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Your Voice In The Community

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30 SEN FOR DELIVERY TO YOUR DOORSTEP -
ASK YOUR NEWSVENDOR

ISSUE **229**

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Upstart or Start-Up Generation?

By Ili Aqilah

Labelled as the confused and the lazy generations, Gen Y and Gen X are often likened to being 'upstarts' usually young persons who are full of themselves and dismissive of others. With technology becoming more advanced, we sat down with nine born and raised Ipohites who are keen on proving everyone wrong. They are young, talented and eager to be successful in a big way. No monkeying around for them this Lunar year. This group is creating start-ups and they mean business!

Continued on page 2



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Young Entrepreneurs Making Waves

Hadi and Fathiah

When Muhamad Hadi Hafiz returned to Ipoh, he knew he had to start something new. Previously working in KL, Hadi decided to venture into a field where he had no experience. After months of R&D, together with his best friend, Fathiah Nasuha, they launched the first food truck, *The Hut* in Ipoh in May last year.

"It took a lot of research in developing the recipes. We rely a lot on our customers and it has been great to serve them with our food," said Hadi.

Although it hasn't been smooth sailing, lacking of customers on certain days, Hadi and Fathiah are having fun working together. In fact the duo have several exciting plans coming up, including opening a new food truck.

"We do have our ups and down.

But that is what keeps us motivated and going further," said the 28-year-old lad. With the current economic uncertainty, Hadi encourages Ipohites to start their own business or perhaps join the food truck trend. Catch *The Hut* roaming around Ipoh or follow their instagram at @thehut.my.



Hor Hon Yeong

For Yeong, the younger generations are living in a better environment with better options. Working hard alone is not enough, it is also important to be smart and creative. Through his company, *HedgeHog*, Yeong, 30, aims to provide e-learning business solutions to those who are interested to build their own e-learning business.

A graduate in film and broadcasting from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Yeong is currently working on multimedia production of state government e-learning projects. Aside from that, together with his sister, they produced explanatory videos and animations. When asked about his challenge in the field, Yeong agreed that the key is to keep everything in balance.

"Since I had a new baby last year, the real challenge for me now is to maintain good balance between my job and family," said Yeong who hopes that *HedgeHog* (hedgehog.com.my) will be the pioneer in the e-learning industry.



Mohd Lazim

Through his love to serve the community, Mohd Lazim, 31, created a team and built a website called *Komuniti Bandar Meru Raya* (Meru Raya Community) that focuses on helping the public to fully utilise the latest technology in their daily lives. Using social networks as a medium to gather people, Lazim encourages startups and e-commerce entrepreneurs to start doing online businesses.

"My team and I want to make Meru Raya the city centre of the online marketplace in Perak by the end of 2019," said Lazim who believes that every generation has different ways to do things and everyone has their own kind of thinking that should be accepted by others.

Although he just started the project, Lazim has managed to gather a few individuals who share the same idea as him. In the future, he hopes to build a foundation for new entrepreneurs to start their own business. Interested readers keen to find out more about Lazim's project can go to www.bandarmeruraya.com.



Priya Vivek

Priya Vivek is not scared of facing challenges in her work field that are mostly dominated by men. She is used to being called names and judged harshly. This easy going 30-ish lady is currently the creative director for *Paintingz*, a 3D animation, design, website development and building apps company she has managed since 2007.

"When I first came out with the idea of *Paintingz*, I had to do all the research from scratch, including learning about drafting contracts, marketing and sales," said Priya who admits that it wasn't all smooth sailing. She has had her share of troubles for the past years including some who refused to pay her for the job she did.

"I learned from experience and got help from the experts. It is important to be humble but also learn not to have people step on you." *Paintingz* has dealt with numerous clients including local and international companies in Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore. Contact Priya at paintingzlr@gmail.com or priya.vivek@lrygroup.com.au for more information.



Amir Idrossaidi

In the field where almost all of his competitors are older and more experienced, Amir Idrossaidi, 25, couldn't believe that he is part of the industry dealing with tombstones.

"I took a course in IT programming where the plan was to set up my own IT shop and open classes for those who want to learn more about IT,". However, Amir's father had a different path set for him. The family business began in 2001 where everything was done manually. When his father asked him to join, he was hesitant at first but soon enjoyed it as he gets to apply his IT skills from his diploma.

"When I first started to be part of the team, I had to build our own filing and accounts system. Luckily I have my sister to help and my father's permission to sort of revamp the current system at that time," said Amir who is now handling 99 per cent of the business including sales, marketing and manufacturing. Together with his sister, Amir now uses only high-tech machines to carve the name on all the tombstones instead of doing it by hand.

"When meeting my clients, they seem surprised to see how young I am. Which I take as a compliment!" added Amir who believes more young people should join the industry. Amir admitted having some tough competition but he takes it as a positive challenge. Located at Chemor, Amir currently has up to thirty four agents all over the country including Perak, Selangor, Pahang and Kelantan. Enquiries about *Batu Nisan Chepor Enterprise*: email them at batunisanchepor@yahoo.com or visit their facebook page!

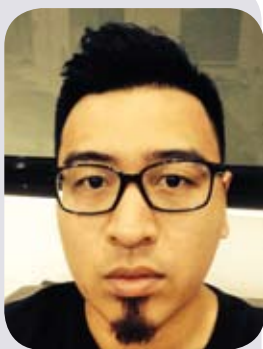


Chow Jia Long

This proud Sam Tet boy, Chow, 31, is managing *Titan Technologies*, a one-stop supplier of laboratory equipment and all lab-related services including consultation and calibration. He had six years worth of experience before starting up the company by himself. Although he is living his dream, Chow advises people to pay more attention on the execution of a plan and not just dream of becoming the next big thing.

"You need to be resourceful to survive. Identify and eliminate hidden and unnecessary costs, learn to increase profit and get as much information as you can," said Chow who disagreed that Gen X and Gen Y are the lazy generations.

"The misconception often thrown around by the previous generation is that the current generation refuses to put in hard work and labour and that we waste a lot of time online. Things are different now. We are doing things faster, smarter and more effectively using non-traditional ways. Something they didn't have back then," added Chow. His company has served a wide range of industries including geological, pharmaceutical, F&B and many more. In short, *Titan Technologies* deals with any manufacturer and factory that has a quality control department. Chow is also looking to provide more value-added services to his core business and plans to venture into different fields depending on his creativity and resources. More information on the services offered by Chow and his team at www.titantechnologies.com.my.



• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Mayor Zamri Man is doing a marvelous (but thankless) job in spite of the many obstacles. These obstacles come from the "little napoleons" who are averse to changes...

I was pleasantly surprised (amused is a better word) when returning home one day I saw Council officers ripping and removing *ah long* banners and posters hung on lamp posts, road signages and tree trunks along the main road leading into my *taman*. My immediate reaction was one of joy because these ubiquitous banners have long been a bane among Ipohites. They have become a nuisance, as their presence not only mar the landscape but debase the value of properties in the vicinity. Unfortunately, these *ah long* advertising paraphernalia have, unwittingly, become an integral part of our society following the global recession of the early 1980s.

I rushed home and alerted my wife who went out with her smartphone, in hand. She wanted to record this epic-making moment for posterity. She managed to capture one officer who was in the midst of ripping a poster from a lamp post. He smiled and gave a thumbs-up, signaling his eagerness to be photographed.

But that was about it. When we returned to the spot minutes later there were no officers and no more ripping actions. How disappointing. Was it a gimmick to show the Council's seriousness in tackling the problem or a knee-jerk reaction by subordinates after a dressing-down by their superiors?

I tend to believe the latter as this scenario happens too often in the army whenever the heat gets into the soldiers' skins. I speak for myself. When orders from the colonels and generals become so regular, those down the line would do anything to appease them. That is the mantra. And I feel that is the way with the Council officers. I mean no malice, as I am only saying the obvious.

On the plus side, I must admit that Mayor Zamri Man is doing a marvelous (but thankless) job in spite of the many obstacles. These obstacles generally come from the "little napoleons" who are averse to changes. Little rascals exist in every organisation and Ipoh City Council is no exception. A well-meaning directive may be misconstrued as an intrusion into their space and thus the resistance. Objection can be subtle without anyone knowing. Delaying tactics and claiming ignorance are two favourite methods to frustrate an order deemed unfavourable to the little devils.

Notwithstanding that, I feel cleanliness is our responsibility. We cannot depend too much on the Council to keep our housing estates clean without getting our hands dirty. My wife and I were appalled by the unsightly trash left by some of our uncaring neighbours. They do not care much where they discard their rubbish and treat the whole *taman* as one huge rubbish bin. Thus the roads and the areas around their houses become



fair game.

After much soul searching we decided to clean the road fronting our house and the field, the *taman's* green lung, ourselves, rather than wait for the Council to do so. I must thank my wife for she is relentless in her quest for cleanliness. With a broom, a rake, a pan and a plastic bag she went on the offensive sweeping the road in the wee hours of the morning. I went around removing *ah long* banners and posters on my bicycle. It worked.

Our erstwhile reluctant neighbours, unlike before, are beginning to clean their compounds now. It is a healthy sign. The rippling-down effect is having a positive impact on everyone. And with some help from Syahrizal Azmi, the Council's hard-pressed but obliging Public Relations Officer, civility has come to my neck of the woods.

There are a couple of illegal dumpsites in my *taman* which keep appearing the moment they are cleared. I traced the culprits to small-time contractors. They would conveniently dispose household rubbish at these two sites early in the morning or late at night when no one is observing. Arresting them is the only option left.

Incidentally, the Council has a solution for illegal dumpsites. If you see one send a photo and details via Whatsapp to this number **019 550 3083**. I have tried and it works. The other alternative is to call up your zone councillor. Check up the Council's website for the appointed zone councillors. They have the means to act, and this has been assured by none other than the mayor himself.

In The Name of My Father's Estate

Episode 50 • by Peter Lee

With the instruction and consent from the family of the late Lee Sr, the Trust Company Representative (TCR) commenced first with the application of Letter of Administration (L.A.) for Lee Sr in Malaysia. However, TCR reminded the family that they would have to first extract the death certificate of Lee Sr's parents from the National Registration Department (NRD) since no member of the family have these certificates. TCR further said "these death certificates would also be important for application of L.A. in Malaysia where the L.A. can be used for application of separate L.A. for the overseas assets. In the meantime, I will list down all the details of movable and immovable assets which I have for the submission of L.A. to the High Court. Similarly, I will do the same for those assets located overseas for the application for L.A. in those countries involved.



