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DEPRESSION: THE SILENT KILLER



By Loshni Nair

***D**epression is a mood disorder that affects the way one feels, thinks and in some cases, interferes with day-to-day activities. Unlike sadness, depression is characterized by persistent feelings of low moods that last over two weeks.*

In light with the passing of Kate Spade, Anthony Bourdain and a student from a private institution in Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh Echo discusses depression, with hopes of generating dialogue within the community.

Continued on page 2



Stigmas make it difficult for people to reach out



According to the National Institute of Mental Health, depression is marked by various symptoms. Examples are feelings of worthlessness, guilt, change in appetite, fatigue, pessimism and loss of interest in hobbies. However, symptoms vary from person to person.

Stigmas surrounding the illness make it difficult for people to reach out and receive the treatment they need.

Dr Marvin Chong, consultant psychiatrist at Hospital Fatimah Ipoh says that there is a common misconception that people who are depressed present themselves in bizarre manners, or act abnormally.

RELATE Malaysia

Dr Chua Sook Ning, clinical psychologist and founder of RELATE Malaysia – an NGO aimed at destigmatizing mental illnesses in Malaysia, says that weakness is a stigma that is often associated with depression, while other stigmas like ‘crazy’ and ‘insane’ are associated with bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.



Dr Chua Sook Ning

“When I experience these lows, it appears to people that I am lazy and unwilling to do anything. In a way, I do feel like I am incapable of doing anything – but it’s more than just laziness,” says Trecia, who was diagnosed with persistent depressive disorder three years ago.

Twenty-one year-old university student, Jane* (not her real name) says that when she was diagnosed, her friends assumed that because she is depressed, she would be sad and suicidal all the time.

This is not necessarily true. Dr Chua Sook Ning explains that there is a severity spectrum: mild, moderate and severe depression.

Severity is a dimension, and the combination of symptoms is unique to the individual. Although everyone with depression will feel sad and/or the loss of pleasure, not all will have thoughts of death or suicide.

Functionality

Mabel Wong, vice-chairperson of **Befrienders Ipoh**, talks about functionality.

“It’s unhealthy to say that people who are depressed must act a certain way. High-functioning depression is a type of depression where individuals can lead regular lifestyles, go to parties and socialise. That does not mean they are no longer depressed, it simply means they are high-functioning.”

Katya* (not her real name) says that another myth is that depression is caused by a lack of faith. Having studied at a renowned public university in Malaysia for a short period of time, she said it was especially prominent there.

“What may look like hysteria may sometimes be a mental breakdown, and reciting religious verses doesn’t actually help,” she adds.

Nuralis Fatimah bt Mohd Ridhwan Fong says that she has tried talking to family about her depression. They respond by saying that depression is not real and that she lacks religious practice.

She says that another close relative suffers from schizophrenia but has constantly said that “it is a religious thing” and refuses to get treated, fearing for her career.

Prayer and Faith

Dr Chua says that a lack of faith does not necessarily cause depression, as depression can be caused by an array of factors. She says that although praying helps, it is not a cure. It is only a supporting agent.

According to Dr Marvin, depression can be caused by genetic factors, chemical factors, biological factors as well as physical factors such as social stress. “Some illnesses, like low thyroid hormone production may cause depression too, but to say that lack of religious practice causes depression is untrue,” he adds.

Mabel agrees, saying that although prayer does give some people strength, it is not a cure and says that topics like depression and suicide are still considered taboo in Malaysia. Depression is seen to be shameful, “it is difficult to talk about, but we have



recognises that she desperately needs help.

Depression: Most Treatable

“It’s a shame that we don’t talk about depression enough, because truthfully, it’s one of the most treatable mental illnesses out there,” Mabel says.

She adds that parents can show their support by acknowledging the problem at hand. “Tell your kids that you’re on their side and that you’ll walk with them through their journey to recovery.”

Lack of Awareness

Both Katya and Jane admit that their families are unaware of their illness, as they have “enough to worry about”. “I don’t think they’ll understand,” Katya adds.

Chin Lee Moi, chairperson of Befrienders Ipoh, adds that a lack of knowledge when it comes to depression may be a contributing factor as to why parents do not know how to help their children.

We must educate ourselves. Befrienders conducts public awareness talks from time to time, and plenty of information is readily available online.

Suicide

Suicidal ideation is one of the many symptoms of depression.

The irony, however, lies here – when someone passes away from a physical illness, our first reaction is sympathy and pity towards the deceased, but when someone ends their life due to a mental illness, our first reaction is to assume that the deceased took their life because they do not care about their family. Why?

Katya says that assumptions like these make her sad and angry. “By saying things like this, you’re not only refusing to acknowledge the battle that the suicide victim was fighting. You’re also failing to acknowledge that this is a real problem. It’s dangerous, and we, as a society, need to do better.”

Rahul (name has been changed to protect identity), who has been diagnosed with depression and anxiety, says that he despises these assumptions. He says while it is easy to pass judgment after someone is gone, not everyone can understand the battles in their minds. “I hate people who say things like that. They don’t even try to understand our emotions, and us as people to begin with.”

Dr Chua says that these assumptions are not necessarily true, but it’s understandable that people might feel that way especially when they don’t understand why someone took their life.

Mabel says contrary to these comments, some people who call the Befrienders’ suicide hotline might believe that they are doing their families a favour by ending their lives.

“That is not true, of course. Most times, they feel like they’re a burden to their families, and they are overwhelmed by these feelings. It’s part of the illness,” she says.

Mental Health Care Inadequate

All the interviewees, including Mabel and Dr Chua, agree that mental health

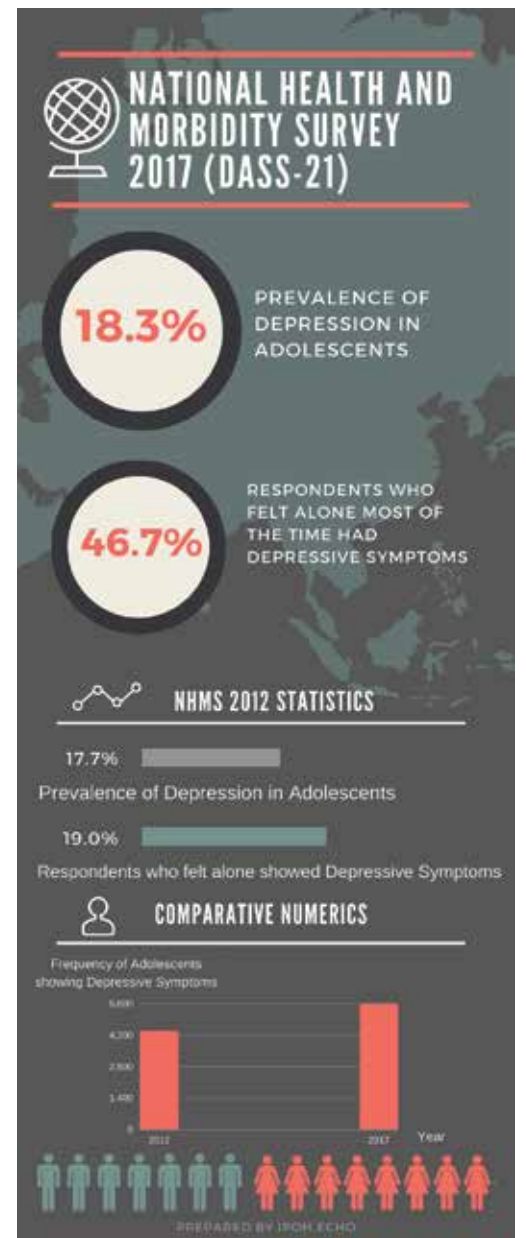
to start somewhere.” She adds that people avoid talking about suicide because they are afraid that talking about it means planting the idea of suicide in someone’s head.

Seeking Help

“Parents need to learn how to respond when their children talk to them about issues like depression and suicide. We need to make sure our kids feel like they are heard and understood, instead of brushing them off or asking them to toughen up. Depression is not cured by ‘sleeping it off’. Pushing them away once may make them feel like they’ll never be able to open up to us,” Mabel reiterates.

Trecia reveals that when she first spoke to her father about needing professional help, he wanted to hit her.

Nuralis adds that in her family, going for psychotherapy is viewed as ‘mad’ and that it affects employment possibilities. She has not received treatment to date, although she





SYMPATHY FOR NAJIB?

Najib is no fool. He is playing to the gallery and is using sentiments to influence or perhaps browbeat simple-minded Malaysians into submission.



The saga of the once mighty and supposedly untouchable but now disgraced former Prime Minister Najib Razak continues. His fate depends on the decision of a high court hearing that will commence proceedings in February 2019.

On Wednesday, July 4 the Member of Parliament for Pekan, Pahang was charged with misusing his position as a government official to receive a RM42 billion bribe. It was an inducement to provide a sovereign guarantee on behalf of the Malaysian Government for a loan of RM4 billion from government pension fund Kumpulan Wang Persaraan (KWP) to SRC International Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of the infamous 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

Najib aka Pekan Boy was also charged with three counts of criminal breach of trust (CBT) allegedly committed during his tenure as prime minister, finance minister and adviser emeritus of SRC International, in which he was entrusted with RM4 billion.

Pekan Boy, as expected, pleaded not guilty. He was allowed bail set at RM1 million with two sureties. And here is the icing, payment of the bail was allowed in two instalments. Najib left the court complex after paying his first instalment of RM500,000. The balance was duly settled on Monday, July 9. He was not allowed to travel abroad and had to surrender his passport for good measure.

Events unfolding following this historic episode were aplenty some hilarious some simply disgusting.

His son, Mohd Nazifuddin upon settling the first instalment of his father's bail, left for Taipei for a rendezvous with his love interest, Taiwanese actress Celia Chang. They were seen sharing two bottles of red wine at a restaurant in Taipei Xinyi district before making a trip to a massage parlour. They were then spotted enjoying a candlelight dinner and then "chilling it out" at a pub for two hours before leaving to a hotel.

The outing, a day after Najib's release on bail following his arrest for his role in the 1MDB scandal, drew heavy criticisms from Malaysians. One comment that strikes me was from netizen Usha Krishnan. Usha wondered if PAS would dare censure Mohd Nazifuddin for consuming alcohol and "canoodling" with a woman not his wife.

"PAS was quick to condemn a minister for wearing shorts to jog. I am certain they've much more to say in this instance," she quipped. Till today there is neither a word nor a whimper from the Islamist party and from the paragon of virtues, Harussani, the Mufti of Perak. The mufti is noted for his off-the-cuff remarks when commenting on matters related to Islam.

But the most poignant (pathetic is a better term) of all was Najib's daughter, Nooryana Najwa's posting on her Instagram account urging the public to "have a heart for her father in his time of need." In an Instagram picture posted by his other son, Mohd Norasham, he was seen holding his cat Kiky with a caption reading: "Thank God you're back home with the family, daddy. Kiky missed you so dearly."

As a precautionary measure, the government has frozen all banking accounts that are connected to 1MDB. This includes accounts belonging to Najib and his family members. The government's action prompted Nooryana to complain that she has no money to buy medicines for her son, as even the child's bank account with "RM100 duit raya" was also frozen.

