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ISSUE

233

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Intangible Charms of Kuala Sepetang

● By Tan Mei Kuan



Sunset at Kuala Sangga

By trading the city lights for the celestial flickering of fireflies and modern comforts for a sojourn with Mother Nature, the sights and sounds of Kuala Sepetang left me with many intangible souvenirs during my first visit in March: new friendships, fresh perspectives and wonderful memories.

The name "Sepetang" is derived from the time it takes to reach here from Taiping by bicycle: one evening in Malay. "Sepetang" also means 18 miles in the Cantonese dialect. Today, it is an hour's drive away from Ipoh via the highway.

Continued on page 2



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Kuala Sepetang floating chalet

Where Nature Brings Out the Best in People

Kuala Sepetang was formerly known as Port Weld where the history of the railway system in Malaya began on June 1, 1885 when the first 8¼ mile railway track connecting it and Taiping was laid.

Perched on the mouth of the Sepetang River, this small fishing village is surrounded by sights and sounds that captivate and enchant as we embarked on our evening cruise right beside the delightfully quaint Happy Eight Hotel.

Sepetang River and Beyond

Our well-mannered teen guide brimming with enthusiasm, ensured that we kicked off our evening cruise along the Sepetang River in the best mood.

At our first stop, we sighted a flock of eagles swooping down during a feeding session. “Eagles remain faithful to one mate their entire lives, no mistresses!” the little boy explained, drawing laughter.

Kids as young as our guide were spotted bundling up fishnets at floating fish farms signalling the end of the day’s work with countless pure-white egrets taking off in the background. What an Instagram-worthy shot!



View along the river



Egrets



Al fresco dinner

Equally eye-catching is the 8-room Kuala Sepetang Floating Chalet. At a rate of RM128 (for Monday to Thursday) and RM148 (for Friday to Sunday) per person per night, it is inclusive of three meals daily. Accommodating up to 40 guests, nature’s breezes eliminate the need for air-conditioning. Interested readers can contact Beh Hou May at 016 521 3396.

At the river mouth stood our ultimate destination of the cruise: A remote fishermen’s village named Kuala Sangga, a gateway to more than 150 years of history.

Originally from Teochew, China, the less-than-200 villagers here are the perfect example of “be more with less”. They survive wonderfully on rainwater and solar panels without Wi-Fi connection, an unimaginable life for us city-dwellers.

Accessible only by boat via a 20-minute ride, a school, a church, three temples and

simple homes on stilts are connected with a single bridge made of concrete slabs along the shore. The rest of the bridge is made of wooden planks. All the construction materials were transported all the way from Kuala Sepetang.

“I have stayed here for five generations. The bridge was made of wood then. In earlier times, electricity would be cut off after midnight, now we enjoy 24 hours of electricity. Before we had engines, my grandfather would row his small boat manually to and from Kuala Sepetang,” a 51-year-old fisherman, Xiang shared during his evening barefoot stroll.

From the beginning, education is of utmost importance for the people here. SRJK (C) Poay Chee is the only school here, currently with 18 students, eight teachers and a headmaster. Students here would attend tuition classes until 9pm and cycle home along the bridges built without railing, sometimes without streetlight illumination too. Any scholar would be humbled by their unabated quest for knowledge.

Also found here is St Anne’s Chapel, the second Catholic Church to be established in Malaysia. It is well-preserved even though none of them are Christians now, a standing testament to religious tolerance and respect.

Before I left, I spotted a father-son pair laying down plates of simple dishes on the wooden bridge for their own version of al fresco dinner as they watch the setting sun reflecting off the breaking waves. What a simpler yet equally gratifying way to end a day of hard labour!

Our teen guide then directed the boat to Kampung Dew, our final stop. “The best time to catch the fireflies is every new moon. The male flashes three times per second while the female flashes once every three seconds. Hence, it is easier to spot the male fireflies,” he added.

There was a half-moon that night, thus there were less lightning bugs. However, they were still able to blink their way to my heart with their dazzling display of light symphony in the quiet darkness which easily put any fairy lights to shame. I could only imagine how much more magical it would have been had there been a new moon.

Observing Everyday Life: Kuala Sepetang

Take a morning walk along neighbouring streets, Jalan Trump and Jalan Tepi Sungai and you would be greeted with fields of golden shrimps basking in the sun. In another unassuming corner, rows and rows of salted fish in wooden racks would be seen having its fair share of the warm sunshine. With the umami aroma permeating through the air, these sun-dried goodies is a major temptation for visitors to buy home by the sack loads.

At the street lined with a marketplace, fishery wholesale godowns, old barber shops, a mosque (Masjid Kuala Sepetang) and the one-and-only bank, I had the privilege to meet 71-year-old Song Lian Kow, a former fisherman turned self-taught fishnet weaver. The exclusive one-on-one with the last of the fishnet weavers will be published in the upcoming issue of Ipoh Echo, look forward to it!



Rows of salted fish



Fields of golden shrimps

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• From the Editor's Desk
By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

ARE OUR CITIES DANGEROUS?

A liveable city incorporates the elements of safety, security, serenity and beauty. Perception too plays a part in determining liveability...

I am somewhat amused by a recent report by Numbeo.com titled, "The Most Dangerous Cities in Asia." Numbeo is a collaborative online database which enables users to share and compare information about food, health care, crime and other related statistics between countries and cities of the world.

Founded in 2009, the Numbeo website is operated by Numbeo doo, a company registered in Serbia. Its founder, Mladen Adamovic is a former Google software engineer. It was originally a website for crowd-sourced price comparison but in 2011 it expanded to include data on crime, pollution, healthcare and traffic.

Numbeo claims to be the biggest website of its kind with more than 1.3 million pieces of data collected in August 2014. It is a good site for comparing everyday prices of goods but its reliability is suspect, as the information garnered is based upon what people say. And the information, being hearsay, should be taken with a pinch of salt.

Notwithstanding that, what is highlighted in the report does not augur well for Malaysians, as we are placed in the spotlight.

In its listing, four out of the ten most dangerous cities in Asia are in Malaysia. They are Johore Baharu at No. 10, Klang at No. 5, Petaling Jaya at No. 3 and our capital city, Kuala Lumpur at No. 2. Fortunately, there is no mention of Ipoh. Is this a deliberate omission? Or perhaps there are no inputs from Ipohites to the website? If inputs are absent there is no way Numbeo can make a conclusion. Thus Ipoh is spared the ignominy – for the moment at least.

Incidentally, the most dangerous city in Asia, based on the report, is Karachi in Pakistan. Let us see what are the common criminal activities witnessed in all four "criminalised" cities in the country. On top of the list is pick-pocketing followed by snatch theft, then robbery and finally rape and murder. The last two are violent crimes that occur mainly in Johore Baharu, Klang and Kuala Lumpur.

Pickpockets and scam artists flood the streets of Kuala Lumpur seizing every



opportunity to steal from locals and foreigners alike. Foreign tourists, especially the unsuspecting ones, are the prime targets. Taxi drivers fleeing tourists is another menace that is difficult to eradicate. The introduction of the American multinational online transportation network Uber and Grabcar is definitely a welcome change on the public transportation scenario. Ironically, it is the taxi drivers' turn to complain. They are now demanding that the government ban or regulate the system.

Efforts at making Ipoh a liveable city are ongoing. Driven by a passion to see things move in tandem with the city's physical growth, Mayor Dato' Zamri Man has taken it upon himself to make things work. Complementing this noble cause is Ipoh City Watch.

A liveable city incorporates the elements of safety, security, serenity and beauty. Perception too

plays a part in determining liveability. Criminal activities, in Ipoh, are not as widespread as in the four mentioned cities. Pickpocket, snatch theft, robbery and the occasional rape and murder do occur but their numbers are small, comparatively.

One petty crime which is considered contagious is the jaga kereta (guard your car) menace. This occurs primarily in areas where Ipohites congregate. The wet market at city centre is a favourite haunt of these unsavoury characters. Most are drug addicts whose illicit act is a means to get a fix. Punitive actions by the authorities are never sufficient to deter the culprits from making a comeback.

Robberies with dangerous weapons do happen and the favourite targets are goldsmith shops and restaurants in downtown Ipoh. Another soft target is foreign workers. Many have been robbed, conned and mugged. The Ipoh District Police under ACP Sum Chang Keong are doing their utmost to prevent these crimes from happening. But their hands are pretty tied as their number is small vis-à-vis the city's expanding population. No matter what it is, our responsibility is to make sure Ipoh does not become city No. 5 on the Numbeo.com list.

EYE HEALTH — World Health Day 2016

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about World Health Day 2016.



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

The World Health Organization (WHO) celebrated World Health Day (WHD) on April 7 and for the first time since 1950, has chosen 'Beat Diabetes' as its theme. This is because Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is now one of the largest global health emergencies of the 21st century with ever growing numbers of people suffering diabetic complications of blindness, heart diseases, stroke, amputations and kidney failure. WHO has estimated that by 2030, Malaysia would have a total of 2.48 million people with Diabetes Mellitus (DM). "One in six Malaysians with Diabetes above 30 years old, are at a high risk of becoming blind due to Diabetic Retinopathy".