As discussed earlier, the overseas submission of the L.A. in each of the countries will be done by the legal firms that TCR will appoint. Now, as for the negotiation between some family members on renunciation of some of the assets especially the properties and shares of the companies in exchange for cash would have to be done after the Malaysian L.A. is obtained. Mrs Patricia Lee (Lee Sr's 1st wife) then asked, "So can you roughly tell us how long we need to wait before all the assets are unlocked for distribution?" In reply, TCR said "I am not sure but we will try our best to expedite the matter since we are dealing with assets local and overseas." With a tired expression, Mrs Patricia Lee said "I guess we can't do much except to wait. By the way, since you have the full picture of our family affairs, what other advice could you give to the family as all of us are here."

To this, TCR responded and said "From this lengthy and difficult experience that everyone has gone through over the intestate inheritance and distribution of Lee Sr's estate, I would strongly suggest that every family member have their own will written by a professional. This will definitely avoid the problems that all of you are going through with your father's estate."

"By doing your will, you can choose who is most suited to be your Executor instead of just passing the burden to your family members to choose. If you find that your family members already have a lot of things on their plate or are forced to choose sides between various family members, a trust company can be appointed to act as the executor instead."

"Having said that, if any of you have a young family with minor children, then the choice of the Executor becomes more important as they will be holding the entire wealth of your estate for your minor children. You will also have to think about who is to be appointed as your guardian in case both parents pass on when they are still minors. Make the right choice and speak to those individuals whom you think are capable of taking up this responsibility and at the same time, to ascertain whether they are willing to assume this responsibility. Once these appointments are resolved, then you will have to decide on your distribution structure with probably a trust being created in the will to use the inheritance of the minors in a proper manner for their expenses for education, medical and maintenance until you think they are able to handle the inheritance."

"As in the case of Lee Sr's estate, it would be more of segregating the distribution utilizing a will and a private trust since there are two families involved. Alternatively, Lee Sr could have prepared a will and appointed a Trust Company like us to be the executor as our position is neutral and strictly following the instructions in the will." Michelle Lee (Lee Sr's daughter), while looking at her siblings, then said "I don't know about you guys, but after hearing what TCR said I think I have to do my will." Then she turned her attention towards TCR and said "I hope you can really expedite the application of L.A. in the name of my father's estate."

THE END

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

EYE HEALTH – FOREIGN BODIES

In our continuing series on Eye Health, Fatimah Hospital's Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talks to us about things that can get into our eyes.



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

Help... something's stuck in my eye! Yes, almost everyone has had to experience something getting into the eye sometime or other. So what does one do when something like that happens? Foreign bodies getting into the eye are common and may range from the occasional eyelash or makeup, to a much more dangerous foreign body like a metal fragment getting embedded in the cornea (transparent area of the eye) or a foreign body going deep into the eyeball (vitreous).

In the case of the eyelash or makeup getting into the eye, it usually sits on the superficial layers of the eye and your eye's natural tears will usually wash the object out. However, sometimes foreign bodies may scratch the surface of the cornea or the foreign body may become embedded in the eye. It is dangerous when small particulate objects travelling at high speed enter the eye as they can cause serious injury. These injuries may result in bleeding, a change in the size or shape of the pupil, or a serious damage to the inside of the eyeball (retina) with the foreign body being retained in the eyeball resulting in vision loss.

SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Foreign body feeling, tearing and redness in the eye following a particular activity.
- Scratchy feeling in the eye.
- Visual blurring after doing mechanical work with lots of flying debris.
- Bleeding from the eye.

SELF-CARE AT HOME

To remove minor debris, try rinsing your eye with a saline solution (the same solution used to rinse contact lenses). Tap water or distilled water may be used if no saline solution is available immediately.

You can also fill a glass with saline solution or water and place it to your eye and tilt your head back. Do this many times. If the foreign body appears embedded and does not seem to be able to be washed out, seek professional eye attention. If you are wearing a contact lens, it should be removed prior to trying to flush out the foreign body. DO NOT RUB YOUR EYE or apply pressure to your eye.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY WHEN:

- You feel something going into your eye after hitting something, such as when hammering a nail or chopping a branch.
- You have removed the foreign body from your eye and continue to have a sensation that something is in your eye, or you have persistent pain and tearing.
- You are unable to remove the foreign body from your eye or are unsure you have removed it.
- Your vision is blurry.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE!

Eye protection is the best prevention. Always wear safety goggles, or face shields when working in an environment where flying debris is likely, especially when working with power tools or chemicals.



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

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Save the planet. Use environmentally-friendly cleaners at home.



If you are concerned about the environment and you dislike using chemicals, or perhaps, you, or a family member is allergic to some chemicals, then why not try making your own cleaners? Some people claim that homemade cleaners are easy to make, and are easier on the environment. They are also better for one's health and one's wallet.

Before the washing machine or launderette, the dhobi man took care of most of our laundry, especially the larger items like bed sheets and towels. Flogging the item of clothing against boulders in the river, would remove ingrained dirt and soften the fibres. Items were always dried in the sun.

Traditional brooms, made from the fronds of the coconut tree, have now been replaced by plastic brooms or vacuum cleaners. At one time, council workers used to sweep roads with brooms, but now cleaning lorries, clean the tarmac. Even leaves are sucked by a machine, instead of being swept into a pile and collected for making compost.

The trick to an eco-friendly and green home, is to recycle, use cleaners as sparingly as possible and make the cleaners from everyday kitchen ingredients. Some plants, like lemongrass and eucalyptus, have antifungal and antibacterial properties.

One of the most useful kitchen ingredients is vinegar. It is biodegradable, safe on stainless steel, safe on the hands, and an effective rinse agent, to reduce levels of E. coli, on kitchen surfaces.

Vinegar cuts grease and also inhibits mould growth, dissolves limescale and freshens the air.

In the kitchen**1. Multi-purpose cleaner**

1 part vinegar

1 part water

A few drops of dishwashing liquid

Pour the contents into a spray bottle. Just spray and wipe surfaces. The addition of a similar volume of rubbing alcohol or surgical spirit, will dry the surface faster. This is an optional step.

2. Fragrant cleaner for mopping tiles

10 tablespoons vinegar

7 tablespoons herbal peppermint tea (for fragrance)

4 litres of hot water

Combine ingredients in a pail and use on tiles, terrazzo or wooden floors. If herbal tea is not available, use a few drops of lavender, tree tea or lemongrass oils, will do.

In the bathroom

Spray around the toilet seat with a mixture of one part

vinegar with one part water. Wipe the surface clean afterwards.

Get rid of stubborn stains in the toilet bowl with 500ml of vinegar. Leave for an hour before scrubbing vigorously, then flush.

The shower head can be cleaned by unscrewing it from the shower hose, before soaking it in vinegar, overnight. Flush with hot water before use.

The bath, taps and washbasin can be cleaned with a half and half mixture of vinegar and water.

Keep a spray bottle of one part of vinegar to two parts of water and spray this mixture on the shower curtain or tiles, to prevent mildew.

In the drawing room**Furniture polish**

Combine equal parts of vinegar and vegetable oil. Apply the mixture to the furniture with a cloth, then buff with a soft dry cloth.

Cleaning brassware

Mix 1 part of vinegar to 10 parts of water. Apply this to the brassware, or soak small items in the mixture, in a bucket of water, to remove the green and black tarnish.

As an odour controller**1. For getting rid of cooking smells**

Boil one teaspoon of vinegar with one mug (275ml) of water, to get rid of unpleasant cooking odours

2. As an air freshener

In a spray bottle, mix one teaspoon of baking soda, one tablespoon of vinegar and 500ml (about two mugs) of water. Use the mixture after it has stopped frothing

3. To remove the smell of vomit from a car or room

Clean the area thoroughly, before placing a bowl of vinegar on the floor, and leave it overnight. Close the windows and doors, for it to work effectively.

Dr Saravana K.

Consultant Physician, Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health**Alcoholism**

Alcoholism is a pattern of alcohol use that involves problems controlling your drinking, being preoccupied with alcohol, continuing to use alcohol even when it causes problems, having to drink more to get the same effect, or having withdrawal symptoms when you rapidly decrease or stop drinking.

If your pattern of drinking results in repeated significant distress and problems functioning in your daily life, you likely have alcohol use disorder. It can range from mild to severe.

Symptoms

- Being unable to limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Wanting to cut down on how much you drink.
- Strong urge to drink alcohol.
- Failing to fulfil major obligations due to repeated alcohol use.
- Giving up or reducing social and work activities and hobbies.
- Using alcohol in situations such as when driving or swimming.
- Developing a tolerance to alcohol so you need more to feel its effect or you have a reduced effect from the same amount.
- Alcohol intoxication results as the amount of alcohol in your blood stream increases causing behaviour problems and mental changes. These may include inappropriate behaviour, unstable moods, impaired judgment, slurred speech, impaired attention or memory, and poor coordination. You can also have periods called "blackouts," where you don't remember events. Very high blood alcohol levels can lead to coma or even death.
- Alcohol withdrawal can occur when alcohol use has been heavy and prolonged and is then stopped or greatly reduced. It can occur within several hours to four or five days later. Symptoms include sweating, rapid heartbeat, hand tremors, problems sleeping, nausea and vomiting, hallucinations, restlessness and agitation, anxiety, and occasionally seizures. Symptoms can be severe enough to impair your ability to function at work or in social situations.

Impact on your health

Drinking too much alcohol on a single occasion or over time can cause health problems, including:

- Liver disease. increased fat in the liver, inflammation of the liver (alcoholic hepatitis), and over time, irreversible destruction and scarring of liver tissue (cirrhosis).
- Digestive problems. inflammation of the stomach lining (gastritis), as well as stomach and esophageal ulcers. It also can interfere with absorption of B vitamins and other nutrients. It can damage your pancreas or lead to inflammation of the pancreas.
- Heart problems. Excessive drinking can lead to high blood pressure and increases your risk of an enlarged heart, heart failure or stroke. Even a single binge can cause a serious heart arrhythmia called atrial fibrillation.
- Diabetes complications. Alcohol interferes with the release of glucose from your liver and can increase the risk of low blood sugar.
- Sexual function and menstruation issues.
- Eye problems. Involuntary rapid eye movement (nystagmus) as well as weakness and paralysis of your eye muscles due to a deficiency of thiamine. Thiamine deficiency also can be associated with irreversible dementia, if not promptly treated.
- Alcohol use during pregnancy may cause fetal alcohol syndrome, resulting in giving birth to a child who has physical and developmental problems that last a lifetime.
- Bone damage. This bone loss can lead to thinning bones and an increased risk of fractures. Alcohol can also damage bone marrow, which makes blood cells. This can cause a low platelet count, which may result in bruising and bleeding.
- Neurological complications causing numbness and pain in your hands and feet, disordered thinking, dementia, and short-term memory loss.
- Weakened immune system increasing your risk of various illnesses, especially pneumonia.
- Some medications interact with alcohol, increasing its toxic effects. Drinking while taking these medications can either increase or decrease their effectiveness, or make them dangerous.