Her grouses elicited a response from Prime Minister Tun Mahathir who replied that his and his friends' accounts were similarly treated when Najib was in power. But he never took to social media to highlight his problem. Rumours abound that Pekan Boy has money stashed all over the world to fall back to in his time of need. For the disbelievers, try to explain how he is going to pay for his team of American lawyers he has engaged to fight his case? Their fees alone would amount to millions as they are in US Dollars and not Ringgit Malaysia.

A free press, without interference from the government, allows for a free passage of information from the sources to the public. The Malaysian media, at this time of reporting, is enjoying a new-found freedom never before experienced in the past. Najib, his children and his cahoots, should be thankful to Pakatan Harapan for bringing about this change.

Restrictive laws enacted to control the Malaysian media have reduced media practitioners to nothing more than mere mouthpieces for the erstwhile Barisan Nasional government. I say this with much conviction as I was hauled up a few times by the Home Ministry in Putrajaya to explain why controversial writers like Din Merican, Bakri Musa and Farish Noor were on our payroll. Ipoh Echo's permit was nearly cancelled once when a piece was considered inappropriate for the Dollah Badawi's government.

What many Malaysians find interesting and perhaps ironic is the "Free Najib" fundraising campaign initiated by Umno members on Thursday, July 5. The objective was to raise RM500,000 being the second instalment of the RM1 million bail fixed by High Court judge Datuk Mohd Sofian Abdul Razak. The amount was duly collected and payment was made to the court on Monday, July 9.

One Umno member, Zaleha Bujang, the Jasin Wanita Umno chief, donated her gold bracelet. She alluded to the heydays of Tunku Abdul Rahman who had to resort to crowdfunding to buy air tickets for him and his team to fly to London to discuss the country's independence. Zaleha, it is 2018 today and Pekan Boy is not some first-time politician just out of the woods. He probably has plenty stashed all around the world and

your gold bracelet (worth RM3000) amounts to nothing.

To conclude, does Najib deserve our sympathy? The guy is no fool. He is playing to the gallery and is using sentiments to influence or perhaps browbeat simple-minded Malaysians into submission. Some may have fallen into his trap but many, including yours truly, are not easily swayed.

Pekan Boy has to face the music, come what may.

EYE HEALTH — WATCH THE EYE MAKE-UP

In our continuing series on Eye Health, Fatimah Hospital's Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talks to us about EYE MAKE-UP.



Every now and then I get some lady coming in to my consultation with a recurring eye infection that eventually can be traced to a contaminated eyeliner.

Do take note that just like any other item, improperly handled

eye make-up may potentially result in eye problems.

Here are some pointers on the handling of eye make-up which may be followed to avoid this from happening.



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

Do take note of:

SHARING OF EYE MAKE-UP

Avoid sharing eye make-up. This is a no-no, even if it's your own sister or best friend! Sharing eye make-up exposes you to eye infections especially if the person you are sharing with is lax about eye hygiene and make-up care. The other person too runs a risk of picking up an eye infection.

CONJUNCTIVITIS

Firstly, if you ever get an eye infection you should cease using all forms of eye make-up. If you have been using the eyeliner or make-up when the eye infection had developed, chances are the eyeliner would have been contaminated. The cap of the eyeliner often would have picked up some oily secretions from eyelids. You do not want to reuse such eyeliners after an eye infection has cleared or you may get re-infected. Always discard them!

CONTACT LENS WEAR

Should you be a contact lens wearer, make sure that you put them on before putting on any eye make-up. Avoid heavy make-up but if this is an absolutely must, apply them carefully and do not let any get into the eyes. Eyeliners especially are prone to getting into the eye when it mixes with the oily sebaceous secretions from the eyelid margins, so do take it easy when applying!

CHECK EXPIRY DATES

When using eye creams and eye make-up, ensure that you check for the expiry date printed on the label. Generally, it is best to throw out eye make-up after three months. All products have a shelf life and it is important to follow this. Avoid using eyeliners that are more than six months old and avoid using expired products.

HAND WASHING

Always wash your hands and face before applying eye make-up. This is to avoid bacteria from unwashed hands from getting to the eye area. Additionally, remove all eye make-up before going to bed.

Always practise good eye make-up habits to protect your eyes and keep them beautiful and also healthy!

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

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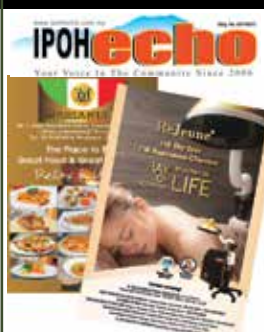
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Deanna Lim

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Please help save Taiping's SK King Edward VII

In tropical ecosystems, the termite is considered an important ecosystem engineer, whose habitat can affect the survival of other species (Jouquet et al., 2006). Its diet consists of dried grass, decaying leaves, animal dung, humus, as well as living and dead wood (Brossard et al., 2007). It functions like a voracious vacuum cleaner on the forest floor, eating anything which is in its way.

Humans consider the termite to be a pest. Once it builds a nest in the ground, termite infestation can destroy a building and render it unsafe. Homeowners have seen the value of their houses drop, because termites have attacked the wood. They have a serious economic impact on man-made structures like buildings, houses and cultivated crops. Once termite infestation is discovered, their removal is usually costly.

Land clearing, for making more homes, tree stumps, and stacks of wood provide an abundant source of food for the termites. They may also cause serious damage to annual and perennial crops and the wooden buildings in cleared settlements.

In early July, it was reported that the much treasured SK King Edward VII (1) in Taiping, was unsafe and at imminent risk of collapse, because of termite infestation and the natural degradation of the structures over the years.

Readers will recall that in 2011, the "Big School" of Malay College Kuala Kangsar had also been rendered unsafe by termites.

SK King Edward VII is 135 years old and had originally been built at another location, then moved, in 1905, to the present site. From its humble origins, the school expanded and because of its popularity, currently employs a total of 52 teachers.

Perak Metro reported that the wooden floor of the school's main building, its roof and the ceiling of the two storey building was deteriorating and leaking. The building is made partly of brick, and shows signs of degradation in other structural areas.

In 2015, the severity of the damage from termite infestation forced the Public Works Department (PWD) to declare the building unsafe, after its staff inspected the roof and floors.

According to the chairman of the Parents Teacher association, Balraaj Singh Tarlachon Singh, both the roof and floor would have to be replaced to make it safe.

In an interview with Perak Metro, he expressed his fear that the floor could collapse at any time, and he blamed the age of the building and the damage caused by termites.

Despite the poor and unsafe condition of the wooden parts of the school building, Balraaj said that the building's exterior, was still stable and none of the brilliance of its colonial architecture had been diminished.

He said, "The school was built in 1883 and it has been listed as part of the Taiping Heritage Trail or Jejak Warisan Taiping, which was started by the state government in 2015.

"The ground floor ceiling of the school's main building is also damaged due to leaks in the roof.

"The main building is the oldest part of the school and also the most impressive. The building immediately catches the eye, as soon as one enters the school grounds.

"We really hope that the repairs for the building can be completed as soon as possible for the safety of the pupils and teachers."

When the PWD declared the building unsafe, the school had to operate two sessions, morning and afternoon, to accommodate all the classes and students.

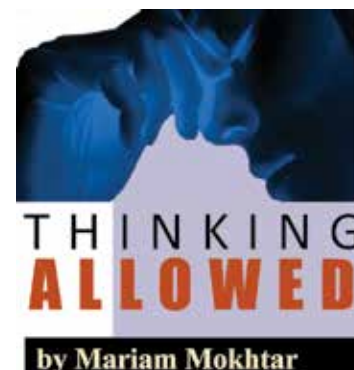
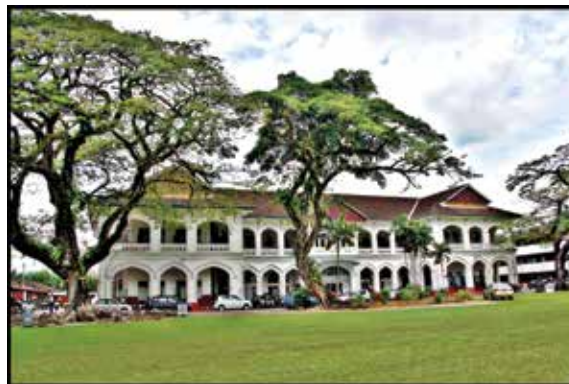
Balraaj complained that the authorities had been dragging their feet over the resolution of the termite infestation and claimed that the long time lapse, would probably increase the cost of treatment.

He mentioned the outrage of many parents who had been forced to withdraw their child from the school and place them in other schools, because the timber had not been treated.

He said, "Because of this problem, many parents became impatient with the length of time it was taking to start repairs to the building and eventually transferred their children to other schools. As a result enrolment has dropped from 800 to 538."

Balraaj expressed his frustration with the Taiping District Education Office, the PWD and other relevant authorities who had all contributed to the delays in repairing the school.

He said, "The last word I received was that work



by Mariam Mokhtar

was supposed to commence in February, and that, based on the damage, the repairs would take between eight to ten months to complete.

"I was also informed, by the principal that the repairs were expected to cost about RM2 million, though the figure might be higher now.

"We sincerely hope that the Education Ministry will look into our plight and help the school."

Balraaj has also urged more parents to show their concern and help the school.

The Ipoh Echo has taken up the concerns of the PTA and students of the SK King Edward VII (1) in Taiping. Will the Ministry of Education respond to Balraaj Singh, in a timely manner?

Will the Menteri Besar, Ahmad Faizal Azumu, also take up this worthy cause and prompt the necessary people to take immediate action?

Sources:

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ABOUT LASIK

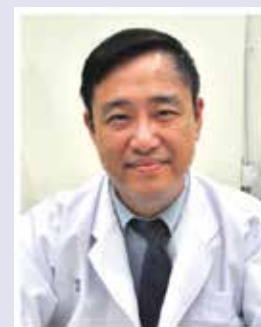
Dr Lee Mun Toong
Consultant Eye Specialist Surgeon KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital

Topography-Guided Femto-LASIK

Topography-guided LASIK is the latest LASIK technology since 2016 and the most advanced form of customized LASIK technology.

The U.S. FDA has approved this technology in 2013 and it became commercially available in November 2015. The technology has been available outside the United States like Malaysia for several years before 2015.

At Our centre, we use Carl Zeiss Topography-guided laser for patient approach to relieve near-sightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia. Our topography-guided LASIK combines Visumax, Femto-laser to create an appropriate treatment plan for our patients.



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As compared to wavefront-LASIK technology, topography-guided LASIK has more-detailed measurements of the surface of the cornea (Topographic) to repair refractive error caused by corneal irregularities. Due to its precision and accuracy, patients who are treated for topography-guided LASIK, receive vision correction that is much more precise, and mapped to each person's cornea surface.

A 12-month FDA (topography-guided refractive surgery) clinical trial revealed the following:

1. More than 98% of patients would recommend it to others.
2. It outperformed glasses and contact lenses in over 30% of eyes in the study.
3. 6% of eyes that received topography-guided LASIK treatment achieved 20/20 vision or better, 64.8% experienced 20/16 (better than 20/20) vision or better, and 34.4% could see 20/12.5 (better than 20/16) or a year after surgery.
4. It reduced the occurrence of common post-LASIK complications such as light sensitivity, glare, difficulty driving at night, and struggles with reading.