SUDDEN BLINDNESS RISK IN ALL DIABETICS

A diabetic patient runs a risk of suddenly going blind especially if they have uncontrolled diabetes and if they have never had their eyes checked. "There was a diabetic patient in his 30s who did not follow his physician's advice to have an eye check-up because he had the impression that he did not need to, since he had good diabetic control. One morning, he woke up to find that he could hardly see in one eye. Unfortunately, like him there are many diabetic patients who are oblivious to such vision complications and have chosen to ignore the need for regular eye checks until they get into trouble."

DIABETIC EYE DISEASE MYTH

Many diabetics think that just because their diabetes is well controlled, they do not need to worry about their eyes. This unfortunately not the case. The DURATION of diabetes along with concomitant diseases like hypertension, puts every diabetic patient at risk of diabetic eye disease and blindness. This means that the longer you have suffered from diabetes, the more the risk of diabetic eye complications. Every diabetic should be made aware that they need a regular eye screening before they have symptoms of blurring vision. Commonly, by the time there is blurring vision, the diabetic eye disease is often at a late complicated stage.

HOW THE EYE DAMAGE OCCURS

Diabetic retinopathy affects the eyes when vessels at the retina (nerve) leak and it becomes ischaemic (lacking oxygen supply). When the retina lacks oxygen, it produces a substance which induces the formation of abnormal weak blood vessels, which start bleeding causing loss of vision.

WHO RECOMMENDATIONS:

BODY WEIGHT: Maintain healthy body weight. Malaysians have one of the highest rates of obesity in the world!

- **EXERCISE:** At least 30 minutes of regular, moderate-intensity activity on most days. More activity is required for weight control if you are obese.
- **DIET:** Eat a healthy diet of between three and five servings of fruit and vegetables a day. Reduce sugar and saturated fat intake.
- **NO SMOKING:** smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

.....and of course, the **EYE CHECK:** Get the eyes checked regularly if you are diabetic!

World Health Day 2016

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For more information, call Gill Eye Centre at Hospital Fatimah on **05-5455582** or email gilleeyecentre@dr.com.

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Would you prefer sex education or child marriages for underage children?

The recent debate on the Child (Amendment) Bill 2015, in parliament, sparked a furious row amongst some MPs. The debate also highlighted that some MPs do not understand the meaning of statutory rape, and have no clue about the mental and physical trauma suffered by the victim, and her family.

Just to be clear, Section 375(G) of the Penal Code states that sex with a person who is under 16, with or without her consent, is considered statutory rape.

DAP Kulai MP, Teo Nie Ching, said that child marriages should be banned. She cited cases of statutory rape, in which someone has sex with a minor.

She was concerned about a recent case in Sabah, where a 40-year-old restaurant manager, raped a 12-year-old girl. In trying to avoid punishment, the rapist paid his victim's father RM10,000 for his silence, and also offered to marry the girl.

The restaurant manager was already married and has four children. He met his victim on Facebook, where he posed as a 24-year-old man.

Teo was interrupted by Nik Mazlan Nik Mohamad, the PAS MP for Pasir Puteh, who said that any sexually active 14-year-old girl, who has consented to have sex with a man, is lusting for sex. He added that child marriages would stop underage girls like her, from having premarital casual sex.

It is naïve of Nik Mazlan to think that a marriage will prevent marital partners from being unfaithful. A marriage which has no solid foundation of mutual trust and respect, is probably doomed from the start. A marriage which is supposed to stop one or both of the partners from having casual sex, does not sound like a good basis of one of the most sacred of unions.

Moreover, why does Nik Mazlan think that it is always the woman's fault? He said that the underage girl, who consents to having sex with a man, possesses what he termed "sexual lust". What about the man? Was he seduced by the young girl?

A responsible adult should realise that sex with a minor is statutory rape. It does not matter if she agrees to have sex or not. It is still rape. He is committing a crime.

Moreover, does Nik Mazlan not realise that when a rapist agrees to marry his victim, and society condones this act, a warped message is being sent to potential rapists? Instead of being punished, rapists are rewarded with a young girl, with whom he can do as he pleases, until he tires of her. It is the cost of a dowry and a wedding feast. It is wrong and this is not justice.

Did Nik Mazlan think about the suffering of the rape victim?

A girl who is married-off does not have much of a future. She will not complete her studies. She will not have the qualifications to enter higher learning. She may be inviting more abuse by her husband.

If she is pregnant, she will have to stay at home, to care for the baby. Her body is not fully developed, and childbirth may be dangerous. Before she is out of her



THINKING ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar

teens, she may already have a few children to care for, when she is still a child herself.

Many studies have been made on young girls who are forced to marry at an early age.

What happens if her husband leaves her? What skills or qualifications does she have,

to get employment to support her family? She may be forced to look for low paid menial work.

If she is from a wealthy family, she may not need child care. If she is not, the money she earns may have to be used to pay for childcare, which these days, is not cheap.

Often, a girl, without education or skills, is condemned to a bleak future. A woman is not just a baby-making machine. She is not someone's plaything. She can contribute to the country, to her community and to the economy.

Marrying-off a young girl, because some men claim that she is "lustful for sex" is the wrong approach towards marriage. Contrary to the opinions of some, sex education is not about how to have free sex. Sex education discusses the dangers of having sex at an early age, the consequences of having unprotected sex, how to say "No!" and how to avoid peer pressure and most important of all, the importance of stable, loving relationships.

Forcing child marriages on underage children, is simply lazy and irresponsible parenting. Just cast your eye on your 12-year-old daughter or granddaughter? Why would you want her to be married-off at this tender age, when there is so much that the world has to offer her, and she, the world?

Dr Saravana K.

Consultant Physician, Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

Ascites

Ascites is the build-up of an abnormal amount of fluid inside the abdomen. Cirrhosis of the liver is the most common cause of ascites. When cirrhosis occurs, blood flow through the liver is blocked. This blockage causes an increase in the pressure in the main vein (the portal vein) that delivers blood from the digestive organs to the liver. This condition is called portal hypertension. Ascites occurs when portal hypertension develops. The kidneys cannot rid the body of enough sodium (salt) through urine. Not being able to rid the body of salt causes fluids to build up in the abdomen, resulting in ascites.



What are the risk factors for development of ascites?

Common risk factors for the development of ascites are any disease that can cause cirrhosis of the liver. These include hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and alcoholism/alcohol abuse. Other diseases that lead to fluid build-up are congestive heart failure and kidney failure. Cancers of organs in the abdomen also may lead to ascites.

How is ascites diagnosed?

Ascites is diagnosed based on physical exam, medical history, blood tests, ultrasound or CT scan, and paracentesis. Paracentesis is a procedure in which a needle is inserted through the abdominal wall (after local anesthesia) and fluid is removed. This fluid is examined for signs of infection, cancer or other medical problems.

What are the complications of ascites?

- Abdominal pain, discomfort and difficulty breathing:
- Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis: The fluids that build up in the gut could become infected with bacteria. It causes fever and abdominal pain. The diagnosis is generally made by performing a paracentesis. It requires treatment with IV antibiotics.
- Fluid in the lungs: This condition is called hepatic hydrothorax. Abdominal fluid fills the lung (mostly on the right side). This results in shortness of breath, cough, chest discomfort. Hepatic hydrothorax is best treated by removing the abdominal ascites by paracentesis.
- Kidney failure: Worsening of cirrhosis of the liver can lead to kidney failure. This condition is called hepatorenal syndrome. It is rare, but is a serious condition and may lead to kidney failure.



What are the best treatments for ascites?

- Limit the amount of salt in your diet. The most important step to treating ascites is to drastically reduce your salt intake. Recommended limits are 2,000mg or less a day.
- Often, patients will require diuretics ('water pills') to treat ascites.
- Paracentesis as a treatment: Sometimes fluids continue to build up in the abdomen despite use of diuretics and a restricted salt diet. In these cases, patients may need paracentesis to remove this large amount of excess fluid.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Better yet, do not drink any alcoholic beverages at all. Reducing the amount of alcohol you drink reduces the risk of developing ascites.
- Limit use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). These drugs affect the kidneys, causing water and salt to be retained by the body.
- Surgery: Surgical placement of a shunt (tube) between the main vein (portal vein) and smaller veins is sometimes used as a treatment. A radiologist can place a shunt directly through the liver, thereby relieving portal hypertension and diminishing ascites.
- Liver transplant: This approach is reserved for patients with very severe cirrhosis whose livers are failing.

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

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ON IPOH FOOD

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



SeeFoon Gets Clubby at the Dome

I usually don't expect good food at a club. A simple bowl of noodles or fried rice is about all I allow myself and with some luck it's served in an air-conditioned environment.

When it comes to gourmet food, I usually look to the 'fine dining' establishments like Citrus or Indulgence. Recently, with a complete revamp of the menu under the expert guidance of Director Christian Bock, the Dome at Meru Golf Resort has undergone a total transformation, offering up some tantalising nosh that can hold its own at any of the gourmet restaurants in Ipoh and maybe even further afield.

For starters, the menu is now looking very posh with a floral bouquet on a lilac hardcover. But naturally the proof of the pudding is in the eating and it's the menu items that count and of course the taste. And both do not disappoint.

In fact there are even some superlative surprises in store for me as I tasted a variety of the menu items on several visits. The **Blossom Tuna Tataki** which is Grilled Tuna loin drizzled with wasabi goma dressing served with tossed mesclun baby greens in passion fruit dressing is an offering straight from a gourmet menu. Not only did it look good on the plate but the taste was just right: pink in the centre and slightly charred around the edges encrusted with sesame seeds – **RM19**.