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



**THINKING
ALLOWED**

by Mariam Mokhtar

Han Chin Pet Soo



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ON IPOH FOOD

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

Pics by Ginla Chew



SeeFoon discovers a Foodie Gem in the Boonies

This is one restaurant that is best for the intrepid Foodie – one who will brook no obstacle, burn up the tyres in search of this backwoods simple Tai Chau restaurant that is open only for lunch somewhere in Batu Gajah.

With this not so encouraging introduction, let me begin by warning my dear readers to arm themselves with GPS or waze on their smart phones and head towards Batu Gajah going either via Pusing or the usual route, which according to Kumar my road-smart driver, the latter is longer than via Pusing.

The restaurant which doesn't have an English name is **Foong Loy** (transliterated from Chinese) and is up some dingy stairs, over a car accessories shop (see pic). While the premises are certainly not palatial – in fact it's your usual lower-end run-of-the-mill 'Tai Chau' restaurant – the food quality can certainly beat many of the more upmarket establishments that abound in Ipoh and the prices to boot.

Where else can one get a *live 'Soon Hock' (Marble Goby)*

fish albeit a smallish one for **RM38**? Plus it was steamed to perfection, the sauce seasoned delicately to complement the sweet and juicy flesh. With only 4 or 5 tables in the place, the fish tank is understandably small but enough to house two to three fish which vary from day to day depending on the supply.

We were a total of 5 people that day and our total bill for 11 dishes came to **RM209**, which included very fresh and very well pan fried **Tualang Prawns or Udang Galah**. They were smallish but absolutely delectable – **RM52**.

Tofu fried with dried prawns were crispy and fragrant – **RM8** and the chicken that followed (**kampong chicken**) was also steamed and redolent with ginger. The meat was tender and juicy and seasoned with just the right amount of salt and soya – **RM18**.

The **Duck** that came next was aromatic, cooked in the style of the famous 'Gow Tsai Ngap' or Puppy



Duck of Pusing's Ming Feong Restaurant. Now lest you animal lovers out there start protesting, the recipe contains no dogs, puppies or four-legged animals of any kind. It is just duck braised in a dark soya sauce and laced with

oodles of young ginger and 'sar keong' or *kencur* (Malay), aromatic ginger or sand ginger – **RM16**.

Fried Catfish with basil was unusual and delectable at **RM16** as was the **Sayur Paku** fried with *ikan bilis*, shallots and chillies. **RM10** (seasonal). The **clams** that followed were very fresh **RM18** but it was the last dish that blew me away.

Fresh oysters (small ones) **braised with pork belly** with slivers of dried squid was one of those old recipes that is hardly ever found on menus these days. Here at Foong Loy, the oysters were fresh, the pork chunks braised to quivering exquisiteness and the squid slivers lent its smoky fishiness to make this dish the paragon of culinary excellence. It's a pity that restaurants have dropped some of these exquisite recipes from their repertoire – **RM16**.

All in all, every dish I had here was well above average, in fact, most had the best 'wok hei' or in Cantonese, the aroma from the wok.



Foong Loy Restaurant

#4A, Jalan SM1, Taman Saujana Mega

31000 Batu Gajah, Perak

Tel: 016 5996443; 016 5385425

GPS: E 101° 1' 19.8" N 4° 29' 32.5"

Business Hours: 12pm-3pm. Closed evenings.

Nosh News

Ili Aqilah



Hello Elvis

With new cafes popping up like mushrooms after rain in Ipoh, it is still hard to find any that cater to the needs of dessert-lovers. Two sisters, Zartih Haslina and Nora Ashikin came up with **Hello Elvis**, serving soft-served ice creams with snacks at Jalan Sultan Iskandar.

"We have a very fond memory of Ipoh. The memories we had with our father and how much he loved the Rock 'N' Roll king, Elvis is the reason behind the name of our shop."

The humble and cute cafe was recently open in the beginning of February and has been packed with locals and tourists staying nearby. Currently there are up to fifteen different menus with three different ice cream bases: chocolate, caramel and fruits.

The ice cream is made at the shop itself where toppings such as churros, crackers, pop corn, pretzel, strawberries and many more can be added and served to the customer. Guests are welcome to try *Pop Incident* (ice cream and popcorn topped with Butterscotch) good at **RM8** or *Caramel Hearted* (salted caramel ice cream with crunchy pretzel and cereal topped with caramel sauce) at **RM8.50** or *Oh Ray 000* (caramel ice cream with crushed Oreo and marshmallow) at **RM7.50**.

The cafe also offers sides such as waffle with ice cream and chocolate sauce (**RM12.50**), churros with chocolate sauce (**RM9**) and root beer float with caramel ice-cream at **RM5.50**. You can also order hot drinks, smoothies and strawberry shakes!

Hello Elvis is currently offering 10% off their special card for a limited period. The cafe opens everyday from 1pm till 7pm. For more information about them, go to their instagram at @helloelvisipoh.



... continued from page 2

Seyn Jukey

His journey to entrepreneurship began after Seyn, 30, completed his degree in engineering and is now running five companies that work on music, film, literature and theatre. Seyn can't help but feel fortunate that he gets to do what he loves for a living. As the co-founder of *Projek Rabak*, an art collective that embraces arts, pop culture and educates the public on appreciating the arts, Seyn and his team have already started working on the next *Ipoh Kreatif*, one of their biggest events, scheduled for January 2017.

"Lazy people can be found everywhere and throughout the ages. It's about finding the passion in oneself. Previous generations had to fight for their rights and prosperity of the country. It's all different now; we are doing what we want to do and to be. I believe in encouraging young people to be passionate in everything they love and making something of their lives," said Seyn who dreams of transforming Ipoh to be the creative city in Malaysia. Check out the upcoming events of *Projek Rabak* on their facebook page or log in to www.projekrabak.com for more details!

**Joanna Marie Gough**

The energetic Joanna, 27, has set foot in several different fields, including journalistic writing and photography.

"My parents knew I was good in doing business so they asked me to pursue the field," added Joanna who is now keen on building up the technology scene in Perak. With her broad circle of friends, Joanna created a group called *Startup Ipoh* to gather passionate Ipohites who shared the same idea to bring Ipoh's tech to the next level.

"Whenever I bring friends from KL or abroad to Ipoh, they love the atmosphere, the surrounding and of course, the food," said Joanna, who also believes that Ipoh has a lot of potential to be the next upcoming high-tech city. All it needs is a push button and she plans to be the one building and pushing it.

Joanna has set up her own digital marketing agency and is currently working as content creation strategist. She has set herself up with a few interesting projects and can't wait to share it with others. To contact Joanna on how you can be part of her start-up team, email: gough@jmsocials.com.

**Malvinderjit Singh**

The young director of *Tandoor Grill*, Malvinder, 31, is looking forward to expand more into the F&B industry. *Tandoor Grill* opened four years ago and has recently won Best Restaurant during the 2015 Perak Tourism Awards.

"The first three years were the hardest. We struggled a lot in so many ways, but now that it's well accepted not only by locals but also by international tourists, just makes me want to work harder," said Malvin. The idea of *Tandoor Grill* began when the family visited North India and it was his father's idea to set up a restaurant that serves good Northern Indian food in Ipoh.

Together with his sisters, Malvin manages the two-storey restaurant and is planning to open more branches in the future. Without any previous experience in F&B, Malvin would like to see more people joining in because it is a field where you can learn a lot of things.

"Everything is possible. Stay focused and do a lot of research. Good things will come to those who work for it," added Malvin.

Tandoor Grill is located at Jalan Chin Choon Sam, Greentown, 30450, Ipoh. They open every day (11.0pm-3pm, 6.30pm-11pm), close every Tuesday and accept reservations (05 252 5995/05 255 5995).

As the saying goes, "Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle". It is safe to say that Gen X and Gen Y are not lazy or confused, but instead are being misjudged by others. With the advanced technologies that we now have, the youths not only need to work harder but also need to learn how to work smart in order to rise to success.

COMMUNITY**Cultural Exchange Programme**

Garbed in traditional costumes, 42 media representatives from the Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club stood in awe at the Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

The Prime Minister's Press Secretary and Advisor to the club, Datuk Akmar Hisham Mokhes, who led the team, said Taj Mahal was an ideal spot to promote Perak as one of the tourism attractions in Malaysia.

"Taj Mahal is an iconic heritage building that symbolises love and affection. It attracts tourists from all over the world. Therefore, we take the opportunity to

display Malaysian's multicultural image by donning our traditional costumes. We promote Malaysia and Perak via the distribution of travel brochures. It is well accepted and many are interested to visit Malaysia," he added.

The programme was made possible by the hardworking committee members of the Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club. It is one of the most active media clubs in the country.

Established in 2008, the club is involved in a range of activities particularly charitable programmes, besides looking into the welfare of members and their families.



Prior to last year's expedition to Beijing, the club had organised trips to Australia, Indonesia and other parts of Malaysia.

President Wan Asrudi Wan Hassan said the club offers opportunities for all Perak media representatives to participate in organised programmes to assist the state and its citizens.

"For next year's programme, a field expedition anywhere around the country is ideal as it's in line with our club's objectives," he told *Ipoh Echo*.

Media members from the federal government, the MB's office, Ipoh City Council and corporate sponsors such as Impiana Hotel, Ipoh, also joined in the outing.

The delegation visited the Golden Triangle of India, namely New Delhi - Agra - Jaipur from Sunday, January 17 to Thursday, January 21.

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Arts & Culture

ATP6 to Raise More Local Talents in Theatre

As theatre is one of the oldest art forms known to mankind, Perak Theatre Academy 6 (ATP6) under the Perak Department for Culture and Arts (JKKNP) has been persistently raising more local talents in the world of theatre.

