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PP 14252/10/2012(031136)

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ISSUE **230**

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Unique Stays in Ipoh

By Ili Aqilah and Nantini Krishnan

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Chokodok Reggae House



Ipoh Bali



Sarang Paloh

Love to travel? Looking for a completely different holiday experience? There is no need to stay in an ordinary hotel ever again. Choosing the right hotel is always a trying task, and with the enormous number of promotions, deals and programmes out there, it can be downright overwhelming. The Ipoh Echo team went in search of accommodations in Ipoh that are so unique and unusual and quaint that you find yourself reluctant to leave your room. Of the hundreds of hotels in Ipoh, only a small number have been considered special enough for inclusion in our guide. Each hotel has been chosen for possessing something truly special, be it excellent service, decor and good taste, atmosphere, singular architecture or beautiful surroundings.

Continued on page 2

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Sarang Paloh

Sarang Paloh is the place to go if you want to take some time off from the hustle and bustle and be just a walking distance to the rich culture of Ipoh's Old Town. Sarang Paloh offers its guests a chance to relax and rejuvenate. The architecturally classic building used only recycled timber and roof tiles salvaged from otherwise unsalvageable shop houses around town. The rooms, named after birds, have different designs and are guaranteed to wow anyone who stays here.

While enjoying your stay in Sarang Paloh, be sure to take a sip of the classic coffee at Lim Ko Pi located next to the building (room guests will get special discounts) and you can also hold private functions such as family gatherings or corporate events at their majestic event hall.

The price of each room ranges from RM238 to RM488 per day.

Reservation:

Phone: +605 2413926
Email: inquiries@sarangpaloh.com / www.sarangpaloh.com
Address: No.16, Jalan Sultan Iskandar, 30000 Ipoh, Perak.



Happy 8 Retreat

A Heritage and Cultural Hotel that uses local resources as building materials, refurbished, to give it new life. Every piece of art in the decor is handmade and crafted. The Happy Eight is a new concept of Malaysian living located in Ipoh. It is indeed an alternative place to stay for those who like to experience life in Ipoh. It is highly recommended to everyone who enjoys art and nature. The Happy Eight is a very unique restored shop house, converted into a boutique hotel and opened in 2012 after much painstaking refurbishment. It is environmentally friendly and evokes a tropical luxe with touches of whimsy. For instance, in The Happy Eight you can even shower in the rain if you are lucky to stay there during rainy season. If you are looking for something different from commercialised hotels, then you should not miss this awe inspiring place. The fact that it is in the heart of all that is happening in Old Town makes staying here even more alluring.

Reservation:

Phone: 05 243 8388
Address: No. 46 Market Street, 30000 Ipoh, Perak
Email: thehappy8@live.com.my
Website: www.thehappy8.com.my



Ipoh Bali

The Ipoh Bali Hotel is located in the heart of Ipoh providing an experience of Bali. The traditional bamboo cages, the antique rustic natural woods with luxurious furnishing used extensively in the lobby decor, creates a sophisticated contemporary design combining Balinese architectural elements with modern touches. Each room is a warm and calming environment with sweeping views combined with all the comforts of hospitality. The Ipoh Bali Hotel offers a special location for exclusive wedding ceremonies distinguished by its Balinese style. Moreover, the Roof Top is a function area for organizing private parties, ceremonies and events. Guests of the hotel can enjoy on-site features like free Wi-Fi in all rooms, daily housekeeping, taxi service, 24-hour front desk and luggage storage. Throughout the day you can enjoy the relaxing atmosphere of their spa while luxuriating with a massage. Whatever your purpose of visit, Ipoh Bali Hotel is an excellent choice for your stay in Ipoh.

Standard Double: RM200-250
Superior Double: RM260-320
Deluxe Suite: RM320-390
Family Suite: RM480
Reservation:
Phone: +605 242 0222/ +6010 566 0222
Email: info@ipohbalihotel.com
Address: 12A Lorong Cheah Cheang Lim, Off Jalan Tambun, 30350 Ipoh, Perak.



Container Hotel

The Container Hotel is an imported idea from Japan where space is scarce. Here in Ipoh, it is the ideal place to place your weary body after a day of exploring Ipoh's many sights and sounds. Cubicles are made from wood are designed to provide flexible, high quality and yet affordable accommodation for adventurous travellers to rejuvenate while discovering the city. It is an innovative hotel offering a unique blend of contemporary and practical charm. They incorporated the ideas of shipping containers and the reuse of renewable materials into developing a uniquely constructed Container Hotel. Colourful and imaginative features combined with creative design and a great use of space that provides a fun and distinctive lodging experience to travelers looking for a cool, value-for-money and modish place to stay. All guests will have to share communal bathrooms and toilets located just a few steps from their dorm. For your comfort, you will find free toiletries and a hair dryer. Container Hotel Ipoh features free Wi-Fi throughout the property.

Single bed: RM45
Queen Size bed (2 persons): RM80
Reservation:
Phone: +605 243 3311
Address: 89-91, Jalan Sultan Yussuf, 30000 Ipoh, Perak.
Email: enquiry@containerhotel.com.my
Website: <http://www.containerhotel.my/>



... continued on page 6

• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

I have never been so amused by the antics of our politicians whose indecisions and flip-flopping policies have left many Malaysians in the lurch. Admittedly, February was one roller coaster month for the *rakyat* who, after having enjoyed a brief but subdued Chinese New Year and Chap Goh Meh that followed, were unnecessarily distracted by fears of a possible invasion of the human kind. No, not the armed type like the ragtag army of the Sultanate of Sulu, but beaming and overjoyed Bangladeshis whose dream of making it good in their supposedly "Land of Milk and Honey", Malaysia.

Their joy is being accentuated by a recently-inked agreement between the two Muslim nations to recruit 1.5 million of their kind to work in a selected number of sectors which ordinary Malaysians shun. These so-called dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs or 3D, for short, are not appealing enough to the locals. Thus the necessity to bring in foreign workers and Bangladesh, being a major source of labour, is the obvious choice.

The use of foreign labour is nothing new. When tin was extensively mined in pre-independent Malaya, Chinese, mainly from Southern China, were brought in to work in the mines. And when rubber was introduced as a cash crop, Indians were brought in to work on the plantations dotting the countryside. This was the scenario in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century. Rubber soon gave way to oil palm and Indonesians became the preferred choice. A brief stint by Bangladeshis in the oil palm plantations of Sarawak and Sabah failed and the plan was aborted in the late 1990s.

This need for readily-available manpower was instilled in the business community who made a fortune extracting tin from the soil and rubber and oil palm from the jungles. This insatiable thirst for cheap labour has not diminished much and the latest ballyhoo about 1.5 million Bangladeshis for the agriculture, manufacturing, building, service, hospitality and security sectors stems from this desire by industrial players – big tycoons and corporations whose livelihood depends on human labour not machines like in the West. Mechanisation, they argued, is expensive, as acquiring capital equipment requires

Foreign labour is nothing new. When tin was mined in pre-independent Malaya, Chinese, mainly from Southern China, were brought in to work in the mines...



investments and huge financial outlays, which they could ill afford.

Political leaders, not wanting to offend these big-time players, accede to their demands for workers from across the seas. They have conveniently overlooked the almost 500,000 illegals who are in the country, courtesy of a porous border, and the 400,000-odd local graduates who are jobless.

The woes faced by Malaysians are endless. Foremost, we have a bunch of clueless politicians who make decisions on the run and an equally inept civil service that sucks up to these overbearing leaders whose shelf-life has long expired.

In a recent survey only 36 per cent of learned Malaysians trust government-link news media. The majority prefer to get their daily intake of news, both good and bad, from social media. The proliferation of social media, via the Internet, is indicative of a population that distrusts mainstream news media and considers anything that comes from the government as propaganda aimed at confusing the rakyat. The

brainwashing, most claim, is similar to what was practised in then East Germany and now North Korea, long regarded as the Hermit Kingdom. The need to keep their citizens muzzled, ill-informed and subdued is paramount.

What is most confusing, however, is policy statements made regarding rehiring and new levy on foreign workers. But when opposition to the planned recruitment of 1.5 million Bangladeshis got out of hand, the matters were conveniently shelved. Is the deferment permanent or put on hold? Malaysians are not a forgetful lot although politicians think so. A contentious issue will not dissipate like water on sand. It will remain to haunt those responsible.

The issue has its humorous side too. Some have suggested that we source politicians from Bangladesh to replace the current lineup. "They're cheaper, intelligent but obedient. And above all, they can converse in English," said one commentator. I cannot agree more.

EYE HEALTH



World Glaucoma Week
AWARENESS SERIES

In conjunction with the World Glaucoma Week 2016, ipoh echo talks to Consultant Eye Surgeon DR S.S. GILL about this "SILENT THIEF OF SIGHT."



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

The visual impact of glaucoma in the world today is severe enough for The World Glaucoma Association (WGA) and the World Glaucoma Patient Association (WGPA) to work jointly in an effort to increase global awareness of this "Sneak Thief of Sight" by starting on the 'B-I-G – Beat Invisible Glaucoma' campaign between March 6 to 12 this year.

Worldwide, too many people are unaware that they have this "silent" disease and continue to lose vision without receiving the appropriate treatment.

What is GLAUCOMA?

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that result in progressive damage of the optic nerve (the "main cable" that carries visual information from the eye to the brain). If glaucoma is not treated, it permanently damages vision in the affected eye(s) and results in blindness. It is often, but not always, associated with increased pressure of the fluid in the eye (aqueous humour).

Glaucoma has been nicknamed the "silent thief of sight" because the vision loss normally occurs gradually over a long period of time without significant symptoms until you eventually lose significant vision. In other words, it means that one will only notice poor vision when the disease is serious and the damage to the optic nerve is advanced.

