



The Ipoh Renaissance – Old Town Out of Control!!

By Ian Anderson

Maintenance and preservation lacking

Over the last three years or so, many international newspapers and magazines waxed lyrical about the Ipoh and how it was changing. They dubbed it the “Ipoh Renaissance”. At this point it is necessary to see what they meant, and to do so we turn to the dictionary, which defines renaissance as: Either the culture and style of art and architecture developed during the Renaissance; or a revival of or renewed interest in something. Obviously they were not suggesting that we had transformed Ipoh into the architecture and culture of the 14th century, but simply meant that there seemed to be a greater interest in Ipoh than ever before. In plain language they meant that Ipoh and particularly Old Town were experiencing a tourism boom. This boom can be best understood by the statistics; today there are 634 choices of visitor accommodation in and around Ipoh, according to “Hotels Combined”.

Continued on page 2



Crowded walkways



Picturesque but disintegrating



Crumbling murals

A Town in Disarray



Temple talismans and lucky charms

So what has this sudden influx of people done to our Old Town, the heart of Ipoh's history? In one word, they have 'destroyed' it! They have taken away its charm, history and living heritage, replacing it with daily traffic jams, hotels, cafes, double parking, and a galaxy of cheap tourist shops/stalls; the latter selling a wide range of 'small eats', imported toys and clothing, temple items and even second-hand cars being sold from public parking spaces! Add to that the crumbling murals, overcrowded, broken walkways, the (in many cases) unregulated hawkers blocking pavements and parking spaces, children's 'Games of Chance' machines and you can start to get the picture of a town out of control. Is it any wonder that our tourists are mainly Malaysians who spend as little as possible in what they call "Ipoh Cheapoh"? These are not the so-called 'Tourist Dollars' we need to build up our town, but we shall never see the overseas tourists we hope for, unless something is here to attract them. Why would any visitor from overseas want to buy imported junk?

In order to cater for this sudden explosion of local tourists many building owners have transformed their properties overnight with minimum expenditure and paying little or no attention to preserving the heritage aspects of the town, while making, we believe, maximum profit with minimum outlay. Good business if you can get it! But let us consider the longer term: without effective maintenance and preservation these old buildings will continue to deteriorate until one day they will simply collapse (it has happened before) or have to be demolished. On the other end of the property scale are those buildings that are already beyond straightforward repair. A quick makeover job is far too expensive for these and so they are left to rot. Two sets of tourists from overseas have already expressed their concern to us about the safety of our Old Town tourist areas and decided to return to their hotel. What sort of reputation is that to be painted with? What message will they spread when they get home?



3 for RM10



Let's visit Concubine Lane



A wealth of costume jewellery

What Old Town Needs
So who is responsible and what can be done; or is it too late? Of course not! What Old Town needs is some basic governmental control. A few months ago many local people saw the dramatic change in the political climate as a golden ray of hope for Ipoh and its future. The new State Government team is younger and appear to be more enthusiastic than those dyed-in-the-wool, long-term politicians who occupied their offices before them. These are the new breed of politician with technology at their fingertips and all the vigour of youth that their new role should bring. Five years is a short time to hold power and if they wish to hold on to it they must get to work now.

So what have they done so far? Well, the *Sama Sama* programme ran for a month and it was a good attempt at getting the community together, but it is time that those in authority realise that not everybody uses Facebook or Twitter. Sometimes old-fashioned methods are still the best. If they had arranged for better publicity, several of the events would have been a more solid success than they turned out to be. Apart from that, there does not seem to have been any positive step to cure the blatant ills of our hometown. Sure, there had been suggestions of some sort of exhibition centre, an art gallery, and a couple of Waller court blocks to be landscaped and turned into small 'start-up units, but surely this is missing the point entirely. Before we create other possible 'White Elephants' like the Darul Ridzuan Museum, (which ranks as 59 out of 65 Ipoh attractions on TripAdvisor), sensibly we should be trying to put right what we already have in our city. May I suggest that our excos and councillors pay an unscheduled surprise visit to Old Town one Sunday and see the chaos for themselves? We would be happy to guide them.



Boy falling



Double parking, vying for space



Hawkers on both sides, double parking, traffic jam



By Fathol Zaman Bukhari

SPREAD OF WAHHABISM



Professor Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid of Universiti Sains Malaysia's damning statement that Muslims in Malaysia are "slowly but surely becoming radicalised" should not be taken lightly. I knew this was coming as ominous signs are so plentiful and obvious that even the most cynical can no longer dismiss them as inconsequential.

The Islamic scholar implored that the new Pakatan Harapan Government take precautionary measures to arrest the spread before things get out of hand.

"Before the situation becomes untenable like what is happening in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it's better to nip the problem in the bud. We need to do whatever possible to see it done. Revamping the school curriculum is one possible way to correct the situation," he said.

Islam preaches compassion, love and tolerance but what we see in the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan is something else. All of those benign virtues associated with Islam are being systematically destroyed by people who use religion for their very own selfish ends. I concur with the academician that religious extremism has no place in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Malaysia.

The radicalisation of Islam in Malaysia, incidentally, did not happen in a few short years. It is like an underground fire that is fueled by methane gas. You don't see the flame but the burning continues and the heat permeates through the vents. It becomes volatile and deadly once the flames reach the surface and start to engulf the surrounding. This is the scenario I can think of.

According to Fauzi, Islamic theology taught in government schools in the early 1990s has shifted from traditional to one derived from the Middle East, especially from Saudi Arabia. The views are one-sided, sidestepping the norms while embracing a more radical form of mindset, one of exclusivity, supremacist, with diminishing respect for the practitioners of other religions. Thus minorities and those with differing views are considered "aliens" or "non-conformists."

The term "liberalism" is often bandied about. If being a Muslim and you don't conform you are a "liberal" and is regarded an outcast destined to burn in hell. The naivety is simply mind-blowing. The only similarity I can allude to is the Inquisition in 12th century France which later spread to Spain and Portugal. The objective of the Inquisitors was to "combat dissent and public heresy committed by baptised Christians." And the targeted groups were mainly converts who were erroneously labelled as suspects due to the "assumption that they had secretly reverted to their former religions."

Incidentally, the last public execution of the Inquisition was in Spain in 1826 when a school teacher was garroted (strangled) for being a disbeliever and attempting to spread his belief to his students.

Things were definitely different, pre and post Merdeka in 1957. And being someone from that era I can safely vouch for it. In 1979, following the Iranian Revolution that helped catapult Ayatollah Khomeini into power, the equation changed dramatically. The revolution sparked interest in Islam all over the world.

Iran is a proponent of the Syiah form of Islam which is strongly opposed by the Sunnis in other parts of the Muslim world led by Saudi Arabia. The oil-rich Saudi government, in wanting to counter the spread of Syiah teachings, took advantage of this change offering scholarships and money to institutions and charities in the developing Muslim world. Malaysia was one of the many beneficiaries.

This, the Saudis believe, would help impose their brand of conservative Islam popularly referred to as Wahhabism or Salafism within their area of influence, including Malaysia.

In the 1980s and 1990s many Malaysians, especially Malay Muslims, went overseas for higher education. Due to the interest in Islam, many headed to the Middle East especially Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt to pursue religious studies. This was made possible by the generous scholarships offered by the Saudi Arabian government. Over there they were exposed to the Wahhabi/Salafist way of thinking and practices.

When these students returned they got into the mainstream education system and becoming the ideal source for the Wahhabi/Salafist way of thinking which preaches intolerance, extremism and exclusivity. Some gained entry into the civil service, becoming influential bureaucrats, lawyers, academicians and politicians. These people are now in positions of power thus allowing them to make decisions for the good and bad of all of us. That explains why the thinking of these "misfits" are so skewed.

Wahhabism was started by Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) who was dismayed by what he saw in Istanbul. The Ottoman Turks' way of life, he reasoned, was revolting. He then decided to propagate his version of "a pure and unadulterated Islam."

The "Arabisation" of Malay Muslims has accelerated over the years. Today "uncovered" women are a rarity. And if you do meet them they are among the few who dare to be different. To the diehard believers, this phenomenon is the result of the proliferation liberalism that corrodes their way of life. The traditional yet alluring kebaya modern, the choice dress of my mother and aunties in the 1950s right to 1970s, had given way to the drab and soulless "tudung" and "telekung" which are designed to conceal the female figure.

Male members are more adept at sporting a goatee and wearing a skullcap, as this is deemed appropriate and in sync with the dress code of Wahhabis. The more Arab one looks and talks, help to improve one's religious credentials. It is about being as close as what was witnessed in 6th century Mecca and Madinah.

So "selamat pagi" becomes "assalamualaikum" and "akhirat" becomes "jannah".

It is definitely chic to lace one's speech with some Arab-sounding words although they may mean little or nothing to both speakers and listeners. The absurdity is getting a little out of hand, I dare say. But to the adherents this is God-sent.