The camp began from December last year and ended in January 2016 where Noor Izwani Mohd Salim, 24, from Batu Gajah was awarded the best student where she won return tickets to Medan, a plaque and cash.

"The passion started when I went to Perak Theatre Festival last year. Through ATP6, I got to learn and discover more about how I can be a better actor. Since I'm just a newcomer, I never knew I could win this award," said Izwani who recently graduated from UITM.

Officiating the affair was state exco for Tourism, Art, Culture, Communication and Multimedia, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Dato' Mohammed Radzi who hoped more would take part in Perak Theatre Academy.

"Congratulations to all the students who completed their training in ATP6. I hope one day they will become



international stars and make us proud," said Nolee.

For ATP6, all thirty students were guided by experienced directors such as Mohd Yusop Najmi

Othman, the principal and Rashidi Abdul Khais, the head of academy.

RM

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.

Speech contests are a Toastmasters tradition. Contests are a key component of Toastmasters Int. members experience. Contests offer an opportunity for members to step out of their comfort zone, test their skills, and receive recognition for their accomplishment both from inside and outside of the club meeting environment. **International Speech Contest** – Contestants present a 5-7 minute speech on any subject they choose. **Table Topic Contest** – an impromptu 2-minute speech, all constants are assigned the same topic, told to them when they are introduced by the contest chair. The public is invited to witness the contests. Date: Wednesday **February 17**, 7.45pm at YMCA of Ipoh, Jalan Raja Musa (Anderson Road). Contact Person Toastmasters Pak Peter **019 574 3572**.

Sharpened Word next literary matinee meets on Saturday February 20, 2.30pm to 5.30pm 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 Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta.

Perak Academy Lecture Series entitled: "The Importance of Botany in Perak" by Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr Abdul Latiff Mohamad, Thursday **March 3**, 7.45pm to 10pm at Perak Academy, 1 Jalan Sambanthan, 30000 Ipoh (opposite Ipoh Padang). Do register early as limited seats available. Registration fee RM10 per person. For reservation, tel./fax: **05 241 3742** or **016 221 3742**. Email: contact@perakacademy.com.

Two-day workshop for teenagers titled "I'm In Control" to raise awareness and knowledge about pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/

AIDS. They will learn about their own sexuality, the need to be responsible and have the right values. Conducted by The Family Wellness Club, in collaboration with the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN) Perak. The workshop will be held on Saturday & Sunday **March 5 & 6** from 9am to 4.30pm at Banyan Spa, 40 Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh. Limited to 15 teenage boys and 15 teenage girls aged 13 to 16 years old. Registration is free. Parents wishing to register their teenage children, please call **05 242 6866** or **012 507 3866** (Denise).

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**.

Chinese New Year Round-up

By Ili Aqilah and Nantini Krishnan

One of the perks of being a Malaysian is we get to celebrate all sorts of festivals from Aidilfitri, Deepavali, Christmas, and Chinese New Year (CNY) on February 8 and 9. The Ipoh Echo team was invited to various open houses where we had a very fun time. May this year bring everyone prosperity and good health!

Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)

With VVIP guests including Chief Minister of Perak, Dato' Seri Diraja Dr Zambry bin Abd Kadir, state exco Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon and Dato' Hajah Rusnah and Ipoh Mayor, Dato' Zamri Man, the big celebration by PCCI was held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel's Grand Valley Ballroom on February 9.

Upon arrival, guests were entertained by Cai Qing (Lion Dance) performance before they were greeted by the current president of PCCI, Dato' Liew Sew Yee. "On this occasion of sending off the year of the Goat and welcoming the fresh year of the Monkey, I would like to send my deepest appreciation to all central committee members for their hard work and contribution towards accomplishing many achievements during the past year," said Dato' Liew in his opening remarks.

Notable PCCI's achievements include various trade missions made abroad with the aim of promoting Perak, staging a 'Meet the People' dinner with the Chinese Community in conjunction with the inauguration of His Royal Highness, Sultan Nazrin Shah and many more.

As for Dato' Seri Diraja Dr Zambry, he hoped the public will continue to keep the harmony in Malaysia and stand united. "Though we may have our differences and beliefs, for the sake of our beloved country and state, I urge everyone to stop looking at the differences but instead cherish what we have," said Dato' Zambry before officiating the event.

In the midst of the event, PCCI also invited one hundred children from various homes such as Anning, Nurul Huda and Salvation Army where they were given *ang pau* and goodie bags.



Open House Hosted by ICW President

Ipoh City Watch (ICW) President, Associate Professor Dr Richard Ng hosted an Open house on Monday, February 8, the first day of the Chinese New Year. Some 300 members, supporters and guests of the non-governmental organisation attended Chinese New Year Open House at Richard's residence in Taman Desa Tambun Indah, Ipoh. The half-day celebration was held in the spirit of *muhibbah* (goodwill) with all races coming together and enjoying the camaraderie and the sumptuous spread of local food. Guest of honour was Dato' Samsudin bin Abu Hassan, Executive Councillor for Consumer Affairs, Human Resources and Civil Society. Also present was State Executive for Arts, Culture, Tourism, Communication and Multimedia, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi, former state exco member Dato' Radzi Manan and his wife Datin Normah.



AMANA Perak Visits Perak Chinese Media

In the spirit of the celebration, AMANA Perak went around the town of Ipoh and visited the offices of Perak Chinese Media including Nanyang Siang Pau, Sin Chew Daily, China Press and Oriental Daily to hand over oranges for CNY.

The significance of giving oranges for CNY is that mandarin oranges symbolises gold in the Cantonese dialect. It is also auspicious to present them as gifts. The chairman of AMANA Perak, Haji Asmuni Awi was at the affair together with other members of the committee.



Volunteers Celebrate CNY with Residents of HRPB's Pediatric Ward

While others are celebrating CNY with their family, a group of volunteers decided to make time for the patients at the pediatric ward of Raja Permaisuri Bainun Hospital (HRPB) on February 9.

The patients and their caretakers including the staff were entertained by clowns and a few cartoon mascots that were invited by the team to cheer them up.

"We can't be here everyday. So we tried our best to make them feel happy, even if it's just for a while," said Thirumaran Muthusamy, one of the volunteers. The guests were also given goodie bags and balloons sponsored by the volunteers themselves.



Hua Yang Berhad Showcases and CNY Celebration

As a gesture of goodwill and to showcase the final phase of Ridgewood, Bercham, Hua Yang Berhad held a CNY celebration 'open house' on February 11 where guests were given a preview to see the homes that were scheduled to be released soon.

Hua Yang Assistant General Manager, Tony Ng who was at the event believes that it was the perfect time for everyone to get together and celebrate the auspicious season with the stakeholders, friends and family.

"We are pleased to launch the final phase of Ridgewood during this time with our valued customers, business partners and members of the community," said Tony.

The guests of the open house were treated with *ang pau* from the God of Prosperity and lion dances. Special for the event, customers who booked a unit on the day were offered a special package and given the opportunity to participate in a lucky draw session to win hampers.



Students Bring Smiles to Old Folks

Ipoh City Watch in collaboration with Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Seri Keledang celebrated Chinese New Year with inmates of Kampong Simee Old Folks Home on Saturday, February 6. The charity event aims to encourage and cultivate active participation of all the SMK Seri Kledang students in community engagement projects. The visit ended with the students giving out oranges and *ang pau* to the inmates and made conversation with them. Everyone enjoyed their time spent with the old folks and some students even felt sad to leave. For them, it was a meaningful way to spend Chinese New Year this year.



News

Ariva Topping-up Ceremony

One of the premier international hotel chains, Ariva Hospitality, has set its foot in Ipoh and is scheduled to open this year in October.

During the topping-up ceremony on February 3, the CEO of Ariva Hospitality, Cameron Ong said, "I can't wait to see the completed building that includes over one hundred and fifty luxurious rooms including a few eco-friendly floors."

"The idea for Ariva Ipoh is to have it at an easily accessible location but still surrounded by nature. We have decided to keep the trees surrounding this building, giving it a nature-friendly look," said Cameron.

Ariva also offers serviced apartments all complemented with facilities such as ballroom, rooftop infinity spa pool, meeting rooms and two in-house restaurants. The hotel is located at the heart of Kinta Valley at Jalan Dato Lau Pak Khuan near Stadium Indera Mulia.

Together at the topping-up ceremony were members of the board of directors, Lee Siew Ming, Tan Say Yap and Andy Goh.

Ili Aqilah



Uber's Trial Run in Ipoh



Although driving in Ipoh is not as hectic as in Kuala Lumpur, one cannot dismiss the fact that the city's traffic is unpredictable and finding parking is sometimes difficult. You can put your mind at ease (for the moment at least) because Uber service is now available in Ipoh.

Founded in 2009, by Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp, Uber set up in Malaysia last year and has made its mark in Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bharu, Penang and, hopefully, in Ipoh. During a soft launch ceremony held on Wednesday, February 3 at The Deck, WEIL Hotel, Ipoh, Marketing Coordinator for Uber Malaysia, Eda Tan, hoped Ipohites would respond positively during the month-long trial run in February.

"Ipoh has developed enormously. Uber definitely wants to be a part of it. We want the community to grab the opportunity and give the service a try," said Eda to reporters.

With base fare as low as RM1 and only 50 sen per km (25 sen per minute), Ipohites can start using the service via an application (app) through their smartphones. After downloading the app, fill in the requirements needed, including your credit card or debit card number for payment and you are good to go. Unlike regular taxis, there is no cash transaction between the driver and passenger. Fares will be deducted via online banking and customers will receive their receipts through their emails.

Upon confirmation of booking, the app will send you the photo of the driver, the type of car and the plate number to make identification easier. It will also tell you the estimated time of arrival of the car.

While KLites get to enjoy different types of Uber services such as Uber XL (larger cars) and Uber Black (luxury cars), in Ipoh it is just Uber X. For more information on Uber, go to its website www.uber.com.

Ili Aqilah and Nantini



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Damaged Wall Repaired



In Issue 226 (Dec 16 2015 - Jan15 2016) of Ipoh Echo, I wrote about the damage to the concrete wall along the bridge in Jalan Raja, Kampung Manjoi and possibility of garbage being strewn onto the road.

MBI has been very efficient and the wall has been repaired. As per my suggestion the river bund has been fortified with stones and concreted. The wall was slightly displaced from the bridge and this has been sealed.

Kudos to MBI for prompt action. Residents staying nearby can now sleep in peace.