Worldwide, glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness after cataracts. Glaucoma affects one in 200 people aged fifty and younger, and one in 10 over the age of eighty. As many as 6 million people are blind in both eyes from glaucoma today. Most of these people were once unaware they had this disease until they lost significant vision in one or both eyes.

One reason why a person may not realise that he or she is losing vision is because the vision loss involves the peripheral part of a person's vision. The peripheral vision loss goes unnoticed by the patient until the very late stage when the central vision starts being affected. Rarely, in some patients there may be symptoms of slight eye discomfort, mild headache and haloes around lights. Any person who is 40 years and above should go for glaucoma screening, especially if you have a family history of glaucoma. Don't wait for vision problems before you do. It may be too late.

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



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PUBLISHER

Ipo Echo Sdn Bhd
(Regd No 687483 T)

A-G-1, No. 1 Persiaran
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PRINTER

Ultimate Print Sdn. Bhd.,
Lot 2, Jalan Sepana 15/3,
Off Persiaran Selangor,
Seksyen 15, 40200 Shah Alam, Selangor.

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05 2451 072 (CCC)
05 2451 222 (Operator)
999 (emergency)

Ipoh General Hospital:
05-208 5000

Ipoh Ambulance:
05-522 2506
993 (emergency)

Ipoh Fire Brigade
05-547 4444/994
(emergency)

Perak Immigration Dept
05-5017100

Perak Water Board
05-254 6161

Ipoh City Council
Hotline: 05-255 1515
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Perak Anti-Corruption Agency: 05-526 7000

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Two Tiger Incidents in Ten Days

Few people realise that wild animals, whose hunting grounds have been encroached upon by human activity, are finding it difficult to survive. The jungles, which provide their source of food, is crisscrossed by roads, and dotted with farms, plantations and settlements.

On February 6, a pregnant tigress was hit around 1am by a multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) on the East Coast Highway, near Kemaman, and later died. The driver of the MPV, was on his way to Kuala Terengganu, from Kuala Lumpur. He failed to see the tiger as it crossed the road.

The animal was badly hurt and died several hours later. Neither it nor the two foetuses could be saved.

There was a public outcry when photographs emerged on social media, of people posing beside the dead animal. More shocking was a video where a few men, took a hammer and hit the tiger's jaw several times, so that they could extricate the tiger's teeth, and keep them as trophies.

Ten days later, another adult tiger was hurt when it was trapped in a snare which had been set-up to catch wild boar, in a plantation, in Tapah. The tiger was possibly about 17 years old, weighed around 200kg and had been injured in its leg.

The trap had been set by Waslostri Usop in Ladang Eden, Batu 10, Jalan Pahang. When Walostri checked the trap, in the evening, he found the tiger and immediately lodged a police report.

Around 25 people from the police, the Perak Department of Wildlife and National Parks, and the National Wildlife Rescue Centre set-off to rescue the tiger, but they had to postpone their rescue, till the following morning, because they had no tranquilizer darts. The animal suffered for 16 hours.

Fortunately the tiger survived the trap and his health is being monitored in the rescue centre, before his eventual release, into the jungle.

In 2008, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, declared that the Malayan tiger (*Panthera tigris jacksoni*), is an endangered species.

This majestic animal is one of the six remaining tiger subspecies in the world. It occupies only the southern and central parts of the Malay peninsula. It is suspected that only 300 remain, from around 3000 animals, in the 1950s. The tiger has fallen prey to rapid development, agricultural expansion and widespread hunting.

Not many people are aware that as the apex predator, tigers ensure that the forest ecosystem is kept in balance. They cover large areas when hunting for their food, and may encroach upon farmland, and the fringes of the forest, where it is very likely they will encounter humans. The tiger's confrontation with man is fraught with danger. The animal is perceived as a threat to human life and in many cases, he is also seen as a trophy.

The other threat comes from the traditional Chinese medicine trade, whereby the animal is indiscriminately hunted, so that its body parts can be harvested, for use in traditional cures.

The illegal wildlife trade generates between USD8 and 10 billion annually. It is believed that between 2009 and 2012, poachers had killed around 530 tigers. From 2009 to 2011, around 138 snares had been removed from tiger conservation areas. Between 2000 to 2012, the body parts from 94 tigers were seized in Malaysia.

The main scientist responsible for our tiger conservation programme is 38-year-old Dr Mark Rayan Darmaraj of the World Wildlife Fund for Malaysia. He completed his PhD at the University of Kent, and the basis of his research was on the conservation status of tigers and their prey in the Belum-Temengor Forest.

Dr Darmaraj's research and wide experience of the tiger's ecology, has provided the basis for tiger conservation planning, in the National Tiger Action Plan.

Three priority conservation study areas for tigers, have been allocated in Peninsular Malaysia. The Belum-

Temengor Forest Complex covers the Royal Belum State Park, the Belum Temengor-State Land Forest and the Temengor Forest Reserve.

The three objectives in tiger conservation are: **Protection.** This means that anti-poaching patrols will be increased and more effectively managed, in the conservation sites.

Monitoring. Cameras will keep track of tiger populations and their prey, so that the various

departments can better manage the conservation efforts.

Community engagement. Various departments will engage with the Orang Asli communities to highlight the importance of conservation of the tiger. The Orang Asli will also be encouraged to take part in anti-poaching activities. They will be advised on alternative livelihood programmes, to reduce their dependence on natural resources, which are known to encroach on the tiger's habitat.

Whilst we may think that progress is made, when we clear our jungles, to make roads, plantations, settlements, and developments, this comes at the expense of the survival of the Malayan tiger and the Orang Asli's traditional way of life.

Sources: Various WWF Malaysia literature, Star and New Straits Times.



THINKING
ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar



CHILD HEALTH

Dr Shan Narayanan

Consultant General Paediatrician, Hospital Fatimah

PHARYNGITIS IN CHILDREN

WHAT IS THE PHARYNX?

The pharynx is the passage that leads from the cavities of the nose and mouth to the larynx (voice box) and esophagus. Air passes through the pharynx on the way to the lungs, and food enters the esophagus from the pharynx.

WHAT IS PHARYNGITIS?

Pharyngitis is the inflammation (redness and swelling) of the pharynx that causes sore throat. Pharyngitis is common in children.

WHAT CAUSES PHARYNGITIS?

Pharyngitis is most commonly caused by a viral or bacterial infection. Virus such as the cold or flu virus causes viral pharyngitis. The influenza virus causes the most common form of viral pharyngitis. The most common type of bacteria that causes pharyngitis is group A streptococcus (strep throat).

HOW IS PHARYNGITIS SPREAD TO OTHER PEOPLE?

Pharyngitis is contagious and can be passed on by touch or by using personal items of the infected person.

Pharyngitis can spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Pharyngitis can also be spread if the person shares food and drinks. A carrier can also spread pharyngitis. A carrier is a person who has the bacteria in his throat but does not have symptoms. Germs are easily spread in schools, day care centres, work and at home.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF PHARYNGITIS?

The main symptom of both conditions is a sore throat. Your child may also have the following:

- Hoarseness
- Cough, runny or stuffy nose, itchy or watery eyes
- A rash on his body
- Fever and headache
- Whitish-yellow patches on the back of his throat
- Tender, swollen lumps on the sides of his neck (enlarged lymph nodes)
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, or stomach pain

HOW IS PHARYNGITIS DIAGNOSED?

Your child's doctor will ask his symptoms and examine him. He will look into the throat and feel the side of the neck and jaw. Sometimes a throat swab (wipe) is taken for tests to determine which germ is causing your child's sore throat. A blood test may be done if indicated.

HOW IS PHARYNGITIS TREATED?

Give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen for fever and to ease the pain. Do not use ibuprofen in children younger than 6 months of age. Give your child cool liquids to drink.

Have your child gargle with warm saltwater if it helps relieve pain. A throat numbing spray may also help. Older children can be given throat lozenges.

Your doctor may decide to add an antibiotic and other medications such as cough and cold syrup, if indicated.

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF PHARYNGITIS?

Wash your hands and your child's hands often. Keep your child away from other people while he is still contagious. The typical contagious period for pharyngitis is 48 to 72 hours. Do not let your child share food or drinks. Do not let your child share toys or pacifiers. Wash these items with soap and hot water.

The way to judge whether the infectious period has passed is by waiting for certain symptoms to ease. When the fever settles or the person gets relief from the pain, the infection is likely settling.

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL OR DAYCARE?

Your child may return to daycare or school when his/her symptoms go away.

For more information, call Dr Shan's clinic at Hospital Fatimah 05 546 1345 or email shaniea02@gmail.com.



ON IPOH FOOD

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

Pics by Ginla Chew



SeeFoon Gets Bowled Over

My favourite meal of the day is breakfast. That is when I'm ravenous and my palate is fresh. Ready to savour the delectable dish of the day. Alas, I'm often too lazy to trek into town for breakfast. Recently however, I allowed myself to be persuaded by friends on two occasions to do just that. The first was to **Auntie Fei Sow** for oodles of noodles done any way you choose and two days later to Weng Oon Kopitiam two doors down, for the best beef balls and beef noodles in all of Ipoh (best for me that is, watch for the next review).



Fellow foodie Datin Phaik Lean loves offal as I do and she persuaded me to try Auntie Fei Sow where she swoons over the **'Tsor Yuet Tong' or post-partum soup**. This heavenly rich broth is heavy on the ginger (ginger is supposed to help new mothers regain their strength after birth) and unlike other places where they use home brewed rice wine, Auntie Fei Sow's (whose name means Fat Auntie – quite an apt description) is laced with Siew Heng (Fa Tiew) a Chinese wine rather like sherry. Liver is high on the priority list for boosting new mother's blood so this soup has loads of it. And my favourite, pig's small intestine or 'fun cheong'. Add an omelette of sorts fried with slivers of ginger, minced pork and wood ear fungus to top the soup which can be served with or without noodles and I am in offal heaven – **RM8**.