The troubled interfaith relations prevalent today is the result of this exclusivist Wahhabi/Salafist thinking which has crept into the education curriculum and mindset. Renowned Muslim scholars are labelled "secular" and "liberal" to keep the

Muslim masses from hearing them out. Those who do not toe the line are banned from speaking out. Fatwas (religious edicts) issued are seldom explained. Questioning a fatwa is considered blasphemous.

Notwithstanding the brouhaha surrounding the controversial Department of Islamic Development (Jakim), no solutions are yet forthcoming. Funding for the department's many questionable activities has never been accounted for.

Where will all this lead us to? Your guess is as good as mine. With the emergence of Malaysia Baru (New Malaysia) this inadequacy will be addressed in due course. But looking at what's been happening, I have my doubts.

Hopefully, I will be proven wrong.

EYE HEALTH – SWIMMING WITH CONTACT LENSES

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about SWIMMING WITH CONTACT LENSES ON.

Most people these days prefer not wearing spectacles to correct short-sightedness and other refractive errors. Contact lenses is a good option whether for cosmetic or sports reasons.

Play a sport with contact lenses on, exercise with them and work with them but NEVER ever swim with them on! Swimming with contact lenses on should be avoided whether it is swimming in lakes, sea, swimming pools or hot tubs.

Firstly, take note that soft contact lenses are hydrophilic in nature, meaning that they absorb water in order to keep soft. This is so that the contact lenses will allow oxygen to permeate through to the cornea of our eyes. Essentially, soft contact lenses are much like a sponge, absorbing whatever solutions they are placed in. The water content makes it easy for the bacteria to get absorbed into the contact lens and mind you, all forms of water that you may swim or dip in are often full of organisms including your bathtub. Do not be misled into thinking that the chlorine in the water would destroy every sort of organism and take note that wearing goggles do not guarantee that water will not get into your eyes.

ACANTHAMOEBA KERATITIS

One dreaded eye infection for a contact lens wearer swimming with contact lenses on is an eye infection called **Acanthamoeba Keratitis**. Acanthamoeba is the organism and keratitis means corneal inflammation.

This organism is found in many different kinds of water including sometimes tap water, often when the source is from stored water (*water tank*). Acanthamoeba Keratitis is a serious debilitating and painful eye infection (*corneal ulcer*) that can cause blindness.

FEATURES:

Accompanying the eye redness, photophobia, blurred vision and profuse tearing is pain that is often quite severe even after the contact lenses are removed. Acanthamoeba Keratitis is often difficult to treat and runs a prolonged course. The infected person runs a high risk of permanent loss of vision in the infected eye, so do seek urgent treatment.

GENERAL POINTERS FOR CONTACT LENS WEARERS TO NOTE:

Here are some general points to note if you are contact lens wearer.

1. Firstly, avoid swimming with contact lenses on!
2. Always wash your hands with soap (moisturizer-free soap) before handling contacts
3. Use proper disinfecting lens solutions if you wear monthly disposable contacts.
4. Change the storage case of your contact lenses frequently.
5. Apply makeup on your eyes only after you have worn your contact lenses.
6. Remove lenses the moment you experience any irritation, redness or eye discharge.
7. Bring along the last worn contact lenses (*before you had eye problems*) to the doctor in case send they need to be sent to the laboratory for organisms to be identified.
8. Finally, remember never ever to take shortcuts in caring for your contact lenses.

If you are in doubt about any contact lens related eye problems, always seek professional help.

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



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Vivien Lian

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PAS and PH in Perak are competing for the men's affection

In the battle for the hearts and minds of the electorate, the Perak Pakatan Harapan (PH) administration appears to want to compete with PAS, to woo Muslim males.

On October 31, having launched the Perak Islamic Religious Council's matchmaking website and Module on Understanding Polygamy in Perak, the State Executive councillor, Asmuni Awi, announced that the Perak government planned to amend Section 23 of the Islamic Family Enactment (Perak) 2004. The move would make it easier for Muslim men to enter into a polygamous marriage.

Asmuni said, "Some wives agree to allow their husbands to be polygamous, but do not like to appear in court. So the amendments will give the court the discretion whether to call the wife or not when arriving at a decision."

Muslim men already find it easy to marry again, with or without their first wives' permission. Why not be creative and help single mothers and abandoned wives, instead?

Last March, the Perak PAS information chief, Wan Tarmizi Abd Aziz, suggested that women should celebrate International Women's Day by consenting to polygamy. He said, "Women's Day will be more meaningful if a woman gifts (sic) another woman to her spouse, as a mark of appreciation of other women."

Have the leaders of these two parties, lost their senses? Why should women agree to polygamy? It is always about the Muslim man. Haven't they been pampered enough, given all sorts of handouts and opportunities, but still make a mess of their lives?

Muslim women, who are abandoned by their husbands, find it difficult to make ends meet. Muslim single mothers who go through the Syariah courts face an uphill battle to get alimony and maintenance for the children, and yet Asmuni thinks it is better to help Muslim men marry again and create even more single mothers.

Will he and his boss, the Menteri Besar, Ahmad Faizal Azumu, get their priorities right?

Why have the other component coalition members of PH, like DAP and PKR, kept quiet? Why are the NGOs and family organisations not protesting against this irresponsible ruling?

Perakians who voted in GE-14 wanted change – real change and not just cosmetic changes or daft policies, which only help to further destroy our society. They did not vote for a new administration which will make it easier for already married Muslim men to marry again. They also wanted an end to corruption, cronyism, bigotry, extremism, injustice and abuse of power.

Don't the Muslim leaders in Perak, read? Have they no idea about the divorce statistics and the numbers of single women, and wives whose husbands refuse to grant them a divorce, but do not contribute towards the upkeep of the family home and the children. There are also the women who have been left high and dry, by their errant ex-husbands.

Did they not read about the two women in Terengganu, both divorced and single mothers who were forced to prostitute themselves to provide for themselves and their children. Instead of forcing the men to provide for these women, the women were whipped. What kind of justice is this?

Why are the Muslim politicians, in government, treating the Muslim men in their electorate like spoilt brats and pampered pooches? If the truth be told, some Muslim men simply waltz from one marital bed to another. Some don't even have a decent job or any job at all. They just marry a working woman and live off her.

Here is the story of a polygamous wife. Her name has been changed to protect the innocent.

"...Our romance was fun. We met at a party. He was much older than me, but I did not mind. Men of my age are immature, and they only want to have their bit of fun, but Nik did not rush into things. In fact, I panicked, in case he ended our relationship.

As he was much older, and already a working man, I enjoyed our dinner dates.

They were at proper restaurants, and it was fun to be wined and dined. The younger men I dated were clumsy and just took me to the nearest stall. They did not know the art of conversation, whereas Nik was well read and enthralled me with his expansive knowledge.

Our courtship was like an adventure. He did not tell me he was married, at first. I found out by accident, much later on. He was always giving me presents and liked to spoil me. We would fly off on short holidays in neighbouring countries.

He said he was waiting for the right time to divorce his wife, so I was patient. But I forgot to take my birth control pills on one romantic weekend away so when I told him I was pregnant, he was furious. So I reminded him to divorce his wife, so we could start a new life together. He stormed out and did not contact me for several days.

He told me to pack, and that we would marry in Thailand, and that he would sort out the papers on our return.

That is how I became his third wife. We have a 19-month-old baby, and as I cannot work and stay at home to look after the kid, he said that I have become boring, unattractive and a nag, because I complain that he is always away with his other wives and children.

Today, I found that he has met another, younger woman. I should have realised that he was a serial womaniser. I want a divorce, but he said he has nothing to give me, and yet I find he has money to buy a new car, and take holidays abroad. I know this from his Facebook profile.

I spoke to some of my divorced friends, and they said that they gave up trying to get alimony for themselves and maintenance for their children. The Syariah courts were not helpful. I think clever lawyers help the men find loopholes, so they can hide, and evade payments.

Many of my friends scrape by with two or three jobs, just to put food on the table.

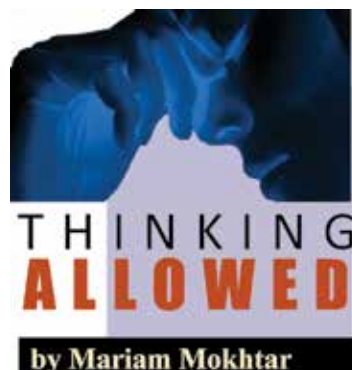
I think that marrying is made too easy for the Malay man. A new marriage, for them, is like changing clothes. When he is fed up with the garment, he does not even bother to launder it, he just changes it for a new one. That is how it is with us wives. The husband just finds a new woman, without being responsible for his former wives.

If former husbands were forced to pay alimony, or else face jail, or have their assets seized and liquidated to pay for alimony and maintenance, they might think twice about marrying again.

I also think about the sons in these families. They have no role models and grow up thinking that they can be equally irresponsible as their fathers who are seldom around..."

So, when will the politicians in Perak's PH be courageous and help the women, instead of helping to create more polygamous husbands? These men, and their philandering ways have contributed to a broken society, and many broken homes.