The FDA recommends topography-guided LASIK if:

- You have less than minus eight diopters of nearsightedness.
- You do not have severe astigmatism (minus three diopters or less).
- The amount of nearsightedness with or without astigmatism in your eye did not change by more than 0.5 diopters during the year before your preoperative examination.
- You are at least 18 years old
- You have a stable vision correction prescription
- You do not suffer from excessively dry eyes

For more information, readers can call Lee Eye Specialist 05 254 4388 or email at ishkpj@gmail.com. Also visit their Facebook page: LASIK Services at KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital.
Opening hours: 8.30am-5pm (Mondays to Fridays), 8.30am-1pm (Saturdays).

SeeFoon goes in search of Mushrooms in Soho

Pics by Vivien Lian



ON IPOH
FOOD



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

I was hopeful when I saw the name that I would finally find a restaurant where they have these elusive mushrooms, the **Morel**. Alas, it was a name that proprietors **Siau Hooi** and **Chef Kah Meng** fancied and chose, rather than actually serving these precious fungi which after the white truffle, are my mushrooms of choice.

But all was not lost as I discovered a great Italian taste, evoking and awakening some of my nostalgia for Milan where my greatest Italian food memories are buried.

Morel could do with a dimming of its ceiling lights, and add some plants to soften the stern cafeteria like ambiance of its interior but food wise is earning rave reviews from me in its cuisine served up by Chef proprietor Kah Meng who honed his culinary skills in Singapore, returning home to Ipoh with wife Siau Hooi to open Morel.

When asked if they actually served Morels in the restaurant, Siau Hooi apologised, saying that it was hard to find and exorbitantly priced. "But perhaps in the future when the restaurant is firmly established?" I asked. "Perhaps" came the reply.



The taste is authentically Italian and most of their **pasta is homemade**. Pasta which is served al dente (still with a light spring to it) and the saucing fresh with a light touch, the cream sauces not overly creamy and the tomato based sauces, just the way an Italian chef would make it.

I tried the **Uova Al Pomodoro Piccante**, a perfect brunch treat of eggs with the yolk still runny, smothered with a mildly spicy light tomato sauce and topped with mozzarella, quickly melted and served with garlic bread; **RM10.90**.

Next came the **Pumpkin Soup with Almond**, balsamic cream and bread croutons, smooth, voluptuous and well seasoned; **RM15.90**; followed by the **Mushroom Risotto** with four types of mushrooms: Imeji, shitake, oyster and king mushrooms informed with truffle oil and topped with parmesan; **RM18.90**.

Reginette Pasta Bolognese with Iberico Pork Ragu in tomato, balsamic red wine sauce was excellent; **RM25.90**, as was the **Tagliolini Al Frutti De Mare**, a squid ink tagliolini pasta cooked with prawn, mussels, clams, baby lobster in a spicy pink sauce. This was al dente, and generously topped with all the seafood mentioned; **RM35.90**.

The **Cacciucco**, the Tuscan version of the French Bouillabaisse or Fish Stew was robust, the broth rich and fragrant with hints of Italian mixed herbs and chock full of

clams, mussels, prawns, scallops, salmon, squid, big tualang prawns, big clams, tinged with red wine and cooked with cherry tomatoes, carrots and celery. Served with bread, this is quite a main course; **RM49.90**.

We were five of us and by this time, we were groaning from surfeit but nevertheless when the **BBQ Iberico Loin Ribs** arrived, we found the look and aromas irresistible and tucked in happily. The ribs were fall-off-the-bone tender, delicately marinated and served with crunchy crispy sweet potato fries. Whole rib at **RM69.90** which can easily feed four.

Naturally no Italian meal can be had without its classical dessert, the **Tiramisu**. Here the Tiramisu does not stint on Mascarpone cheese (often most places use only whipped cream) the Madeleine pastry fingers dipped in coffee and layered with Mascarpone with the lightest hints of alcohol; **RM12.90**.

Another dessert which Siau Hooi urged us to try was their **Warm Matcha Lava Cake**, with its molten lava centre oozing out the moment we put our spoon in, served with Gelato Matcha ice cream and chocolate soil. Heaven in a spoonful; **RM20.90**.

Morel also has a **3-course lunch** menu available from 12pm till 2.30pm which changes daily for a very reasonable **RM19.90**.



Morel Restaurant

A-G-12A Soho Ipoh

Jalan Sultan Iskandar, 3000 Ipoh.

Tel: 010 928 7291 or 014 274 7138

Business hours: Tuesdays-Fridays 11am-3pm;
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Weekends and Public Holidays: 11am-10pm

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... continued from page 2

care is not accessible enough in Malaysia, as of today.

"Private psychiatrists are expensive. Government hospitals like the General Hospital here in Ipoh are well-equipped to handle psychiatric cases, but, waiting periods are long and people are scared that they'll be labelled as 'crazy'. They don't want other people to find out," says Mabel.

Dr Marvin says that although mental health awareness has been gradually improving in Malaysia, more can be done via campaigns and social media.

Hospital Bahagia

Mabel adds that Hospital Bahagia is one of the best hospitals in Perak to receive psychiatric treatment, but it has been labelled as a 'lunatic asylum' for such a long time, that just the mention of it makes people shudder. Public perception needs a reboot.

Dr Chua has many ideas to improve mental health care accessibility in Malaysia, such as increasing funding for the mental health sector, more money being spent on researching mental health and looking at policies that involve mental health.

Reaching Adolescents

Mabel says that Befrienders have been trying to break into schools, as they believe that it is vital to speak to adolescents, but most schools are lukewarm to the idea.

A glimpse at the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2017: Adolescent Mental Health (DASS-21) revealed that the prevalence of depression among adolescents aged between 13-17 year olds recorded a staggering 18.3 percent out of 30,496 students. Number wise, this works out to 5581 students.

In 2012, the prevalence of depression was recorded to be 17.7 percent of 24,708 students that represented 4373 students.

There has been an increase of over 1000 adolescents showing symptoms of depression in the last five years. If this is the case – why aren't schools doing more? Is one mental health evaluation, yearly, enough?

"The word 'suicide' rings alarm bells in their heads. If you want to conduct stress management talks, they're very open to the idea. The moment you mention 'suicide', they're no longer interested," Mabel says.

Getting Help

Depression does not cherry pick its victims.

"Depression can strike anyone. It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, educated or not," Mabel says.

Dr Marvin urges people to see counsellors and psychologists to determine the state of their mental health. "Talking to professionals helps to confirm whether what you're experiencing is indeed clinical depression. It is important, as it paves the way for you to



Dr Marvin Chong

get treated."

How do you get help? If private psychiatrists are not an option, fret not.

If you intend on seeing a government psychologist or psychiatrist, visit your local GP and provide him/her with a detailed list of your symptoms to get a referral letter.

RELATE Malaysia offers therapy sessions at affordable rates, available both online and face-to-face around Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya. More information is available on their website, www.relate.com.my

Befrienders Ipoh offers listening ears via their hotline at **05 547 7933/955**. You can choose to be anonymous when contacting them, and all calls are treated with strict confidentiality.

Depression is an illness that drives individuals into feeling alone, worthless and isolated.

Depression attempts to convince you that you cannot be helped, or that no one cares about your wellbeing, but that is not true. People care – even strangers. Taking the first step and reaching out is often difficult, but if you never try, you will never know.

Dr Chua adds that friends and family can help by being available. Gently encourage individuals to get help and remind them that you care.

Dr Marvin agrees, saying that although not all individuals may be open to talking about the way they feel, it is important for a support system to be present. "It doesn't mean you have to constantly speak to them, just remind them that you are there, whenever they need you."

However, there has to be a balance. Family and friends must accept that they cannot always save people, but they can support them.

"It is a two-way street," Mabel says. People can only help individuals who are ready to help themselves.

The road to recovery is not always the easiest, but it is not impossible. Depression in Malaysia is a vicious cycle of victim-blaming and stigmatising, thus preventing people from getting treated.

Now is the time – not only to stop the cycle; but to break it, once and for all.

If not now, when? If not us, who?

**Names have been changed to protect identities*



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ABOUT BRIGHTWINGS EDUCATION

Brightwings Education trains young people to get ready for their career and life. As well as running training programmes in Malaysia, we will be running training programmes for Oxford University (for their undergraduate and graduate students).

DETAILS OF THE COURSE

DATE & VENUE

Meru Valley Resort, Ipoh
20-26 August 2018 (Monday-Sunday)
9am-5pm daily (lunch and snacks included)

PROMO BOOKINGS

Full course fees: RM3500

Promo for non-scholarship students: 20% off until 30 July | Promo code is EchoSummer

Booking: To book a place, you need to register on the website. And then make the full payment during July.

Complete the registration form: <https://www.brightwings.co.uk/ipoh>

Any questions, get in touch with Dr Camille Koppen on WhatsApp: +44 7919 124 137

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Criteria: Household income must be less than RM7000 per month

Application process: 1) Please complete the registration form on the website (<https://www.brightwings.co.uk/ipoh>) and enter "Scholarship application" in the comments section. 2) Please send an email to camille@brightwings.co.uk with a message from the student (150 words or less) stating why they would like to attend the course and how they believe they will benefit from it.

Note: We will not select students based on their academic success. We are interested in motivated students who can show they will really benefit from attending the course.

News

Iconic Rain Tree Felled

“It took more than one hundred years to grow, and now – it is gone, in just a day,” says Ms Lee Pui Mun, lawyer, and ex-student of MGS Ipoh.

This comes after news of the historic rain tree being felled spread rapidly across social media. A meeting with ex-students, Board of Governor representatives and lawyers revealed that the issues behind the felling of the rain tree is two fold: sentimentality and legality.

According to Section 35H of the Town and Country Planning Act 1976, it is illegal to fell a tree with more than 0.8-metre girth unless the tree is diseased or dying, facing imminent danger, or if the felling complies with any written laws.

A look at the cross-section of the already chopped branches revealed that the tree was perfectly healthy, and the felling was uncalled for.

Ms Lee recalls that over 300 students could gather under the shade of this beautiful tree, with more than enough room for comfort.

Vice-President of the Old Girls' of MGS, Linda, added that she was not made aware that the tree was to be chopped off. “I was aware that a new 4-storey building was going to be built, but no one told me that we were chopping down the tree,” she adds.

Three generations of her family have been students at MGS, and her granddaughter is to be enrolled at the school in 2020. “When my mum found out that the tree was being cut, she was really upset,” Linda adds.

Ms Lee said that the felling of the tree was kept under wraps. “Even the teaching staff and principal were not made aware,” she says. She added that Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh (MBI) was not aware that the tree was to be felled.

“When contacted, they told me that the tree was not disclosed in the plan. They did not know that the construction of this building involved the felling of a 100-year-old-tree,” she says.

Linda said she contacted the chairman of the Board of Governors, Dr Ting Chen Sing on Saturday. He said he would “look into it”.

The question then becomes – if the Board thought that the felling of the tree was legal, why was it not included in the proposal?

Linda added that only select members of the Board of Governors knew that the tree was to be felled. She said that in January, the chairman explicitly said that the renovation process would not involve the tree.