Their **seafood soup** is very 'tsing' (Chinese for clear) but with Auntie simmering her soup overnight with good quality *ikan bilis* or dried whitebait and some pork bones, the broth is rich and umami. Add to this rich stock some very fresh big prawns, some fish paste, fish slices, clams (again very fresh and nary a bad one), cuttle fish, bitter gourd slices and some ham choy or preserved chinese kale and you have a concoction fit for the most discerning gourmet. I chose the 'lai fun' a thick round rice noodle which has a lovely chewy consistency and imbued with the fish flavours of the broth and other garnitures, reminded me of some other noodles I've had elsewhere which are actually made from fish paste – **RM8**.



For the less adventurous palates, their fish slices are very fresh and can be mixed with fish head chunks or have fish head on its own with the 'Ham Choy' or preserved vegetables and bitter melon – **RM8**.

A bowl of just innards with some sliced pork is **RM5** as is the 'Yu Wat' or fish paste with your choice of noodles.



Worthy of mention is their **Pan Meen**, homemade noodles (you have a choice of the thick or thin type somewhat similar to spaghetti in taste and texture) in a very clean broth served with a bowl of 'gow gay' soup, the dark green, slightly bitter leaves of the Chinese boxthorn which are reputed to be very healthy. I opted for the dry version with thick noodles which came with a dark slightly sweetish soya sauce, delicately flavoured, topped with minced pork and a generous portion of crispy *ikan bilis*. The noodles were 'yeen ngan' the Chinese equivalent of what I would classify as Italian 'al dente' and at **RM4.30** beats any Italian pasta for both price and flavour.



The ambience might not measure up to most Italian restaurants but if one is willing to sweat a little (although their big powerful fans really whip up a cooling breeze) this is one coffee shop to patronise. And I haven't even mentioned their sambal belacan which is doled out generously with every bowl. Just ask for replenishment.

When Auntie first opened she was closed by 2pm but now with extra help from her son and even grandchildren, she has extended her hours till 8pm.

Restoran Auntie Fei Sow

20 Jalan Medan Ipoh 1b, Medan Ipoh Bistari, 31400 Ipoh, Perak

Tel.: 012-515 1289

Business Hours : 7:30am-8pm. Closed one day a month.

Nosh News

Ili Aqilah



Ali Yeh Yeh!

Food trucks in Ipoh are making a mark not only among youths but also for foodies who appreciate good street food. The latest member to join nine other food trucks in Ipoh is Ali Yeh Yeh, which looks set to wow customers with their one of a kind menu!

Ali Yeh Yeh started in November 2015 but owing to unforeseen circumstances the team had to go on hiatus for a month before coming back in December 2015. Led by enthusiastic businesswoman, Dato' currently

Foo Mei Yen, Ali Yeh Yeh is roaming around Ipoh with two trucks one yellow and one green, that offers both drinks and food.

"Before opening Ali Yeh Yeh, we had a fair amount of time doing R&D because we want to deliver the best to our customers," said Sean Phan Di Jian, the marketing director for AliYehYeh Group Sdn Bhd.

The green truck of Ali Yeh Yeh serves four different types of drinks: latte, mocha, chocolate

and caramel latte. The drinks come in two sizes, single (from **RM5.90** to **RM6.90**) and a couple's cup that comes with a special doughnut as the topping, at **RM9.90** to **RM10.90**.

The latest addition to the Ali Yeh Yeh family, the yellow truck, began its operations early this year serving not only drinks but also savoury waffles (**RM9.90**) that come with three different kinds of cheese and customers can choose between four different fillings: chicken, beef, turkey and lamb.

While the green truck will be roaming around town everyday except Monday, the yellow truck will be at Greentown Business Centre (in front of Ipoh Echo) from Tuesday till Thursday and at Kong Heng Square on Friday and the weekends. Currently Ali Yeh Yeh are the only trucks that open from noon till midnight so be sure to catch them! More information and the whereabouts of Ali Yeh Yeh's truck at their Facebook and Instagram.



... continued from page 2

Sekeping Kong Heng

Placed next to the famous coffee house, Sekeping Kong Heng is the latest addition to the Sekeping family of retreats. The 3-storey neo-classical building was previously used as a hostel to house theatre performers but was burnt down in the 50s. Despite its unique architecture, Sekeping Kong Heng still preserves the original character of the existing building. This place is perfect for those who wish to experience the authentic humble life of Ipoh city; waking up to the tantalising aroma of white coffee, the quiet traffic in the morning and of course, the smells of great food.

Sekeping Kong Heng also provides several facilities for its guests such as a swimming pool, dining area with washing facilities and many more. Located at Kong Heng square, guests won't have to worry about finding food as there are about five to six cafes within walking distance. The place recently added an extension to their stay called the Annexe, a comfortable communal space.

Standard Room: RM220

Family Room: RM800

Glass Boxes room (a hall with two glass-windowed rooms): RM800

Room 1: RM320

Room 2: RM400

Room 3: RM320

Room 4: RM500

Annex Type A: RM230

Annex Type B: RM230

Annex Type C: RM80-130

Reservation:

Website: www.sekeping.com/kongheng

Email: kongheng@sekeping.com

Phone: +6012 227 2745 / +605 241 8977 (call hours Mon-Sat, 8am-7pm)

Address: 74 Jalan Bandar Timah, 30000 Ipoh, Perak.

GPS coordinates: 4.596346, 101.077881



E-Loft

Another accommodation gem for backpackers in Ipoh, the E-loft is also a great place to stay if you just want a quick rest, before continuing exploring Ipoh. The place currently offers only a mixed dorm room complete with bathrooms and lockers, however in the future, E-Loft will also have female dorm rooms and family rooms. They recently opened a cafe downstairs that is also open for the public, serving western food and drinks.

Guests at E-loft can also rent bikes provided by the owner to go around exploring Ipoh. E-loft is located along Jalan Sultan Iskandar, on the opposite side of Hello Elvis.

RM30 (per head)

Reservation:

Address: 115 Jalan Sultan Iskandar, Taman Jubilee, 30000 Ipoh, Perak

Website: www.elflohostel.com or through hostelworld.com, booking.com

Email: elflohostel@gmail.com

Phone: +6017 336 5592



Chokodok Reggae House

The perfect place for backpackers who just want a simple and cheap stay, Chokodok Reggae House is located at Jalan Sultan Iskandar opposite the police station. As it is located in the centre of Ipoh, guests will have easy access to both Old and New Town of Ipoh. Currently Chokodok only has two types of rooms, private and mixed dorm rooms. However, it might not be suitable for those with small kids as no extra bed will be provided if you need one. This humble backpackers lodge also has a halal cafe located downstairs serving both good local and western cuisines.

Private room (for 2 persons): RM20 per head

Dorms: RM15 per head

Reservation:

Address: No. 175, Jalan Sultan Iskandar Shah, Ipoh, Perak.

Bookings can be made via booking.com or airbnb.com



Whether you are looking for a place to ease your mind and body or just to have a quick rest, we hope this list will help you to decide. With the upcoming school holidays, take time to unwind and relax in Ipoh; walk around town, go for culinary adventures and explore the hidden attractions. Have a fun stay in Ipoh!

Wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Is There Life after Cancer?

When I posed the above question to **Dr Lum Wan Wei, Consultant Clinical Oncologist and Radiotherapist at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital**, the answer was an emphatic YES.

“After more than 10-plus years as an oncologist in government hospitals and another 10 more in private practice, I have come to view after care in cancer treatment as a very important part of the total healing process”, said this affable doctor who honed his oncology skills early on in his medical career working for three and a half years at the largest oncology centre in Hong Kong treating an average of 4000 new cancer cases per year. “I care very much what happens to my patients even after the ‘all clear’ signals have been given and I believe in spending time with them on post cancer counselling” he added.

Dr Lum has been busy reviewing the literature on cancer survivors and in the USA alone, there are over 14 and a half million of them. Although there are no statistics available about cancer survivors for Malaysia, he is optimistic that the figures are equally favourable in the battle against cancer.

“Post cancer care is very important for cancer patients as they begin the road to regaining their full health. Patients are wondering what comes next and in some way, they are dealing with a ‘new’ person after cancer. Their physical being has suffered a massive attack and the treatments of chemotherapy and radiation leave them weaker than ever.” he stressed.

Four Elements in Post Cancer Care

Dr Lum looks at four elements of the post cancer dynamics and spends time over a 2-3 month period in counselling each patient with genuine empathy. He goes where many doctors fear to tread which is in dealing with the emotional aspects of patients who have just finished cancer treatment. Additionally he also spends time advising on weight management, exercise and dietary counselling.

Emotional

“Cancer survivors are prone to depression, anxiety, anger, and mixed emotions. They have a tendency to feel isolated and lonely. Some younger patients especially breast cancer patients may have to deal with body image and all the associated hidden fears around sexual issues. This is where I come in. I listen to them with an open mind and I try not to lecture. I encourage them to spend time with other cancer survivors and share experiences and join a survivor group if they can and because I have already been with them on the treatment part of the journey, they are usually more open to talk about their feelings and more willing to accept my counselling.”

Physical

On the physical side, Dr Lum encourages sensible weight management eschewing the usual standard charts, emphasising more on BMI or Body Mass Index and waist circumference. With obesity being linked to breast cancer in women and colon cancer in men, he advocates for men to keep their waist circumference under 94cm and women under 80cm.