Source: <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2018/10/31/perak-plans-to-make-polygamy-easier-for-muslim-men/>



Conservation

Conservation of Tropical Biodiversity

A public forum on Conservation of Tropical Biodiversity was organised by UTAR in conjunction with International Conference on Tropical Biodiversity at Tower Regency Hotel. Three speakers spoke on different aspects of conservation.

First speaker, scientist Dr Gathorne Gathorne-Hardy, 5th Earl of Cranbrook, recipient of the Merdeka Award, had worked in Malaya in 1956. He was a civil servant in UK and shared his experience on how to get the government to implement conservation policies. He added that the ministers have power and authority to implement laws, but they do not like to be advised. You have to speak their language to convince them and when the minister comes up with a policy you must praise him for his brilliant idea.

Second speaker Dr. Ahimsa Campos-Arceiz, Associate Professor, University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus is a conservation ecologist. He informed the attendees on how elephants and other animals play their role in conservation of the forest and are not destructive as portrayed.

Third speaker Dr Chan Jin Hooi, Senior Lecturer, University of



Greenwich, UK explained how Virtual Reality can be used to preserve biodiversity and gave an example of how the technology was used to stop building a dam in Brazil.

Students from Tenby International School were invited to the forum. The younger generation were told the importance of preserving biodiversity. Our survival depends on it.

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SeeFoon Enjoys a Battle from Afar

Pics by Vivien Lian



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

I'm not a blood thirsty person and don't fancy battles of the warring kind but this is one Battle that I applaud. **The Battle Of The Chefs 2018**, a Penang State Signature Competition Event organised by the **Penang Chefs Association** which was held in early October in the Setia Spice Arena, attracted over 1500 participants from all the neighbouring countries with the furthest away being Pakistan.

This was the 17th edition of the battle which is held every two years and chefs in teams or individually battled it out from 7am-8pm over three days. Each entry was given 45 minutes to cook two dishes and a panel of judges tasted and voted.

Iphites can be proud of four competitive teams; three of whom brought home gold medals while the fourth brought home a bronze.

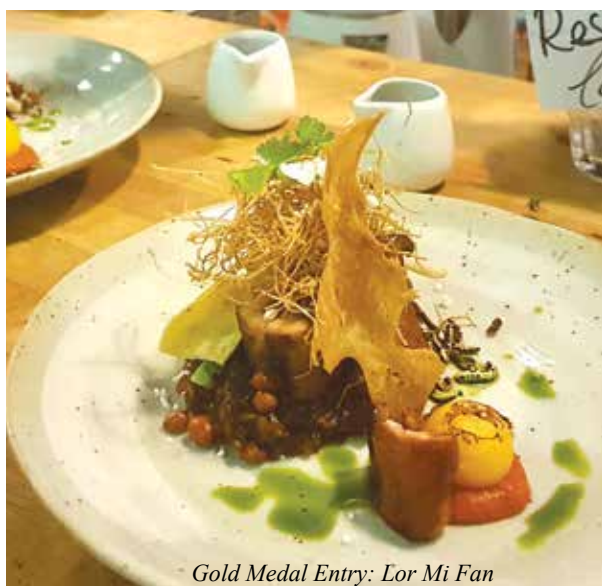
In this issue I wish to congratulate two of these and share with my dear readers their winning entries.

Artisan Handmade Bread

I first raved about Artisan Handmade Bread a few years ago for his delectably crusty bread reminiscent of what I would eat in Europe, led by **Sam Lau** with his acolyte **Kew Zong Yang**, brought home a gold for his winning entry of **Lor Mi Fan** (our famous Dim Sum Special of steamed glutinous rice given a creative Fusion twist).

Sam, who has been promoting his **Bistronomy** cuisine ever since he opened his Cafe on Market St., has had the good fortune to discover a few good talents in the culinary students he tutors, one of whom is Kew Zong Yang, who created this fusion dish that won the gold.

A very complex recipe indeed requiring many steps of



Gold Medal Entry: Lor Mi Fan



Sam putting finishing touches



All smiles, Zong Yang (L) and Sam Lau (R)

culinary wizardry. Essentially a Ballotine of chicken stuffed with a fungus filling, served with glutinous rice in Asian flavours, an egg crepe, soy caviar, vegetables, Milan sweet potato sauce, spring onion oil, sous vide yolk and a confit of chicken wing seasoned with western herbs like thyme and bay leaf. While the ingredients of this whole composition are primarily Asian, the cooking methods as in **sous vide** and **confit** are western and makes for an interesting curation.

Artisan Handmade Bread

27 Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh.

Tel: 05 255 2727 or 016 597 8922

Business hours: 9.30am-6pm (last call 2pm)

Monday & Tuesday closed.

Crew Skills

Crew Skills International is a culinary school in Ipoh, recognised as a quality culinary education provider by the **World Association of Chefs Societies (Worldchefs)**, a global network of chefs associations founded in 1928 in Paris, by the venerable **Auguste Escoffier** who espoused global training methods for cooks. Awarded the citation in November last year, it was a first for Perak and the fourth in Malaysia, thus putting **Crew Skills International** on the map and ranking it with institutions such as Taylor's, Sunway, Berjaya and KDU.

Now they can add a bronze medal from the **Battle of the Chefs 2018** to their list of accolades and gain more trust from parents wondering where to send their offspring for career training.

I was invited to a tasting of all their entries from different participants from the school with the winning bronze entry being shyly presented by **Laven Shiv Kumar**, a **Creamy Spaghetti infused with saffron served with marinated duck breast and roasted red pepper sauce, accompanied with flavoured nut crumble**. This dish certainly deserved the bronze and this young chef Laven will go far with this kind of mastery.

The spaghetti was al dente as it should be and the saffron infusion not only lent it's colour but the subtle fragrance of the crocus flower stamen permeated the whole dish. The marinated duck breast was still pink and the red capsicum with tomato paste sauce



Bronze Medal Entry: Golden Spaghetti from Crew Skills



The crew from Crew Skills with Chef Mohammad Safwan and non-executive Director Garry Prior in the back and winning chef Laven in centre

lent a nuance of piquancy to the whole dish with texture provided by the nut crumble.

I also had the pleasure of sampling all their other entries which were all good efforts put in by these fledgling chefs under the guidance of their mentor tutor **Chef Mohamad Safwan**. Keep up the good work Crew Skills. And the next time, perhaps a gold or two.

Crew Skills International School of Culinary

No. 9, Lintasan Perajurit 17G

Taman Perdagangan dan Perindustrian, 31400 Ipoh.

crewskills.edu.my

05 545 9800

"I often receive comments from my dear readers to the effect that some of the restaurants I have reviewed were disappointing. I do need to emphasize, which I have done on quite a few occasions, that all restaurants do some dishes well and some not so well. So I suggest that you follow my recommendations on the dishes that I write about. This way, you may have a better meal."

SeeFoon

If you would like SeeFoon to try your food, contact Vivien at **014 332 3859**.

Email: vivienlian@ipohecho.com.my

We do not promise a review but we're open to discovering new or interesting eating places.

The Ipoh Renaissance – Old Town Out of Control!...continued from page 2



Chopping boards, pomelos, drinks and second-hand cars for sale

What Needs to be Done

For a start, let us have something done about the double parking, unregulated hawkers and broken pavements, all of which are a hazard to children and old folks alike. It is not only the government, but every citizen's responsibility to ensure the city is safe.

Then, in the Old Town heritage area, hawkers' licenses should only be issued for sale of a wide range of appropriate goods, not imported plastic rubbish. Old Town does not need the Chinese street market it now has, with its uncaring hawkers blocking the streets and walkways. Similarly second-hand cars and those ugly modern 'Games of Chance', should also be removed immediately. There is plenty of scope for quality items and entertainment to replace all these.

Ipoh is said to be a food haven. So let us turn Old Town's Concubine Lane, the very centre of our heritage, into just that. Only issue licenses for a range of quality heritage souvenirs and food, some of which are already there, but operating in entirely the wrong place. Offering quality rather than rubbish will attract a larger number of overseas tourists spending their money here, and that is what we need. There is plenty of room in other parts of town for a daily street market if we really need it. All this requires is effective licensing. In parallel with that, the tourist authority should put Ipoh on the world map. Currently their website <http://www.ipoh-city.com/> does not have any Ipoh attraction on its front page, Ipoh City's top three attractions are said to be: Kuala Sepetang, Kellies Castle, and Gua Tempurung. Are they not aware that Ipoh itself actually has several quality homegrown top attractions?

Enforcement is Essential

Government and public should all remember that Laws and By-laws exist to cover most of the above ills. Sensible enforcement is what is needed. I am not suggesting anything draconian or out of the ordinary; just that those in authority pay attention to what is happening in the town and ensure that council officers do their job effectively, across all aspects of Ipoh. It is their job to make sure that things run as smoothly as those that passed the laws intended. Then residents and visitors alike will be able to enjoy the Ipoh Renaissance and Ipoh will be a better place to live.