Edwin Seibel, lawyer at Gibb & Co., started an online petition to stop the felling of the tree. He said that his daughters are students at the school, and he wanted to raise awareness, as a concerned member of the society.

The petition garnered over 2400 signatures in about 24 hours.

Victor Chew said that there was a suggestion to chop the tree before. It was met by protests from the Old Girls. “It didn’t work the first time, so everything was done in a hurry this time around,” he said.



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Ms Liew Meng Wai, also a lawyer, estimated the tree to be at least 60 feet in height.

Victor said the saving grace was when the tree cutter did not have the right equipment to cut the tree, as the diameter was just too big.

The crown of the tree had been chopped off, but Ms Lee told us that the roots were there, and the tree was not dead. “They can design the building around the tree, there is no reason to chop it down like that.”

The Board has not responded.

Ms Lee sent a legal letter to Ipoh City Council, requesting for a stop-work order. An order was duly issued by the Council on Thursday, July 5. A notice is plastered on the tree stump and the area surrounding the chopped tree is now off-limits to all and sundry.

Loshni Nair

New Australian High Commissioner

Ipoh Echo had an exclusive one-on-one with His Excellence **Andrew Goledzinowski** AM, Australia's High Commissioner to Malaysia, whose appointment was announced in November 2017, after outgoing High Commissioner Rod Smith PSM.

The noon tete-a-tete with the affable Goledzinowski was held on Friday, June 8 at Burps & Giggles Cafe, Ipoh.

“This is only week 16 for me in Malaysia, so everything is still new and exciting. I am in Ipoh for the first time too,” he enthused.

Hailing from Sydney, Goledzinowski is a senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Ambassador for People Smuggling and Human Trafficking. He has previously served overseas as Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York and at the Australian Embassies in Geneva, Port Vila and Pretoria.

Goledzinowski was an Adviser and Senior Adviser to Foreign Ministers Gareth Evans and Alexander Downer, and has served as Chief of Staff to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the Senior Australian Official in the Coalition Provisional Authority, Baghdad and as the World Bank's representative in Iraq. He holds a Bachelor of Jurisprudence and a Bachelor of Law from the University of New South Wales and is a Member of the Order of Australia.

For the annual memorial service in Perak, he explained its significance, “It's a big deal for us because the Malayan Emergency was Australia's longest war until the war in Afghanistan. It involved over 7000 Australian servicemen, men and women, and 39 of them died here. Most of that happened in and around Perak, the epicentre of the insurgency warfare. To mark the 70th anniversary, we've now commissioned a scroll of honour to be placed in the High Commission which will have the names and unit details of all those who fell.”



The Aussie veterans attending the remembrance ceremony here are getting older year by year. Goledzinowski, whose father was a World War II veteran, commented, “They are getting older but are still coming every year, they are very impressive. What we found is, in Australia, as the old ones passed away, the young ones still continue to remember those events. The memory is still held closely. We find that every year there seems to be more and more young Australians who want to go to Gallipoli to commemorate Anzac Day so I'm confident that this too will be remembered.”

Australia helps to fund the maintenance of Perak war graves, including the ones in Taiping and Batu Gajah, through its contributions to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

“Since the change of government, I've met with Tun Dr Mahathir and Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim. Both were very good meetings and they emphasised that they want to maintain and grow the good relationship between Malaysia and Australia. In fact, I think now that Malaysia has become more democratic, the opportunities are going to grow,” said the Sydneysider.

“My vision is that Australia and Malaysia become natural partners as we have so many similarities. Think about it, both countries have constitutional monarchy, British common law system, similar military and police traditions, open trading policies, are about the same size, multi-ethnic and our history is connected in so many ways,” he highlighted.

“I've had many very distinguished predecessors as high commissioners here but I don't think any of them have been here at such an exciting time as I have been so I'm very, very lucky,” he concluded.

The Australian High Commission is located at **6 Jalan Yap Kwan Seng, 50450 Kuala Lumpur**. For more updates, follow Goledzinowski's official Twitter account: [@AusHCMalaysia](https://twitter.com/AusHCMalaysia).

Mei Kuan

Buccal Fat Removal Surgery

Dr. Leow Aik Ming
Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon
Pantai Hospital Ipoh and Pantai Hospital Manjung

The buccal fat pad is a deep pocket of fat situated below the malar eminence (cheek) and behind the buccinator muscle. Excess buccal fat pads often give rise to the appearance of overly full and rounded cheek. The appearance of such facial features is sometimes referred to as “chip monk cheeks”, “chubby cheeks” or “baby face cheeks”. The size of buccal fat pad varies with each individual patient, and the buccal fat pad in each cheek may be different in sizes and volumes. These conditions are often hereditary in nature and cannot be readily reduced by exercise or diet. These excess buccal fat pads can only be removed by surgery.

Buccal fat removal surgery is performed to improve the definition of the face, transforming an excessively rounded chubby cheek to a slightly more chiselled look. Buccal fat removal surgery is performed through an intraoral incision, on the inner portion of cheek adjacent to the top second molar tooth. This surgery is usually performed under local anaesthesia with light sedation. Once the surgery is completed, the wound is often closed with absorbable sutures.

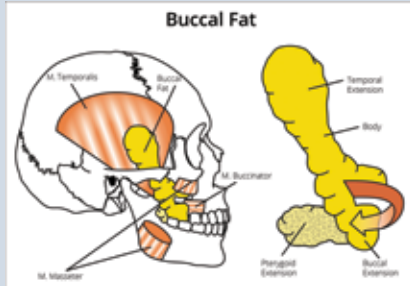
Buccal fat removal surgery should not be performed in people with thin and narrow faces as removal of these buccal fats may result in haggard facial appearance. Buccal fat removal surgery can also be performed along with other procedures such as face-lift, chin augmentation or neck liposuction.

The ideal candidates for buccal fat removal surgery:

- Bothered by the appearance of chubby cheeks
- Having a positive outlook, realistic expectations and specific goals in mind for improvement of facial appearance
- Physically healthy with no active or serious pre-existing medical conditions

Postoperative expectations:

The final outcome of buccal fat removal surgery may not be apparent immediately after the surgery. It may take several months for the swelling and bruises to subside before the final results are seen. The expected outcome from the surgery will be a less chubby cheek. During the initial healing phase, patient may experience pain, numbness, bruises and swelling around the cheek or neck areas. These symptoms usually fade away after 3-4 weeks. Oral antibiotics and analgesics will be prescribed to reduce the risk of infection and postoperative pain respectively.



Tourism

Pulau Sembilan may be Reopened



The state government is reconsidering the possibility of reopening Pulau Sembilan to the public.

Tan Kar Hing, Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts and Culture, said that the paperwork on the future of the island will be presented to the state government soon.

According to him, conservation efforts on the island have been completed by the Public Works Department.

“I’ve visited the spot and am satisfied with the work done. We’re in the midst of preparing the paperwork. Hopefully, it could be presented to the state government soonest. At the moment, we’ve yet to know if it’ll remain closed or to be reopened,” he said during the Tourism Perak Aidilfitri event at Casuarina@Meru Hotel on Thursday, June 28.

Present were Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Perak, Zuraida Md Taib and President of Perak Tourism Association, Datuk Mohd Odzman Abdul Kadir.

Pulau Sembilan, located off the shores of Bagan Datuk, was declared off-limits to the public after permanent structures erected by certain parties destroyed the natural environment within the vicinity.

Kar Hing added that the state government would formulate a tourism master plan consultation council to enhance the competitiveness of the state tourism sector.

Expected to be established in three months, it is now in the process of identifying council members and forming the framework for the master plan.

“Those to be chosen must have the experience and the expertise. They’re from tourism associations and agencies. Among them are biology lecturers, nature lovers and architects,” he added.

Rosli Mansor



understanding (MoU) between Emkay Foundation, Pulau Banding Foundation (PBF) and Pulau Orang Utan Bukit Merah Foundation (POUBMF) with Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM).

The MoU is aimed at promoting academic cooperation, which includes setting up research centres in facilities owned by PBF and POUBMF.

The MoU was signed by Vice-Chancellor of UiTM, Professor Emeritus Datuk Dr Said Hassan and the CEO of each foundation, Zainon of Emkay, Datuk Dr Rashid Malik of PBF and Dr S. Sabapathy of POUBMF.

PUOBMF made history by returning two orangutans, Ah Ling and Carlos, who were borrowed from the Sarawak Forestry Department in 2000.

After the signing, Dr Mahathir said that it is important for us as humans to practise civic mindedness.

“Humans are wild, we kill animals as we please. Some species have become extinct, and others will soon be, unless we work on preserving them,” he said.

He applauded the efforts made by Emkay Foundation and MK Land Holdings Berhad.

“More people should follow in their footsteps. We must remember that businesses are people-dependent. Earn, but never forget to give back to the public.”

Loshni Nair

More Pribumi Supporters

Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) President, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged Malaysians to join the party.

He said this at the party’s Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house at Bukit Merah Laketown Resort on Friday, July 6. A massive crowd of over 20,000 Malaysians of all races were present to greet the prime minister and party president.

“There are so many of you here, so many people, so many flags – but I’m sure not all of you are PPBM members,” he said.

He added that the call for support is not about competing against other Pakatan component parties, but to strengthen PPBM.

“By holding the Prime Minister’s seat, PPBM can influence the country’s administration. We can protect the people,” he said.

He assured the crowd that although PPBM is a Malay party, it would not be another UMNO, another Malay Nationalist Party.

“UMNO has forgotten their roots. The members only think about money for themselves,” he said.

“However, people can only be blinded for so long. People will soon realise that they’ve been manipulated and used as tools for other people’s personal gains,” he added.

“Many people have left the party, after their president was accused of stealing money. The turnout was great at our rallies, sometimes recording over 20,000 supporters, but due to certain ‘issues’ – we only won 13 seats.”

Dr Mahathir said that the party could have won by a larger margin during the 14th general election, had it contested with its own logo.

“Other parties got in the way and stopped us. We’re not allowed to campaign with our own logo, so we’re forced to use other logos and symbols,” he reasoned.

“We should thank Pakatan Harapan for giving a Bersatu leader the opportunity to become Prime Minister.”

Earlier that evening, Dr Mahathir witnessed the signing of a memorandum of

Arts and Culture

Is PORT up to Scratch?

An informal discussion appropriately named, “Sembang Santai” was held at PORT (People of Remarkable Talent) along Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, Ipoh on Friday, June 8. The Executive Councillor for Tourism, Art and Culture, Tan Kar Hing under whose portfolio the centre is entrusted to, led the talk. In attendance were people from the Ipoh arts community. The objective of the discourse was to reprise PORT’s roles vis-à-vis arts and culture in Perak.



Established by the previous state government in 2011, PORT’s primary objective was to nurture and incubate talents and expose them to the outside world. In short, the facility is, supposedly, to develop artistic talents from Perak. However, due to inertia and the lack of direction from those entrusted to lead the pack, PORT suffers a steady decline.

Its lacklustre performance became more apparent towards the tail end of the previous administration’s tenure. The management was revamped and reshuffled a number of times. The last two years (2017 to 2018) saw few activities taking place at the centre prompting many to assume that PORT has ‘gulung tikar’ (roll up) for good.

The centre is presently being managed by General Manager, Zamari Muhyi and his team of 10. Its “general health” was the theme of the discourse.