**Diet and Food Preparation**

As for dietary advice, he takes into consideration patients’ preferences and works with individuals tastes and beliefs to draw up eating plans that are based on a 20-30% fat/ 40-60% good carbs and 10-30% proteins. He admonishes all cancer patients and survivors to stay away from sugar and refined grains and starches.

For proteins, he advises patients to eat less meat and if they do, to stick with lean and no skin, preferring more fish and eggs. Snacks and chips are on his **no no list** as most of them are laden with trans fats. He recommends using grapeseed oil for cooking as well as light olive oil and to cook with less oil, using a non-stick (Teflon is also on his **no no list**) pan where possible.

Because cancer survivors’ immune systems are compromised from the cancer and treatments, he places great emphasis on good food handling habits as in separating chopping boards for fruits/vegetables and meat. He also recommends eating hot foods hot and cold foods must stay cold. Expiry dates on food are also very important.

Exercise

“Combine these elements on emotional health, diet, weight management with regular exercise and cancer survivors should stand a good chance to stay in remission for a long time, perhaps till they die of old age. Exercise need not be vigorous. A brisk walk four times a week for 20-30 minutes is a good start for most people. Add to that, the habit of taking the stairs instead of lifts or even doing housework should go a long way to boost energy, fight fatigue and depression – that dark hole many cancer survivors fall into.”

Dr Lum Wan Wei, Consultant Clinical Oncologist and Radiotherapist.
Suite 2-19. KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital Tel: 05 255 0566 or 05 240 8777 (ext. 405/262/226/400/408).

Reforming MACC



The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) organised an enlightening public forum entitled, “Catching Monkeys – Fighting Corruption in Malaysia” at Syeun Hotel, Ipoh on Wednesday, February 24.

IDEAS, together with the Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4), Citizens’ Network for a Better Malaysia (CNBM), Transparency International-Malaysia and The Malaysian Bar aspire to empower the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and enhance current anti-corruption laws in the nation.

The proposals, presented by panelists Shaza Onn, Senior Researcher of IDEAS and Cynthia Gabriel, Executive Director of C4, were the following:

- The creation of the Independent Anti-Corruption Commission (IACC), a constitutional body independent of the Executive.
- Amendments to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009 to enhance the Commission’s powers of investigation
- Amendments to other legislations such as the Official Secrets Act and the Whistle-blower Protection Act to improve witness protection and encourage whistle-blowing.
- The separation of the office of the Attorney General and Public Prosecutor to remove the current conflict of interest between these two appointments.

Present was Dato’ Seri Zakaria bin Haji Jaffar, a former Deputy Commissioner of MACC who has 33 years experience working as an enforcement officer, and later as head of the enforcement division, in the Commission. “We’re all in a ship. If one of us bores a hole in the ship, all of us have the responsibility to stop him or else we’ll all perish. That’s the analogy. Support the authorities, such as MACC and Police, as they have the powers to fight corruption. We as individuals don’t have any powers. We can only talk

and comment,” he insisted.

“To eradicate corruption, we should start from schools. Introduce the subject and make children aware that corruption can destroy a society,” stated Surinder Singh, Chairman of the Perak State Bar Committee in his closing remarks.

Led by founding president, Tunku Zain Al-‘Abidin Tuanku Muhriz, IDEAS is inspired by the vision of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj, the first Prime Minister of Malaysia as stated in the 1957 Proclamation of Independence.

The institute is dedicated to promoting market-based solutions to public policy challenges. This independent, not-for-profit organisation, achieves its mission through research, publication, media engagements, seminars and briefings to federal and state politicians and policy-makers from both sides of the political divide.

For details on IDEAS call its office: **03-6201 8896 / 8897** or visit its website: www.ideas.org.my.

Mei Kuan

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24. Ipoh Echo’s office



News

Flood Relief Money Missing

“Starting from today, we from Amanah Youth Perak will try to highlight issues every week, as a form of checks and balances, to keep the public informed of any inappropriate events or activities happening in Perak and to prompt action from the responsible sides,” Mohd Fakhruhazi Mohd Mokhtar, Amanah Youth Perak Chief stated in a press conference held at the Amanah Party Headquarters, Greentown Nova, Ipoh on Tuesday, February 23.

“Today’s issue is on the Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBUDR)’s relief fund amounting to RM40,000 which was intended for flood victims in Perak. This amount went missing at YBUDR’s office in October last year. Two police reports were made by their officers,” said Mohd Fitri Asmuni, Amanah Youth Deputy Chief.

According to him, among the donors were Perak Water Board (RM500,000), Malayan Flour Mills Berhad (RM100,000), Ladang Moccis Sdn Bhd (RM30,000) and Kamdar Group (M) Berhad (RM75,000). There were approximately 6000 flood victims in the state.

“On Saturday, November 7, four suspects including a guard and three officers of YBUDR were remanded for three days to facilitate investigation by the Ipoh Magistrate Court. The questions that we wish to pose: Firstly, was only RM40,000 lost, as reported, or more but was not reported to the Police? Secondly, why were two police reports made? Thirdly, has the money been found or have those involved been charged? As far as I know, those remanded have been released and to date, no action has been taken against them. Fourthly, is it true that part of the lost funds were actually kept in the office of a senior YBUDR officer? Why was it not kept in a bank account instead?” Asmuni questioned.

“I hope the state government will take responsibility and provide some answers because YBUDR was established by Menteri Besar, Dato’ Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir for the welfare of Perakians. YBUDR is an independent body free from scrutiny from the National Audit Department. Plus, this relates to integrity, transparency and good governance,” he insisted.

“Just imagine, how many families could have benefited from the RM40,000 if



RM500 is given to each family. Hence, it is a very large amount of money and this kind of negligence should not have happened,” he reasoned.

Present at the press conference was Safarizal Saleh, Amanah Youth Perak Secretary.

In an immediate response, the Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan, Dato’ Ismail Saffian, verified that the RM40,000 flood relief fund, kept in 80 envelopes of RM500 each, was indeed stolen. According to the media statement released on the same day, it was discovered stolen on Friday, September 18 and a police report was made on Monday, September 21 last year. To date, the case is still under police investigation.

During Amanah Youth Perak’s subsequent press conference on Thursday, February 25, Safarizal highlighted, “It’s been more than five months since the money was lost in September, how could there be no further action taken? Is it true that the lost money was actually kept in a safety box in the senior officer’s office in YBUDR? Isn’t there CCTV in his office? Plus, why isn’t the officer suspended until investigation is completed? If we didn’t raise this issue, nobody would know?”

Mei Kuan

Co-operative Takes Off



Koperasi Alam Hijau Perak Berhad (KOHIAU) started off with a bang recently at the YMCA building with over 80 newly-registered members and a starting fund of RM20,000, courtesy of guest of honour Dato’ Hj Samsudin bin Hj Abu Hassan, Executive Councillor for Consumer Affairs, Entrepreneur Development, Cooperative, NGO and Civil Society.

The co-operative is formed by the Ipoh City Watch (ICW). “ICW was established in 2002 and re-launched in 2015. We embark on the journey of making Ipoh the most liveable city in Malaysia, the same aspiration Mayor Dato’ Zamri has. In recycling, we see there’s an opportunity to supplement people’s income while keeping the environment clean at the same time. However, as an NGO, we don’t have the financial resources to

begin with. Plus, there’s a big demand for our services outside of Ipoh at the moment. Therefore, we established KOHIAU as our platform. The profit would be ploughed back to the community,” said Associate Professor Dr Richard Ng, the President of ICW to Ipoh Echo.

Operating within Perak, the objective of the co-operative is to provide job opportunities and increase the economic status of the community via sales of recycled products and the promotion of green technology for a safer and healthier environment. The services it provides include marketing, education, ICT and event management.

“In Perak, we wish to establish a total of 2000 co-operatives by 2020. Right now, we have up to 1500. I applaud Professor Richard for coming up with his brilliant idea,” said Dato’ Hj Samsudin in his opening remarks. He has promised to assist KOHIAU in identifying a suitable site for its upcoming composition efforts.

Also present were Hajah Fatimah Ahmad, the Perak Solid Waste Corps (SWC) Director and Hj Zainun Hamzan, Director of Malaysia Co-operative Societies Commission (Perak).

At the end of the inaugural general meeting, 12 individuals, representing the various communities, were appointed as members of the Board of Directors.

The number of KOHIAU members, for the moment, will be limited to a hundred. Membership is open to Malaysians 18 years and above living, working or owning property in Perak.

A one-off entrance fee of RM20 will be levied on members to enable them to buy RM600 worth of shares in the company. Readers keen on becoming members can contact Dr Richard Ng at **012 525 6252** for details.

Thanks to ICW’s hard work, there is no longer any illegal dumpsite at Jelapang Tambahan and Lim Garden. For the record, up till January 2016, more than 5000 tons of rubbish has been recycled in Jelapang Tambahan alone, an achievement by any means.

Mei Kuan

Media Clubs Sign MOU

The official visit of a delegation of about 30 media members from Perak to Medan, Indonesia from February 18 to 20 saw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Persatuan Wartawan Muslim (PWM) Perak, Malaysia and Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia (PWI) Provinsi Sumatera Utara (North Sumatera Press Club).

The objective of the MoU, which was signed at a luncheon hosted by North Sumatera Governor Ir. H. Tengku Erry Nuradi, M.Si at his residence, is to foster a closer working relationship between the two parties, particularly in the area of journalism.

Erry said, “With this MoU signed, these two parties can learn from each other through different activities that will be held. It is a win-win relationship that benefits both sides. This is the first time journalists from both countries are collaborating in their common field. I am optimistic this will be a great experience for media practitioners from Perak and North Sumatera.”

In the evening, the delegation was also received by the mayor of Medan City, Dzulmi Eldin. He, too, was confident that this visit would bring a positive impact to both cities, not only in journalism but also in other areas, such as business and tourism.