To this end, the talented planning department of MBI have produced a well thought out proposal to turn Old Town, and a part of New Town, into a heritage enclave. It is a comprehensive study with all the supporting facts and figures and it is an excellent plan. This is not the first time that such a plan has been put forward but so far the Executive have never grasped it. Perhaps this is the moment for the new Government to show their resolve and take positive action!

Should the Government fail to grasp these thorny problems once and for all then once the excitement of the Renaissance wears off, Old Town will simply become a slum, a place that nobody wishes to visit. Surely we cannot allow that to happen?



Anyone for titbits?

Business



111 Years of PCCCI

The Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) celebrated its 111-year milestone with a grand dinner on the auspicious date of Thursday, November 1 (2018-11-01) at Kinta Riverfront Hotel.

The guest of honour for the evening, which coincided with the 11th anniversary of its youth committee, was Nga Kor Ming, Deputy Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat.

Performances galore, the lively affair was attended by members of the Perak Malay Chamber of Commerce, Perak Indian Chamber of Commerce and Chinese chamber of commerce from various states.

"In response to the call by the government to support the Tabung Harapan Malaysia, our honorary life president, Dato' Lim Kok Cheong and his Yee Lee Group came forward to donate a sum of RM1 million. Our calls to our members for contributions received a resounding response with a total sum of RM2.7 million collected and a mock cheque was presented to the Menteri Besar," Dato' Liew Sew Yee, President of PCCCI explained.

"PCCCI initiated a dialogue with shop owners and tenants along Jalan Theatre and Jalan Mustapha Al-Bakri in the vicinity of Octagon Complex together with members of parliament, state assemblymen and city councillors. Then, an Octagon Cultural Street Task Force was set up to look into transforming the shops along the two streets into cultural and tourism-related business streets," Dato' Liew shared.

"The government recently presented the 11th Malaysia Plan Mid-Term Review, which highlighted the need to enhance skills and increase automation as a means to improve productivity. Combined with a credible and transparent government, these policies will certainly boost investor confidence and drive the economy," Tan Sri Datuk Ter Leong Yap, President of the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia stated.

Present were Dato' Seri Ir Mohammad Nizar B Jamaluddin, the Executive Councillor for Investment, Industrial and Corridor Development; Howard Lee Chuan How, the Executive Councillor for Youth and Sports Development; Tan Kar Hing, Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts and Culture; Wong May Ing, the Executive Councillor for Women and Family Development, Character Development and Social Welfare; Dato' Gan Tack Kong, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers Perak Chairman and Dato' Lim Si Boon, Branch Chairman of Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Mei Kuan

Book Review

A Doctor Tells Her 'Story'

Beyond Deception, a futuristic science fiction with extra-terrestrial elements and medical breakthroughs by Dr Nirmala Kasinathan is a sequel to *Woven in Deception*, a historical family drama which was published in February 2013. *Beyond Deception* has received a five-star book review from Readers' Favourite, a US-based novel contest and review site.

Her debut novel, *Woven in Deception* was a tale woven around the lives of three generations of an affluent family afflicted by a gripping malignant curse. *Beyond Deception* follows on the descendants of the same family whose lives subsequently revolve around the prophecies and blessings of a great sage.

"The present book I wrote over the last four years with long writing breaks in between owing to my academic pursuits. I did indie publishing on Amazon's Create Space in July 2018," Nirmala, hailing from Ipoh, told Ipoh Echo.

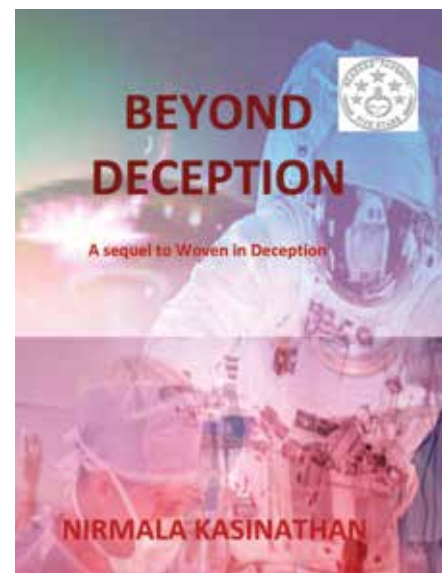
"Writing started to interest and fascinate me ever since I began reading for a hobby as a young preschool child. I have very often dwelled on the hobby of writing, building on my ideas for fascinating stories. However, hailing from a conservative Ceylonese Tamil family, studies always took precedence and academic achievements given priority. Writing often had to be pushed aside in favour of academic pursuits," she explained.

"I have written for school and college publications as a student. It wasn't until I became a medical officer, however, that I finally had the time to chase my dream of becoming a part-time published author and it remains a much-loved hobby and source of much pride," she enthused, citing authors such as Enid Blyton, Arundhati Roy, John Grisham, Sidney Sheldon, Salman Rushdie, Jane Austen, Rani Manicka, Tan Twan Eng and Sharmini Flint among others as her inspirations.

Being a full-time practising medical doctor in the local general hospital, what motivates her to keep writing? "It is an outlet for my long-suppressed creative energy and fills my days with much joy. It additionally bestows on me the added accolade of being an author. I write to tell a tale less often told from the perspective that is rarely taken," she shared.

Beyond Deception is available as an e-book (USD6.00) and paperback (USD10.00) on Amazon.com. Readers will be able to obtain autographed copies of her books directly from her at RM44.50 per book inclusive of postage or a set of both books at a discounted price of RM78. For more info, email Nirmala at nirmalakasinathan78@gmail.com.

Mei Kuan



Personality

Live Life to Serve

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen



Dr Shan being awarded the "National Community Service Award 2018" from Federation of Private Medical Practitioners' Associations, Malaysia (FPM-PAM) by Deputy Health Minister, Dr Lee Boon Chye.

Dr Shan Narayanan credits a near death experience, widely known as an **NDE**, as the motivating factor that drives him to keep the punishing schedule that he maintains today.

It happened in 2012 when an infection in his leg spread into his blood developing into septicaemia. As a result he developed severe pneumonia leading to Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome. As he was ventilated not knowing if he would recover he saw a **yellow light and heard the Maha Mirtunjya Mantra**. He recovered miraculously to the delight & surprise of his doctors and family. He subsequently saw this same yellow light again in both the **Shirdi Sai Baba centre** in old town and at an **Amman temple in Sungai Siput**.

"God gave me a second chance. Therefore I want to give back", he declared.

"I was not so confident as a young man, owing to the fact that I had various bleeds which I only knew it was due to a very rare condition called Factor XIII deficiency at the age of 19. This had a significant emotional impact on my early life," he said.

"Since the NDE I have been driven to help others which led me in 2015, to start training as a **Life Coach** with the Corporate Coach Academy, a coaching school recognised by the **International coaching Federation**," he enthused.

Since then he has had his plate full.

As the newly installed **41st President of the Rotary Club of Kinta**, Dr. Shan not only has a goal of inspiring youths during his term but will focus on personal development and developing leadership skills in them. This is in addition to his full-time practice as **Consultant Pediatrician at Hospital Fatimah** and his work in Life Coaching.

So how did this Ipoh boy who spent all his school years at ACS from kindergarten to 6th form, getting his first medical degree at University of Malaya, followed by housemanship in Penang, then working 6 years in Kuala Lumpur at the **National Blood Bank and Hematology Centre**, end up being a passionate Life Coach?

His interest in Hematology got him a **Fellowship in the International Hemophilia Training Centre in Sheffield, UK**, under the guidance of Professor Preston whose dedication and passion awoke in Dr. Shan a desire to study Pediatrics as most of their patients were children.

Under **Professor Preston's tutelage**, and given wide exposure, Dr Shan, over a period of 10 years in UK, developed an interest and passion for helping children with special needs, especially those with autism and learning difficulties.

Returning in 2001 to nurse his father, "My father is my hero," Dr Shan then worked for two years in the General Hospital after which he set up his private practice, initially in Ipoh Garden and subsequently in 2006, moved into Fatimah Hospital where he has been ever since.

Here he kept up his special interest in special needs

children and still to this day has a **Child Development Clinic on Wednesdays**. He was the co-founder of the **Autism Support Association for Parents** and in 2008, helped to open a school for school age children with autism in Tambun.

In 2010, Dr Shan co-founded Autism Aspergers Help Association; now known as **OHANA**. He was the founding president. OHANA runs an early intervention programme for children with special needs. He donated RM10K and organised the first **'Walk for Autism'** in Ipoh to raise a further RM20K to set up this centre.

Dr Shan is no stranger to charity work, as volunteerism is in his blood, beginning in his student days in ACS as **President of the Benefit Society** raising funds for poor students for uniforms, books and other basic school necessities. He is an active member of the **Hemophilia Society of Malaysia** and co-founder of a sub group in 2015 for women with bleeding disorders known as **KHWAN or Kelab Hemostasi Wanita**, developing awareness that hereditary bleeding disorders occurs in women too. Ipoh Fine Arts Society supported this cause and raised RM10K for KHWAN.