On another occasion I had a hankering for a small snack to go with my beer and the **Crispy Anchovies with Cuttlefish and Mermaid**, which is stir-fried anchovies, cuttlefish & mermaid (a curly type of anchovy) with cucumber in savoury Thai chilli absolutely sated my craving for something savoury, tangy and sour. This was heaven on a plate – **RM16**.

Soup Kambing Berempah, a local traditional Malay soup made with herbs, spices with potatoes, carrots and Dorper Lamb chunks was delectably fragrant, umami and cooked to perfection.....none of the watered down, overly curried versions that are prevalent in other places – **RM13.50**.

I have always loved the **Chicken Wings** at the Dome finding myself forever ordering a six-piece portion in addition to whatever else I may be having – **RM17** for six pieces and **RM28** for 12 pieces, but I have now found a yumilicious alternative to this 'side' dish in the **Chicken Strips**, deep fried battered strips, served with coleslaw, wedge served very attractively on a wooden board with the chips in a stainless steel basket, accompanied by a traditional barbecue sauce and another the chef's special secret sauce – **RM18**. All these can be found on the menu under snacks.

There are two burgers worthy of rave at the Dome. These are firstly the **Gourmet Wagyu Burger**, a home-made Wagyu Beef patty seasoned with spices and herbs, accompanied with turkey bacon, vegetables and topped with a slice of cheddar cheese. Served with truffle fries and a side of coleslaw – **RM31**.

The second, the **Meru Dorper Lamb Burger** is a home-made Dorper Lamb patty seasoned with spices & herbs, accompanied with turkey bacon, baby gherkins and vegetables, topped with a slice of cheddar cheese and served with truffle fries and a side of coleslaw – **RM28**.

Ask for either of these medium rare and you will have a juicy mouthful of one of the



best hamburgers you've ever tasted.

Under Western cuisines, I had the pleasure of tasting their **Oriental Cod Fish**, pan-fried ocean fresh Pacific Cod in a soya reduction, accompanied by delicate baby French beans, baby pak choi, and seasonal Shimeji mushroom. Crispy on the outside, the soya reduction accentuating the umami taste and feel of the cod – **RM41**.

Their Mediterranean **Wagyu Oxtail Stew** served with roasted potatoes and toasted cheesy gourmet bread was tender and sauced robustly. – **RM35**. And for a simple bite, their **Fish & Chips**, battered fish deep fried to a golden brown, accompanied with tartar sauce, coleslaw, French fries and a wedge of lemon at **RM17** is a mouthful of crispy delight.

The menu at the Dome is extensive with dishes to suit all palates and pockets from the luxurious **Wagyu Steak** at **RM118 for 180g** to the simple Meru's signature **Prawn Mee** with Meng prawn, fish cake, sliced chicken, beansprouts, *kangkung* and of hard boiled egg at **RM10.50** and half a slice the **Wat Tan Hor**, wok-fried kway teow with sliced chicken, fish cake, prawns and vegetables in thick egg gravy – **RM8.50**.

There is now an interesting offer for families where a **Set Menu A RM55** (for 4 to 5 pax) is on offer comprising Seafood Tom Yum Soup, Sweet & Sour Fish, Chicken Curry, Egg Foo Yong, Steamed Rice and a **Set B RM45** (for 4 pax) consisting of Meru Fried Kway Teow, Singapore Fried Bihun, Fried Chicken Wing (4 pieces) and Samosas.

Now that the new menu is in place, I will certainly be dining more at the Dome than ever before. Weekend barbecues are another favourite where one can choose from a plethora of items and have Chef Desmond grill them for you to perfection. Chef Desmond who has been instrumental in creating the new menu with Director Chris has been working overtime to bring this new menu to fruition and deserves a pat on the back for a job well done.

Non members are welcome to the Dome as can be witnessed by the numbers of office workers from around the

Meru/Jelapang area who now frequent the Dome at lunchtime, particularly on the 25th of each month as Meru is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year and a set menu is available for **RM25** on that day from now until the end of the year.

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Ipoh City Council Round-up

Nantini Krishnan

Ipoh City Council Soccer Kid

The Ipoh City Council Soccer Kid (MBI SoccerKid) team was first runner-up at the football tournament held in Sekolah Kebangsaan Tronoh on Saturday, March 19.

The first-ever championship by Tronoh Football Academy and co-organised by the Youth Development Academy Malaysia (APBM), Batu Gajah saw The Perak Football Association (PAFA), East Ipoh team emerging as champion.

The championship is aimed to promote Tronoh as a football centre in South Kinta.

The Ipoh City Council kid team was formed in November 2015 and has been playing for almost six months. Training sessions are held every Saturday from 8-10am in Ipoh Padang. This is the best placing that the team has achieved so far.



Car Free Day

The sixth Car Free Day programme (CFD) along one half of Jalan Raja DiHilir (Tambun Road) on Sunday, March 27 in Ipoh drew over 3000 visitors. Among the highlights of the day were silat display, aerobics, angklung and percussion. Others included busking, cycling, roller skating, appearance by Ipoh City Council Soccer kids (MBI SoccerKids) and an environmental-cleanliness awareness campaign by Ipoh City Watch.

The mayor of Ipoh felt confident that the programme would help make Ipoh a Low Carbon City and be a good promotional stint.

According to the Executive Councillor for Education, Science, Environment and Green Technology, Dato' Dr Haji Muhammad Amin bin Haji Zakaria, the Car Free Day Programme was a step in the right direction in the efforts for environmental conservation and green technology.



Midnight Walk to Beautify Ipoh

Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Zambray Abd Kadir hoped that Ipoh City Council would take measures to beautify the city.

He inspected several locations in Ipoh on the night of Tuesday, March 29 beginning at 10pm to 1am along with Mayor, Dato' Zamri Man.

"We walked from Taman DR Seenivasagam to People's Park. I gave my views on ways to light and decorate the spots identified.

"The banks of Kinta River are full of huge and beautiful trees that can be decorated at night. I hope city council would act on my suggestions," said Zambray on his official Facebook page.



Mass Participation in Monthly Aerobics

Over a thousand Council staff participated in the monthly aerobics held at Dataran Bandaraya Ipoh on Friday, March 25.

The mass exercise, led by Mayor Dato' Zamri Man and Council Secretary, Mohd Zakuan Zakaria, is held every month since January with the intention of strengthening bonds as well as making the staff healthier and fitter.

This is among the many initiatives the mayor has introduced to bridge the gap between officers and staff of the Council.

Mayor Lent a Helping Hand

Ipoh Mayor, Dato' Zamri Man lent a helping hand to council workers when he saw them cleaning a drain at the Japanese Garden in Taman D.R. Seenivasagam on Friday, April 8.

Among the maintenance works currently in progress are area cleaning, grass cutting, plants watering, bicycle management, cleaning the water pathway from the man-made lake to Kinta River, structural, lighting and security improvement.

The Japanese Garden is central to Taman D.R. Seenivasagam. It will be restored and upgraded in an effort to draw visitors in view of the upcoming Visit Perak Year 2017.

The Council has placed guards on morning and night shifts to ensure the park's security.

The mayor was confident that the Japanese Garden would be restored to its former glory and would become another tourist attraction besides the Gunung Lang Recreation Park, Sultan Abdul Aziz Recreation Park and Kinta Riverfront.



Council Lucky Draw

The lucky draw at the Ipoh City Council building on Thursday, March 31 saw 30 very fortunate Ipohites winning some very attractive prizes, compliments of the Council. Those who paid their annual assessment bill in full and before the February deadline were eligible for the draw.

As required, the payments were made at counters within the council building, at the drive-through counter outside of the council building, at the old council office in Jalan Bandar and at mobile counters. The objective was to encourage property owners to settle their assessment bill in full and on time.

K. Jeevaratnam, 52, said he was overjoyed winning the first prize, a Yamaha motorcycle. He would let his 19-year-old daughter use it when she returns from college.

"I already have a motorcycle, this is a bonus. I'll continue paying my assessment in full," he told reporters after the lucky draw.

Other prizes included five full HD LED television sets, ten bicycles, an HP All-In-One personal computer, a Samsung Galaxy tablet, three units of Apple iPad Mini and five units of Samsung mobile phones.

News

Rotary Club Honours Dato' Dr Majumder

An Appreciation Night to honour Malaysia's first woman dermatologist, Dato' Dr Madhuri Majumder, was organised by the Rotary Club of Greentown on Saturday, April 2. The event, held at Syeun Hotel, Ipoh was to acknowledge Majumder's over half-a-century humanitarian services to the community.

Her enthusiasm stems from her dedication and energy which she exhibited through the various non-governmental organisations she helmed.

Dato' Dr Madhuri Majumder was born on March 8, 1933 in Seremban to Dr D.K. Majumder, a Bengali of aristocratic origins. She studied medicine at Calcutta University in 1959. A government scholarship took her to the United Kingdom to specialise in dermatology in 1966. She received her Diploma in Dermatology in 1967, became a member of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh in 1968 and then Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh in 1982. She did community service at both national and international levels.