Syed Omar from Teratak Nuomar, a publishing house in Perak alluded to the centre’s one major failure: “PORT has so much on its plate – music, dancing, paintings, etc. It’s trying to fulfil its KPI (Key Performance Indicators) but after so many years in existence I still don’t see its achievements. Is it an arts hub or an event organiser?” asked Syed. He was surprised that PORT is now a corporation. “Why the change in status,” he queried.

Zamari replied that it was PORT’s strategy to give the facility a wider exposure to the public.

“I received complaints asking why PORT is only focusing on Ipoh. So, we decided to organise tours and roadshows all over the state. We want Perakeans to know that PORT is for everyone in Perak not just Ipoh,” said Zamari.

“The reason why Ipoh is said to be a cool city is because of its Rock and Roll scene. The youths in Ipoh feel that there’s a gap between themselves and PORT. That’s why they turned to us, instead. I was asked several times by PORT’s director, Dato’ Nolee Ashilin why I refused to work with PORT. It was mainly because I was not comfortable working with them but I might reconsider should there be a reshuffling in the management,” said Mohd Jayzuan, the founder of Projek Rabak.

Jayzuan said several well-known Perak artists had approached PORT for assistance but were turned down for no apparent reasons.

In 2017, said Zamari, PORT received a RM1.25-million budget. However, the amount was insufficient to underwrite all the planned activities. A roadshow in the kampung could cost anything between RM12,000 and RM15,000 to organise.

Howard Lee, the Executive Councillor for Sports, Youth and Character-Building, who was present, promised to bring the matter to the state executive council for

Connexion

By Joachim Ng

Pay your tithe to an honest govt

The national treasury is quite bare with RM1 trillion in debt. Fortunately, patriotic citizens are pouring money into Tabung Harapan to help ease the nation’s financial burden. Even RM1 is okay. If every working person were to give RM1 today, RM15 million would be received by midnight.

Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus observed a poor widow put two copper coins into a collection box at a temple. They would have been worth a combined two sen, like our own defunct 1 sen copper coin. But Jesus gathered his disciples around and praised the widow for donating out of her poverty. In Jesus’ words “she gave extravagantly what she couldn’t afford.”



A systematic collection was the tithe dating back a thousand years before Jesus. Farmers and herders — the backbone of pre-industrial economies — were obliged to contribute 10 percent, or what they could afford, of their produce. “Any tithe of the land, from the grain of the land or from the fruit of the trees...” and “All the tithe of herd or flock...” as laid down

in the book of Leviticus. In the book of Deuteronomy: “You must be certain to tithe all the produce of your seed that comes from the field year after year... and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.” The amount was optional as stated in Deuteronomy: “Every one of you must give as you are able.”

The book of Malachi acclaimed tithing as the way to achieve wealth surplus and respectability. “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land.” The tithe was an effective public revenue source as it worked on the 90:10 principle that 90% of income earners should each contribute 10%, or what they could afford, of their produce to the national treasury. The people gave willingly because of scrupulous honesty in tithe usage to benefit the nation. Wealth flowed like water through the tithing connective network.

Our modern taxation system, however, is an upside-down contortion of the 90:10 tithing principle as all the personal income taxes are contributed by just 15% (or 2.27 million individuals) out of a total registered workforce of 15 million people. There are 12.7 million workers in Malaysia who are either unable or unwilling to pay income tax.

To be continued next issue.

deliberation.

“There’re many unresolved issues between PORT and the arts community. We’ll try our level best to resolve them amicably. We’re not here to find who’s at fault but rather to share opinions and find solutions,” said Tan.

On another matter, a Facebook page named “Ipoh Followers” ran an online poll recently asking the public should the PORT management be changed or remain. Fifty-five percent said it should be changed.

Ili Aqilah

Nosh News with SeeFoon

Pics by Vivien Lian

Tamara's

I love Sri Lankan food and I love Indian food. Putting the two together means I get to eat coconut sambol with my favourite curries and also some unusual salads which I don’t find in Indian restaurants.

A new restaurant called **Tamara's** has just opened serving a delightful mix of both culinary traditions; and although many people cannot distinguish between the two, *Tamara's* has more vegetable dishes with more unusual treatments than typical Indian vegetarian dishes. Which makes for a lighter meal.

‘Tamara’ which means lotus flower, (one can see the lotus leaves adorning the walls of the restaurant) is headed by Harrish Aswin Kumar, who is both chef and proprietor. Instead of the typical banana leaves, *Tamara's* serves their meals on (what else?) lotus leaves and their daily dishes change from day to day.

Their lunch set meal consists of rice, two types of vegetable of the day, side dishes of curry gravy, pappadam, dry chilli and rasam and a choice of main dish chicken (RM8.50); mutton (RM11); seafood (seasonal price); vegetarian (RM5). Additional items like coconut sambol is RM0.50; Brinjal Anchovies Salad is RM2 (these two are delicious and must-haves) and added main dishes from RM4.



It is served ‘buffet’ style where you select the items you want (a bit like the typical banana-leaf places) and the platter is delivered to your table. Additional orders are served separately. There are daily items of prawns, squid, chicken, one or two mutton dishes in different styles and oodles of yumilicious vegetables,



some never before seen in restaurants; like *pegaga* (pennywort) salad; roselle leaves with *ikan bilis* or anchovies; burnt brinjal mashed in a paste (Sri Lankan Baba Ganoush!); banana flower salad; signature Sri Lankan brinjal salad; Brinjal Moju or achar or pickle; Signature Cashew Nut Chicken and many many more. Ever changing on a daily basis.

Here at *Tamara's* I can happily eat vegetarian (although I am more of a carnivore) as the selection is so extensive and the vegetables are not overcooked or mushy. And the treatment is light, with loads of salad type dishes.

Tamara's
36 Persiaran Greenhill, Ipoh.
Tel: 012 642 8821
Business hours: 11.30-3.30pm
Sundays closed.



Medan Kidd Bazaar in Dire Straits

“This is a must-visit destination by tourists”. That is what is written about the Medan Kidd Bazaar on Ipoh City Council’s tourism website. The bazaar, located at Jalan Leong Boon Swee, is supposed to be a hotspot for locals and tourists alike. Unfortunately, it is a huge disappointment.

The entire site is poorly maintained, thus its potential is lost. Most of the streetlights do not function, and have been so for several years now. Water supply is another problem. There has been one disruption too many in the past.

Ina, 25, who operates a restaurant at the bazaar claims that it has affected her business. “Business is bad at night. Customers assume that her restaurant is closed because there are no lights. Water supply is disrupted occasionally. We’ve made several reports to the authorities but nothing has changed,” she lamented.

Soh, who owns a grocery shop faces a similar problem. “In the morning it’s usually crowded. But at night, it’s the opposite. The 60-year-old, who has been running the shop for over a decade, said many had come to enquire about the problems, but nothing concrete has happened.

Twenty-year-old Ain, a restaurant worker, says that it has affected business. “Customers can’t eat in the dark, can they? Lights are out at times. We resort to using candles. That’s how bad it has become.

“Water supply is another issue, as there are the occasional disruptions,” Ain added.

“TNB personnel have come to fix the lights but it only lasts for a while before the lights go out again,” she said dejectedly.

Joshua Jacob



LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader’s comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipoecho.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.

Farewell Mr Brian

I hope my eulogy of Mr Brian Hubert Foenander captures the essence of his personality, primarily as a great teacher and it is with so much sadness we, the ACSians, have to say farewell to him.

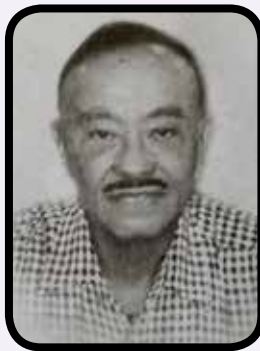
Undoubtedly, Mr Brian has indeed left an indelible mark on many of his students, colleagues and hockey players. Integrity, responsibility, respect and discipline: these are all the qualities that he not only held in high esteem, but practised them every day in the classroom and on the hockey field.

He was truly a great teacher at Ipoh Anglo Chinese School (ACS) where he taught English for decades. Though only a college-trained teacher, he knew his stuff and prepared well and able to explain clearly to his students.

What made him a remarkable teacher was his unwavering commitment and dedication to the teaching profession – his approach was always student-centered. As a principal then, I was much impressed by his passion and love for the school. More importantly, I noticed he had a special charisma to relate to students.

Being a hostel teacher (popularly known by his moniker “Boarding Master” (BM)), the school was truly his first home. He was a father to many hostel students whose parents faithfully trusted him to look after their children, even the Rancangan Khas Malay students.

When he was frail and wheelchair-bound, among the endless stream of his ex-



colleagues and former students dropping in to visit him, was a Malay family who tearfully hugged him for his care and love for the students.

Mr Brian was a well-known state hockey player. So naturally he was tasked to be the hockey teacher. Certainly, he did not disappoint the school – he not only made ACSians proud of being champions all the time but produced many state and national hockey players with the likes of Nor Saiful Zaini, Karpal Singh and Dato’ Poon Fook Loke, who led the team to the semi-final in the World Cup Competition at the Merdeka Stadium, resulting in Malaysia being ranked 4th in the World.

Like me, he was a great believer in discipline – it might sound cliché to many teachers. But Mr Brian, as a discipline teacher, was a no-nonsense person. Albeit often using the cane as the last resort, he was also extremely patient in dealing with problem students. After repeated counselling failed, he would not hesitate to use the rod.

It was difficult to imagine Mr Brian not being present at every annual alumni dinner. He was like a celebrity with whom most old boys and girls (former sixth formers) would pose for photos. And some of course would take every opportunity to toast with him.

Unlike many retirees, he had an inherent love for hunting, and he had always found time to go hunting wild boars and shared his spoils with friends.

My lasting memories of Mr Brian are simple: a hard-working 24-7 teacher who never waned in his passion for teaching – a God-fearing man who had fought a good fight, finished his race and kept his faith.

Thomas Kok
Ipoh Learning & Training Institute

Our World Class Education

My humble request to the new Education Minister, Dr Maszlee Malik. You have a mammoth task to perform with anxious parents hoping for a reform. I think we really don’t require a sophisticated blueprint to decide on a system.

I request you, sir, to consider the education policies which were enforced from mid-1960 to 1980.

A system which did not only produce all rounded students but at the same time students who could look back and appreciate the education that they received. It didn’t cost an arm and a leg for holistic education and it definitely was not rote learning.

I was one of the students who benefited from the system and I really don’t know what it was called but so fortunate to have received my education.

I went to school at the age of 7. I was placed in Standard 1 D as I had not attended kindergarten. I could only speak in Tamil and didn’t know my ABCs. I completed Standard 6 and was already able to read, write and converse in Bahasa Malaysia and English.

When I went to secondary school the learning process continued to educate me and I learned history, geography and literature in addition to the core subjects. Some of my classmates who were non-Malays even did Malay literature and were really good.

Tuition classes were almost none or could be counted just with your fingers.

I knew Shakespeare and I bet my friends who did Malay Literature knew our local writers and poets too.

I knew every state in the country and the capitals.

I knew my timetables, the kind of weather, the trees, their leaves and the fruits from them.

Most of all I could speak fluently in three different languages and read and write in two.