It was in 2015 that Dr Shan decided to expand his already impressive repertoire of helping skills by enrolling in the **Corporate Coach Academy** and became a **Life Coach**. He felt that coaching skills would enhance his work with special needs children and their families. Coaching is a powerful tool to create self awareness, which is the precursor to empowerment that instills personal power. Personal power gives one the control of one's life even in adversity.

He had a wish to bring coaching to the medical establishment and began with a **Workshop on Coaching For Nurses** at the AR-Ridzuan Hospital attended by 40 nurses from various hospitals. The workshop focused on enhancing interpersonal skills through self-awareness and active listening.

Through Rotary in 2017, when he was the Director of youth services, and now the President, he organised the **Interact Leadership Training Seminar** along with three other certified coaches for the four interact clubs sponsored by Rotary Club of Kinta. The seminar focused on role training, self confidence and teamwork activities.

This year, the Malaysian Medical Association Perak Branch, organised the **7th House Officers Essential Skills** course. It was attended by 62 housemen. Dr Shan was shocked to realise most of the attendees were in the medical profession on the request of their families.

Dr Shan with three other coaches conducted a half-day session on **"Finding your Purpose"** as part of the course. This session helped many of the young doctors find their direction in personal and professional life.

When Dr Shan expounds on his passion for coaching, he shares that he can take on all his various tasks and achieves his goals because his **wife Sumathi** is his pillar of support.

As Dr Shan moves on to his new calling and having set up his enterprise called **Able Coach**, Ipoh Echo wishes him much joy in his paediatric and coaching journey. With the backup of Rotary's service behind him, Ipoh will benefit greatly.



Dr Shan with wife Sumathi

Augmentation Rhinoplasty

Dr. Leow Aik Ming

Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon
Pantai Hospital Ipoh and Pantai Hospital Manjung

Augmentation rhinoplasty is a surgical procedure that can be performed for both aesthetic and functional reasons. Functional reasons for augmentation include providing structural support for deficient areas of the nose such as the upper or lower lateral cartilages. Augmentation can also be performed to enhance the appearance and proportion of nose in relation to the face to restore facial harmony.

There are varieties of materials that can be used for augmentation rhinoplasty. **Non-autologous or artificial materials** used as implants or grafts include medical-grade silicone, medpore or Gore-Tex. **Autologous graft** is made from materials harvested from your own body. For example, cartilage grafts may come from your ear, ribs or nasal septum. Bone grafts may come from your leg or hip. When tissues from your own body are used, there is a reduced risk of complications such as infection and displacement.

Ideal candidate for augmentation rhinoplasty:

- Completion of facial growth (preferably 13 years of age or older)
- Healthy individuals who do not have life threatening illnesses or medical conditions
- Preferably non-smokers
- Individuals with realistic goals in mind for the improvement of appearance.

Preoperative evaluation before augmentation rhinoplasty

Communication is vital in order to achieve the patient's goals. During the initial consultation, patients should discuss their goals and expectations with the plastic surgeon. The plastic surgeon will work closely with patients to reach an agreement about the desirable results from the surgical procedures involved and their long-term benefits. Every patient is different, therefore a specific treatment regimen is planned to suit an individual's need.

- Discussion about expectation and desired outcome
- Medical conditions, drug allergies and previous medical or surgical treatment
- Use of current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drugs should be revealed
- Discussion of type of anaesthesia
- Examination and measurement of the face and nose
- Photography for preoperative and postoperative evaluation

Postoperative expectations

A splint or bandage is usually placed on the outside of the nose to support and protect the new structures during the initial healing phase. After the surgery, there may be swelling, bruises or discomfort, irritation for several days that can be controlled with oral medications, cold compression and ointment. Oral antibiotics and analgesics will be prescribed to reduce the risk of infection and postoperative pain respectively. Any external sutures on the nose will be removed about 7-10 days after the surgery. It may take several months for swelling to resolve and up to a year for the shape of the new nose to be fully refined.



For more information on the procedure mentioned in this article, please visit the following website (www.elegantplasticsurgery.com).

Online consultation is also available if you have any enquiries, please email: elegantplasticsurgery@gmail.com.

Elegant Plastic Surgical Centre, **Pantai Hospital Ipoh**,
Tel: +605 5405457 (Receptionist) or +605 5405458 (Direct Line)
WhatsApp : +0126235458

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Tel: +605 6898624 (Receptionist) or +605 6898697 (Direct Line).

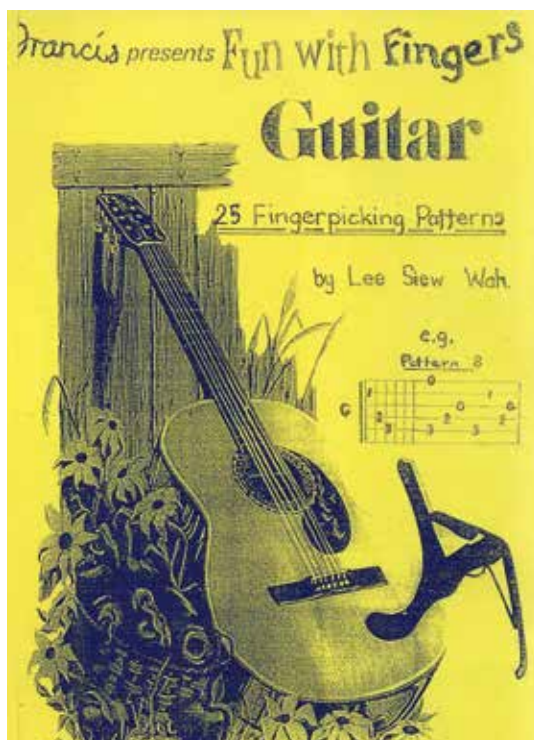
83rd Birthday Wish: Offering Free Guitar Lessons

Mr Francis Lee Siew Wah, an 83-year-old retired school teacher, picked up the guitar upon his retirement in 1991 to while away his time after teaching toddlers for a spell. Today, this self-taught octogenarian guitarist has composed a teach-yourself guidebook as his 'gift-back' to society.

This is an easy to follow guidebook which Francis has painstakingly taken the trouble to put into a CD and booklet. He has dedicated this CD/book especially to the kindergarten and primary school teachers who have a special place in his heart. His hope and aspiration are for the teachers who have picked up the skill through his free tutorials to use this newly acquired guitar skills to play and sing for the youngsters as a teaching tool.

Those who are interested to pick up his free guitar lessons are welcome to go to his Facebook account @ Siew Wah Lee which he officially launched on his 83rd birthday on October 18.

SH Ong



Community

KPJ Ipoh's Disaster Drill

When a tragedy happens, victims will be sent to nearby hospitals for treatment. The outcome will be disastrous if things are poorly managed.

Mindful of this, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital disaster-drill team, led by its Chief Executive Officer, Yusmah Salleh, organised a two-hour disaster exercise in preparation for a possible real-life situation.

The drill is conducted annually. However, this year's scenario was on a fire taking place within the adjacent Regiment 503 (TA) Camp. The exercise was held on Wednesday, October 31.

"The objective is to test the hospital's capacity in coping with an emergency. We too want to see how well our nursing staff are able to handle patients in crisis. Apart from that, management staff involved also play their roles in handling patients' relatives, media and controlling the crowd in the hospital who are keen to get information on the crisis," explained Yusmah.

Consultants from various disciplines were involved in the drill, namely neurosurgeons, orthopaedic and trauma specialists, anaesthetists, cardiologists and medical officers.

For the disaster drill team, the exercise proved once again that it is important to have a structured and tested patient-management system during crisis so as to be better prepared in a real-life situation.

"There's no such thing as a hundred-percent preparedness. But keeping the organisation's emergency management and communication plans up-to-date will get us as close as possible," said Yusmah.

Rosli Mansor



Longest Cake by Special Kids

Some 76 special education students have gained entry into the Malaysia Book of Records by baking the country's longest cake. The record was created during the National Special Education Skills Carnival 2018 held from October 22 to 24 at Tower Regency Hotel Ipoh.

Aged between 13 and 17, the pupils decorated the 50.2m-long cake shaped like the Perak state flag.

Aznan Alias, Perak Education Department's Head of Private and Special Education cum organising chairman said that it was the 8th such record set by the department's special education unit.

"We've been creating records since 2011. As Perak is the carnival's host this year, we've roped in the students. This is one way to highlight these special kids' hidden talents to the community. They can perform as well as any normal student," he explained.

Dr Abdul Aziz Bari, Executive Councillor for Education, Science, Environment, Green Technology and Information said that the state government was supportive of developmental programmes for special education students such as these.

"Their talents get to be honed to a level unattainable even by normal students. I've seen them performing. They do have hidden talents," he said.

According to Aziz, efforts and sacrifices by the special education class teachers in creating capable students should be acknowledged. "These teachers have worked really hard," he stated.