Uithayakumar Parasuraman, President of Rotary Club of Greentown said, "Dato' Dr Madhuri Majumder is an icon and is known throughout Malaysia as a true humanitarian. She has touched the lives of so many in our community. Her life exemplifies the Rotary's motto of 'Service above Self'. We're fortunate to have her as a



charter member and our first lady president."

The event was attended by Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, the Executive Councillor for Health, Transportation and Non-Islamic Affairs. Entertainment was provided by renowned classical Indian dancer, Dato' Ramli Ibrahim and musical scores performed by the Kinta Valley Wind

Orchestra.

In honouring Dato' Dr Majumder's contributions, Rotary Club of Greentown launched the 'Majumder Humanitarian Fund' to help the less fortunate. Dato' Dr Mah donated RM10,000 to start the ball rolling.

Nantini

Bifurcation of the Malaysian Legal System

Professor Andrew James Harding, a leading scholar in the fields of Asian legal studies and comparative constitutional law, was the latest distinguished speaker to join the Perak Academy's lecture series.

With Dato' Ab Wahab bin Dato' Seri Azizul Hassan, the Territorial Chief of Kinta as its guest of honour, the dinner talk was held on Saturday, April 2 at Syeun Hotel. In its 17th year, this was the fourth talk of the series.

At the beginning of the programme, the audience of over 150 observed a minute of silence for the late Dato' Reverend Brother Vincent Corkery. "He was one of our earliest speakers way back in 1999," Dato' Dr Ramanathan Ramiah, the master of ceremonies stated.

Deputy Chairman of the Perak Academy and an eminent lawyer himself, Chan Kok Keong in his introduction of Professor Harding, said, "Inspired by the late Professor R.H. Hickling, who drafted so many of the laws of our country when he was parliamentary draftsman, Andrew's career spans three decades in four continents. From his birthplace in the United Kingdom, he has also taught in Singapore, Australia and Canada." One of Andrew's books entitled, "Law, Government and the Constitution in Malaysia" is used as a textbook in many university courses in Malaysia.

Regarding his interest in Malaysia, this was what Andrew said, "It was Hickling who piqued my interest first in Malaysia. It's such a fascinating multicultural community with so many interesting issues. When you're engaged with a country and its people as a scholar for such a length of time, you grow to love them. I've been



coming to Malaysia since 1974 and over that entire period I've always been treated with a huge amount of respect, hospitality and love."

In 1988, there was a significant amendment to our Federal Constitution namely, Act A704, which drew a line between our civil and syariah courts.

"Actually, if you take East Malaysia into account, you might even say it is trifurcated because they've systems of Native Courts," Andrew highlighted. According to him, legal pluralism, in the official sense, offers a workable way of compromising between these two extremes.

"Take the recent example of S. Deepa's case this year where the critical issue was whether custody of two children should be given to their father who converted to Islam or their mother who remained a Hindu. The Federal Court granted custody of the older child, a boy to the father and the younger child, a girl to the mother, based on the perceived interest of each child. In the process, the court held that Civil Court orders prevail over Syariah Court orders. This is a very important decision by the Federal Court that has huge implication for the bifurcated legal system. In that case, the two systems cannot be strictly equal," he explained.

Present at the lecture was Indira Gandhi, a mother who fights for the custody of her three children when her estranged husband decided to convert to Islam, and in the process inducted their kids into the religion unilaterally. Her lawyer, M. Kulasegaran was also in attendance.

Perak Academy is a non-profit and apolitical organisation dedicated to achieve its objectives through a variety of different approaches, working closely with all like-minded bodies including government agencies. The academy believes that the Perak state potential can be dynamic.

The patron of the organisation is Sultan Nazrin Shah. Since its establishment, Perak Academy has hosted and will continue to host bimonthly lectures by inviting professionals here and from abroad to speak on subjects related to their expertise and interest. For more information, visit www.perakacademy.com.

Mei Kuan

No Fires, More Green

Perak Department of Forestry will not hesitate to take serious action on trespassers of reserved forests as well as those who set open fires in this state.

The strong statement was expressed by the Deputy Director (Development) of Perak Department of Forestry, Dr Mohd Hizamri Mohd Yasin, after its CSR programme together with PLUS Malaysia Berhad on March 21.

Over five hundred Karas trees (*Aquilaria Malaccensis*) were distributed to drivers driving through the PLUS Highway (South bound). The affair was held in conjunction with the celebration of International Day of Forests.

"Ipoh has a record for being in the top four hottest place in Malaysia, with that in mind, I hope the public realise how important it is to plan and protect the greenery," said Hizamri.

"One tree can provide oxygen for four adults, it is vital to plant more trees and we are planning to keep on going," added Hizamri.

In 2013, the Perak state government launched a campaign to plant two million trees around the state and by December 2015, it is recorded that over eight million trees have been planted making it indeed a successful campaign.

Luqman Hakim



Kuala Sepetang. . . continued from page 2



Mainland (left) and Seberang (right)

Seberang – The Other Side of Happiness

It is car-free day every day at Seberang, an islet of less than 5000 residents across the river from Kuala Sepetang. The narrow concrete road running throughout the fishing village is only wide enough for motorcycles, bicycles and the occasional motorcycle sidecars, which then require pedestrians to step aside momentarily for the sidecars to pass.

Before the existence of a concrete footbridge built in 2013, boats and sampans used to be the sole mode of transport connecting the century-old islet and the Kuala Sepetang mainland. Hence, the more readily-available cockle shells are used as land cover at Seberang due to the pricey cost of transporting sand.

The locals are notably cheerful, smiling and oh-so-friendly, that it has an immediate knock-on effect on you. As the homes are huddled so close together, it produces a close-knit community which renders fencing and padlocks obsolete on the islet. Coming from a gated and guarded community, this was such an eye-opener for me.

The Happy 8 Retreat @ Kuala Sepetang

Every design in the retreat has a story. For instance, its chairs and railings are made of wide-mesh fishnet, symbolising the livelihood of the people here. Fifty-year-old Tan Kai Lek, the founder of The Happy 8, knows Kuala Sepetang like the back of his hand.



The Happy 8 interior



My balcony view from the Happy 8 Retreat

During my 2-day-1-night stay, I was lulled to sleep by the lapping waves and pleasantly awakened to the gentle chugging of fishing boats heading out. Plus, my balcony view of the coast lined with fishing vessels was breathtaking!

Located right next to the jetty, The Happy 8 at Kuala Sepetang would be glad to arrange guided boat tours for its guests upon request. While waiting, you could chill out with a bowl of natural fruit snow ice. Did I mention that seafood restaurants such as Xin Kuala Sepetang Seafood and Kang Kao Seafood are just within walking distance? Before you leave, remember to browse through the selection of dried marine products by Hoon Teong Fish Dealers also conveniently located at the hotel's doorstep.

The Happy 8 at Kuala Sepetang offers six types of rooms with the following rates:

- Mangrove Room (double bedroom without balcony) – RM127.20.
- Dolphin Room (double bedroom with village view) – RM169.60.
- Eagle Room (double bedroom with sea view) – RM190.80.
- Charcoal Family Room (double decker without balcony, max 4 pax) – RM254.40.
- Dolphin Family Room (double decker with village view, max 4 pax) – RM339.20.
- Eagle Family Room (double decker with sea view, max 4 pax) – RM381.60.

Do take note that the price changes according to low, shoulder, peak and super-peak seasons.

Contact: +605 243 8388 / 241 8288

Email: thehappy8@live.com.my

Facebook: facebook.com/thehappy8

Conclusion

It is time to fulfil your long overdue New Year's resolution to travel more and Kuala Sepetang would not disappoint. I'd do it again! It's the irresistible twinkling jewel only an hour's drive north of Ipoh.

Wellness

Surgery with a Difference

On Saturday, April 9, a workshop named, "New Insights in Laparoscopic Prolapse Surgery To Mesh or Not to Mesh" was held at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital, Ipoh. It was the hospital's fourth Minimally Invasive Gynaecological Surgery Course since 2013. Doctors from all parts of Malaysia presented themselves to gain and share knowledge with each other.

Many may not be familiar with the term "laparoscopic" as we do not hear it often. "It's a surgery which only requires three holes, instead of having big incisions. It's less painful and heals faster," explained Dr Divakaran T. Govindan.

After KPJ's Chief Executive Officer, Asmadi Mohd Bakri, wrapped up his opening speech, they described what the surgery entailed and studied the first case. Dr Paul P.G., a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist from Kochi, Kerala, India began his live surgery. The first case was of a lady with vault prolapse. Dr Paul explained in detail before performing every action.

The surgery was done in 3D and the audience had their 3D glasses on. The operation was telecast live on two big screens from the operation theatre and the audience could communicate and listen to what the doctor was saying whilst performing the surgery. A question-and-answer session followed.

Dr Sevellaraja Supermaniam conducted the live surgery workshop along with Dr Paul. They performed six surgeries, back to back, using the same surgical technique. Each surgery took about two hours to complete. The workshop, which began around 8.30am, ended around 5pm.

It was a whole new experience for the uninitiated. The attendees, on the other hand, had definitely gained something upon leaving.