My mother had unknowingly picked up English words when I tried to practise my English with my brothers and sisters.

My biggest gain was my friends who were Malay, Chinese and Indians. I am glad to have known them and still treasure the friendship until now.

All this was made possible just by going to a school in a small town in Perak.

I am sure we don’t need a rocket scientist or a blueprint from some mega task force. We had an education system which produced educated, intelligent and caring Malaysians.

You don’t have to look far, Sir.

Please consider the education system from mid-1960 to 1980 and adapt it to the present. We will go back to days of glory.

Ms Sumathi Sivamany
President
Perak Women for Women Society (PWW)

MGS Ipoh Rain Tree

As an old girl of MGS Ipoh I was devastated to learn that the very old rain tree which sheltered generations of girls and teachers was felled.

I believe many of your readers would be keen to know who was responsible for the decision and what consultative process was adopted prior to that decision.

This tree is a significant contributor to the emotional connection old girls have with the school, and an irreplaceable piece of the cultural history of MGS Ipoh.

I hope you will be able to shed some light on this matter which has caused distress in

the old girls’ community.

Hew Phaik San
MGS Ipoh Head Prefect 1987

Footnote: Ipoh Echo published this news in their Facebook page and received an avalanche of comments protesting the news.

Community

Caring for Strays

Stray dogs were allegedly poisoned and beaten in certain residential areas in Ipoh as a last resort when authorities failed to respond to complaints made by local residents.

Is that the right way to deal with stray dogs?

Vijay Rajakumaran, 23, a full-time student at Multimedia University (MMU) from Sungai Siput does not think so. "Killing is not the solution. It's not even an option. There are several ways we can achieve zero strays," Vijay stressed.

Zero strays is a goal that Vijay personally set out years ago which aims at reducing the number of stray dogs and puppies to zero in towns like Sungai Siput and Ipoh by taking in stray canines, nursing them, and putting them up for adoption.

Vijay said inspiration came from Joe, the first dog he rescued.

"An injured Joe came to me years ago. His dark brown eyes spoke to me almost immediately. He was badly wounded. His bark was weak. I could tell he was in so much pain and hunger. I took him in and nursed him back to health. After a few days, I saw a healthy Joe wagging its tail at me. He jumped into my arms with the happiest look on his face. Deep inside me was this profound sense of satisfaction to see him up and running," he said smiling. "I decided, then and there, that this was something I had to do, not just for myself but for Joe and his kind," he said.

Since then, Vijay has single-handedly rescued and nursed over 60 stray dogs and puppies.

Vijay said that he often drives back and forth from Sungai Siput to Ipoh and if he sees any lost or hurt puppies, he takes them in and returns home.

"I always ask around first before taking them home with me. I don't want to be charged with kidnapping," said Vijay jokingly. He takes pregnant dogs too who are on the verge of giving birth.

When asked where he keeps all his rescued dogs and puppies, he said, "I don't have a kennel but I do have a spacious veranda where I keep them all. I keep newborn puppies inside my house, as they require tender loving care."

On how he nurses them, Vijay said, "I've done a few basic classes on dog care. If the puppies are weak or hungry, I feed them nutritious dog food. If they suffer from minor injuries, I nurse them myself. However if they suffer from severe injuries, I take



them to the nearest government veterinary clinic."

"Once they recover it's time to find them a new home and there's where my friend, Anantha Rao, 23, helps out. He takes pictures of the dogs and puppies and posts them on his Facebook page (Santos Anantha) along with details like their breed, age, and our contact numbers.

"He has a lot of friends on Facebook so it's effective, as the adoption posts often get a lot of likes and shares and are seen by many. We've managed to find new homes for all the rescued dogs to date," he exclaimed.

Vijay does not charge any fee for the adoptions because he says the satisfaction that comes from knowing that these dogs and puppies have new homes is more than enough. Vijay has no plans of starting up a shelter anytime soon, as he is very much occupied with his degree, but he will someday.

Vijay said that it is possible to reduce the number of strays with love and not hate. "It's time we take action ourselves and not rely on authorities alone. If you see a stray, take them to animal shelters or call up ISPCA or any NGO. If people don't have the time to help strays directly, they can donate to NGOs instead," he said.

"The simplest act of kindness can cause a ripple effect. All it takes is one act of kindness to achieve zero strays," he concluded.

For those who are interested in adopting Vijay's dogs can either contact Vijay: **010 6516959** or Anantha Rao: **011 3366 8016**.

Paaveetra N.

The PWW Shop

Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) unveiled its latest empowerment project, The PWW Shop, on Friday, June 22.

The boutique shop sells well-kept, pre-loved items (some brand new!) and collectibles which are all contributed by donors.

"The main emphasis is empowerment and business skills. Now as we have started off, we've got a lot of items donated by generous donors. Later, we are trying to get ladies who are trying to sell their stuff. For example, single mothers or anyone for that matter who are trying to start a business but find it difficult to actually get a venue to market their products. Like a stepping stone, we hope to help them by introducing their product here. If things are going well, later they can set up wherever they want," Sumathi Sivamany, President of PWW explained on her vision for the place.

"If there is something which you would want to donate for a cause, give it to us as we need to keep replenishing things here in the shop. The proceeds are going to help us sustain this project and at the same time empower other ladies. Plus, there is something for everyone here. Do come and browse!" Sumathi enthused.

"We will be conducting training and skills workshops here for small groups. This is also the place where we are promoting our ongoing peace-filled community project to end all forms of violence, 'One Million Stars to End Violence'. We are almost at 370,000, hopefully we can hit our 400,000 by October. We know we'll hit the target of one million stars," the practising lawyer added.

The PWW Shop was launched by Kava Subramaniam, the director of Perak Department for Women's Development. "It's a very good initiative. I hope Perak women would take the opportunity to join the programmes here which are free of charge," she said.

Among the guests was Caroline Wong who told Ipoh Echo, "It's such a relief and pleasure for me to get rid of some of my stuff and at the same time helping others."

Manned by volunteers, the PWW Shop opens from 10am to 4pm (closed on Tuesday) at **15, Market Street** (next door to Market Place Waffle Café). Those who would like to donate or volunteer can call **05 246 9715**. Swing by its Facebook page for more updates: [The PWW Shop](#)

PWW is a registered, apolitical, non profitable and non-governmental organisation set up in 2003 to enhance the status and lives of women in Perak irrespective of their race, religion and social background.

Mei Kuan



Vision Home Producing Fertiliser

Vision Home in Taman Rishah recently started a project to produce fertiliser from food waste to generate income for the home. Asher Amos, manager of the home said that this project was started about three months ago and they now produce more than 100kg of fertiliser per week.

Amos informed that the idea of producing fertiliser came about after seeing the amount of food waste being disposed by the home. They bought a machine that could convert food waste into fertiliser. In addition to the food waste they also use fish and chicken waste which they get for free. The product has been sent to laboratory for testing and elements like nitrogen, phosphorus and others are within specification.

Amos added that all the work in producing and packing is done by the residents in the home. The product is sold in 1kg packets and 50kg for bulk orders. Being new to the business they lack marketing expertise. The 1kg packet costs RM15 and mainly sold to walk-in customers.

Vision Home was started in year 2000 and has 30 residents whose ages range from five to 17 years and they are all schooling. The funding for the home is mainly from walk-in donors.

The aim of the home is to expand the fertiliser business so that it can be self-supporting. Amos said he is not a businessman and needs advice and support from the public on how to operate the business professionally. For further information call Amos **017 300 0193**.

This is a good initiative by Vision Home. Instead of depending on funding from the government and well-wishers, homes and NGOs should try to generate their own income.

A. Jeyaraj



WHAT AM I?

I am nutrient packed **Organic Fertiliser** derived from reclaimed food with trace elements. All the good and natural stuff for plants.

HOW TO USE ME?

STEP 1

Loosen the soil

Pot size 3" - 5"

STEP 2

Scatter me around

Pot size 6" - 10"

STEP 3

Cover & water daily

Pot size 11" & above

USE ME ONCE A MONTH

MY BIRTH PLACE!

Persatuan Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Yatim
Rumah Visi (Vision Home)
(1247-04-4)

Address:
No.1 & 3, Lorong Raya, Off Jin.
Rishah Raya, Taman Rishah,
30100 Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia.

Tel: +605-527 7807
Fax: +605-527 9618
Email: visionhome@gmail.com

Net Weight: 1 KG

Community

Single Mum in Dire Straits

Kasmah Ulong, 61, could only watch helplessly as her rented flat went up in flames while she was out.

The single mother has been renting the council unit along Jalan Ashby for three years. She received a call from a neighbour informing her about the fire an hour after she left.

"I didn't expect an electrical shorting, as all electrical outlets were switched off and unplugged. The kitchen stove was turned off to prevent gas leaking. I ensured this every time I leave the flat.

"There was one faulty electrical plug which I left untouched for a while.

However, it was functional a few days earlier and I used it to operate the room fan.

"The fire damaged everything, including my savings of RM2600. I'm left with nothing," she said when met at the site on Thursday, June 28, two days after the tragedy.

The fire broke out on Tuesday, June 26 at her flat on Block 10 at around 3.30pm. The flat is part of the Ipoh City Council Flats along Jalan Ashby, Ipoh and is managed by the council. Loss is estimated at RM10,000.

Firemen arrived some 30 minutes later. Even though the fire was put out, the lady's belongings could neither be saved nor salvaged.



Shahrizal Mohd Musa, 38, Kasmah's neighbour on the third floor said that he rushed down when his floor became scorching hot and thick smoke was billowing from below.

"It's a small fire then. I heard an explosion at the fuse box. I rushed to get the fire extinguisher at the entrance. Unfortunately, it was out of order. I could only watch and yelled in case someone was trapped inside.

"I hope those responsible would ensure that circuit breakers and fire extinguishers are in working order for the safety of residents," he remarked.

Kasmah Ulong has now been relocated to Block 9.

The single mother works at a fruit stall at Kinta Heights earning about RM20 daily.

"My income is not fixed. I can't afford to buy furniture and electrical items for my new flat. I'd be so grateful if people could lend me a helping hand," she pleaded.

Readers keen to assist can deposit any amount into Kasmah's BSN savings account: **08100-41-00020478-2**. You can also meet her in person at **No. 90G, Block 9, Jalan Ashby Flats, Ipoh**.

Rosli Mansor

Treat for the Needy

Sponsored by Canning Dim Sum, Ipoh Love & Care Society hosted a Raya open house for the underprivileged kids and their families who are under the society's care. The annual Raya treat was held on Friday, June 22 with the Member of Parliament for Ipoh Timor, Wong Kah Woh and the assemblywoman for Canning, Jenny Choy as guests of honour.

"What we do is we investigate if a family is genuinely in need then we do the reach out. Besides excelling academically, we want the children from underprivileged homes to have values and confidence so they could work with the community after they have finished their studies," said Ceylyn Tay, vice president of Ipoh Love & Care Society. The president, Michael Chong, was also present.

The kids received Raya ang pow while a student pursuing higher education received a laptop. The charity function also saw Canning Dim Sum Sdn Bhd presenting a cheque of RM2000 for Tabung Harapan Malaysia.