Malaysia Book of Records Executive Officer for General Administration, Siti Hajar presented the book's certificate of recognition to Aznan Alias, witnessed by the executive councillor.

Luqman Hakim

Community

A Day's Visit to 8 Old Folks Homes

Members of Vadcares Malaysia, a non-profit organisation, visited eight old folk homes around Ipoh on Saturday, October 20. The homes visited were Procure Home for Senior Care, Pusat Jagaan Warga Tua Eylon, JJ Blessing Care Centre, Twilight Care Centre, Precious Elderly Care Centre, Gloria Old Folks Home, Our Home Care Centre and Trinity Care Centre.

Over 190 residents were medically screened and treated. They ranged in age between 65 and 104. Common ailments afflicting the residents were diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and arthritis. They managed to get 40 elders to acquire person with disability (OKU) cards. The team too helped unregistered homes to get operating permits from the authorities.

A total of 50 volunteers, including medical students and doctors, participated in the programme.

"As a medical student, it's an opportunity to learn how to handle a patient from different aspects. Doctors too need to learn to communicate with patients," said Archana, 22, second-year medical student from the same university.

"We've been doing this voluntary work for six years now. We plan to open more community clinics to provide medical assistance to the needy," said Dr Anantha Kumar, National President of Vadcares Malaysia.

Readers keen to donate or to volunteer may do so by calling these numbers: **016 771 0762** and **016 521 0762**. Donations can be credited to this RHB account number: **25825300007150**.

Qistina Izfarina



Connexion

By Joachim Ng

Litter Litter Everywhere and the Danger to You

Property developers are behaving more like the local councils in providing services and infrastructure, observes Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah. He concedes that some councils have failed in providing basic services to the people, causing developers to step in and fill the void.

Let's hope that all councillors have taken note of his keynote address entitled "Reimagining the Housing and Property Industry in the New Malaysia" delivered at a colloquium in Kuala Lumpur a month ago. Is there a big difference between Old Malaysia and New Malaysia at ground level? Life at the centre probably has changed for the better. How about life further out?

Two months before the May 9 general election, this columnist toured four suburbs in Ipoh city — Menglembu, Jelapang, Silibin and Buntong. They all looked the same at the ground; that is to say, litter was strewn about the roadsides, open spaces and drains. Five months after GE14 this columnist revisited Menglembu, Jelapang, Silibin and Buntong, adding Chemor to the list. The colourful scenery hasn't changed. Plastic bags and paper cartons stand out in sharp contrast to the dull green grass at the roadsides and open spaces. Here and there disused mattresses dot the landscape, and stormwater drain sumps are stuffed with throwaways. In Menglembu, the smoke from open burning of a huge pile of garbage near a children's playground is clearly visible to apartment and terraced house residents.

Ironically, gigantic signboards prominently displayed at many busy stretches carry the slogan: *Ipoh Bersih, Hijau dan Maju*. As such, there is a chronic disconnect between what is promised and what is delivered. Is it important that we keep the nation clean? Yes, dirty streets carry dirty implications. Local councils appoint cleaning service contractors to do the job, and contractual fees are paid every month using ratepayers' money. If the job is not done, it is wastage of public funds.

There is also a life-threatening implication. Litter is home to killer mosquitoes and deadly germs because they trap stagnant water and food particles. Litter litter everywhere is a giveaway sign of a nation's health index. If you see abundant litter in the residential areas of all cities and towns, the next thing to do is check the nation's dengue and cancer rates. What's the connection? Litter tells you that people are generally unaware that environmental abuse is a major factor that brings on deadly ailments as well as climate change.

NEXT: How Litter Kills You Slowly



Tumour Girl Has Dream Come True

A four-year-old girl with cervical chordoma was in tears as her dream to visit Lost World of Tambun came true on Saturday, October 20.

Board member of the Children's Wish Society of Malaysia (CWS), Gordon Hendricks said the girl, Firasz Nur Rayhan from Kajang, Selangor, has a tumour growth at her spine. She had always wanted to visit the theme park having heard so much about it.

"Upon receiving her request from the hospital, we contacted the park management and together we planned the trip.

"She was taken on a tour of the site spending time at the petting zoo where she saw and touched various kinds of birds, reptiles and animals housed there. She played at the water park, watched the tiger show and had fun at the hot springs," he said.

Firasz enjoyed being a party to the attractions, as were her parents. "I am so excited to be here. Thank you everyone for making my dream come true," she exclaimed.

Lost World of Tambun played the perfect host by looking into her needs. They hosted the whole family to a 3D/2N stay at the resort, free-of-charge.

CWS is a non-profit NGO dedicated to fulfilling wishes of terminally-ill children in Malaysia.

Rosli Mansor



63 Years of Serving Perak

Established on October 1, 1955, Headquarters 2nd Malaysian Infantry Brigade celebrated its 63rd birthday on Sunday, October 28.

Held at the playing field of Syed Putra Camp, Tambun, it was attended by almost 2000 personnel consisting of officers, other ranks, family members and students from a nearby *tahfiz* (religious) school.

After a lively aerobic warm-up, the participants took part in a number of people-centric games (*sukan rakyat*) such as sack race and the run-and-tagging game. After lunch, the much anticipated lucky draw took centre stage.

Former soldiers, who were wounded when in harness, were duly honoured with gifts. This highlight was followed soon after by the cutting of a turmeric-laced-glutinous rice cake, a blessing for future good tidings.

Brig-Gen Datuk Mohd Nizam bin Hj Jaffar, the brigade commander was in attendance along with his unit commanders and staff officers.

Mei Kuan



Community

Colours of Deepavali



Light Up with Fireworks

Meru Valley Resort together with Greentown Indian Cultural Society organized a Deepavali Cultural Night on November 9. Truly a night of culture, the free event was held at the Meru Valley Clubhouse lobby and was open to the public.

The explosive night of entertainment was celebrated with Indian Bhangra and Dhol accompanied by Indian instrument ensembles. There was a dance drama of Ramayana with a Deepavali story. They even invited and taught the audience to dance with them including the Cha-Cha-Cha.

The night ended with a beautiful fireworks display.

Qistina Izfarina



Deepavali at Meru

Ipoh City and Country Club Deepavali Nite

It was an evening of entertainment with songs, dances, game shows and the floor was opened for the guests to dance. There was a special Deepavali song presentation. The dances by Akshaya Arts Dance Studio were modern reflecting changing trends. Not to forget the less fortunate, cash donations were given to Anak Yatim Kasih Sayang and Persatuan Ibu Bapa SJK(T), Kampung Simee.

Little India Deepavali Carnival

Every year people look forward to the biggest Deepavali carnival celebration in Ipoh at Little India Deepavali Carnival. This year, the function organised by the new government, was no exception. The ten-day Deepavali Cultural Programme saw 100 stalls selling products from the area, and including kacang putih, snacks, drinks and other items. Religious songs and dances were presented by Hindu Sangam and students spoke on the significance of Deepavali.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu was the guest of honour at the closing ceremony and was entertained by folk dances like the peacock dance, karakaattam (dancing with a pot on the head) and others.

A. Jeyaraj



Perak State Level Deepavali Open House, SMK Buntong

Guest of honour DYTMM Raja Muda Perak Raja Jaafar ibni Almarhum Raja Muda Musa distributed cash gifts to underprivileged children. Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu, in his address, called on all levels of society in the state to unite to maintain unity and ensure prosperity. There were dances and songs to entertain the guests, and ample food was available.



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on

10 NOVEMBER 2018

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MR BOBBY YIN

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MR WILLIAM V. BALASINGAM

MEIN DING GALLERY STUDIO

Nostalgia

By Ian Anderson

Fond Memories of Deepavali, the Festival of Lights

I have lived in Malaysia for more than 28 years, the first 27 months in the Shangri-La Hotel KL. I call this period of my life "Anderson in Wonderland", but it was not the hotel that made it that, it was the staff and local guests who took me into their hearts and homes and made sure I took part in every special occasion; festival, weddings and even funerals, of every race or religion. Those months were an unforgettable kaleidoscope of sounds and sights, colours and exotic food. It was a miracle I actually found time and energy to go to work!

My first Deepavali was arranged by a local friend, a university professor, who took it upon himself that I should learn about how to celebrate the Hindu New Year. It was an evening I shall never forget! Around 8pm that fine evening we arrived in a street somewhere near Brickfields and the view was stunning! Every house was brightly lit with a myriad of coloured lights, both inside and outside. The whole street glittered and sparkled like a child's imaginary fairyland. Beams of light pouring from open doors and windows, added to the brilliance of the scene.

But that was not all, for as we entered my professor's home I was struck by the incredible scene before me. For apart from a table loaded with special festival delicacies, the room was bereft of furniture which had been replaced with lights and lamps of every description; hundreds of them; and on the floor, a delicate *Kolam* decorated with miniature oil lamps, their flamed dancing in the gentle evening breeze. It was time to savour the special menu, flavoured with exotic spices from the shores of India and beyond. But my journey did not end there for it was time to visit the neighbours, on both sides of the street, for more tastes of India, served by the prettiest of girls in multi-coloured, silk saris reflecting the multitude of lights in every home.