“This visit to Medan will give Perak journalists a first-hand experience of our city. Your positive impression of Medan is important to us and we hope that through the sharing of knowledge and by comparing our cities, we are able to learn and build up one another,” he said.

Following dinner was a serious discussion on the role of the media in the era of



ASEAN Economic Community (MEA). The dialogue resulted in the establishment of a forum for communication between journalists from ASEAN nations, beginning with Indonesia and Malaysia.

Emily Lowe

News

World's Largest Holdall

Certified by the Guinness World Records in May last year, the world's largest holdall measuring 7.62m long, 5.44m tall and 3.04m wide (the size of two Myvis) was on display at the Ipoh Parade for ten days from Friday, February 19 to Sunday, February 28.

Running on the theme "The Power of Unity – From Fingertips towards World Record", a total of 1492 participants from government agencies, schools and NGOs put together 2984 pre-loved T-shirts to construct the holdall which took six months to complete.

Co-organised by the Malaysian Association of Creative Sewing Art and Epal Handicraft Training Centre, the exhibition also featured DIY sewing activities and talks on entrepreneurship development.

Everything on display was 100 per cent handmade using sewing machines and used materials, such as old clothes and discarded banners. Other than backpacks, tablet covers, pencil cases, table runners, quilt bags, bedsheets, patchworks and embroidery, portraits of public figures formed by pieces of fabric intricately sewn together was especially eye-catching.

"Sewing skill is a necessity which produces not only clothing but handicrafts, home decorative items, fashion accessories and soft toys. Our objective is to educate the public on how pre-owned items can be turned into useful items, which in turn generates income," Asmassura Tokiman, committee member of Malaysian Association of Creative Sewing Art explained. For instance, the bags made from banners are produced by the Orang Asli in Kampung Semelor, which generates income for them.

When asked on her advice for those who would like to venture into the sewing business, she said, "You must have the effort to advance and attend courses."

According to the association's chairperson Chye Goet Lee, the record showcased the unity of the multi-ethnic Malaysians who worked together in completing the amazing feat.

"We encourage the community to love the environment by using recycled products," Chye added.

The exhibition began last year at Malacca, Seremban, Kuching, Sabah and Kota Bharu. After Ipoh, the upcoming destination is Kuantan.

Based in Selangor, the Malaysian Association of Creative Sewing Art, which to date has over 5000 members, offers training and courses in sewing. It obtains its instructors from the Epal Handicraft Training Centre. One of its branches is located in Medan Bestari.

Mei Kuan



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CONTACT
US

Civil Defence to Expand

The Malaysian Civil Defence Department will increase its holding strength to as many as 20 million volunteers. With a larger number the department can provide better services to the people.

Director-General of Civil Defence, Datuk Ogu Salim Omar, said that recruitment would commence immediately.

"We've been entrusted with the responsibility of forming disaster management secretariats at state and district levels. To achieve the said recruitment target, we've established emergency teams at village levels and at schools, where cadet and community police teams are formed. Our current strength stands at 850,000. From this number we're capable of deploying as many as 300,000 members in an emergency situation," he told reporters at the Malaysian Civil Defence (Perak) 2015 Excellent Service Award ceremony held at the banquet hall of the Home Ministry complex, Meru Raya on Tuesday, February 16.

Individuals from 21 categories of the Perak chapter of the department were given commendation as a form of recognition for services rendered.

Present at the ceremony were the Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Communication and Multimedia, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Dato' Mohammed Radzi and Perak Civil Defence Department Director, Colonel Mohd Noor Hassan Ashaari Sulaiman (Rtd).

According to Ogu Salim Omar, the government has given its green light for the expansion of manpower and the acquisition of capital equipment such as multi-purpose vehicles, ambulances, trucks, beddings, etc. which will be in the pipeline beginning October this year.

"As many as 61 5-tonne trucks, 14 boats and 32 large-sized beds will be acquired.



Our current assets are insufficient to serve the 144 districts under our command. What we need are trucks and 4WD vehicles to transport our personnel to disaster areas fast and efficiently," he said.

Rosli Mansor

COMMUNITY

A Well-Deserved Commendation

A gentleman with a strong sense of community, Dato' Tomiyasu Ushima has been playing a leading role in strengthening ties between Malaysia and Japan for the past four decades.

On Monday, February 15, Ushima was given a certificate of commendation by Ryuji Noda, the Penang-based Consul-General of Japan at a simple ceremony held at the Meru Valley Golf and Country Club.

The 77-year-old Ushima is among the first Japanese entrepreneurs in Malaysia and is one of the founding members of the Perak Malaysian-Japanese Friendship Society (PMJFS). He started the Perak Japanese School in 1983 and is very committed in the education of the younger generation in the Japanese community.

Equally admirable is his effort at restoring the Japanese cemetery in Ipoh.

"Restoration requires tremendous efforts since the oldest grave dates back to 1896.



Dato' with his colleagues spent so many nights battling mosquitoes to retouch faded characters inscribed on each grave stone. Such work could not be carried out during daytime because it was not possible to read the inscription in the bright sunshine," Ryuji remarked.

In his address, Ushima thanked the committee members of PMJFS who are working full time yet spend most of their evenings and Sundays running Japanese classes and events.

Present at the joyous occasion were Datin Ushima, Dato' Lim Si Boon, Chairman of Kinta Properties, Hiroko Taniguchi, Deputy Consul-General, Dato' Hew Choy Kon, Honorary Advisor of PMJFS, Lam Kim Yeap, Chairman of PMJFS and Kenzo Tamura, Deputy Chairman of Japan Club Ipoh.

"I enjoy the food here, especially curry. I first came to Ipoh in 1969. In half a year's time, my weight increased by 5 kilos. Now that I am retired, I like to cook," the amiable Ushima told Ipoh Echo.

Mei Kuan

Manjoi Mosque Gets a Van



The community of Kampung Tengku Hussin, Manjoi now has a 2-in-1 multipurpose van at their service.

Village head, Mazlan Nek, 63, stated that the service, coordinated by the Masjid Al Ittihadiyah committee, would benefit both locals and the public.

"The van, donated by Bank Rakyat, would be used as a hearse and for community service. This is what we meant by 2-in-1. Besides renting it out for funeral services, it is also available for ceremonies, sight-seeing and others. The management would have official stickers on the van soon. We're renting out the van to increase its mileage and keep it on the move. Our worry is, if the van is not used frequently it would cause engine failure."

Package A provides funeral services around Ipoh for RM60 and the same service covering outside Ipoh in Package B for the same price with additional RM1 for each kilometre. Meanwhile, public usage falls under Package C with a rent of RM200.

According to Mazlan Nek, the management offers its services to hospitals which are in need of transportation.

A replica of the key to the 2.7cc Toyota van was presented by Bank Rakyat Meru Raya Branch Manager, Mat Ayob Mat Yaacob to the president of the mosque committee, Yeop Ghazali Alang Kitak on Saturday, February 13 at the mosque compound.

According to Mat Ayob Mat Yaacob, the gift, valued at RM121,050, is part of the bank's corporate social responsibility as an Islamic cooperation bank.

"The fund obtained from business profits is channeled to the community nationwide via zakat contributions in the form of various necessities.

"To date, Bank Rakyat has donated a total of 23 vans in Perak. This is an appreciation to the Muslim community who has supported the bank," he said.

For further details on the service, readers could contact Surur at **019 572 7271** and Idris at **019 573 6031**.

Rosli Mansor

Blood-donation Drive



Since 2007, Y's Men's Club of Ipoh has been contributing a monthly allowance of RM400 to two brothers in Taman Buntong Jaya, Ipoh. The siblings are Patrick, 44, and Lourdes, 34, who were born with cerebral palsy.

Their plight was first highlighted by former Buntong state assemblyman, Dato' Yik Phooi Hong in 2007. Patrick moves around in a wheelchair while Lourdes has to be spoon-fed and carried about, including trips to the toilet. Their mother passed away last year.

Readers who wish to assist the family, kindly contact their caretaker, Jean Antonie Francis at **016 427 9052**.

Y's Men's Club of Ipoh will co-organise a blood-donation drive with Raja Permaisuri Bainun Hospital at Aeon Kinta City Shopping Centre, Ipoh in March. Members of the public are urged to donate their blood for a worthy cause. For details call the club's honorary secretary, K. Letchimanan at **012 538 1939**.

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COMMUNITY

Of Children, Horses and Magic

Perak Turf Club provided a magical experience for under-privileged children to see horses at its equestrian club along Jalan Kelab Golf on Saturday, February 13.

It was a morning of carriage rides, show jumping, horse petting, face painting, red packets and lunch with clowns, for children from Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah, Vision Home, Precious Gift Home, Edufun Learning Centre, Yi Shan Home, Anning Children's Home and Pusat Pemulihan Sultan Azlan Shah.

Present during the occasion were the deputy chairman of Perak Turf Club, Dato' Cheah Choon King and committee members, Dato' John Lim Ewe Chuan, Norman Tan and William Balasingam.

Ipoh Echo spoke to Yean, the chairperson and founder of Yi Shan Home. "The kids are having fun today as they have never seen a horse before." Formed in 2014, the home currently supports five single parents financially and houses 14 orphans ranging from 4 to 16 years old.

The relatively new home located at No 1, Lengkok Bunga Saroja, Taman Melor, 31650 Ipoh (next to Pasir Pinji) is in need of funds and foodstuffs such as rice and biscuits. Readers wishing to donate can contact Yean at **016 5216798** or **05 3217890**.