Established in 1998, Ipoh Love & Care Society is a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping the less fortunate from all religions and ethnicities. Managed by volunteers and supported by public donations, the NGO works with the local community to ease the burden of the poor, the sick and the handicapped. With about 1000 members, the society also aids victims of disasters and organises educational programmes as well as blood and organ donation campaigns.

Readers interested to donate or know more can call the society's treasurer, Cheryl Wong at **017 525 3887**.

Mei Kuan



Education

New Technology to Enhance Education System

White board and textbooks will soon be replaced with new technological gadgets in public schools and classrooms. In line with the brand new Malaysia, using technology will not only benefit the teachers and students, but will also create a more conducive learning. These were among statements made by the Minister of Education, Dr Maszlee Malik at the officiating ceremony of SMK Bawong on July 5 recently.

The affair was attended by HRH Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, HRH Tuanku Zara Salim, Raja Muda Perak, Raja Jaafar Raja Muda Musa and Raja DiHilir Perak; Raja Iskandar Dzulkarnain with wife, HRH Tuanku Soraya Abdul Halim. Menteri Besar Perak, Ahmad Faizal Azumu together with a few state councillors who were also present at the event.

Dr Maszlee also stressed on the importance of upgrading the learning environment including adding high-speed internet connections, smartboard and tablets for students in each classroom.

"It is not just about adding technology in learning, we also aim to change teaching methods, that has been taught for years, by adding new elements that will push students to think outside the box; both creative and critical thinking," said Maszlee.

SMK Bawong, located at Kampung Bawong, Sungai Siput currently has 375 students, 37 teachers and 11 staff. The school began its construction on November 25, 2013 and was part of the level two of Kampung Orang Asli Bawong Mini Rural Transformation Centre (RTC) project. The school is currently the only daily public school in the village



and is fully equipped with science labs, computer labs, language labs, workshops and even Wi-Fi. The school began operation in September 2016 and was led by Anuar Mamat, the principal together with 15 teachers and five admin staff.

Ili Aqilah

News

PCCCI New Lineup

The installation ceremony gala dinner of Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) 59th central committee cum 5th youth committee 2018/2021 was held on Thursday, June 21 at WEIL Hotel.

"We've a very strong team of corporate leaders leading PCCCI, holding key positions and certainly they can play a very important role in improving the image and status of PCCCI," said Dato' Liew Sew Yee, president of PCCCI.

"We'll also work closely with the business community of different races to boost the racial harmony and unity. Together, we aim to raise the standard of business entities regardless of ethnic background, especially the SME industries, which constitute more than 90 percent of businesses in Perak," he added.

Witnessing the ceremony were Dato' Lim Kok Cheong, Life Honorary President of Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) and PCCCI, Tan Sri Ter Leong Yap, President of ACCCIM and Nga Kor Ming, Chairman of DAP Perak.

"I'd like to commend the contribution from PCCCI, including their members, to Tabung Harapan Malaysia which has exceeded RM5 million. PCCCI has shown an exemplary example in displaying the spirit of patriotism," Nga Kor Ming told Ipoh Echo.

Below are some of the newly-elected team members:

Deputy President: Dato' Liew Chee Ming

Vice Presidents: Dato' Seri Desmond Loh Chee Yau, Steven Yow Thin Chin, Dato' Ng Yok Gee

Secretary General: Low Heng Keat



Treasurer: Joseph Tan Huang Kew

Head of Economy Affairs: Lai Weng Keong

Head of External Affairs: Ken Yap Kean Lye

Head of Welfare Officer: Chuah Seong Kok

Mei Kuan

Dubious Payment by MB Inc

In 2017, former Menteri Besar Perak, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir received the Nation-Building Brand Icon Leadership Award Game-Changer Icon by BrandLaureate. Parti Amanah Perak subsequently lodged a report with Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) requesting the agency to investigate the RM381,113.86 payment made by MB Inc to BrandLaureate Sdn Bhd prior to Zambry receiving the award in August 2017.



"I then received a letter of demand from BrandLaureate for highlighting the issue. However, being a lawyer, I was not afraid, as I can defend myself," said Asmuni Awi to reporters following his Hari Raya open house on Saturday, June 23.

After making the report, Asmuni's informer was harassed by MACC officers, instead. Now with a new government in Putrajaya and Ipoh, he is taking up the matter once more with MACC.

"Both Zambry and BrandLaureate didn't say anything about the matter. I didn't touch on the award or whether it can be bought by anyone. My question is why Menteri Besar Incorporated (MB Inc), a state-linked company, was made to pay using public money?" questioned Asmuni, the state Executive Councillor for Islamic Affairs, Islamic Education, Rural Development and Human Capital Development

Although he made the report last year, aside from the harassment his informer endured, the anti-corruption agency has yet to investigate his report.

Zambry did not respond directly to the allegation but described Parti Amanah Perak as "a bunch of political rats".

"Like termites, they destroy and damage one place after another. These are cheap tactics employed by them to ruin my reputation," said Zambry to reporters last year.

MB Inc was formed under the Menteri Besar Incorporated Enactment 1951. It is a state-linked company tasked to handle business ventures using the state's resources. According to its website, MB Inc is also responsible "to bring sustainable growth and development for Perak under the Perak Amanjaya Transformation Plan".

Beside MB Inc, Perak Corporation Berhad (PKNP) is similarly affected. Perak DAP chief, Nga Kor Ming has demanded that the entire Perak Corp management team resign for the loss of RM11.4 million in the first quarter of 2018.

Its group chief executive officer, Datuk Aminuddin Md Desa has resigned from his post.

Meanwhile, Perak Menteri Besar Ahmad Faizal Azumu, announced on June 24 the sacking of seven senior executives of a state-linked company. The reason – their remuneration packages were unwarranted and a waste of public funds.

"Their dismissals will save the state government RM1.6 million a year. The company didn't make much profit but the overheads are too high. The officers' employment is not necessary," said Faizal. He will reveal their names once investigations are finalised.

Faizal added that there was no necessity to buy new cars for official use by the newly-appointed state executive councilors. The old staff cars are still serviceable. An auction to sell off cars owned by state-linked companies will be held soon as part of a cost-saving exercise.

Ili Aqilah

Environment

Keeping Perak Clean

The new Pakatan Harapan government has been urged to review the previous BN government's policy of banning plastics as announced in April 2016 which was supposed to be enforced effective June 1, 2017.

However, due to objections from the business community, a deferment was announced by then Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir about a month before the enforcement date saying a thorough study was required.

In April 2016, the former MB said the total ban on plastic bags and polystyrene containers would be enforced in stages, starting with state government buildings, cafeterias, and functions to start using biodegradable containers every Friday from June last year. In the second stage, the ban was extended from weekly to daily. It was then extended to cover all municipal councils in the state. The final stage was the ban on polystyrene and plastic bags throughout the state.

If the government is serious about reducing carbon footprint and addressing climate change as one of the goals under the United Nations on Sustainable Development Goals, then a review is in order. There are two ways to do it: through enforcement and legislation and education.

In Perak with a population of 2.8 million now, a total of 200,000 tonnes of garbage is generated each year, out of this about 30 percent, or 65,000 tonnes, consists of plastics and polystyrene. There are over 2000 illegal dumpsites in Ipoh alone. As plastics take years to disintegrate, landfills and illegal dumpsites will keep piling up.

We need not wait for further studies as states such as Penang, Selangor, Melaka and Johor have implemented it successfully. It has to start with the government, the corporate sectors, the traders and plastic manufacturers, in that order.

The government must also engage environmental NGOs such as KOHIJAU and Ipoh City Watch which have been actively involved in educating the public, especially



students to practise 3R (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle) and use recyclable shopping bags.

During the recent FIFA World Cup in Russia, Japanese fans, players and officials set good examples by picking up trash left in the stadium and even cleaned up their rooms before leaving. The Japanese government has cultivated this habit in young Japanese students.

Perak will soon host the 19th SUKMA Games from September 14 to 22. This is the best opportunity for Perakeans to showcase our good habits by emulating the Japanese to clean up the venue after every event held.

Thousands of people will be in Perak during the games and what better way to show that we are not just a superb host but a responsible one too. Perak is noted for its good food. Besides winning medals we must also show people what a clean state Perak is.

So let's form our volunteer brigades and NGOs, empower them and make our state proud and great again.

Dr Richard Ng

Sport

SUKMA XIX without Velodrome?

During the weekly state executive council meeting on Wednesday, June 6, the Executive Councillor for Youth, Sports and Character Building, Howard Lee defended his claims that Velodrome Rakyat is unfit for cycling events in the upcoming Sukma Games scheduled for in September.

Howard visited the site on Tuesday, June 5. He was unimpressed with the recently-refurbished velodrome. The timber track is in poor shape and may injure cyclists. He plans to bring the matter up with the Sport Ministry.

Ipoh Echo spoke to Datuk Amarjit Singh, vice-president of Malaysian National Cycling Federation (MNCF). He was shocked at Howard's insistence.

"This is a baseless claim. There was no expert or representative from MNCF and Perak Cycling Association during Howard's visit. He should've invited qualified people to determine the track's safety," said Amarjit. He met Howard on June 7.

Ipoh Echo spoke to Howard on June 8 during a social event at P.O.R.T and sought his side of the story.

"As for today, June 8, I still stand by my statement. The velodrome is unfit for any cycling events. I'm giving the responsible party till August 1 to fix the problem. Should they fail, cycling events at the velodrome will be cancelled," he remarked.

Howard questioned the RM11 million allocation the previous state government received to renovate the facility in 2016. Was the money properly spent?

With less than three months before the Sukma Games, time is running out on those responsible.

Ili Aqilah



SUKMA XIX Series: Part 1

In conjunction with the upcoming Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA) scheduled for September this year, Ipoh Echo spoke to Hj Musa Dun, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SUKMA XIX. The discussion was held at the Games Secretariat office located at the State Secretary of Perak Incorporated (SSI) at Menara SSI Soho 2, Jalan Sultan Idris Shah, 30000 Ipoh. The objective was to get the latest update regarding the biennial games.

This is the second time Perak is playing host, the first was SUKMA V in 1994. In order to make it the best ever games, prior preparations become a necessity. And the person entrusted with the responsibility is none other than Hj Musa Dun. Besides venues and scheduling of the Games Musa is also responsible for other related matters like logistics, accommodation, messing, transportation, medical and the works.

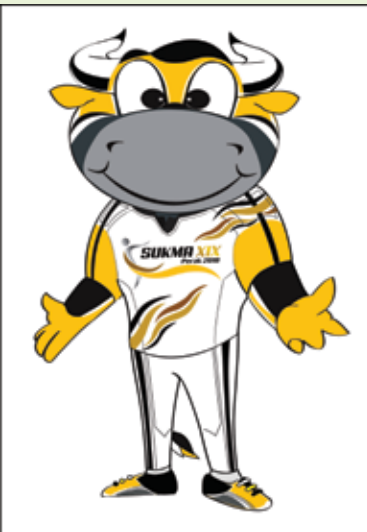
Ipoh Echo: How long did you and your team prepare for the upcoming SUKMA?

Musa Dun: SUKMA XIX Secretariat was established on December 1, 2016. I was appointed CEO by the state government. I am being assisted by 30 officers from various state departments. The primary function of the Secretariat is to lead, manage and oversee the progress of SUKMA XIX for one year and 10 months, that is till the end of the Games on September 12, 2018.