Then, around 10pm, it was time to visit the temple. In the Brickfields area, there are nine temples, five of which are said to be more than a century old. On arrival, I was greeted by the priest and presented with a garland of flowers, which I am assured is an honour reserved only for VIP guests. He then applied the red *Tika* (dot) to my forehead and I was escorted into the outer courtyard. Here, there was an enormous *Kolam* with every coloured grain of flour meticulously positioned, with dozens of those flickering oil lamps to enhance it.

Finally, in the inner courtyard, I was presented with two sticks – it was time to do the *Dandiya* or traditional stick dance. About 60 people formed themselves into two concentric circles facing each other. When the music started each circle moved clockwise, clicking their sticks against those opposite. As the tempo increased the circles moved faster and knuckles were clearly in danger.

As I left the temple, exhausted, around 11.30pm the priest kindly presented me with two bags of rice and I returned to my hotel, looking, to the amusement of the staff, more like a reformed Hindi than a Christian!



Fundraising

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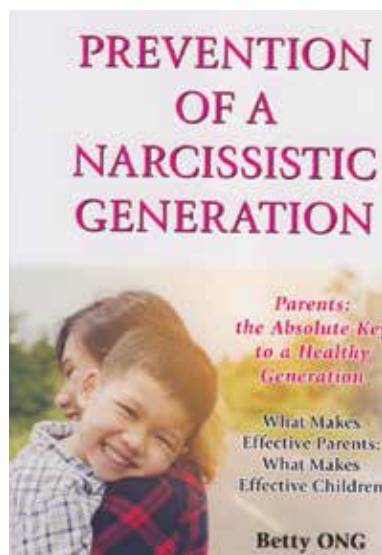
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PERAK PARKINSON'S ASSOCIATION
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Taman Mirindy, 31400 Ipoh
(05 545 5610)

PERAK SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH
Lot 18200, Batu 8, Tambun, Ulu Kinta
(05 533 5457 or 533 2167)

The book is also available at these premises.
Your support is deeply appreciated.



In the pipeline for December:

- CONVERSATION CORNER (informal group): 'Making Sense of our Lives'
- RATIONALE: Get people (us) together to stimulate connections, to energise ourselves to crack open our thinking and invest in mental health.
- DURATION: 1 hour. Proposal: twice a month; 1st and 2nd Fridays at 3pm.
- VENUE: Perak Society for the Promotion of Mental Health (05 533 5457 or 05 533 2167)
- FACILITATOR: Betty Ong, RGN RMN MBACP - UK

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Business

FMM Celebrates 50-year Milestone

Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers Perak (FMM) celebrated its 50-year milestone in a branch annual dinner on Thursday, October 25 at Casuarina @ Meru Hotel. The momentous occasion was graced by Sultan Nazrin Shah.

"Earlier on in our administration, we set up a Perak State Investment Advisory Council to streamline our investment micro-targeting, by matching prospective investors' needs with the state's long-term vision, which I am honoured to be a member of. It is this council that has identified, facilitated and delivered investment projects worth RM1.9 billion next year following the signing of cooperation agreements with several local companies," explained Howard Lee Chuan How, the Executive Councillor for Youth and Sports Development representing Ahmad Faizal Azumu, Menteri Besar.

"The largest investment of RM1.1 billion involves Malayan Flour Mills Bhd who will establish an agro-food manufacturing factory in the state. Another agreement involves Top Glove Bhd investing RM100 million to build a glove-making plant here. The state will also assist Central Medicare Sdn Bhd which is building a glove manufacturing plant in Teluk Intan involving an investment of RM600 million. Smart Paints Manufacturing Sdn Bhd will set up a RM50 million paint factory in Batu Gajah," Howard added.

According to him, the state will also assist Optotronic Semiconductors Sdn Bhd in establishing a light-emitting diode factory in Kamunting, Taiping, involving an investment of RM50 million. Kossan Rubber, the first halal glove manufacturer in the world will meet the state government agencies to obtain the necessary approvals to set up an integrated glove factory in Bidor. Tin miner and metal producer Malaysia Smelting Corp Bhd has inked a MoU with the state for leases of land in Klian Intan measuring 423 acres in total which will be used for tin mining-related activities to expand its upstream business.

"Set up schools, training academies, vocational institutions to train your next COO, CEO, chief technician, head engineers, field operatives and robotics manager. Sponsor academics and scholars for their masters and PhD on how to improve your products



and your production. Encourage and incentivise creativity and innovation by setting partnerships with us in government to build incubation and acceleration spaces for our young and upcoming start-ups. The days of 'government knows best and know all' are gone. We need your help and solidarity. Help us help you," Howard concluded.

Present were FMM President Dato' Soh Thian Lai and FMM Perak Chairman Dato' Gan Tack Kong.

Mei Kuan

Seeking Contributions from our Readers

We are doing a story on the BEST and the WORST (public) TOILETS in Ipoh. Share with us your photo(s) with a caption.

Send to: editorial@ipohecho.com.my

We reserve the right to publish only the ones we deem suitable.

HAPPENINGS

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

Only pay RM30 for chargeable events/seminars announcements. You get 3 media avenues for the price of one: • Print (circulation 100,000) • Website (over 1 million hits per month – verifiable) • Facebook (Free public events are published FREE)

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05 543 9411**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

ARTS & CULTURE

BALLET: 'BEING DIFFERENT BEING LOVED'. NOVEMBER 24 & 25 (Saturday & Sunday), 4pm & 8pm at Jabatan Kebudayaan & Kesenian Negara Perak, Jalan Caldwell, 30350 Ipoh. City Ballet, together with Soroptimist International Ipoh, presents 2 most outstanding musicals 'Matilda' and 'Wicked', a double bill fundraiser for SI Ipoh EduFun Project. For further information, call: **012 588 2313**.

IT'S CHRISTMAS ON BROADWAY! DECEMBER 8 (Saturday), 8pm at the Auditorium of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 47 Jalan Golf Club, 30350 Ipoh. A concert in aid of charity. Further details, contact: Stanley Tham **012 512 5629**.

PSPA SINGERS: THE CHIMES OF LOVE VOL. 2. DECEMBER 15 (Saturday), 8pm-10pm at Wesley Methodist Church, 121 Jalan Lahat, 30200 Ipoh. Entry pass FREE!! Entry pass holders are encouraged to donate in kind, as printed on the recommended list by the organiser. Limited seats. Get your entry passes now from PSPA Office. Call **05 545 0350** or visit website www.pspaipoh.org for more details.

COMMUNITY

SHARPENED WORD ON SOCIAL BUSINESS. NOVEMBER 17 (Saturday), 2.15pm-5pm at 22 Hale Street, 22 Jalan Tun Sambanthan, 30000 Ipoh. Guest speakers from Malaysia and Singapore explore the potential of such new business model in this millennium. More details at <https://www.facebook.com/sharpenedword.kinta/>.

PERAK WOMEN FOR WOMEN (PWW) HAMPER AND GIFT-WRAPPING WORKSHOP on NOVEMBER 21, 23 and 27 between 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Venue: The PWW Shop at 15, Market Street, Ipoh. Limited vacancies. Acceptance is on a first-come-first-served basis. Call **05 546 9715** for details.

THRANGU DHARMA RETREAT CENTRE – MIRACULOUS CUNDI BODHISATTVA PUJA & DINNER. NOVEMBER 24-25 at and SJK(C) Sam Chai, Jalan Shah Bandar, 31650 Ipoh. For details contact: **012 515 2601, 017 575 0755 or 012 590 3525**.

EXHIBITION: MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS & MASKED RIDER COLLECTIONS. NOVEMBER 24 & 25 (Saturday & Sunday), 11am-8pm at Mydin Mall Meru Raya, Ipoh. More than 100 action figures and replica models on display; meet-and-greet session with cosplay characters; game demonstrations with prizes to be won; etc.

SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB PERAK 41ST ANNIVERSARY DINNER AND DANCE. DECEMBER 7 (Friday) at Super HLT Restaurant (formerly Hee Lai Ton Restaurant), Jalan Sultan Iskandar, Ipoh. Music, songs, dance performances and lucky draws. Open to the public. For more information and dinner tickets, contact: Mervin Anthony **05 547 0387/012 508 2946** or Shirley Lim **017 573 0416**.

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 channeled 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).

EDUCATION

UTP ANNUAL CAREER FAIR 2019. JANUARY 29 & 30, 2019, from 9am onwards at Chancellor Complex, Universiti Teknologi Petronas, 32610 Seri Iskandar, Perak. The major objective of TEC is to provide exposure of corporate companies to students. Students will be able to submit their resume and attend walk-in interviews. Open to the public of all ages. For more information, go to website: tec.utp.edu.my; Facebook: [tec.utp](https://www.facebook.com/tec.utp); Instagram: [@tec.utp](https://www.instagram.com/tec.utp); Twitter: [@tec.utp](https://twitter.com/tec.utp).