Khaleeja



Wellness

Palliative Care - More than a Last Resort

Palliative Care is specialized medical care provided by a multidisciplinary team for people with life-threatening illness where cure is no longer possible and relieving of suffering is the main aim. It provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms like shortness of breath, loss of appetite, nausea, constipation, difficulty sleeping, depression and much more. In addition, it also addresses the psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients and their families. The ultimate goal is to enhance their quality of life. It is applicable early in the course of illness and should not be looked at as a last resort.

Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS) was established in 1995 by a group of volunteers who have dedicated their time and effort to make palliative home care service available to people who need it, irrespective of race or religion. The society is non-profit and non-governmental. According to Dr Koh Wai Keat, President of PPCS, the Society aims to offer a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death at the place of their choice, as well as to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement.



Dr Koh Wai Keat
(President of PPCS)



Dato' Dr Ziaudin Ahamed B Abdul Kareem
(Medical Director)

"Our services are provided free but cost on medications, dressing and nursing materials will be borne by the patient and their family. A variable amount of medical and nursing equipment is available to assist in coping at home," said Dr. Koh. For many years due to nursing resource constraints, PPCS was only able to offer its home care services to clients who reside within a 20km radius of Ipoh. By 2010, PPCS was finally able to widen its service area up to Lumut to the West, Tapah to the South, and Kuala Kangsar to the North.

One of PPCS's hope and vision is to see palliative care centres develop and mushroom in other major towns in Perak. The society has been working actively in providing assistance and training under its 'Cendawan Project' to those people interested in setting up their own palliative care teams in their own home town.

Other objectives of PPCS include providing palliative care education and training to other health care providers and promoting volunteerism.

For those interested in their services or in doing some volunteer work, contact:

Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS)

54, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah,
31400 Ipoh, Perak.

Telephone and Fax: (605) 546 4732

Email: admin@ppcs.org.my

Website: <http://www.ppcs.org.my/>



Young Perak

Back-to-Back Fun

Kudos to the 60 final-year Architectural students of Ungku Omar Polytechnic for making the best out of a minimalistic stage with their first-ever dual musical play entitled, Rumah Kayu x Taj Mahal.

Both provided the audience with moral guidance, the Rumah Kayu narrated the journey of a family entangled in love and revenge, as they complete the traditional Malay house while showcasing the beauty of the local vernacular architecture, a rarity in present time. Who could forget the resounding slap from the father to his misled son towards the end of the show? Equally memorable was the presence of the unbrow village idiot who drew laughter with her antics.

Taj Mahal told the heartwarming story of how a couple's love, just like the beauty of Taj Mahal, is timeless and bridges generations. Presented in a reverse chronology, I like how the ensemble broke out into dance in the best of sparkling Bollywood costumes, one of the highlights that night.

Both performances were sprinkled with the right amount of comedy to keep it lighthearted and frisky.

Ipoh Echo caught up with the crew behind-the-scenes on Tuesday, March 29 at the auditorium of the Perak Department for Culture and Arts:

"I am satisfied with the show tonight because within a very limited time we managed to pull off a grand project together. At the beginning of the semester, we had voice and theatre training. When we got our script, we just had two months left," said Kheng Chen Fatt, 21, the project director.

"Set in the 60s in a Malay traditional village, the main message that I'd like to convey to the audience is how a wooden house is built. In the olden days, it was built with wood by carpenters with the blessings of the shaman to ensure that it would not fall apart. Nowadays, concrete is incorporated, as it is stronger and less expensive than wood," Nurfaisha Zahari, the 21-year-old director of Rumah Kayu remarked.

Present were Wan Sharizatul Suraya, the head of architectural programme, Mohd Azmi Zulkifli, the head of civil engineering programme and Zuraini, senior assistant of Sekolah Seni (Arts School) in Sungai Siput.

Mei Kuan



Announcements

The National River Care Fund

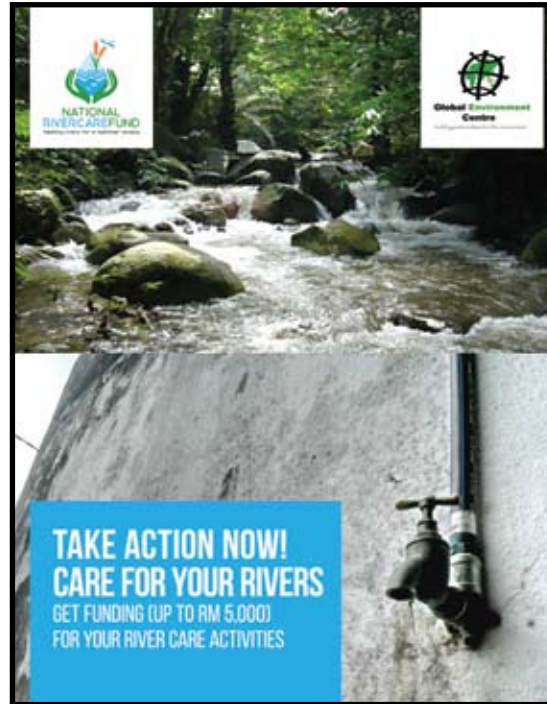
Community based organisations, non-profit organisations, school communities and universities delivering projects concerning river and water conservation are invited to apply for funding from The National River Care Fund (NRCF) – Small Grant Programme.

Initiated by the Global Environment Centre, NRCF is a start-up grant or operation grants of RM2000 to RM5000 per project for the following categories:

- Awareness raising and community participation activities;
- Riverine biodiversity conservation/habitat creation/river conservation and protection;
- River audit or pollution monitoring;
- River restoration or rehabilitation;
- Sustainable livelihood focusing on river conservation;
- Promote best practices for pollution reduction; and
- RIVER Ranger/SMART Ranger/Island Ranger/DrH2O Programme.

"The National River Care Fund – Small Grant Programme is a great opportunity for CBOs, NGOs and learning institution communities to demonstrate the best management practices in Malaysia to support establishment and sustainability of community based water and river care programme in Malaysia. We believe this initiative will motivate our community in becoming a river care society" said Dato' Ir. Lim Chow Hock, Chair of National River Care Fund Advisory Committee.

The Small Grant Programme is now open for applications, closing June 1. Applications must be submitted through the grant online form available on GEC website. For more details about eligibility criteria, visit www.gec.org.my.



COMMUNITY

RIVER Rangers Clean Sungai Buntong

In conjunction with World Water Day, members of RIVER Rangers Sungai Buntong cleaned a stretch of Sungai Buntong next to the bridge along Laluan Sungai Pari.

S. Pravin, Youth Leader of RIVER Rangers, is a student from St Michael's school and said that he has participated in a number of river cleaning programmes. The youth members are mostly school students and students from UTAR who did not turn up because of their exams. Pravin said that members visit schools and give talks on the importance of drains and how by having clean drains we can reduce pollution of rivers. Drains are only meant for rainwater to flow into the rivers and not meant for dumping garbage. Clean drains make clean rivers and ultimately clean and healthy environment.

The programme was jointly organised by W.A.T.E.R. Project, Global Environment Centre (GEC), Ipoh City Council and Department of Irrigation and Drainage Perak. M. Jagatheswari, Programme Officer of GEC said that they carry out this programme throughout the country to create awareness on keeping the rivers clean.

S. Jayagobi, a local community leader took the lead and got into the river first followed by the volunteers and started clearing the garbage. This is one of the few instances I have seen where the volunteers themselves carry out the cleaning activities. Most of the time MBI workers do the dirty work and invited VIPs pose for the photo and leave the place without getting their hands dirty. As usual a few residents staying nearby came to see what was going on, but never got involved in the work.

Instead of fire fighting, it is important for NGOs to educate the public on how to dispose of their garbage properly; otherwise they'll have to continue cleaning the rivers on a regular basis. People who throw garbage indiscriminately must be punished.

We applaud the example shown by Jayagopi and his team who are hands-on workers and do not depend on others to do the dirty work for them.

A. Jeyaraj



We Care Carnival

Some 50 volunteers from Pertubuhan Wanita Prihatin Perak (PWPP) helped organised a charity event named, "Karnival Kami Prihatin" (We Care Carnival) on Sunday, March 27 at the Chenderong multi-purpose hall, Batu Gajah.

Executive Councillor for Tourism, Art, Culture, Communication and Multimedia, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi said that the efforts by PWPP had managed to bridge the gap between races in Chenderong.

"I hope the community will continue to support the society, as it's for a good cause. They don't require much money but the initiatives taken by the society help to bring joy to those in need," she told Ipoh Echo after launching the carnival.

"The initiatives are designed at encouraging the public, regardless of race, to contribute for the benefit of the poor and the needy," she added.

The day-long carnival saw the participation of Hospital Ar Ridzuan, SOLS 24/7 (an award-winning humanitarian organisation), Universiti Teknologi Mara, Haaza Culinary Academy and the state welfare department. Their personnel operated from booths.

The booth that was the focus of visitors was the "drop-your-donations-here" booth. It collected material donations from well-wishers and those in need were free to take them. Among the goods given were food, clothes, children's clothing and household items.

The Chairman of PWPP, Datin Normah Hanum Dato' Ibrahim said that the event would be held on a monthly basis at varying locations within Perak.

"For our coming events we'll concentrate on districts with high poverty rate. However, if support from individuals and corporations is good, I plan on bringing this social service outside of Perak," said Datin Normah.

