenty three categories of awards where Harian Metro grabbed the award for Most Innovative Media.

Ili Aqilah



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Funtasy House Trick Art

Ipoh Echo was invited to the exclusive pre-opening preview of Funtasy House Trick Art, a 3D trick-art museum located at No. 16, Jalan Pasar (Market Street), 30000 Ipoh recently. Located in the heart of Old Town, it was officially launched on Saturday, November 21.

Deriving its name from the combination of "fun" and "fantasy", the opening of this 3D trick-art gallery marked another milestone in the conservation and restoration works performed on this beautiful century-old dual-frontage courtyard shophouse, bringing back the life and activities it deserves, in addition to preserving the nostalgic feel of yesteryears with the "Straits Eclectic" architectural beauty of Ipoh's Old Town heritage enclave. The owner has selected and rented this shophouse to a suitable tenant business-operator as part of their commitment to contribute to the conservation and preservation of history and heritage values and tourism-activities for Ipoh, Perak.

The tenant-business is operated by Arts & Wonder Museum Sdn Bhd, occupying the fully air-conditioned two-storey shophouse of approximately 5000 square feet, which includes the fully covered internal courtyard that features over 20 pieces of hand-painted 3D interactive trick art (or in French, Trompe L'oeil) by eight local freelance artists which took a total of four months to complete.

Twenty-six-year-old Penangite Andrew Chew who is the business owner-manager, told Ipoh Echo, "Getting inspiration from Penang, I want to add to the attractions of Ipoh. Some drawings here are reflections of Ipoh. In the future, we are thinking of changing the murals' theme from time to time," the young entrepreneur said.

Everything is retained in the conservation and restoration of this dual-frontage courtyard shophouse, including the original heritage 100-plus-year-old steep staircase built by Shanghai carpenters ("Sifu") back in the days of yore. Another highlight is the framed 109-year-old copies of the United Kingdom's Daily Mail which were printed in London and Manchester simultaneously then, dated "Friday, 20 July 1906" on the restored walls. These heritage newsprint artefacts were discovered pasted on the century old lime plastered walls during repair and restoration works and were carefully curated, conserved and preserved



"at it is", on the walls.

Dating back to the 1900s, this Straits Eclectic dual-frontage courtyard shophouse fronting Market Street and (back) Market Lane – also famously known as the 2nd Concubine Lane or "Sam Lai Hong" in Cantonese was originally owned by Towkay Leong Kin and later by an English lady by the name of Agnes Lucy Skelchy. The shophouse was a resident stay for and operated by the tenant family under the name of "Heng Woh Shoe Shop", one the oldest and most sought after custom handmade leather shoe-maker and accessories shop in Ipoh Old Town of its time. It was managed by Mr Ho Kok Lim (a Chinese migrant) and his family. Thanks to his father, eldest son Captain Winkie Ho Weng Toh was the envy of many with his everlasting supply of leather shoes, a luxury in his time. Captain Winkie Ho also made a name for himself as he later became an elite member of "The Flying Tigers", professionally trained to fly the Mitchell B-25 Bomber squadron during WW2.

Other luminaries who patronised the shop was the famous Mr Berthel Michael Iversen, the famous Danish architect of Ipoh and modern Malaya who also ordered custom-made shoes from this historical and heritage shophouse.

Another untold heritage mystery of this shophouse brimming with old-world charm is its hidden secret chambers found between the four-brick-thick load-bearing walls which functioned as the safe deposit boxes of yesteryear.

Mark your calendar, grab your family/friends and capture some Instagram-worthy fun-filled photos there now!



Address: 16, Jalan Market (Market Street), 30000 Ipoh, Perak.

Opening hours: 9am-6pm (weekdays), 9am-8pm (weekends and public holidays)

Admission fees per person: RM15 (adults), RM10 (kids, students and elderly) and RM19 (non-MyKad holders). Free entry for the disabled. Visitors will be accompanied by gallery attendants.

Tel: 05 255 0007

Facebook page: [funtasyhousetrickart](https://www.facebook.com/funtasyhousetrickart)

Mei Kuan

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- Do not forget to capture the pulse-pounding night with some Instagram-worthy shots at the backdrop.
- With games and lucky draws, the party just may never stop!
- Spirits are at their brightest at the stroke of midnight when the New Year is on the brink, and anything is possible! Hence, don't forget your mask and allow your alter ego to take over.
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LETTERS

Rafflesia Soup

The article On Ipoh Food in Issue 225 of the Ipoh Echo refers to an unusual and rare soup made from Rafflesia. Despite the name this is probably a case of misidentification that has implications for the conservation and sustainability of the true Rafflesia: allow us to elaborate.

As the article describes, Rafflesia are a group of parasitic plants that only grow on a very specific genus of jungle liana (*Tetrastigma* sp). They are rare and sporadically distributed through the rainforests of Southeast Asia but are seldom seen because the flowers, which take nearly a year to bloom, last only a few days. Some Rafflesia species, with blooms exceeding 100cm in diameter, can lay claim to being the largest flowers in the world. This has made Rafflesia an eco-tourism attraction in Perak and elsewhere. Also, Rafflesia buds are sometimes collected by the Orang Asli for use in traditional medicine. However, Rafflesia have never been successfully cultivated and additional harvesting from the forest to provide a gastronomic delight would put further pressure on the sustainability of a unique family of plants that has already been severely depleted by loss of its natural rainforest habitat. Fortunately, it is most unlikely that Rafflesia Soup contains the true Rafflesia.

What then is the "Rafflesia" in Rafflesia soup? A recipe can be found on the internet at <http://fumews.com/index.php/2015/09/27/traditional-chinese-healthy-soupconch-soup-with-rafflesia-and-sparerib/> together with an illustration of the ingredient in question. Based on the illustration and a visit to a Chinese herbal shop in Ipoh we have identified the ingredient as most likely being the dried flower of the Dragon Fruit (*Hylocereus undatus*) – a cactus species from Central America that is now widely cultivated in Asia. An internet search reveals that in Hong Kong this dried flower is sometimes marketed as Rafflesia although it has no relation to the true Rafflesia of botany and the SE Asian forests. Gourmands can therefore enjoy their soup without guilt about adverse consequences for the Malaysian rainforest. If they wish, after having partaken of their soup, they can visit the Orang Asli village of Ulu Geroh near Gopeng to see the true Rafflesia in its natural habitat.

K. Fletcher, Donna Baylis & Leong Tuck Lock

Matang Mangrove Forest Land Issue

After my open letter to Perak Chief Minister Zambry Abdul Kadir on the Matang mangrove forest, I was informed by the State Exco for Tourism, YB Nolee Ashilin that a stop-work order has been given pending investigations by the state government.

I am relieved by the immediate inquiry and look forward to the best solution on this matter. Sadly, the plot of land already cleared will need 30 years for the new mangrove trees to grow.

I urge for the investigation to be presented to the public transparently. After the matter was reported by the media, many have been calling me to show their support and concern. Clearly people are aware that mangroves are crucial for the coastal areas.

The mangrove forest trees along Jalan Taiping-Kuala Sepetang offers a beautiful panorama and landscape as you enter Kuala Sepetang town, welcoming visitors with an iconic landmark. Any development or Kampung Tersusun plan



Announcement

The Magnificent Vajrakilaya Grand Puja

A qualified lineage teacher and a great reincarnation master, the Venerable 8th Zuri Rinpoche who is highly commended by His Holiness the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje will be conducting the Magnificent Vajrakilaya Grand Puja on 18 to 20 December 2015.

Committed in the Bodhisattva Path to spread the Dharma and liberate all sentient beings from samsara. Rinpoche travels to and from Bhutan, Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan, setting up Buddhist centres, giving teachings, conducting pujas,

holding retreats and animal protection activities.

Organiser: Thrangu Dharma Society PJ (TDSPJ)
Date & Time: 18 to 20 December 2015, 10am-10pm
Venue: SRJK(C) Puay Chai, Jalan SS2/54, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Contacts: Mr David Lee 012 286 0529, Mr Howard Chiam 012 398 5617, Ms Kathy Ong 012 586 8776 or Mr Yaw KM 019 383 1668.

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Public Announcement by Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh

1. Hospital Fatimah would like to inform the public that the writer and publisher of an article alleging that our hospital is a party to a suit in Ipoh High Court relating to the transfusion of HIV-infected blood to a patient have issued an apology. The apology was published on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, which expressed regrets over the factual error and inaccuracy of its contents.
2. Whilst reserving its rights to seek legal redress, including damages and other reliefs, the Board of Directors and Management of Hospital Fatimah would like to reassure the public and our patients that Hospital Fatimah is, at all times, committed to upholding the highest of standards in the running and management of the hospital.
3. Hospital Fatimah reiterates that we have always practised the highest safety standards in the procedures of processing, screening and testing of blood before they are transfused.
4. As a matter of fact, the patient referred to in the article was admitted into Hospital Fatimah on Friday, May 22, 2005. The relevant health authority confirmed that our Hospital's blood donor was HIV negative.
5. For easy reference, the full text of the apology by Perak Today, dated December 2, 2015, is reproduced below.

Issued by:

Dr Lim Chie Kean

Chief Executive Officer

Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh.



Wednesday, December 2, 2015 11:47 am

IPOH: Berhubung satu artikel yang dikeluarkan semalam yang bertajuk 'Hospital Swasta Didakwa Cuai, Pindah Darah Dijangkiti Virus HIV', terdapat kesalahan maklumat yang dikeluarkan.

Sehubungan itu, Perak Today ingin memohon maaf secara terbuka kepada Hospital Fatimah diatas kesalahan laporan yang diterbitkan semalam yang menyebut hospital tersebut cuai ketika melakukan pemindahan darah kepada pesakit.

Hospital Fatimah tidak berkaitan dengan kes tersebut tetapi pihak hospital hanya merawat pesakit dan menerima pek darah daripada salah satu pusat kesihatan luar di bandaraya ini.

Dengan itu, kami telah menarik semula artikel berkenaan dan meminta kepada semua pihak yang telah berkongsi dan menyiarkan semula artikel tersebut untuk membuat perkara yang sama.

Perak Today sekali lagi memohon maaf diatas kesilapan fakta dalam laporan tersebut.