Ipoh Echo: Will special merchandise be made for SUKMA XIX? If so, where can fans purchase them?

Musa Dun: The state government has appointed a company to produce, distribute and sell the various merchandise. They will be available for purchase by the public at all games venues and at our offices in all districts in Perak.

Ipoh Echo: Will SUKMA XIX be available for online streaming?



Musa Dun: The public can keep themselves updated on SUKMA XIX via our official website at www.sukma2018.perak.gov.my or through our Facebook at www.facebook.com/sukmaperak2018, Instagram at www.instagram.com/sukma_perak2018, Twitter at www.twitter.com/sukmaperak2018. They can also visit our official channel on Youtube: SUKMA Perak 2018.

Ipoh Echo: In your opinion, what are the Games' must-watch sports?

Musa Dun: There will be 29 sporting categories; 16 compulsory categories and 13 optionals. The 16 compulsory sports are aquatic, badminton, cycling, football, gymnastic, hockey, karate, lawn bowls, archery, shooting, athletics, squash, silat, tenpin bowling, wushu and sailing.

The 13 optional categories are; handball, netball, basketball, golf, judo, cricket, Muay Thai, pentaquine, rugby, boxing, weight-lifting, Sepak Takraw and taekwondo.

Out of all these, athletics, gymnastic, aquatic, shooting and football are among the must-watch sports with the public. We believe there will be many record-breaking feats during the Games. I hope Perak will

continue with its stellar performance in football, as they were the gold medal winners in 2014 in Perlis and 2016 in Sarawak.

Ipoh Echo: Will the new state government affect the way SUKMA is organised and run?

Musa Dun: After the 14th General Election May 9, the Games Secretariat is operating as usual without any hitches. The Secretariat is giving its fullest support to the newly-elected state government. I believe the new Executive Councillor for Youth, Sports and Human Capital Development, Howard Lee, is fully committed to making Perak not only the best but the perfect host for the upcoming Games.

Ili Aqilah

KLK Muhibah Cup

Sponsored by Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK), a total of 15 teams competed in the annual KLK Muhibah Cup (Under-12 Boys) held from July 7 to 8 at the Ipoh Padang. Entering its fourth year, the two-day tournament was jointly organised with Ipoh Bug, an Ipoh-based NGO.

"We want to encourage youngsters to play sports. We called this the Muhibah (Goodwill) Cup because the requirement is each team must consist of at least three ethnicities. We found out that in Ipoh there are not many tournaments for children under 12," said Latt Shahrul Rambo bin Mansor, the chairman of the organising committee from KLK.

"To spice things up for the kids this year, we added two more trophies for the 5th and 6th placings under plate event. It's getting more popular with the participation of schools from Ipoh and Kampar," William Chang, president of Ipoh Bug Football Club told Ipoh Echo.

The team from Akademi Tunas, which participated in the competition for the first time ever, emerged champion.

Winners who walked away with trophies, medals, cash prizes of up to RM600 and footballs presented by Janaki Raman a/l Shanmugam, general manager for KLK plantation, were the following:

- Champion (cup event) – Akademi Tunas A
- 1st Runner Up (cup event) – KPSA B
- Champion (plate event) – Ipoh Fridays Football Club
- 1st Runner Up (plate event) – MBI A
- Most Promising Player – Danial (player no. 4 from Akademi Tunas A)

The under-16 Boys tournament will be held in August. Stay tuned.

Mei Kuan



Young Perak

Javendra, The Young Entrepreneur

Born into an average income family and having lost his dad at a young age, Ipoh-born Javendra Kumar made it his life's purpose to provide his mother with nothing but the best.

"After my father passed away, I felt that it's my responsibility to care for my mother," he says.

JavenGlobalEnterprise came about after nights were spent thinking about how he could generate income, refusing to ask his mother for money.

"When my dad was around, I could ask him for money whenever I wanted. After he was gone, I couldn't bring myself to ask my mum for money."

"I didn't really know what this business was going to be, so I wrote everything I could think of, printing, F&B, IT."

Javendra began his entrepreneurship journey as an agent, connecting companies with potential clients and earning a small commission from every successful client.

Being elected as the vice-president of the student council, he recognised that there was a demand for printing.

"When we conduct events, there's a constant need for printing. We usually have to print things like shirts, bunting and banners," he says.

He realised that the students were being overcharged and decided to outsource his own materials.

"I didn't really have enough capital to start my business. I earned about RM300 being an agent, so I saved the money. I was very frugal with my spending, basically surviving on roti canai," he laughs.

Being a UKM student, he was able to rent a shop lot in the university at a much lower rate.

"I managed to save about RM3500 from being an agent, so I only did some basic renovation and opened my first printing shop," he adds.

"I hired students, as students in public universities usually aren't from high-income families. I pay them by the hour, and on a commission basis. I have about seven part-time staff now."

Today, he earns a six-figure income.

With his hard-earned money, he bought his mother, Parameswary, her first house, having only lived in their grandfather's shop lot all their life.

Although it was his dream to pursue medicine, Javendra says that he believes he was placed in UKM and offered the engineering course for a reason.

Javendra believes that it is all about the mindset. "For example, if you're down with a fever, and you keep telling yourself that you've a fever, your body starts to believe you – and you feel weaker. Our mind is much stronger than we know. When my dad passed away, I was broken. He was closest to me, as I'm the youngest child in my family, but I



had to think about the future, about my mum. I couldn't let it affect me," he says.

Also an IJM scholar, Javendra says that managing a business and excelling academically is not as difficult as it sounds, as it all boils down to time management.

"Classes are from 8am-5pm. Most students choose to spend after-class hours on entertainment. But I had important goals, so I channelled all my extra hours into my business," he says.

Javendra strongly believes that students must set personal goals for themselves, and not just 'go-with-the-flow'.

"Surround yourself with the right company and make choices that'll improve your future. Work hard, nothing in life comes easy."

He also believes that it is important to give back to the community.

"Give, and you will receive more in return. I've experienced that first hand with my business. When I choose to be stingy, I end up getting fewer projects, making lesser profits."

He helps the community by donating his profits and providing free shirts to various charities.

Asked if he would consider a career in engineering, having graduated as a civil engineer, Javendra says to him his degree is a passport.

"It's a paper qualification that gains people's respect, especially when I meet people of high ranks. I might look at real estate sometime in the future, which is why I took up 5 environment modules during my degree. My certificate certainly helps, but no – working in the engineering world just isn't for me," he says.

Besides his printing business, Javendra also runs an e-commerce company.

He looks up to Jack Ma and was one of the 30 budding entrepreneurs hand-picked by the Ministry of Education to attend the Youth E-Commerce Programme in Hangzhou, China.

Now, he is looking to expand his printing business in Ipoh but lacks the manpower as he is currently based in KL.

Readers keen on giving Javendra a helping hand can contact him at **011 1148 7983**.

Loshni Nair

HAPPENINGS

Ipoh Echo IS the ONE and ONLY medium to reach Ipohites and Perakeans for your Announcements or your Ads.

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ARTS & CULTURE

Sharpened Word. THE LIFE OF FINE ARTS ARTISTS. JULY 21 (Saturday), 2pm-5pm at IDR Knowledge Centre, Greentown Suria (GPS: 4.6013N / 101.0961 E). As a continued effort to introduce local talents within the state of Perak, Sharpened Word is now proud to bring three Perak-based fine art and visual art artists. The Master – Husin Hourmain, The Mover – Kok Hwa Kean, The Teacher – Jayanthi Nalaiya. Entrance by donation. For updates please visit Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta.

TAPESTRY'S 'THE LIVING ROOM SESSIONS: SOFA SO GOOD'. JULY 28 (Saturday), 7.30pm at Sarang Paloh, Heritage Hotel, Ipoh. An evening where audiences can chill out and unwind over a specially selected blend of tunes and harmonies. The show will feature new material as well as some crowd favourites from previous productions, in a mixture of a cappella style singing and singing with instrumental accompaniment. Tickets are priced at RM45 and can be obtained online at www.wearetapestry.com.

COMMUNITY

Financial Planning Association of Malaysia. FAMILY FINANCIAL EDUCATION DAY 2018. JULY 22 (Sunday), 10am to 7pm, AEON Midtown Falim, Ipoh. Session 1 (10am) is in Malay & English while session 2 (2.30pm) is in Chinese. For kids from 4 to 12 years of age, it aims to cultivate good financial management habits. Invited guest is Kenneth Yew from International Association of Registered Financial Consultant USA with more than 24 years experience in financial services industry. For registration, call **017 301 0393, 05 243 8828** or email ipohchapter@fpam.org.my.

MARIAVILLE COMMUNITY PROJECT DAY. JULY 25 (Wednesday), 9am to 12pm at Mariaville Good Shepherd Kindergarten. Free Health Screening by Pantai Hospital Ipoh (Blood Pressure Check, BMI, Dietary Counselling); POSLAJU (Stamp Exhibition, Create your own Stamps); MyKindie (Kindie Babes photography session); Ukelele Lessons (course preview). For more information, contact **05 545 4344**.

FREE YOGA CLASSES. Wednesdays 7pm-8.15pm: meditation & talk on Vethathiri Philosophy by Dr R.M. Muthiah (Asst. Prof. in Yoga for Human Excellence); Fridays 6pm-7pm: Vethathiri simplified holistic exercises in Tamil & English; 7.15pm-8.15pm: Vethathiri Simplified holistic exercises in English; Saturdays 4.30pm-6pm: Hatha Yoga classes for children (7-15 years old) with Mr Yoganathan Periyasamy. **At R.M. YOGA & MEDITATION CENTRE, 68 Jalan Tun Abdul Razak, 30100 Ipoh.** For further enquiry, contact Ms Yoges Muthiah **016 544 6855** or Dr Muthiah **012 591 4493**. Preferably via WhatsApp.

Kechara Earth Project. LET'S RECYCLE FOR GREENER EARTH. EVERY 4TH SUNDAY of the month, 9.30am-11.30am in front of Ipoh Garden Post Office, Jalan Dato Lau Pak Khuan, Ipoh Garden, 31400 Ipoh. Carton boxes, paper, metal/aluminium, electronic equipment, plastics, light bulbs, batteries and used clothes. Funds are channelled towards Kechara Food Bank that serves the urban poor and underprivileged community in Ipoh. For more details, contact: **016 532 8309** (Mr So) or **012 522 3200** (Ms Yee Mun).

MEDICAL

KPJ IPOH SPECIALIST HOSPITAL ANTENATAL CLASSES FOR 2018. Dates: JULY 21, SEPTEMBER 29 and NOVEMBER 17 (Mandarin Class), 1pm-5pm at Dewan Anugerah, 5th Floor KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital. Contact customer service at **05 240 8777 ext. 8111** for enquiries.

IMPORTANT

REPORT BULLYING. All schools in Malaysia have an Anti-bullying Guideline. Anti-bullying hotline: Talian Aduan Disiplin **1800-88-4774** or email adudisiplin@moe.gov.my. You can also call **15999 Childline** to report bullying.



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Land Encumbrances: Nil Land Tenure: Freehold Price: Min RM393,800 Max RM565,800 Approved Plan No.: OSC(211-B)L/B/6/98/224/16
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