Meanwhile, Jeya Jeyaratnam of Edufun Learning Centre, told Ipoh Echo, "I think it's very inspiring for the children, as some of the riders are very young. I said to them, if they study hard, obtain a good job and earn enough money, they can then start taking lessons. It's a form of motivation for them to get good grades."

"Some of them scored straight A's in the UPSR exam last year," Madam Salome, their guardian, added. Edufun Centre, founded in 2012 by Soroptimist International Ipoh, is located within the low-cost flats in Buntong. It provides a safe haven for poor kids in the community.



The centre is looking for a part-time teacher, preferably Tamil-speaking with experience in managing kids, for its 25 children. Those interested kindly contact Jean Chai (President SI Ipoh) at **012 588 2313**.

Mei Kuan

Toastmaster Eloquence Contest



The YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club organised an eloquence contest at YMCA Ipoh on Wednesday, February 17. It was divided in two categories – International Speeches and Table Topics.

International Speech Contest is to provide opportunities for speakers to challenge their speaking abilities and to provide learning opportunities for members and the audience by observing more proficient speakers. The Table Topics Contest is designed for contestants to use their best impromptu speaking abilities by presenting a one-to-two minute response to a selected question which they have no prior knowledge.

Speech contests are an important part of the Toastmasters Educational Programme. They provide an opportunity for proficient speakers to gain contest experience and interesting educational programmes for members and the public. Speech contests allow Toastmasters, who are not participating in the contests, to learn by observing proficient speakers.

Contestants in the International Speech Contest impressed the crowd with their oratory skills, while the Table Topics Speech contestants were posed with a tough topic, "What Makes a Hero" for their impromptu speech.

In the International Speech Category, the first prize was won by Ramesh Victor, second prize was won by Lisa Cheong and third prize to Singarair. In the Table-Topics Category, first prize was won by Nur Aida Ahmad Nazeri, second by May Foo and third placing to Ramesh Victor.

The YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club meets every second and fourth Wednesday, at YMCA Ipoh. For details call CG Huan at **012 558 1012** or KT Pillai at **019 555 5585**.

Nantini

Increased Levy Detrimental to 'Mamak' Eateries

The increase in the levy of foreign workers is expected to have a detrimental effect on Indian Muslim 'mamak' eateries in the country, said Hj Mohamed Burhan bin Mohd Alahudin, President of Perak Indian Muslims Chamber of Commerce (DPIM) during a press conference on Friday, February 19 held at the DPIM Office, Ipoh.

According to Burhan, the timing of the increase could not have come at a worse time due to the weak economical climate and deteriorating ringgit. The increase in levy up to RM2500 has burdened many employers by causing financial problems for those who hire foreign labour. He acknowledged that the current cost is even higher than hiring local workers.

Besides the issue of the increased levy, Burhan also spoke of the renewed food and beverage pricing at *mamak* restaurants. According to him, prices have been raised due to the increased price of many basic raw supplies utilised by *mamak* stalls such as dhal (lentils) and so on.

"The additional price is not imposed by us but due to the imposed GST (Goods and Services Tax). Our prices are raised because the raw material prices have increased as well. Hence, we cannot reduce the prices as the said materials are expensive. We are also the victims here because, unlike what people assume, we are end consumers too," said Burhan.

Regarding the issue of the recruitment of 1.5 million Bangladeshi workers, Burhan urged the government to reconsider their decision to increase intake of foreign workers.

"Instead of bringing in 1.5 million new Bangladeshi workers, it is more fitting for the government to legalise the current illegal foreign workers, estimated to be as many as four million in Malaysia."

Nantini



Han Chin Pet Soo



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





iSpeak
A. Jeyaraj

Revitalising Kinta Riverfront Park – More Hype than Action

A few months ago the daily papers, blogs and online media gave prominent coverage on the gotong royong carried out by Mayor Datuk Zamri Man at Ipoh Riverfront Recreational Park, the former People's Park along Jalan Sultan Iskandar.

Zamri said that MBI planned to return the park back to its original role, that of a family park. It is the People's Park and is for the entire Ipoh community. Zamri added "We need to find ways to draw the residents back to the area. The city council plans to carry out activities in the park to attract more visitors."

One of the priorities for the park is to identify a suitable entrance. Currently visitors driving here have to enter by going around the back of shop houses. Zamri said "We want an entrance that welcomes visitors and we will place signboards to make passers-by aware of the park and guide them in."

The paddling pool for children will be improved, including new lighting and signboards.

After all the publicity, I decided to visit the park to see what has been done. I made four visits on different days, in the mid-morning, evening and night. During the visits I did not see any genuine visitors. A few men were sitting and others were sleeping under the sheds. It looked like the men resting had nowhere else to go and were probably homeless. There were young couples sitting in secluded areas.

Construction of a new entrance from Jalan Sultan Iskandar to the park has been completed with two special bays next to the road.

On a Sunday morning the fountain was working, but during the following Sunday evening, it was not working. Just before submitting the article, I visited the park one late evening on a working day and the fountain was working. The place was deserted.

The paddling pool was the most attractive facility in the park. Families brought their



children to play in the pools. There is a signboard saying swimming is not allowed. I cannot remember whether the signboard is new or was there all along, but children used to play in the pools previously.

There is clear stagnant water in the basin of the fountains which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. There are also other receptacles containing stagnant water. The place is relatively clean because there are few visitors. More dustbins are needed.

The broken roof of one of the shelters has not been repaired. It has been there for quite some time. Plants are growing on the

opposite roof.

A number of plant receptacles have fallen off from their pedestals. A couple of them seem to have fallen recently. The bulb on the lamp post along the river bund is missing.

There are three entrances to the park through arches and the signages are missing. The name of the park was there earlier, but has been removed. There is still no new signboard along the main road for the park.

The buildings on the far side of the park are abandoned, but are in good condition. The restaurants along Jalan Bandar Timah (Leech Street) are crowded; why not move some stalls here to attract people. Ipoh is a food haven.

The place is dark at night with only two spot lights next to the main road and does not look safe. From the entrance I noticed a motorcycle was parked inside and two guys were sitting under a shelter. A couple of cars were parked along the main road and the drivers were playing with their phones. There must be more lighting.

The tree the Mayor had planted needs weeding. After the gotong royong, I doubt whether the Mayor or the councillors with him had visited the place to see the progress.

It looks like what Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister said during his keynote address at the Halal Cosmetics and Personal Care Products Industry forum is very apt. "Malaysians are good at initiating things, but do not follow through."



Business

Old is New Again

Upcycling is the process of converting old or discarded materials into something useful and often beautiful. Ipoh Echo had an exclusive one-on-one with Ipoh-born Tan Kai Lek, the Managing Director of Bukit Merah Wood Products Sdn Bhd to learn more about his work and vision.

"As the Chinese saying goes, 'jiu di qu cai' (to draw on local resources using materials at hand). As an artist, I always bear that in mind, using any materials from wood, stone, glass, plastic, straw, metal and others. There is no limitation," 50-year-old Tan explained.

It all began 20 years ago, when Tan saw a lumberjack chopping off a particular tree which had been there throughout his childhood. He turned the few pieces of wood that he requested from the logger into a table. From there, his passion was ignited. Having

majoring in civil engineering, it fuels him to repurpose things and give them new life. He obtains his inspiration from his readings and visits to exhibitions.

Established in 1990, Bukit Merah Wood Products Sdn Bhd won the first prize for bare space booth presentation at the Malaysian International Furniture Fair 2012. Tan and his team craft furniture, sculpture, carving and commissioned pieces out of discarded wood and other recycled materials by hand. Among the pieces which exudes old charm and character are the unique three-legged chairs which remain the all-time favourite.

"My objective is to pass down the knowledge of upcycling especially to the younger generation," the recycled art crafter added.

Hence, his factory's showroom is open to the public for educational visits. Besides running two quaint boutique hotels called Happy 8 at Old Town, Kuala Sepetang in Taiping and a homestay in Pasir Puteh, he has a one-of-its-kind factory stay at his factory for any artist looking for inspiration. Begun in 2014, factory stay offers them accommodation free-of-charge!

Staying true to his aim, Tan gifted me a piece of wood to kick off my own artistic journey at the end of our enlightening interview.

Do take note that advance reservation is a must for visits to the showroom. Tan hosts educational visits from schools

for free. For others, the rate would be RM10 per adult and RM5 per child. Readers are also welcome to join Tan's team and take advantage of his factory stay.

Address: Lot 59241, Bukit Merah Industrial Estate, Batu 4½, Jalan Lahat, 31500 Lahat, Perak.

Operating hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Contact: 05 323 1388

Email: bukitmerahwood@gmail.com

Mei Kuan



Memoriam

A Life Unknown

TJ Tan, author of “Travels in the Malaysian Rainforest”, died in July last year. In this remembrance, friend and fellow writer, Liew Suet Fun recalls his passion for the written word and the final enigma of his departure.

The last time I saw TJ was in a crowded coffee shop in Section 5, Petaling Jaya. We had met for lunch, a sumptuous meal of banana leaf rice of which he said was one of his favourites. We spoke of our frustrations as writers; the lack of appetite amongst local publishers for non-fiction, documentary works which we both favoured and the perennial challenge of securing financial support to produce such books. Towards the end of our conversation he said that he was tired and looked forward to his yearly one-month break. It was the only way to remain sane, we agreed. Before parting ways, I asked him to sign my copy of “Travels in the Malaysian Rainforest”. I saw his face light up, and knew without a doubt what the book meant to him.

It was a rare meeting for us, this despite the fact that I had known TJ since my teens in Taiping. He was my brother’s classmate who occasionally came by our house to visit. Later, he attended the youth meetings at the Methodist Church where I was also a regular. In his youth, I remember him to be shy and quiet whose complexion carried a perpetual intimation of a blush. We never really spoke. I had the impression that he had come to seek spiritual truths and had little use for the social niceties that many others favoured.