Rosli Mansor



Sharmila's Yoga for Babies



The busy life and hectic schedules made Sharmila Raj, 36, wonder if she will ever be able to live a positive and healthy lifestyle. That was when she discovered yoga and what made it more special was getting her children involved; something she looks forward to regularly.

"I decided to practise my yoga in their presence and I noticed how much they liked the postures and were trying to do it by themselves or would just lean towards me for comfort. This is where I got the idea to conduct yoga classes for moms and their toddlers," said Sharmila.

Being a working mother herself, she can relate to mothers who are struggling to juggle their working and personal life. Sharmila believed that the bond between mums and children is special and yoga is one of the ways to preserve the beautiful relationship.

"Some parents are too busy with their work that their children may suffer lack of attention. The mummy and baby (toddler) yoga class will give both of them the much needed time together and will directly build a healthy relationship," added Sharmila.

The yoga class includes a bonding session with your children where they get to do the yoga posture with or near their mothers. During the class, mothers are also expected to attend the needs of their babies, including feeding, changing, holding and many more.

"With the support of other participants of the class, the mother will be able to develop a balance between doing yoga for herself and meeting the needs of her baby," said Sharmila.

For more information about the mummy and baby (toddler) yoga class, readers can contact Sharmila Raj at 016 521 0645. Aside from the class, Sharmila also conducts yoga classes for adults.

Ili Aqilah

Business

JCI CYEA to Honour Outstanding Entrepreneur



Calling all young entrepreneurs, this is a chance you shouldn't miss. Nominate yourself for the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Creative Young Entrepreneur Award (CYEA) 2016 where creativeness and entrepreneurship will be the key element this year.

One of the previous winners of JCI CYEA 2015 who was selected to be the speaker at the 2015 Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (CAAYE) Summit in Putrajaya, the managing director of Andaman Property Management Sdn Bhd, Dato' Sri Dr Vincent Tiew, urged young entrepreneurs to take part in JCI CYEA to benefit from the network and the international exposure it provides.

"Malaysian businesses need to be more creative in managing their business operations in the current economic situation," added Vincent during the press conference of JCI Ipoh held at Andaman Ipoh sales gallery on March 28 recently.

JCI CYEA is an award designed to reward and recognise the outstanding young entrepreneurs aged between eighteen to forty years old who are business owners or managers or those primarily responsible for start-ups of a new business and/or implemented creative measures or methods that resulted in positive outcomes in their business operation.

Three winners will be awarded in September at 2016 JCI CYEA Grand Award Ceremony, where one lucky winner will then be selected to represent Malaysia as Panel Speaker at the CAAYE summit.

Together winning last year's award with Dato' Vincent were Mahair Goh, Founder & CEO of Global Art & Creative Sdn Bhd and Steve Low CEO of Tandop Hotel Sdn Bhd.

The nomination has been open since February 1 and will end on May 31. All nominations must be submitted using the online nomination form via www.jcicyea.com.my.

Ili Aqilah

PRAISE Home Food & Funfair

IN AID OF PUSAT JAGAN PRAISE, IPOH

- ✓ Praise Home for boys and girls is a non-profit organization that reaches out to destitute, orphaned and underprivileged children. It's a refuge where young, battered lives are mended, loved and nurtured back to physical and emotional health.
- ✓ There are 40 children from ages 3 to 21 years old.
- ✓ This funfair is to raise funds to purchase a minibus to facilitate the transportation of the children to various places.

Monday, May 2nd
8:30 am - 2.00 pm

St John Ambulance Hall
Jalan Raja Musa Aziz, 31400 Ipoh, Perak

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE NOW

FOR FUNFAIR TICKETS, CASH DONATIONS OR ANY ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:
MR ALEX MUNIANDY 60125091435 OR MS ANGELA HIEW AT 012 5556603.

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1, JALAN HABIB ABDULLAH, TAMAN MERDEKA, 30100 IPOH, PERAK.



Han Chin Pet Soo

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



COMMUNITY

Oldest Malaysian Heads to Everest

Try to picture a 68-year-old Malaysian sipping coffee during breakfast or walking in the mall. Now, try imagining them climbing the tallest mountain in the world, Mount Everest. While it might seem impossible to some but for James C.M. Lee, age is just a number and he is on his way to climb Everest.

James started hiking when he was 40 and was working in China. What started out as just an activity to fill up his time has turned this former mechanical engineer into an advocate and passionate hiker.

"I've climbed more than 20 mountains, including Mount Rinjani in Indonesia, Mount Fuji in Japan and Nepal's Mount Ama Dablam," said James. He has also climbed Mount Kinabalu sixteen times, including completing the world's highest via ferrata and scaling to Mount Kinabalu peak in a record time of two and half hours.

James' expedition is organised by Lions Club International District 308B1 in conjunction with Lions Club International's 100th anniversary. This trip is jointly sponsored by leading property developer, Andaman Property Management Sdn Bhd. During the press conference held recently, managing director of Andaman Property, Dato' Sri Dr Vincent Tiew couldn't help but salute James's bravery and determination.

"Despite his age and how challenging this expedition will be and the time taken up for training, James manages to find time to protect the environment and raise awareness on the issue of climate change," said Vincent.

One of Lion Clubs' aim for this expedition was to raise environmental awareness among the public and manifest the spirit of Malaysia Boleh. "Andaman hopes this climb will be smooth and successful. The spirit of Malaysia Boleh must be upheld!" added Vincent.

If successful, James will make the record as the oldest man in Southeast Asia and first Malaysian Chinese to climb the incredible peak of Mount Everest (8,848m above sea level) and mark a record in the Malaysian Book of Records.

Ipoh Echo wishes him all the best and Malaysia Boleh!

Ili Aqilah



Serving the Needy

Over 500 people were treated to a scrumptious lunch by Lions Club of Ipoh hosted on March 11 at Masjid Panglima where Raja Muda Perak, Raja Jaafar bin Almarhum Raja Muda Musa was present at the affair to serve the food himself.

"We've been doing this for quite some time where we distribute food for the homeless and the poor regardless of race or religion," said Emily Kong Phooi Lai the current president of Lions Club.

A well established international club, Lions Club members hail from all over the world and present at this event were members from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Taipei.

Ili Aqilah



IPoHecho

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COMMUNITY

Ipoh Calling

A two-day art event called *Ipoh Calling* was held recently at *Ooi Comrades*, an established local cafe located at Kampung Melayu Sungai Rapat, to promote Ipoh's local brands, bands and many more.

Consisting of seven components such as a talk show, live band performance, independent and street-wear bazaar, street workout show, mural painting, live poem recitation and local theatre screening, *Ipoh Calling* managed to grab the attention not only of art lovers but also those who were interested to find out more about the independent scene in Ipoh.

Officiating the affair was state executive for Sports and Youth, Dato' Shahrul Zaman Yahya who hopes more youths will participate in such events next time. "Congratulations to the team of *Ooi Comrades* for their hard work and determination to organise this event," said Shahrul during his opening remarks.

Among bands and brands that participated in the event was Projek Rabak, PeaceBeUponYou, Joho, Abstrax, Masquerader, Tata Surya, Sendikit Jongkong Emas (SaJE) and Taqwa.

Ili Aqilah



Women's Issues in the Working World



Gender equality has been one of the heated topics debated over the years. Both men and women admit that they have been treated differently due to their gender and despite the rise of gender movements and actions taken, many still feel the inequality in gender issues.

In Malaysia's working field, although women are given the chance to take part and compete, the power of decision making often falls in the hands of their male peers. This is not particularly shocking as in 2014, a labour force survey by the Department of statistics showed that women professionals make up 14% of the workforce while only 3.2% are managers. In 2013, it was stated that in every 100 women, 52 were in the labour force.

"In addition to all these statistics, our latest survey showed that only 5 per cent of engineers in Malaysia are women," said Srihartini Mohamed Shamsudin, the director of Perak's Women Development Department during a forum entitled 'Women's Issues in the Workplace: US & Malaysia Perspectives' held recently at Lincoln Centre, UTC Ipoh.

The forum discussed the issue faced by working women in Malaysia and United States where sensitive issues such as sexual harassment was among topics debated during the event.

"As I work in a field dominated mostly by men, I did encounter a male co-worker who was eyeing the way my female friends and I dressed and walked. We decided to file a report as he kept on looking despite the fact that we expressed our discomfort to him," said Candace A. Moore, the United State Embassy Defense Attache Officer who was also one of the key speakers of the forum.

During the forum, members of the audience were given the chance to share their experiences dealing with problems at work and ask for opinions from the speakers.

"More needs to be done in Malaysia on handling the issue and problems faced by working women. In the US they have groups and NGOs helping out, something that I hope Malaysia will have one day," said Srihartini before ending the forum.

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.

'Isn't it time the department cleaned up its act'

I appreciate Ipoh Echo carrying an article (Issue 232, April 1-15) on the contract workers' issue. It's a big scandal and needs to be exposed with a view to making changes. But there are some major errors, partly due to Malaysiakini's faulty report, and partly because of confusion.

It is not true that I said "Therefore the workers can get their unpaid salary and minimum wage as soon as possible." In my press release (below) I said that I hope they will get their unpaid salary.....as soon as possible. Lots of difference, as getting the wages is going to be another big struggle.

The number of errant contractors is huge. Our police report last year was on Double Click for late payment of wages. The company that has not paid wages for 7-10 months and has been declared bankrupt is Time Medi.