A. Jeyaraj



News

Media Luncheon with Mayor

“**U**tmost thanks to the media for their support to Ipoh City Council. To date, the total number of published articles for the past six months is 1307. That’s approximately 200 reports per month. It is fantastic,” said Mayor Dato’ Zamri bin Man during his first luncheon with media representatives on Thursday, February 4 at the Simpang Tiga Restaurant in conjunction with the upcoming Chinese New Year.

“As a result, we see a significant increase in the number of tourists in Ipoh via the congestion during peak times such as weekends which helps spice up the socio-economic scene,” the amiable mayor added. Zamri thanked the 150-odd crowd from the various Ipoh-based media agencies during the fellowship gathering.

The objective of the luncheon was to foster closer ties between the Council and the



media besides expressing gratitude for the synergy.

Present at the event were Ipoh City Council Secretary, Mohamad Zakuan Hj Zakaria, Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club President, Wan Asrudi bin Wan Hasan, Perak Media Club President, Alan Teh Pek Ling, senior staff of MBI, media bureau chiefs and their staff.

After the auspicious *yee sang* prosperity toss, the occasion saw the distribution of the much-awaited parking stickers to members of the media. Over 200 car stickers were given out, the largest number ever recorded. While the attendees ate, the musical ensemble played. It was an enthralling occasion for everyone present.

Mei Kuan

River Cleaning by GEC

River pollution has always been one of the biggest problems in our country and it has increasingly become a large environmental problem due to public attitudes. With this in mind, Global Environment Centre (GEC) together with over two hundred volunteers gathered on January 30 to clean Kinta River and its area.

The programme was organised in collaboration with The Star ‘Do Good Volunteer’ Initiative and Indah Water Konsortium (IWK), supported by Perak State Department of Irrigation and Drainage Perak (DID), Ipoh City Council (MBI) and GAB Foundation under their WATER Project. Officiating the event was director of DID, Dato’ Ir Hj. Abdul Razak bin Dahalan.

“River clean-up is not an easy task. I am pleased that proactive actions are being taken by fellow stakeholders to educate the community especially younger generations about river care including river clean-up,” said Abdul Razak in his opening remarks.

The event was also joined by a few schools and colleges including Raja Perempuan School and Ipoh Sunway college. Trustee for GAB foundation, Renuka Indrajah was also at the affair and hopes the public will take river clean-up as a serious matter.

“Water is an essential part of our lives and it should be monitored and protected. The WATER project aims to engage immediate community members in a monitoring programme to interest them in rivers as a community asset,” added Renuka.

The half-day programme involved river clean-up, constructed wetland cell management, river walk and education, river water quality monitoring and a site visit to a nearby IWK sewage treatment plant.

Ili Aqilah



iSpeak
A. Jeyaraj

Perak Herbal Garden Needs Publicity

Irecently visited the Perak Herbal Garden located in Kampung Kepayang, off Jalan Simpang Pulai - Batu Gajah. I was very impressed. It is a suburban nature park comprising of about 22 hectares and home to more than five hundred species of plants and trees, including medical, cosmetic and aroma-therapeutic. The theme ‘Knowing the goodness and wonders of natural treasures’ is appropriate for the park. Nature lovers can spend the whole day there and it is a good place for a picnic.

There are two main enclosures, one comprising herbal plants and each plant has a notice stating its name and remedial uses. The other one is a nursery where plants are sold costing between RM4 and RM15 which is cheap. Herbal products are sold at the office.

The garden is well maintained by the Perak Agricultural Department. The grass is cut and the whole area is clean with hardly any garbage.

There park has recreational facilities for jogging, cycling, camping, three ponds for fishing and a bazaar on Saturdays.

During weekends there is a free tram ride around the garden which takes about half an hour.

Everything about the garden is good except the lack of visitors. This is one of the tourist icons being promoted by Tourism Perak. In fact, a number of people I spoke to were not aware of the existence of the garden. I visited the place twice, once during a weekday and on a Saturday. During the weekday, I was there for more than two hours and during this time, besides my friend and myself, there was another man with his son. There was not much difference on Saturday; just two families came to buy plants and they soon left.

I saw the tram passing by and there was only one family in the tram. When I took the tram there were two ladies and a child. During the next trip there were a number of



small girls probably from the nearby housing estates and not actual visitors.

The tram ride is pleasant and for a change instead of seeing concrete jungle we can see greenery everywhere. There is also a nice view of the surrounding hills. During the ride I only saw one person fishing and he looked like a staff member. There was nobody along the route. During the tram ride there must be recorded commentary in English and Malay providing information about the trees and plants.

The signage is not adequate and I had to ask the staff in the office how to go to the main herbal site. The few signages provided are only in Malay and if we are targeting foreign tourists then we must have English as well. All the brochures are also only in Malay, we need an English version as well. When I visited tourist sites in neighbouring countries, I noticed that English is widely used.

During the Saturday bazaar, there were a few stalls selling local products but there were hardly any customers. I wonder whether it is economically worthwhile for the traders to open their stalls.

The cafeteria is a big let-down, serving a limited variety of food. Ipoh is a food haven and I know of people coming from Singapore just to eat. There must be a mini food court selling the delicacies of Ipoh. This would attract the residence from the neighbouring housing estates.

My concern is so much money is being spent to maintain the place, but it is not attracting tourists and even many Ipohites are not aware of it. The Agricultural Department is doing a good job. It is up to Tourism Perak to promote the place. Since the garden is educational, it must be promoted to school and college students.

The garden is along the same road as Kellie’s Castle which is quite popular and it would be a good idea to promote the place together with Kellie’s Castle.

COMMUNITY

CNY Cheers to Old Folks



The Ipoh Jewish Entrepreneurship, a young entrepreneurs' association, organised a pre-Chinese New Year gathering exclusively for 50 old folks at Persatuan Kebajikan Warga Tua Seri Bahagia, Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah (formerly Gopeng Road), Ipoh on Sunday, January 31.

The volunteers distributed gift bags containing daily necessities such as cereals, rice, cooking oil, sugar, mandarin oranges and the much-sought after *ang pau* packets, which they packed a week prior to the event.

The celebration started with the tossing of *yee sang* for prosperity and good health followed by a sumptuous lunch. It was a very heart-warming experience for all. The old folks expressed their gratitude for the reception and the gifts they received.

Ipoh City Councillor Ceylyn Tay, co-ordinator of the event, said, "I appreciate the opportunity given to be with these old folks. I feel good to engage them, as they need our assistance. We'll continue to organise similar events in the future."

It was inspiring to see many individuals volunteering their services for free, a reflection of their desire to make a difference to the lives of the less fortunate in the community.

"Rumah Seri Bahagia" or "Lucky Village Home" is an old-folks home providing shelter, care and comfort to elderly people, irrespective of race and religion. All services and facilities provided in the home are free of charge. Readers can visit the home located at 8km, Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, 31350 Ipoh or call **05 312 0997** for details.

Nantini

CNY Celebration at Ipoh Parade

As everyone prepared to usher in the Year of the Fire Monkey, Ipoh Parade decked out completely in red with its Prosperity Garden theme to welcome another auspicious year. Shoppers got the chance to get up close and personal with an array of cheeky monkey characters as part of Ipoh Parade's Chinese New Year decorations this year. The Prosperity Garden featured the Prosperity Monkey, Longevity Monkey, Harmony Monkey, Fortune Monkey and Happy Monkey, each of which is believed to bring in good luck, good health, wealth, prosperity, and a joyful year ahead for all.

Exciting performances for shoppers included the Shaolin Kung Fu Performance, China Acrobatic Show, Southern & Northern Acrobatic Lion & Dragon Dance, 24 Seasons Drum, and Rhythmic Latin Dance. Also movie promotional tours for films such as "Huat The Fish" "Let's Eat" and Red Red People Red Red Year CNY Album Tour as well as an Oldies Singing Contest as part of the "Old Town Story" movie promo on February 13 was on the programme.

Jaya Grocer which opened recently offered CNY promotions on selected items such as Mandarin oranges, gift hampers, cookies, and Banana Leaf Nian Gao for shoppers to enjoy.

"Chinese New Year is always celebrated with a bang here in Ipoh as we look forward to a great number of city dwellers from the south coming back to spend time with their families," commented Chan Yu Yin, Ipoh Parade's Centre Manager. "At Ipoh Parade, we strive to provide the best in retail for the festive season. Gong Xi Fa Cai!"



Festive Cheer for Anning

Children and old folks of Anning ushered in the Chinese New Year at the home together with Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) recently with an abundance of red packets, mandarin oranges and a lion dance performance.

Based in Kelana Jaya, this is CGC's first ever corporate social responsibility initiative in Ipoh. Founded in 1972, the core business of CGC is to assist SMEs, especially those with inadequate or without collateral and track records, to obtain credit facilities from financial institutions by providing guarantee cover.

Besides distributing red packets to the residents, a cheque of RM10,000 was presented by CGC's chief executive officer, Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak to the advisor of Anning Old Folks' Home, Ho You Meng. Also present was vice president of Anning Children's and Old Folks' Home, Mok Soon Sang.

"This initiative is an ongoing effort in fulfilling our responsibility as a caring corporate citizen to foster closer relationships between CGC's staff and the community we serve, especially the underprivileged ones," Zamree stated.

"Anning Old Folks' Home was established in 2003 while the Anning Children's Home began in 2009. We don't collect a single cent from the residents under our care," Ho explained.

To date, there are 37 kids and 45 elderly citizens residing at Anning. Readers who would like to donate or volunteer, kindly contact **05 311 1223** (Anning Old Folks' Home) or **05 311 4640** (Anning Children's Home).

Mei Kuan



Ipoh Car-Free Day, an event held every month beginning in October 2015, is aimed at encouraging people to move around the city without cars. The fourth car-free day on Sunday, January 31, along one half of Jalan Raja DiHilir (Tambun Road), received encouraging support from the public.

The first event for 2016 saw a lot more activities compared to previous. They included silat, busking, group aerobics and free dental examinations. Government departments, schools and hospitals had joined in by organising cultural dances, live band performances and health-screening.

Over 5000 people turned up for the fourth car-free day event to enjoy the ambience and the merriment. The primary objective of the programme is to turn Ipoh into a low-carbon emission city and to transform its inhabitants into a low-carbon community. It is also designed to encourage residents to practise a more active and healthy lifestyle in the absence of vehicular traffic.

The upcoming car-free day on February 28, according to Mayor Dato' Zamri Man, will feature Chinese cultural performances, such as lion dances, to celebrate Chinese New Year.

"Our approach is to attract a wider cross-section of the public by organising fun-related activities and engaging them on issues such as non-car travel options," he told reporters on conclusion of the 3-hour event.

Incidentally, Ipoh Car-Free Day is held every month on the last Sunday of the month.

Nantini

ARTS & CULTURE

Ili Aqilah

Underdog Festival Shines!



Wira

Ipoh Kreative 2016, hosted by Projek Rabak, took place from January 24 till 30 at eleven different locations around Ipoh. With over forty nine different local and international artists and performers, this independent festival has proven that Ipoh has a big potential to become Malaysia's hub for creativity.

Launched at Ipoh's iconic market, Pasar Loken, Adun for Manung and also the chairman of Tourism Perak Management Berhad, En Kamil Dato' Shafie, officiated the affair. He was proud to see the initiative taken by young Ipohites and hoped to see more art festivals happening in Ipoh. Last year alone, three different festivals took place here; the first Ipoh Kreative, Borak Art Youth (BAYS) and The Other Festival. These three festivals managed to grab not only the attention of locals but also international tourists. Ipoh Kreative's director, Mohd Jayzuan wished more would support their dream to make Ipoh the city centre for creativity.

"The development of a city can be measured by its community's ability to think beyond the closed circle and critically. Thus, this festival is held as a celebration to the many forms of creative leagues and to encourage analytical thinking and fostering understanding of different opinions and ideas."

Later on the same day, at Khizanat, audiences were introduced to 'Ipoh Avant-Garde Special' where five different talented performers discussed and performed the new art of experimental music to the public. Ipoh Kreative is a combination of art, music, film, economy, fashion, coffee, lifestyle, pop culture and of course, literature. The second day of the event took place at Sepaloh Art Gallery which saw two events designed for literature lovers where Mutalib Uthman, CEO for DuBook Press was given the honour to talk about the new wave of alternative books. According to Mutalib or Mut, it is important for writers, experienced or new, to stick to being true to themselves when writing books.

"Everyone can write a book. Everyone can publish a book. But what about the content? When writing, what do you want from the reader? Ask yourself, why am I writing this. Find the answer first." Mut, a funny man himself, opened the eyes of his audiences at the session when he shared the challenges he faced when he first started DuBook back in 2010.

"I had to put on a thick face and sell my own book. I know how hard it is to be a successful writer so when any new writers come and approach me for help, I'll put 101% effort for them," DuBook was one of the pioneer alternative book publishers and Mut is happy to see more publishers coming in and printing books that actually will trigger the minds of its readers. After Mut's session, one of the co-founder of Projek Rabak, Riduan A.Dullah talked about 'Rabak Writing & Poetry' where he discussed how to express your feelings through writing.

"Suffering is an advantage when it comes to writing," said Riduan, a sentence that caught my attention. Later on the same night, together with over 150 in the audience, we were awed and entertained by seven poets at the poetry party. While poets like Muharos, Meor Hailree, Jack Malik, Riduan A.Dullah and Seyn Jukey charmed everyone with their one of a kind poetry style, it was the three female performers who grabbed my attention. Lara Hassan's carefree style, Fynn Jamal's on her rant about being stuck between mainstream and independent media and the amazing Melizarani T. Selva with her 'Macha That Got Away'. Melizarani's book, 'Taboo' published last year got into MPH's Top 10 best-seller list and is available in major bookstores across Mumbai, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

As a film-lover myself, I had a great time attending three of Ipoh Kreative's sessions where I got to meet one of the upcoming film directors, (known for her short film 'Odah' and Khalilah), Junad M. Nor, who conducted a workshop on film, script and directing. Junad discussed what encouraged her and how she is keen to create something that



L-R: Jayzuan, YB Kamil, Dato' Hajah Rusnah

can be enjoyed by everyone for a long time. Soon after the workshop, the Ipoh Film Festival was held at Yasmin at Kong Heng museum. From Ipoh Kreative's own documentary, Nadia Ngidam Cili (Nadia Cravings Chili), Poskad Dari Seberang (What The Man Needs is Loneliness), Aku Bukan Nietzsche (I am not Nietzsche) to the special premier of Behind the Scenes of Jagat; a local film which captured the hearts of everyone and a definite must watch. Courtesy of Goethe Institute, the official institute for German culture and Projek Rabak's hard work, Ipohites were in for a treat as 'Berlinale Shorts Go Abroad' were viewed exclusively free for Ipoh Kreative. The films that were labelled as controversial, disturbing and testing the limits of anyone's comprehension moved everyone at Khizanat on January 29 and many who stayed until the last film.

For anyone who shared the same interest as me in exploring the local music scene, Kamal Sabran is not an unknown name. He is a talented artist-musician and also the founder of Space Gambus Experiment, an experimental music and sound art collective. Together with other talented performers such as Lara Hassan, Eric Hausman, Hakim Sattu and many more, they joined forces and performed under Space Banjo Circus where they became the opening act for Ipoh Kreative's final session, Alternative Music Showcase at Insider Satellite on January 30. I was also charmed during 'Singer, Song-writer Affair' held on January 28 at Chokodok Raggae House where Anaz, Wira, Sam Lopez and coming all the way from Kuching, Amy Amin sang their hearts out.

After seven days of attending the festival, it will be hard to deny how big Ipoh Kreative's potential is. Without any big funding, the team of Projek Rabak has certainly proved to everyone that hard work definitely pays off. Everything about Ipoh Kreative was done in Ipoh style, no hustle and bustle. It was indeed a great event organised by our own Ipohites and I am definitely looking forward to attend it again next year!

Ipoh Echo is proud to have been the Media Sponsor for this festival.



Lara Hassan



Riduan A. Dullah

Junad M. Nor



Rhiss Amirul

Tourism

Fruitful Tourism Gathering

Counting down to the Visit Perak Year 2017, the Perak Tourism Association (PTA) initiated a Tourism Tea Gathering on Tuesday, February 2 at WEIL Hotel, Ipoh in the presence of guest of honour, the Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Multimedia and Communications, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi and over 90 players within the tourism fraternity. They also included KTM Intercity, Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA), state tourism officers, representatives from hotels, airlines and NGOs.

Also present was former President of PTA, Datuk Mohd Zainal Abidin bin Haji Abdul Kadir.

"We've requested organisations in the tourism industry to purchase the Visit Perak Year 2017 lapel pins for all their staff to wear throughout the year 2016. This will be an awareness campaign that all of us are playing our role in our own way," said Hj Mohd Odzman bin Abdul Kadir, the President of PTA since 2010.

"Running on the theme 'World of Wonders', Visit Perak Year 2017 is aimed at making the tourism industry the second highest contributor for the state's gross domestic product," Dato' Nolee explained. Among the initiatives taken are: Wi-Fi upgrade, training courses in human resource, developing agro-tourism, increasing the state's visibility outside of Perak especially in Kuala Lumpur, Johor and Pahang, launching of commemorative stamps and the establishment of an official state merchandise store.

Two new players, Ipoh Convention Centre and Movie Animation Park Studios (MAPS), also shared their added attractions to the attendees.

Ipoh Convention Centre would have an exhibition hall with a capacity of 4000 and a combination of 43 retail outlets of branded goods, 313-room hotel (operated by Pullman International) in one tower and 300 service-apartment units in another tower.

Meanwhile, the upcoming MAPS offers 40 attractions in six themed zones with the DreamWorks Zone as its highlight. With a target opening in July, MAPS also has a 20-storey drop, 4D theatre, three-level starship dining restaurant and stunt shows.



According to Dato' Nolee, the two new products would address the issue of low occupancy rate during the weekdays for hotels. With the right strategy and promotion, it will help all the industry players to fill in the gaps in further strengthening the potentials for tourists to visit Ipoh and Perak.

Mei Kuan

Yang TU Yang NI

The Iron Rooster to Quanzhou

China's high speed train covers most big cities in China. The first time I took the train when it started it seemed grander and faster. The posher part could be my memory playing tricks but it was certainly faster. Because of incidents due to its speed it is now required to travel no faster than 300kph. It's still the fastest train but it doesn't seem such a big deal anymore.

If you are not going anywhere fast I suggest you take one of the old (very old) trains. They serve the very small provincial towns and if you don't hurry they may be phased out by these unromantic speeding behemoths. I once took the old iron rooster (as Theroux calls them) to Guizhou. The engine was a massive piece of metal, formidable looking, pulling other lesser masses of metal which are only a little less intimidating. The train rises three feet from the platform. They have a step-ladder to assist your access. You can't simply board at your leisure, only when the guard gives permission. This prevents the rush one sees on Indian railways, and a good thing too because with the passengers go chickens, farm produce and bundles of personal baggage.

The seats are wooden and hard with straight backs. It's a good thing that access was controlled because soon the coaches were full. The aisles blocked by bundles of clothing, chicken and other farm produce were an obstacle course. These together with their owners discharged along the way and others taken on. Generally it became less crowded as the journey wore. The downside was, it got colder (it was winter) because you lost so much body warmth and you wished it was packed again.

Somewhere along the journey a guard appeared and started giving a spiel on a nicotine-removing toothpaste he happened to have. In case you did not want toothpaste he also had a cure-all balm. It was such a good show I bought both. "This is a clever foreigner who knows what is good value". And he went on to sing my many virtues. "You all should follow his example". No one else did. And the train would chug along into the thirtieth tunnel. We appeared into daylight only to go into tunnel 31st not ten minutes down the track. This is a mountainous region. That's the kind of train journey one should take, not those whose journey is over before it begins.

Like the Shenzhen railway station at the other end, the Quanzhou railway station is equally impressive – big and modern with all the facilities of an international airport. But Quanzhou is not a new city nor is it big by China's standard.

If you like Chinese tea then Quanzhou is the place for you. It's the centre of Te Kuan Yin – a green tea. But it's not just green tea. Quanzhou also has Pu Err and Hong Ta Bao (ZTE's cheongsam) both of which are red tea (which Westerners refer to as black tea – a misnomer really). There's a very local tea from a hill just outside Quanzhou. It appears that the Wu Yi Shan (5-1) tea is exceptional. I have not had the pleasure, therefore, I can't vouch for it.

It seems like every other shop in town is a tea shop. They welcome you to try their tea – no obligation to buy. I must say some of them are outstanding, even to this ranking amateur. However my uneducated palate is suspect so take my opinion with a bit of salt. Let's say they beat the stuff they serve in our restaurants back home or the rubbish they dish out in coffee shops. There are people who are truly knowledgeable about



tea but I think few who have the natural palate for it. Learning about tea is a doctorate course in itself.