His cousin, Ooi Eusie reinforced my early impressions. TJ and her were of the same age and as children would often meet at each others’ homes and play together.

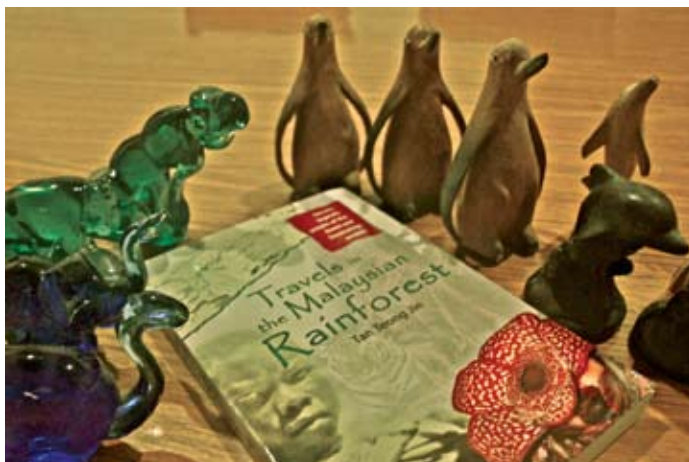
“He was so quiet that we would tease him by saying, why is it so hard for you to speak,” she said. But though he possessed this unerring capacity for silence, he was good-natured and kind.

“He always smiled and never said anything bad about anyone or anything,” she added.

TJ, a second child and eldest boy of four in the family may well have discovered that there was comfort in the silence, for it allowed him to cast a shroud of privacy over a life he jealously guarded as his own.

A marine biologist who graduated from the University of Bangor, Wales, he chose instead to become a journalist first working with foreign news agency and publications and a local newspaper. Eventually he set up Blue Mountain Press to “publish the work (he) believed in”.

Throughout his adulthood, Ooi feels that he also chose to become increasingly aloof with the family.



“Travels in the Malaysian Rainforest”, TJ Tan’s evocative book on the people, their way of life and beliefs and the natural world is his legacy to us and our future generations. (Photo by Liew Suet Fun)

“We would have get-togethers frequently and asked him to come but he never showed up,” she explained. “We all had the illusion that he was living well and doing what he wanted but maybe he just felt he had not achieved anything of value in those years.”

The extent to which TJ’s life was layered became apparent only after his passing. Ironically, many of these revelations turned out to be more prosaic than profound.

They trickled in through friends who knew him in different ways.

“We found out he had become a Catholic, that he was called Jonathan, that twice, he almost got married, that he had a heart problem and that he was living on a financial edge for many years,” Ooi said.

What many people did not know however was that TJ was also working on a new book. When Ooi was tasked to clear up his belongings in his house, she discovered “stacks and stacks of notes and papers, video footage and thousands of photographs”. However, she never found a manuscript or any draft related to a new title.

Several years ago, when TJ and I exchanged emails, he had mentioned that he was working on a book and subsequently I had met several people he had interviewed for this purpose

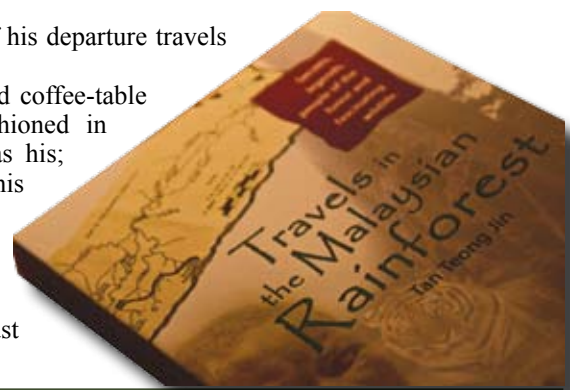
In life, as in death, TJ kept this veil of secrecy firmly wrapped around himself.

Sometime around July 14 last year, he breathed his last, alone in his house. About a week later, a neighbour noted a strange smell and made a police report. It was then that they found him.

Three weeks ago, I met a couple in Ipoh who knew him but did not know he had died.

True to form, the revelation of his departure travels as a trickle.

In my home, on a glass-topped coffee-table stands an army of creatures fashioned in crystal and wood, which once was his; they are whimsical reminders of this brilliant man who chose a path he believed in. On my bookshelf sits “Travels in the Malaysian Rainforest” bearing an inscription for me by his hand. It recalls the last time I saw him smile.



Yang TU Yang NI

Let's Get Involved

A friend said that Malaysians are often too wrapped up in making a living to be involved in activism. He’s too kind. The truth is most of us are selfish; as long as it doesn’t affect us directly we don’t care. I am speaking from experience.

People just aren’t interested when a problem occurs in another area. They feel it’s not their business. There is no social interest, only personal interest. And if truth be told, we are an apathetic lot. We moan and groan about this and that but that’s all we do and when it requires some action we have a hundred reasons why we don’t act. Don’t expect our city or country to change for the better if we don’t change our attitude.

Nothing changes on its own. Enlightenment does not descend on those in power. The social and political ebb and flow move because someone or some group of people acted. Believing that things will change on their own is naïve.

One often cited reason why people don’t get involved is that they feel they won’t make a difference. They feel their criticism, protest or vote makes no difference. People often feel that the status quo is so set, and all the cards are in the hands of the Establishment, that it is pointless to protest. And when the government makes draconian laws to stifle protests, when the mainstream media is in the hands of those in power, this hopelessness is reinforced.

However, history tells a different story. What we take for granted today was hard fought for by those who did not accept the status quo and who were not cowed by the overwhelming odds against them.

The French Revolution is a fine example. When the French people were so fed up with corruption, abuses of power and wastes by the ruling class, they revolted. If you are asked to eat cakes when you can’t even afford bread that is the last straw.

Women’s right to vote was not given to them on a platter. In a male dominated society, in an era when the woman’s place was deemed to be permanently in the kitchen it was not easy to change the mindset of society, besides, many women agreed with the men. Then came the suffragettes, and the rest is history.

Slavery would not have been abolished if not for the brave men and women who dared challenge what was the norm then. The church lent its weight to the cause. The groundswell was so great that politicians took up the cause and eventually slavery was abolished.

Apartheid in South Africa. Imagine the odds against the blacks – the government was run by whites, whose main aim was to preserve whites’ hold on power. They controlled the army and police and every facet of government. Yet despite the overwhelming odds the blacks persevered and won.

Myanmar, Cambodia, Sri Lanka are some of the examples where despite the seemingly hopeless situation, the forces for change won.

And even when things are not so bad, like in America today, people are looking for change so that there is a fairer society and where their government represents their interests instead of those of big business. That’s why Bernie Sanders – a socialist, non-establishment politician – has caught the imagination of much of America. Americans are fed up of big business government and politicians who are in the pockets of Wall Street. Whether Sanders wins or not, the mould has been broken.

We are in a similar situation. While we are not yet at the stage of being unable to afford rice, please don’t ask Malaysians to eat kangkong when you dine on caviar; don’t tell us to tighten our belts when our ministers gallivant round the world at our expense. Our politicians should not be paid fat wages when a new graduate cannot make enough to feed himself and his family even if he has a job.

Yes, we have the vote; but is it an equal vote? Surely not when constituencies are gerrymandered to ensure the government stays in power. It cannot be right when the vote in one constituency is worth ten times more than a vote in another constituency.

The only difference between South Africa and us is that in Malaysia there is no social racism. The different races mix freely and there are not “whites only” places. By and large we get on with each other well.

Malaysians across the board are fed up with the endemic corruption, the lack of transparency and accountability and a judiciary that is broken. Increasingly and dangerously, the clerics are dictating the social and religious conventions in our country.

It doesn’t matter what your interest is – the environment, climate change, local government issues, racism, free and fair elections, corruption – get involved.

If we think the rubbish will always be in someone else’s yard and not ours, if we think it’s always someone else who gets taken in for speaking his mind, if you think racism does not affect you and there’s no need for you to act, you are wrong.

“First they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak for me.” – Pastor Martin Niemoller.

Yin
the man from TR

Education

New Smart Boards in Yuk Choy

Students of SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh can now utilise new SmartONE multi-touch displays in their classrooms, as well as go-green-themed toilets.

A total of fifteen 65-inch full HD SmartONE displays were installed in the school's new 5-storey building. It is a 5-in-1 multimedia technology containing projector, whiteboard, HD TV, computer and speaker. It provides a wide-range of interactive software for educators to ensure efficient delivery, enhance interactivity and facilitate students in E-learning, as well as U-learning.

"In recent years, a number of facilities have been built, such as a new block, a huge auditorium, an upgraded school gate, re-roofing old buildings and new toilets. In line with the 21st-century classroom concept, we installed these smartboards," said Chan Hen Huan, Principal of SMJK Yuk Choy during the launch on Tuesday, February 23 at the school compound.

"We reused the old roof tiles in building the go-green themed toilets. There are 16 cubicles for boys and 18 cubicles for girls. Each block has one cubicle for the disabled. Natural light and natural ventilation are the vogue. Used water from wash basins is channelled to clean up the urinals. Later, the washrooms will be linked to a rain-harvesting system too," Chan Swee Weng, President of the Parent-Teacher Association told Ipoh Echo.

Present at the morning ceremony were guest-of-honour Mohd Yusof Hassandi, representing the North Kinta District Education Officer and Kwan Foh Kwai, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the school.

Mei Kuan



Amber Grabbed First Place!

Amber Cheah Chooi San won first prize for the Photography Competition 2016 organised by the Intergraphic Club of Sunway College Ipoh during the Thaipusam festival in January.

The theme of the competition 'A Moment in Thaipusam' was selected where students of Sunway College Ipoh were sent to the temple during the festive day to capture as many photographs as possible using their photography skills. After the preliminary round of judging by Sunway College's lecturer, Joel Ang Juinn Shyang who teaches photography, the photos were then judged by Foo Kok Kin, founder of Kok Kin Photographic & Color-Lab, an award winning professional photographer and Charter president of the Society of Photographers Malaysia; Adawiah Norli, Sunway College Ipoh's principal and a committee member of Maha Mariamman Temple Ipoh, Mr Jeya.

Amber's photo captured attention as she successfully conveyed the spirit of Thaipusam with a shot of a man carrying a *kavadi*. Brothers, Chong Chee Yong and Chong Chee Hao grabbed second place and first runner-up, leaving Foo Kok Kin impressed with their talents.

"When I was judging the photos, I couldn't believe the talent displayed by the students. I hope that Sunway College Ipoh will hold this competition again next year to encourage more students to participate," said Foo who also shared a few tips and tricks with the students on how to take better pictures in the future.

"At Sunway College Ipoh, we do not only focus on classroom learning but also



expose them outside the college through competitions, activities and real life experiences with industry partners," said the principal Puan Adawiah Norli.

Ili Aqilah

Sunway College Ipoh's CNY Celebration

Sunway College Ipoh together with the families of Sunway, Sunway Property, Sunway Lost World of Tambun and Sunway Banjaran & Retreat organised a Chinese New year celebration for their students and staff in Tambun on February 18.

The celebration of the Year of Fire Monkey began with a lion dance performance to bring good luck accompanied by fire crackers to chase away the bad ones and usher in the brand new year with an abundance of luck, happiness and joy.

"I wish all the students of Sunway College Ipoh a long lasting happiness and success in their studies and future undertaking," said Adawiah Norli, the principal of Sunway College Ipoh in her opening remarks.

The celebration then was continued with Loh Hey (Good fortune tossing) of Yee Sang by all the guests as a symbol of wishing abundant luck and happiness for all.

Ili Aqilah



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.

Confession: Reasons for My Prolific Writing

Some readers of my blog – usually those who for some reason or other disagree with my article or who may have a chip on their shoulder – ask the question as to why I write so frequently. They pose this question mainly because I am an exception among successful Malaysians who generally prefer to keep quiet or appear dumb unless their interests appear to be directly affected when they will then speak out.

Here is my honest and frank explanation as to why I write so often. The motivating factors are as follows:

1. The Ego Factor

The term “ego” comes from Freudian psychology. Although it is important to avoid being completely egoistic, at the same time we must realise that the ego is also absolutely necessary for healthy psychological functioning. This is because ego is the part of the mind that organises the parts of our self into an integrated whole which interacts with the external world. According to the experts in psychology, ego is necessary for reality testing, judgment, sense of reality of the world and of the self, regulation and control of drives, affects and impulses, object relations, and many more aspects of our thinking processes.

Everyone needs to have an ego but one that is not too strong or self-centred. I must confess that I am egoistic in the sense that I want to be noticed and enjoy the limelight of seeing my name in print. That part of me may be criticized by others as being greedy for fame. I suppose they may be right. But these critics who write in should also realise that they themselves are equally guilty of being egoistic for wanting to see their comments on my writing in print. The important difference between these critics and me is that while they do not dare to put their names down besides what they write, I do so openly.

2. Desire to Share my Knowledge and Experience

I am 83 years old and, in my varied career, have accumulated much unique knowledge and experience which I want to share with readers especially of the younger generation. This is particularly the case since I retired from active work in 1983. All my present wealth is from share investment. I have tried many different strategies of beating the market and am now confident that the best method is to make sure the company can make more profit this year than last year and that its projected P/E ratio should not be more than 10. I call this my golden rule in share selection.

3. An Active Mind Prolongs the Life

Many studies have shown that those who exercise their body and brain have longer life spans. In some ways I can be considered to be lucky to be writing still. This is because I have a hereditary blood disease called hypercholesterolemia. As a result of this disease I had heart bypass surgery in 1983. My cardiologist told me that most people who have hypercholesterolemia cannot live more than 20 years after their heart bypass surgery. I

have lived well beyond this threshold partly because of my active mind. It is a fact that writing today is a lot easier because of the computer. All that is needed is a mind that is going strong. And I shall write so long as there is breath in me.

4. Writing as Political Engagement

I write also because I am passionate about being engaged politically. Besides political commentaries, I have also during the election period gone on the talk circuit to help the opposition bring about change in the country. I feel that my writing and speeches have helped the cause of freedom and justice. But it is not just empty talk as I have openly – unlike donors to the Prime Minister's infamous personal bank account – donated large sums of money to help the opposition throw out the corrupt BN government.

5. Sharing my Political Vision

Besides writing about share investment, I also like to share my vision of development for the country. I have written a book with the title, Malaysia: Road Map for Achieving Vision 2020, which was published about 6 years ago and in which Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah wrote the foreword.

6. Writing and Sharing Brings Me Happiness

Many friends are also aware that besides writing to make me happy, I also like to help poor people. As I come from a poor family, I know the needs of poor people especially poor students. I believe helping poor students to complete their tertiary education is the most effective way. I realise that I am not immortal. I am aware that I can die anytime due to my hereditary blood disease and my age. As I cannot take my money along when I die, I have decided to spend it wisely. I have written in my will that all my remaining assets will be for doing charity. In the meantime I try to live happily every day and this explains why I write!

Koon Yew Yin



It was reported in NST (February 14, 2016) that the government is expected to implement Single Price Policy (SPP) after July. This was informed by Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin, Minister for Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism.

Recently, I visited India and noticed that all the snacks packets like biscuits, mixtures and food products had the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) printed on the packets, with the price and production date printed in a white rectangular box. The price of the item is same at all outlets and also at Delhi Airport. Retailers do not have to waste their time sticking price tags to the packets. India seems to be practising SPP.

The price of medicine is also printed on the packets. When I compared the price of eye drops, the variation was more than 50 per cent in different pharmacies in Ipoh.

The Ministry should implement this policy without further delay. If a big country like India can do it, I do not see any reason why it cannot be done here. The Ministry must look after the interest of the consumers and make sure they are not overcharged by unscrupulous traders.

The price of a common snack like Menglambu groundnuts varies in different shops. This would not be the case if the MRP is printed on the packet.

Shopkeepers are increasing their prices for no apparent reason other than to make bigger profits. It is time for the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-Operative and Consumerism to implement this policy immediately and make it mandatory for manufacturers to print MRP on the packets.

If India can do it I don't see why it cannot be done in Bolehland.

A. Jeyaraj



Tourism

Nigerian Emerged Winner

The sole international participant from Nigeria, Njoku Genevive Ucheci emerged champion at the Gua Tempurung Lipstick Challenge 2016 on Sunday, January 31 at the cave.

Genevive, 38, completed the 12km extreme 10-obstacle run in 17 minutes and 24 seconds, all the while making sure the lipstick applied on her lips was intact at the finishing line.

As an amateur runner, she thought that the competition was quite tough and it tested her physical as well as mental strength.

"I prepared by running for 10-15km a day for a week. I always join runs. I look forward to joining it again in the future and seeing what surprise challenges the organisers could offer next," Genevive, who is a policewoman, shared.

She added that the championship was part of her training before representing her country at the Olympics qualification trial on Saturday, February 6.

She won a cash prize of RM500, presented by the Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Multimedia and Communications, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi.

Second place fell to Sin Pei Chan with a recorded time of 1:20:35 while T. Anuratha won third placing with her time of 1:21:01.

The first-of-its-kind competition which required its participants to put on lipstick was joined by over 150.

Each contestant had to overcome ten obstacles which included rubber trouble, tyre step, crawling maze, amazing spider, wooden bridge, brick shoes, wall breaker, slippery mat, mud mad and hang on.

According to Nolee, the challenge which ran on the concept of sports tourism would be able to attract international tourists to the state.

"After this, we target even more attractive tourism destinations in the state for similar programmes in the future," she said after the prize-giving ceremony.

Luqman



Sport

BEYOND A MATCH



The first-ever friendly football match between Officers' Mess Headquarters 2nd Infantry Malaysian Infantry Brigade and the football club of Ipoh Fire and Rescue Department was held on Wednesday, February 10 at the football field of Territorial Army Training Centre (Puswatan).

The objective of the game was to strengthen fellowship between both organisations. The Ipoh Fire and Rescue Department team emerged champion with a 6-3 scoreline.

Present to witness the match were Brig-Gen Mas'od bin Hj Muhammad and Samasuvam a/l Pavathyappan, the fire department chief.

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.

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.

Public Forum: 'Management of the Diabetic Foot. Avoid Amputation' by Dr K. Raveendran, Consultant Orthopaedic & Trauma Surgeon. Saturday **March 5**, 2pm at Conference Room, 4th Floor, Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh. Entrance is free. Free blood test and diabetic counselling for the first 100 pax. For more information, call: **05 545 5777 ext. 276**.

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).

Theatre Training Workshop for boys and girls, 10 to 17 years old, organised by Ipoh Fine Arts Society, Saturday **March 12**, 8.30am to 3pm at YMCA Ipoh. Registration is free. Please call **016 527 2959** or **012 519 3004**.

Public Forum on Down Syndrome organised by the Ipoh Down Syndrome Centre, Saturday, **March 19**, 2pm - 5pm at Ipoh Down Syndrome Centre, 2 Persiaran Bercham Selatan 27, Taman Sri Kurau, Ipoh. The target audience is parents and care-givers of children/adults with down syndrome and anybody who is keen to know about down syndrome. It is a day of learning and sharing. Admission is free. Places are limited to the first 100 participants only. Please call at **05 546 8386** to register.

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**.

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.