SUNWAY COLLEGE IPOH WEEKEND COUNSELLING SESSION. Calling all SPM, STPM, O-Level & UEC school leavers. Come and learn more about various Diploma programmes ranging from Business, Information System, Entrepreneurship, Graphic design and Interior design. A pathway to own your dual degree with our Foundation in Arts programme. Fast track to earn your Professional Accounting Qualifications (CAT/ACCA) with us, ACCA Platinum Approved Learning Partner. We are open every day from Monday to Friday (8.30am-5.30pm) and every Saturday (10am-4pm). Alternatively you can email: infoipoh@sunway.edu.my or Whatsapp us at **019 368 1096**.

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.

Education

Co-curricular Excellence

One hundred students of SMK St Michael Ipoh were presented with co-curricular excellence awards by the Member of Parliament for Ipoh Timor, Wong Kah Woh on Friday, October 26.

Principal Sit Wai Yin said both the school and parents had a hand in creating disciplined and responsible students in academic and co-curricular fields.

The school, he said, viewed disciplinary issues among pupils seriously and the two-way cooperation was the best way to instill students' confidence through involvement in co-curricular activities.

"The main focus is not solely academic; co-curricular activities help create students who are able to make the right life decisions. With encouragement, they can achieve success both at school and international levels," he added.

At the same ceremony, Wong Kah Woh presented the school's full colours to 40 students.

Five students were presented with the King's Scout Award for completing the scout badges scheme.

Scout master, Christopher said that the King's Scout Award is the highest secondary school level award from the Scouts Association of Malaysia. The certificate is signed by the King. According to him, one has to undergo certain tests and acquire specific badges to be eligible for the award.

King's Scout Award recipient, Chan Wai Hong expressed his gratitude to his teacher, Christopher for getting him involved in the school's scout movement. It taught him many useful life skills.

The other recipient, Krishna Prasath, joined the movement as it was the most influential society in his school. "I learnt a lot of new things. The knowledge I acquired has benefited me in many ways," he exclaimed.

Luqman Hakim



Sport

Let's Get Physical



Ipohites get to use the upgraded MBI Sports Complex effective Thursday, November 1. The complex opens its doors to the public after refurbishment and upgrading in preparation for the just concluded 19th Sukma Games.

The sporting venues within the complex are the Aquatic Centre, Badminton Hall, Squash and Tennis arenas.

The aquatic centre, named Tuanku Zara Aquatic Centre, boasts an Olympic-size swimming pool, a diving pool and a warming-up pool. All are based on international specifications. Wading pools are also available, one for senior citizens and two for children.

The aquatic centre is open daily (less public holidays) based on the following sessions. Morning: 8am till 11am. Afternoon: 1pm till 4pm. Evening: 5pm till 11pm.

On Friday. Morning: 8am till 11am. Afternoon: 2.30pm till 5.30pm. Evening: 6pm till 9pm.

Entrance fee: Weekdays: Children (1 to 12 years old): RM2. Adults: RM3. Senior citizens (60 years and above): RM2. Foreigners: RM8. Weekends: Children: RM3. Adults: RM4. Senior citizens: RM3. Foreigners: RM10. Handicap and Disabled: free.

Fees for use of the badminton hall, squash and tennis arenas range between RM6 to RM25 based on days and timings. The rates are available for viewing at the venue entrance and counters.

Ipohites are advised to use the facilities fully, as they are built for your convenience.

Ili Aqilah



The Model Kindergarten, KinderJoy

KinderJoy kindergarten had its 22nd graduation concert recently. Attended by about 100 parents and guardians, the ceremony was held at Dewan Leong Wan Chin, SMJK Perempuan Perak recently. Running on the theme, "Our Beautiful Planet", the pre-school students put up a performance.

State Assemblyman for Tanjung Malim, Chang Lih Kang presented certificates to the students. It was witnessed by CJ Liu, the kindergarten director. According to Chang, Tadika KinderJoy provides an optimal setting for children to achieve excellence in early childhood education.

"The school has gained the Perak Education Department's recognition as a model kindergarten. Its success would not have been possible without the cooperation of parents, teachers and the school authorities," said Chang.

Luqman Hakim



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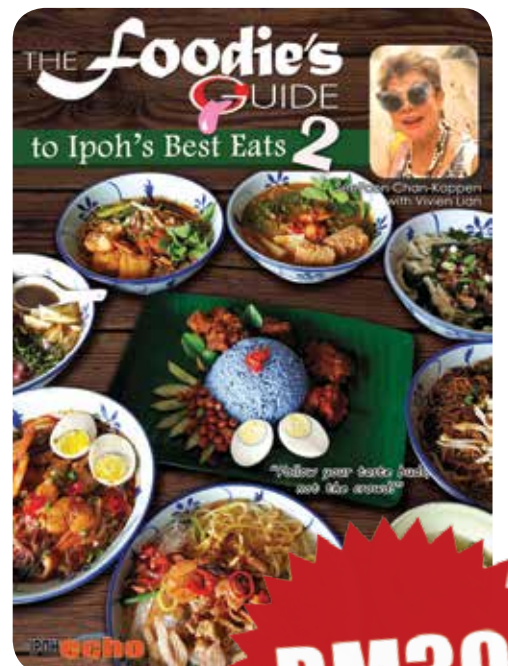
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Fashion



Cheque presentation

IIFW '18: Even Bigger

The star-studded International Ipoh Fashion Week 2018 (IIFW '18) was held from November 9 to 11 to showcase Malaysian-based fashion talents globally and generate funds for the benefit of the neonatal intensive care unit of the General Hospital.

The first day saw a charity gala dinner graced by Raja Puan Muda Perak, Tunku Soraya and Princess, Raja Dato' Seri Azureen.

Present were Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu, Menteri Besar; Datin Seri Dr Nomee Ashikin, wife of Menteri Besar cum advisor for IIFW; Howard Lee Chuan How, the Executive Councillor for Youth and Sports Development; Tan Kar Hing, Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts and Culture; Tok Puan Norzieta, wife of Menteri Besar Kedah and Louis Sebastian, Founder and CEO of IIFW.

Held at Syeun Hotel, the evening kicked off with an opening performance from eight-year-old Lauren Campbell, a junior international model from Singapore and hair show from Hairdressing Skills Development Association. Vic Teo, Ipoh-born international artist and music producer based in Taiwan wowed the audience with his powerful vocals.

A cheque worth RM30,000 was presented to the General Hospital while another worth RM10,000 was presented to Teduhan Kelana, a shelter for the homeless.

The second day saw the fashion showcase being opened to the public.

Datin Caroline Wong, the amiable IIFW ambassador who was spotted wearing gowns from Martini G shared with Ipoh Echo, "Martini G's designs are very premium and exclusive. It's such a pleasure to have them here. Today my outfit has got more bling while yesterday's design had more ornaments."

Ada Goh, founder of Martini G from Singapore explained, "Yesterday we showcased nine pieces of haute couture evening gowns. Today, we are showcasing nine pieces of fusion qipao made mostly using brocade. The inspiration comes from Chinese paintings. The collection is by my designer, LC Sia."

Here is Ada's advice for aspiring designers, "Follow your dreams and passion and you will make it one day. You must really have the patience to make gowns out of your sketches. What keeps me going is my passion and being able to make every lady look beautiful."

Established for over 20 years, this is the second year Martini G showcased in IIFW. To find out more, visit the store at 7500A, Beach Road, The Plaza #02-309, Singapore 199591 or swing by www.rent-a-gown.sg

Other fashion talents featured in the homegrown event were from Nepal Fashion Designer Association, Baisi (International) Fashion Group, Community College Fashion Week and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak.



LC Sia, Datin Caroline Wong and Ada Goh flanked by models



Lauren Campbell



Martini G - close up

According to Dr Zainudin Md Nor, programme coordinator for the fashion design department of UiTM Perak, the 45 creations displayed were the diploma students' best work from their final semester's collection. A total of 10 female outfits and five male outfits were showcased daily according to the event's category which was evening wear (day one), modest & cultural fashion (day two) and resort theme & casual streetwear (day three).

The department's selected inspirations for the IIFW runway were cultural heritage, nostalgia and global issues such as environmental pollution and Gaza at Palestine.

"Among the material used in the evening wear were silk satin, brocade, bridal satin, suede, leather, PVC, neoprene, pure cotton, chiffon silk, taffeta and organza. Meanwhile, some of the techniques used by the students were machine embroidery, hand embroidery, fabric manipulation, *batik canting* (hand-drawn batik), art painting, cut out technique, tie & dye, shibori technique, silk screen printing and digital printing," Dr Zainudin added.

Interested readers can visit the department's website: Fashion Department FSSR UiTM Seri Iskandar.

Mei Kuan

For more pictures of the designs go to: www.ipohecho.com.my



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