Jinjiang is the city next to Quanzhou. In fact they are the same city separated by the Jinjiang River – somewhat like Old Town and New Town only much bigger. If Quanzhou is the centre for tea, Jinjiang is the world capital for shoes. At one time every branded shoe was made here – Nike, Converse, Reebok, etc. but some have relocated outside China because of the rising labour cost. Although a small town (by Chinese standard), Jinjiang has a large expat population – most of them involved in the shoe industry – manufacturing, designing, buyers.

There is a part of Quanzhou called Hwa Shiao Shing Chun (in my bad pinyin) translated as Overseas Chinese District. Apparently in the past many Overseas Chinese who made money abroad returned and build mansions for their retirement or their concubines. However, after 1949 they could not come back and so they left their mansions to their relatives. Today most are neglected although there are signs that they are being gentrified – cafes and interesting eateries. I went to one such, called Xiao Ching Ku Shi (Small Town Story) which is a song made famous by Teresa Teng. The restaurant serves home-style meals to small numbers. It's a Ma/Pa operation with a very limited menu. The cuisine is Fujian/Hokkien. Many of the dishes will be familiar to Penang people or Hokkiens in Medan. The food is worth returning for but only if you know what to order.

Like in our Old Town, the prices of properties in the Overseas Chinese District have rocketed.

Talking of Old Town reminds me of home. We may not be famous for tea or shoes – although we have a small shoe centre in Tanah Merah – but we have Ipoh White Coffee and the best *Sar Hor Fun* in the world. Destination Ipoh next.

Yin
The Man from TR

Education

A Gem of a Teacher

Friday, January 29 marked the retirement of the principal of SMJK Perempuan Perak, Lee Puay Eng. The affable yet unassuming lady was appointed principal of the school in 2009 and has been teaching for the past 32 years specialising in Physics.

Ipo Echo had an exclusive one-on-one with the 58-year-old Ipo-born Lee.

What does she like the most about teaching? "Seeing how the students initially crinkle their forehead in confusion and then the sparkle in their eyes during their light-bulb moment is very enjoyable," Lee enthused.

A graduate of University of Malaya, she went into pedagogy by chance as the offer of an education diploma came to her. Lee was first posted to a science boarding school at Raub in 1984. In 1989, she taught at SMJK Pei Yuan, Kampar and subsequently at SMJK Poi Lam before joining the present school.

Following is her advice for all young educators out there: "Times are changing so you must adapt your teaching methods to suit the pupils nowadays who have the choices to attend tuition classes and surf the Internet. Do not let those choices override your



role. Besides that, be involved with the students to earn their respect because they will then know that you really care."

"Every moment spent in school is the proudest moment for me because I get to see the students putting in effort and trying their best," she shared.

Over the course of her career, she observes that things are changing for the better. "In the past, everyone would quietly copy the notes given by the teachers in class. Now, we encourage interaction in the classroom. Sometimes it is good to have 'constructive noise' which is a sign that they are having fun learning," she posited.

Under Lee's leadership, the school ranking has been improved to band 3 and is one of the top 10 schools in North Kinta district in terms of academic performance in the SPM examination. She was honoured with the

excellent service award in 1993 and 2010.

On her plans after retirement, she wishes to take it easy and clear her mind. "I am not having any plans, as I believe that God will plan for me," Lee concluded.

Mei Kuan

Empowering Today's Students

EasyUni, Asia's leading education site, is launching a Paid Internship Programme for college and university students studying in Malaysia who want to earn extra cash while still in school. Interns and part-timers will get a chance to work in various industries including Food and Beverage (F&B), Advertising, Retail, E-commerce, IT and others.

"Students can contribute stories, write articles, design layouts and creatives, even do data entry and translation in our headquarters in Mid Valley or in the comfort of their home," says Edwin Tay, CEO and Co-Founder of EasyUni Sdn Bhd.

"We are looking forward to hosting culinary arts majors who have the passion for action in the kitchen," says Jo-Ann Tan, Founder of Fork D World Bistro, who will be offering internships to aspiring chefs.

Mobile commerce presents a huge opportunity for entrepreneurs, businesses and start-ups in Malaysia. In fact, mobile commerce is making a huge impact in Malaysia, as 91% of online shoppers researched products on a device, while 42% made purchases via their mobile phone. Shopee is a mobile marketplace that focuses on providing platforms for budding entrepreneurs who plan to start a business or to work in small entrepreneurship enterprise and Shopee also aims to create a young entrepreneurship community by educating young talents on how to develop and create their own start-ups.

"University and college students can explore Shopee as an online avenue to sell their products while getting the chance to network with experts, buyers, influencers and more. By giving them the right skills and platform to use, young entrepreneurs today will no doubt be an influential force in the social commerce scene", says Ian Ho, Managing Director of Shopee Malaysia.

Other partner companies include online footwear store Christy Ng Shoes, telecommunications company Action Retail Management, and premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services and events for information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets, International Data Corporation (IDC). "By providing opportunities to students, we are enabling them to help themselves, at the same time imparting valuable knowledge and skills," tells Vijay Sundararaman, Country Manager (Malaysia) of IDC.

In addition, EasyUni, together with the partners, will host a series of talks featuring topics related to youth empowerment, entrepreneurship and money management.

"EasyUni was launched with a mission to help students. This initiative is another one of many that we have done and many more that we will do," says Tay. "Aside from offering a chance to work in our organisation, we are offering opportunities for students to learn skills on how to manage their finances and help themselves, while they are still in school."

The talks will invite experts and leaders from various fields, hoping to inspire students by making them recognise their gifts, skills and talents which they can use to support themselves and take care of their expenses.

James Tan, CEO of Mantra, adds, "We are glad that EasyUni has chosen us to partner with them in this noble cause. We will be glad to extend our expertise to help these students." In addition to the talks, Mantra will also offer internship for media and mass communication students, which includes copywriting and design, social media, account servicing and events management.

"We have an exciting line-up of speakers and we are beyond ecstatic to share them with our students. We hope this will help them in any way," says Tay.

EasyUni.my is Malaysia's first and largest online portal that offers a comprehensive and complete platform for college and university applications for school leavers and working adults with over 70,000 courses and programmes from 2000 colleges and universities across more than 20 countries. Launched in 2011, EasyUni.my currently has helped more than 4 million students globally in their application to institutions of higher education of their choice. Easyuni.my is owned and managed by MSC-status company EasyUni Sdn Bhd.

Through these efforts EasyUni hopes to help empower students so they can realise their full-potential by creating opportunities for them to learn and use their abilities to make significant change in their lives. For more information and updates on this project, visit <http://goo.gl/XML1Az>.

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Another Successful Campaign

A total of 251 Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) public relations undergraduates showed their volunteerism spirit during the opening ceremony of their PR campaign, "Volunteerism V", at its Kampar campus on Monday, February 1.

This year's campaign constituted five groups with each championing a sub-theme namely, Depression (D), Recycle (R), Technology Escapism (E), Animal Protection (A), and Malaysian Culture (M), which are collectively known as 'D.R.E.A.M'.

Gracing the joyous occasion was Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry, Dato' Lee Chee Leong. On hand to receive him were UTAR President, Ir Prof Academician Dato' Dr Chuah Hean Teik, Kampar District Council Secretary, Nor Akmal Yang Ghazali representing Council President Khairul Amir Mohamad Zubir, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Dr Alia Azalea and Volunteerism V Main Director, Alex Leong Kar Yin.

Leong clarified that the multi-faceted sub-themes are aimed at giving back to the Kampar community through a series of on-campus and outreach activities to be held throughout February and March.

"In short, 'Depression' is to create awareness about the adverse effects of depression; 'Recycle' is to encourage the love and care for the environment; 'Technology Escapism'



is to create awareness about smartphone addiction; 'Animal Protection' to encourage people to have empathy for animal welfare, while 'Malaysian Culture' is to preserve Malaysian cultures which are on the brink of disappearing," explained the second-year student.

Meanwhile, Nor Akmal looked forward to collaborating closely with the students for the fifth time to engage with the Kampar community on a wider scale. "The campaign is a catalyst in the formation of human networks besides serving as a learning platform beyond the classroom for students to develop networking and management skills," he stated.

Initiated in 2011, the PR campaign has since gained momentum in becoming a significant annual

event at UTAR Kampar Campus.

Citing the exemplary achievement by the previous year's campaign in bagging the bronze award in the Malaysia PR Awards (MPRA) 2014/2015 for the first time ever, Professor Chuah encouraged the current organising committee to take that as a motivation for continuous improvement.

"Bear in mind that your degree will earn you a bronze medal; your experience will earn you a silver medal; your human network will earn you a gold medal; and your right mindset and attitude will earn you a royal medal," Professor Chuah concluded.

Ed

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.

World Wetlands Day 2016

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on February 2, commemorating the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands in 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Since 1997, the Ramsar Secretariat provides outreach materials to help raise public awareness about the importance and value of wetlands.

'Wetlands for our Future: Sustainable Livelihoods' is the theme for World Wetlands Day 2016. This theme is selected to demonstrate the vital role of wetlands for the future of humanity and specifically their relevance towards achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals.

In conjunction with World Wetlands Day, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight and provide an update on the issue of Kuala Sepetang Mangrove Forest that I had brought up to media attention last December 2015. After my open letter to Chief Minister Zambry Abdul Kadir, the Perak state government issued a stop-work order on the clearing of the part of mangrove forest pending an investigation.

I am relieved by the immediate response and look forward to the best solution on this matter. Last week, I was informed that the Larut Matang & Selama District Office was called to present the case chronology in the Exco meeting. I have yet to receive any official decision by the state, but I am hoping the Perak state government can make a public announcement soon and bring good news to the villagers, and to all Malaysians.

As we all know, fishing, rice farming, travel, tourism, and water provision all depend on wetlands. They also host a huge variety of life, protect our coastlines, provide natural sponges against river flooding, and store carbon dioxide to regulate climate change. Mangrove forests are one of our most important coastal ecosystems and wetland. The three major industries of Kuala Sepetang – fisheries, charcoal production and eco-tourism – all depend on the ecosystem of the mangrove forest. Any damage caused now will continue to affect us and our future generations not only environmentally but economically too.



While waiting the Perak state's investigation report and decision on the Kuala Sepetang Mangrove Forest, my office with the assistance of Skyzoom have captured photos of the affected area of the mangrove forest. I hope these photos send a strong message to the government and all of us, on the importance and urgency of keeping our mangrove forest protected and safe.

The mangrove forest trees along Jalan Taiping-Kuala Sepetang offer a beautiful panorama and landscape as you enter Kuala Sepetang town, welcoming visitors with an iconic landmark. Any development or Kampung Tersusun plan will totally destroy this natural wonder of the historical fishing village.

To protect this treasure, the Kuala Sepetang community are in the process forming Sahabat Hutan Paya Bakau Kuala Sepetang with the help of Global Environment Centre (GEC). I call upon friends who are interested to come forward. Come join us to spread awareness about the importance of wetlands and mangrove forests.

Happy World Wetlands Day!

Chua Yee Ling

Perak State Assemblywoman for Kuala Sepetang

Cruelty to Animals

Animal lovers in the country welcome the Taiping Magistrate court's decision to fine an unemployed women for neglecting her female pet Rottweiler dog (NST February 4). It was reported that the women had subjected the canine to cruelty by not giving it food or water for several days. Apparently, the dog was rescued by the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS) officers with the assistance of some local animal lovers after public complaint.

I applaud the DVS for its timely intervention and for successfully taking up the case to the courts and ensuring the perpetrator is appropriately punished for her animal crime.

I am happy to note that the media has given good publicity to this animal cruelty case. The news will help to create a better understanding and awareness among the public with regards to animal crime and the stance of our national animal welfare guardian – the DVS.

Having said that, I am equally sad to note that the single unemployed woman who was fined RM4000 in court for the animal cruelty offence was in a state of dilemma and was not prepared to handle the adult Rottweiler breed.

According to the news report the 16-year-old Rottweiler ended up with the women when her mother passed away. The women who was reported to have no experience in handling a grown-up dog, especially a Rottweiler, was simply not prepared to take possession of the canine. It must be noted that adult Rottweilers are known to take

orders only from their masters. It is not easy for others to handle this dog. Under these circumstances the woman just didn't know how to handle the situation and I suspect that this unfortunately had led to the neglect of the Rottweiler.

This case clearly demonstrates the need for us to consider setting up special 'Pet Help Call Centres' like the Befrienders Help Centres to cater for those who are finding it difficult to handle their pets for one reason or other. These Pet Help Centres can be manned by volunteers with the cooperation and assistance of the relevant authorities like the DVS or local councils. The DVS can help train these volunteers in handling distress calls from pet owners or others. Had there been one of these Pet Help Centres I believe the said woman would have found some professional help to handle her Rottweiler instead of neglecting it.

Getting upset with animal mistreatment and abuse by animal lovers is understandable but we should also not overlook the elements or factors that gave rise to such abuses or neglect. It's noble to uphold the welfare and needs of our animals but at the same time we should also give equal importance to unfortunate pet owners and others who are caught in a "catch 22 situation" dilemma like the unfortunate woman who was fined in court for her pet neglect offence.

S. Param

My Mistake in Not Selling

As I said before, no share can go up or go down indefinitely for whatever reasons. When it is up, you must sell some so that you have money to buy when it is down. My biggest mistake is that I fell in love with my shares so much that I did not sell when they were at their peak.

EGO: Ego is the root of my problem. I am so proud to have found shares that went up a few hundred per cent within a couple of years and if I sold them, I have less shares to boast.

GREED: Another problem I have is greed, which is one of the deadly sins. It can be a virtue or a vice. In the stock market, it encourages investors to work harder to find good stocks to buy and continue to buy but then we forget about selling. That is often one of my biggest mistakes.

From the several articles I have written and published, you would know that I have discovered Latitude, VS, Lii Hen and a few other stocks which have gone up a few hundred per cent in the last couple of years. But my big mistake is that I always find difficulty in selling. I fall in love with my discoveries and I did not sell more when their prices were peaking.

In my letter titled, "Export Manufacturers Share Prices Dropped Too Much", where I said that due to the 3.5 per cent strengthening of our Ringgit their share prices dropped too much. Most investors overreact to good or bad news.

The MYR per USD chart shows the average rate for the last 3 months was RM4.30 to one USD and the rate on February 5 was RM4.15 to one USD, a 15 sen or 3.5 per cent drop. Smart investors should be able to see that this 3.5 per cent strengthening of our Ringgit should not cause the export manufacturers share prices to drop more about 20 per cent. For example:

- VS dropped from RM1.68 to RM1.32, a drop of 21 per cent. Note 1st Quarter

EPS was 5.22 sen.

- Focus Lumber dropped from RM3.02 to RM2.28, a drop of 25 per cent. Note EPS for last 3 quarters was 3.22, 7.8 and 9.35 sen, respectively. It has no borrowing. Some of its cash saving is in USD.
- Chin Well dropped from RM2.28 to RM1.84, a drop of 19 per cent. Note 1st Quarter EPS was 6.07 sen.
- Latitude dropped from RM8.05 to RM6.63, a drop of 18 per cent. Note 1st Quarter EPS 28.95 sen. It has about RM200 million cash saving and some portion is in USD deposit.
- Lii Hen dropped from RM2.97 to RM2.35, a drop of 21 per cent. Note EPS for last 3 Quarters were 6, 7, and 8.6 sen. It is cash rich and no borrowing.

If I had sold more when their prices were at or near their top, I would have a lot more cash to buy back when they subsequently dropped so much.

On Chinese New Year eve, Ooi Teik Bee rang me to seek my opinion regarding the strengthening of our Ringgit. He said that he has spoken to a highly respected investor who said that due to the bad publicity of our political situation, he thinks that our Ringgit will continue to be weak, which is good for exporters.

I also agree that our Ringgit will continue to be weak and I foresee more foreign funds will come back to take advantage of our weak Ringgit.

Most investors have difficulty in selling. As I have learned a humble lesson in not selling, I hope this article will help you improve your investing skill to make more money.

I wish you a Happy and Prosperous Chinese New Year.

Koon Yew Yin

Sport

Chess First Leg Begins

Running for the 7th consecutive year, the Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Chess Championship series aims to bring chess to the smaller towns in Perak.

Organised by Perak State Chess Association with sponsorship from Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK), a series of six tournaments are held in different districts in Perak every year. This year, tournaments will be held in Sungai Siput, Bagan Serai, Kampar, Tapah and Ipoh.

The first leg began on Sunday, January 31 at the school hall of Sekolah Menengah Shing Chung, Sungai Siput with a total of 271 players. The participants were a diverse crowd with boys and girls as young as seven and adults as old as 60 from Perak, Kedah and Selangor, respectively.

Present at the tournament were Choong Chee Kong, headmaster of SMK Shing Chung, K Subramaniam, Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad representative and Chan Swee Loon, President of the Perak State Chess Association.

Below is the list of winners:

- Open:** 1st Muhd Syakir Shazmeer Azhar
2nd Yip Yong
3rd Fong Yit San
- Under 17:** 1st Tin Shan Wen
2nd Chua Jia Tien
3rd Thang Kit Han
Best Perak player: Dharmin a/l Pathamanathan
- Under 12:** 1st Tin Shan Ze
2nd Lai Zhen Hou
3rd Nurul Akma Quzaina bt Khairulhisal
Best Perak player: Maryam 'Aaqilah bt Zainuddin

The upcoming Bagan Serai leg will be held on Sunday, February 21 at Kolej Vokasional Kerian.

Mei Kuan



BUSINESS



Celebrating Success

The world's leading crane spreader supplier, Stockholm-based Bromma Group, marked its 20 years of growth and success in crane spreader manufacturing at its flagship Asian factory in Ipoh on Saturday, January 30.

After a preview of the Bromma Group's corporate video, slides presentation and briefing on its operations, visitors and reporters were led on a tour of the factory floor.

Bromma was founded more than 50 years ago in Sweden, and has since become a world leading supplier of container crane spreaders. It is also known as the 'benchmark' product for spreaders.

Presently Bromma is a global organisation with an extensive sales and service network around the world. Their spreaders are manufactured here in Malaysia, at the heart of the dynamic South-East Asian market. They have delivered spreaders to more than 500 terminals in over 90 countries on six continents.

"Our sales and service network has a wide-reaching footprint. We've our own sales office on all continents, and with an extensive network of agents we are able to support our customers in every country in the world," said David Dahlqvist, Vice President, Global Operations and Sourcing Managing Director.

Bromma (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd is located in Chemor, Perak and has been around since 1996. The company plans to invest further in the coming years.

Nantini

PROPERTY

Affordable Houses Up For Grabs



It was double the joy on Monday, February 1 as the Perak State Development Corporation (PKNP) launched the upcoming affordable housing, Suria@Meru as well as the property portal, www.rumahkuamanjaya.com.my.

Scheduled for completion in December 2017, the 413-unit Suria@Meru is located at Zone 9 of Bandar Meru Raya. The two-storey terrace houses, with a 1600 to 1670 sq ft built-up area, are priced from RM263,800 to RM273,800. The houses come with four bedrooms and three bathrooms each. Its developer, Cempaka Majujaya Sdn Bhd is a

joint-venture company formed by Sunny Reap Development Sdn Bhd and a subsidiary of PKNP, PCB Development Sdn Bhd.

"PKNP is committed to boost the socio-economic scene of Perak by completing 10,000 units of affordable homes by 2018. To date, up to 8000 units has been identified and planned while the remaining 2000 units are awaiting suitable land," said Dato' Aminuddin bin Md. Desa, PKNP Group Chief Executive Officer during the launch held at Amanjaya Convention Centre, Meru Raya. The state agency would launch four more affordable housing projects this year located at Pengkalan Raya, Ulu Kinta, Segari and Trong, respectively.

Guest of honour Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir said, "The state government also helps the hardcore poor who doesn't have the capacity to purchase a house at all through the establishment of Yayasan Bina Upaya, which provides them with a home free-of-charge."

Incidentally, Rumahku Amanjaya portal has been operational for the past eight months promoting Bumiputera-quota property built by private developers and affordable homes by PKNP.

"In the second half of 2015, RM30 million sale was achieved compared with RM9.7 million in the first half, showing an increase of 67 per cent," Dato' Aminuddin added.

Readers keen on acquiring a property at Suria@Meru can contact PKNP at **05 501 9888** or Cempaka Majujaya Sdn Bhd at **05 525 2289** for details. There is a 5 per cent discount for Bumiputera.

Mei Kuan