Once again I appreciate the coverage but would have been good if your side had called me to clarify. Someone called to congratulate PSM for the 'great job' so I was quite surprised as we are not sure at this point if government will release the money. But we will fight hardest to get them to pay the workers.

R. Rani

Wellness

Women Too Have Bleeding Disorders

Clotting factors (special proteins), platelets and tissue factors act to stop bleeding when we have an injury. There are individuals who have deficiency of these clotting factors. These individuals have prolonged bleeding.

Clotting factor deficiency is usually inherited. A common inherited bleeding disorder is Haemophilia A (Clotting factor VIII deficiency). Haemophilia A affects men. Thus, for a long time, inherited bleeding disorders are considered a man's disorder.

However, deficiency of other clotting factors and abnormality of platelet function can be inherited by women. Undiagnosed and untreated bleeding disorders in girls and women can have significant medical, reproductive and social implications.

Women with the following symptoms may have a bleeding disorder:

- Heavy menstrual periods

- Prolonged, heavy bleeding limiting daily activities.
- Heavy bleeding from dental surgery, other surgery, or childbirth and/or have other additional bleeding symptoms such as:
 - frequent prolonged nosebleeds
 - prolonged bleeding from cuts
 - easy bruising

Above symptoms with someone in the family having a diagnosed bleeding disorder.

As part of its World Haemophilia Day (April 17) activities, the women's group of the Haemophilia Society of Malaysia (KHWAN) is actively creating awareness of bleeding disorders in women. Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment will ensure a better quality of life. Those interested to know more, can email their questions to khwanhsm@gmail.com.

Dr Shan Narayanan

Volunteer

Haemophilia Society of Malaysia

SPORT

Agility and Sportsmanship

A total of 790 participants from Perak, Kelantan, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor displayed the precision, speed and power of their strikes while observing a high degree of etiquette in the 7th Martial Arts Taekwondo Championship held at the Leong Wan Chin Hall on Sunday, March 27.

Co-organised by the Perak Taekwondo Association (MGTF), the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education, the categories competed in the annual championship were individual pattern, individual sparring and team pattern.

During the opening ceremony, there was a self-defense demonstration with different scenarios involving opponents bearing sticks and knives. Another crowd favourite was the board-breaking routine.

"MGTF is a very active association which has received the 'Anugerah Persatuan Cemerlang' from the Perak Youth and Sports Department for three years continuously. Last year, MGTF got into the Malaysia Book of Records for breaking the most number of planks," lauded Professor Dato' Seri Paduka DiRaja Grandmaster Sabree Salleh, the founder of Malaysian Global Taekwondo Federation who has been in the art for 53 years.

Present was Daniel Wa Wai How, representing the Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry, Dato' Lee Chee Leong.

"In the upcoming World Taekwondo Championship to be held in the UK, there would be 11 participants from Perak, out of which seven are females," Khoo Bu Leong, the Chairman of MGTF stated proudly.

List of winners:

Athletes with Potential under 12:

Haarisivarthan (G.Fist, Taekwon-do Academy)

Loh Ying Shan (SJK C Kg Tawas, Ipoh)

Athletes with Potential under 16:

Mok Jin Ming (Kanthan Baru, Chemor)

Chen Zhi Shan (SMJK Poi Lam, Ipoh)



Athlete with Potential 17 and above:

Lim Pui Yee (Buntong, Ipoh)

Result by Centre:

1st: Pusing Centre

2nd: SMJK Poi Lam, Ipoh

3rd: SJK (C) Kg Tawas, Ipoh

Mei Kuan

Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 255 2181**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

St Michael's Institution, Ipoh school play entitled "FROZEN" would be held from Friday, **April 15 to Sunday, April 17** at 7.45pm at its main hall. This year's play is dedicated to the late Brother Vincent Corkery. Tickets are priced at RM20 and RM50. All proceeds will go towards school maintenance. For details, call the school at **05 254 0418** or email Peter Khiew at peterkhiew@yahoo.com.

Basic Teaching & Learning Course for Tutors. Modern Language Training & Consultancy Services (IPO 44 1988-D) is organising the above mentioned course themed 'connecting-extending-challenging' for parents, home tutors, kindergarten teachers and lecturers. The purpose is to train those who have no formal teaching qualifications on the basic concepts of teaching, learning, assessment and lesson planning strategies. The modular-based course will be conducted on weekends. The course begins on **April 16**. For further information, contact Dr Bart **0111 643 3120** or anthaman90@yahoo.com.

Mother Teresa's Reading Shelter Charity Lunch 2016, Sunday **April 24**, from 11am to 2pm at Church of Our Lady of Lourdes Hall, 45 Jalan Silibin. For tickets call **05 241 0751**.

Tamilar Thirunal 2016, Sunday **April 24**, from 4.30pm at K.I.A Hall, Gurdwara Road. Guest speaker V. Ponraj, Scientific Advisor to (Late) Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. Admission is free. For further information call R. Manoharan **016 532 2444**.

The Perak Malayalee Association will be reopening their renovated hall located at 12-14, Medan Istana, Bandar Ipoh Raya on Sunday, **April 24** in conjunction with the

Vishu (New Year) lunch and their 52nd annual general meeting. It will be officiated by Tan Sri Ravindran Menon, the patron. For inquiries, contact the Honorary Secretary, Sakuntala Nair Rajadurai at **017 579 8062**.

Tarcisian Convent Class of 1983 Grand Reunion, Saturday **April 30**, 7pm at WEIL Hotel with the theme: REUNITED & RECONNECTED. Dress code: smart casual. There will be a school visit on same day at 2pm. For details, call: Geraline **017 586 0141** or Carol **012 515 1398**.

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.

Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) offers counselling services, for victims of domestic violence, by Mabel Wong our licensed and registered counsellor. PWW also has a crisis intervention support team comprising of para-counsellors. For more information, please call PWW at **05 546 9715**.

Performances of Traditional Songs and Dance every Friday every week at 8pm (except fasting month). Held at Kompleks Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Perak, Jalan Caldwell, Off Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh **every 1st and 3rd Friday; 2nd and 4th Friday** at People's Park. 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**.

Tourism

MB Launches VPY 2017



In conjunction with Visit Perak Year (VPY) 2017, the state government is paying extra attention to foreign tourists in order to increase the number of visitors.

According to Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, the European, Asean and Singaporean markets are expected to bring in more visitors to the state. "Right now we have around 300,000 to 400,000 foreign tourists, but with the Visit Perak Year 2017, we expect approximately half a million visitors to the state," he said during the press conference on Saturday, March 26 night following the launch of the year-long event at KTM Square, Ipoh.

For that purpose, he would ensure that Visit Perak Year 2017 be jointly organised by the state government and Tourism Malaysia. "During my last visit to Berlin, we met many tourist agencies who were keen to work with the state government and Tourism Malaysia," he stated.

He said that there were a few problems that needed to be resolved. They included basic infrastructure and general cleanliness, especially toilets, to ensure comfort. "I've informed all district and local councils to make sure that Perak is categorised as a clean state. Not only tourist destinations must be clean but restaurants and public toilets too," he told reporters.

Public transport, said Zambry would be upgraded to improve movements. "We will make sure that transportation issues, encompassing cars, trains and flights would be solved quickly," he added.

Present at the launch were the Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts, Culture, Multimedia and Communications, Dato' Nolee Ashilin Mohammed Radzi, Tourism Malaysia Director General, Datuk Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, Tourism Perak Management Bhd Chairman, Mohamad Kamil Shafie and other state executive councillors.

Rosli Mansor

Destination Perak Office Opened

Minister of Tourism and Culture, Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Abdul Aziz expected tourism growth in the country, for the first quarter of the year, to be positive. "This is based on the number of tourist arrivals during that period," he told reporters following the launching of the Destination Perak Sdn Bhd (formerly known as Tourism Perak) office located at Level 11, Perak Techno-Trade Centre, Bandar Meru Raya, 30020 Ipoh, on Friday, April 1.

Nazri spoke on Perak's efforts at promoting tourism in view of Visit Perak Year 2017. The state, he said, needed the support and cooperation of the federal government to ensure success. His ministry would extend all the assistance required.

"Efforts to publicise Visit Perak Year 2017 are good, as they help to create awareness and encourage tourists to visit the state and the country," he added. He felt 2016 was a time of consolidation to prepare for the coming year, adding that tourism had garnered RM69.1 billion in profits for 2015.

According to Tourism Malaysia, tourist arrivals in 2015 amounted to 25.7 million. The figure for 2016 is estimated at 30.5 million tourists and profits at RM103 billion.

Present at the launch was the Menteri Besar of Perak, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry bin Abd Kadir.

Another DEstination Perak Office is open at Lot 1-C (GF), Casuarina@Meru, Bandar Meru Raya, 30020 Ipoh.

Nantini



Old Town, The Next Book Town

A book town is a small rural town or village in which second-hand and antiquarian bookshops are concentrated. Most book towns have developed in villages of historic interest or of scenic beauty. The first book village was established in Wales in 1961.

Mohd Syairoz bin Mohd Odzman, the director of Book Village Foundation Malaysia cum board member of the International Organisation of Book Towns was inspired to develop a similar entity in his hometown, Ipoh.

The earlier book villages in the country were established in Lubuk Semilang, Langkawi in 1997 and Ayer Keroh Botanical Park, Malacca in 2007. Book towns all over the world are governed by International Organisation of Book Towns but owned by the local community. A European Union (EU) project, Malaysia was the only non-EU member in the book town movement in 2006.

"When we become member of a book town, it's a jump-start promotion for tourism, as we belong to a worldwide network of book towns and engage in book trail activities. People will travel from one book town to another. For instance, people visiting Belgium would know about Langkawi when brochures are scattered throughout these book towns," said Mohd Syairoz during a brainstorming discussion held on Saturday, April 9 at Cititel Express Hotel.

Every two years, 38 book towns all over the world will take turns to host the International Book Town Festival. Members from each book town would showcase and trade their materials. Thousands of people would travel to buy second-hand books and memorabilia. This will benefit the local hospitality and the food and beverage industries. Langkawi was given the honour to be the host country in 2012.

Old Town has now come to life with its wall art murals, historical buildings, trendy cafes, boutique hotels and scrumptious food and beverage. All it needs is the addition of second-hand books and antiquarian collection to the area, a crucial element of the book town concept. In short, visitors to Old Town would enjoy value-added travel thanks to this edu-tourism factor.

Never a library setting, a book town is a place for all age groups with a melting pot of activities where arts and culture flourish. Visitors could rent a magazine or a book while enjoying a cup of coffee. It is an area where cultural festivals, food fairs, sports carnivals and flea markets could be held.

The discussion was helmed by, Hj Mohd Odzman bin Abdul Kadir, President of Perak Tourism Association; Mohd Taib bin Mohamed, Chairman of Perak Heritage Society; Peter J. Bucher, founder of Sharpened Word Literary Matinee; Maggie Ong, Chairperson of Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH Perak Chapter); Ron Low, Vice Chairperson of MAH Perak Chapter; Mohamed Daniel Kadir, President of the Malaysian Association for the Disabled (PPOC Perak); Chan Kok Keong, Deputy Chairman of the Perak Academy; Fathol Zaman Bukhari, Director of Ipoh Echo; Mohamed Hisam of Aidil Travel and Tours; and Cecilia, Manager of Burps and Giggles.



Odzman insisted that this should be a private-sector-driven effort in order to ensure success. "Let interested parties in the private sector take up the challenge, as the involvement of government agencies would be a non-starter," he lamented.

Everyone present pledged full support. A working committee was set up with Perak Tourism Association acting as the secretariat. A follow-up meeting is fixed for Thursday, April 21. Stay tuned for more exciting updates.

Mei Kuan

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Arts and Culture

#BAYS Coming to Ipoh!

A desire to be something, a dream to be somebody and a goal to be successful, these are the words we should hold onto in life. While life may have kicked you hard sometimes, it is never too late to go back to the right path and chase that dream of yours. Learn how to be better, familiarise yourself with the field you want to pursue and get to know those who have made it and study their key to success. It is good to get an insight from those who have experience because experience is indeed the best teacher in life.

Coming to Ipoh this **April 23 and 24**, My Performing Arts Agency (MYPAA) together with Bursa Malaysia under its Bursa Bull Charge programme is organising the Borak Art Youth Series (#BAYS) Plus happening at Heritage Hotel!

Created and curated by MyPAA, #BAYS Plus is the extended version of BAYS where the programme aims to spark the fire of entrepreneurship among Malaysian youths who have passion and skills in the arts and creative fields. This will allow students and young artistes to immerse in the country's best alternative creative world and dive into exciting workshops that will aid them in starting their desired business such as recording, fashion and creative writing, to name a few.

Exclusively for this year, Fikri Satari the chairman of Bandung Creative City Forum, Indonesia, will be one of the panel together with Malaysian Film Director and Founder of Sarang Art Hub, Mamat Khalid, Filipino lad Kaloy Uypuanco of Sonic Boom & Above Line Production and many other talented and experienced speakers will be at #BAYS Plus to share the stories of their successful journey as well as dropping tips and tricks for those who are keen on making a name in the arts field.

#BAYS Plus will also include MyPAA's ARTIVATE (Activate the Artpeneur in You) facilitated by the Bandung Creative Forum team. Eizaz Azhar from Guitar Empire, Fikri Fadzil from The Wknd, Hugh Koh from Pestle & Mortal Clothing, MDeC's Hasnul Hadi Samsudin and the producer from 'Terbaik Dari Langit', the man behind Playground Production, Tuan "Tapai" Faisal will be speaking at the forum. Not to forget writer, Wani Ardy and Meor "Myo" Shahiran from Bodysurf Music & MUCK will also make appearances at the two-day affair together with other talented speakers.

Due to their success organising previous BAYS since 2014 including the one in Ipoh last year, founder and director of MyPAA, Izan Satrina Dato' Mohd Sallehuddin is excited to return to the city that is rich with pop-culture amongst its youth.

"Having the same vision with our partners, we hope that we get to help enabling the youth community to follow their passion and reach their potential. It has been a solid collaboration with Bursa Malaysia and I hope they will take this chance and attend BAYS Plus."

The admission to #BAYS Plus is free and registration can be made via www.baysplusipoh.eventbrite.com.

As Ipoh Echo is its proud media partner, we are looking forward to see enthusiastic and passionate Ipoh youth to participate in #BAYS Plus. Grab this golden opportunity to learn from the best and who knows this will be the kick-starter in pursuing your goals. Quoting Chris Hadfield, the first Canadian astronaut to walk in space, "Don't let life randomly kick you into the adults you don't want to become."

See you at #BAYS Plus!

Ili Aqilah



Storytelling Via Dancing



It was an evening of music and dance at the auditorium of the Perak Department of Arts and Culture recently. Music and dance lovers from all over Ipoh were enthralled by a fusion musical presentation by Pandavas Fusion Band led by sitarist Kalai and his team.

Music lovers were entertained with a mixture of Indian classical and contemporary music. The band consisting of Kalai (sitar), Mahendran (flute), Ram (guitar), Vinod (tabla), Mark (bass) and Muthu Raman (drum box), were very Malaysian-oriented with their version of Chinese, Malay, Indian and Hindi hits.

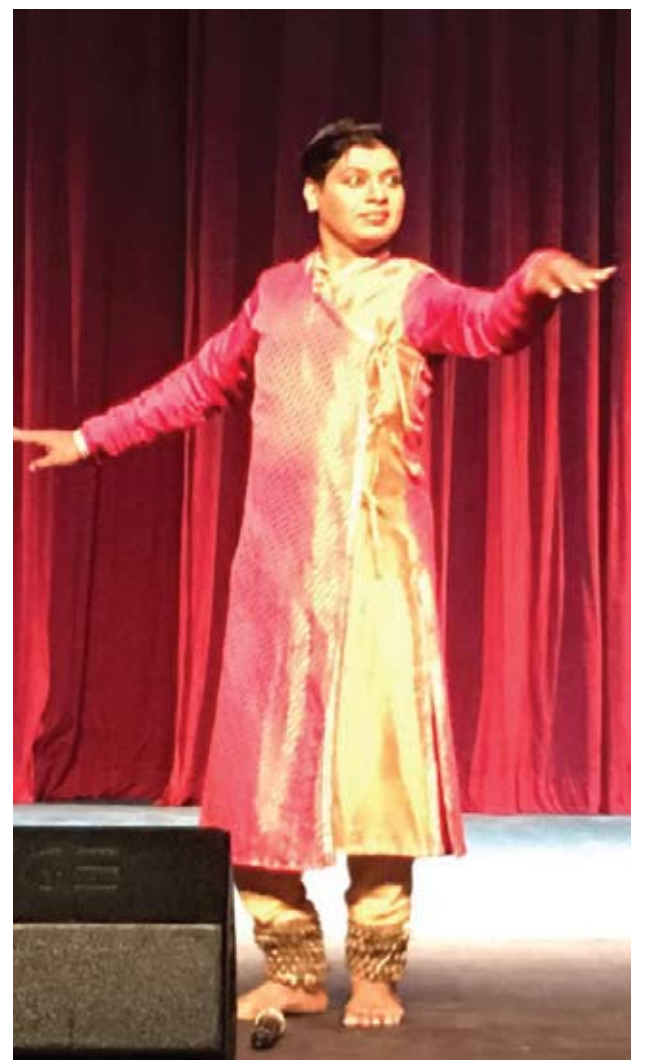
Besides playing popular tracks that were improvised and Kalai's original compositions, the band took requests from the audience. The crowd was thrilled when the group was joined by Ipoh's talents Subain Singam (thavil), Raja (drum) for a jam session that took the game to a whole new level. The speed and rhythm on the drums rocked the

auditorium to its foundations.

The audience was later introduced to Nithin P. Shirale from Maharashtra, India, a fascinating storyteller through his Kathak dance movements. Not many were familiar with Kathak but Nithin did a splendid job of explaining the story of each dance number. He was joined by some of his students from Kuala Lumpur. Nithin worked his magic through the fast-paced foot movements accentuated by the sounds of his bell-laden anklets. The spectacle was sufficient to keep the audience on edge.

The event was jointly organised by Greentown Indian Cultural Society, Nethaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Perak State Cultural Council and Perak Cultural and Arts Department.

Nantini



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Land Tenure: Freehold
Price: Min RM 427,780 - Max RM 585,800
Approving Authority: Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh