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# A Religious Festival, Not a Celebration

By Joelyn Jonathan

The haunting chords of Indian traditional music, emanating from Hindu temples as well as street processions announces the festival of Thaipusam. Thousands of devotees will have gathered once again to celebrate this annual event. As tourists line the streets, devotees throng the temples and the public's perception of Thaipusam is traffic jams, people (hordes of them) and music. Is that what Thaipusam is all about? Ipoh Echo acquired some remarkable insights into this annual celebration this year.

FULL STORY ON PAGES 2 & 6



## Speed Bumps In Ipoh

### Location

- Road along stadium (Jalan Stadium)
- KPJ Specialist Hospital
- Bandar Meru Raya
- Petronas Junction @ Canning Garden
- Menteri Besar's former residence
- Neighbourhood bumps
- Whole stretch of road from Pantai Hospital to MB's Residence

### Main Problems

- Wear and tear of car suspension
- Bumps too high and sharp
- Some bumps built by individuals, not MBI or JKR
- Speed regulation speeds might be better than anti-speed humps

Jack Foo



## It's more than just colours, it is a celebration dedicated to Lord Murugan



The Chariot

**T**haipusam, derived from the word 'Thai' which means the 10th month of the Tamil calendar and 'Pusam', the star at its highest point, is a celebration dedicated to Lord Murugan.

The 'Thai' month usually falls during the full moon (between January and February). As of this year, it was on Monday, January 21. Thaipusam is celebrated in countries with large Hindu populations such as Sri Lanka, India and Malaysia.

In Malaysia, this festival is observed in three states namely, Kuala Lumpur, Perak and Penang.

### Thaipusam in Perak

Focusing on Perak, this festival is celebrated at two major venues. In Ipoh it is at the Maha Mariamman Temple, Jalan Sungai Pari also known as the 'Mother' temple and Kallumalai Murugan Temple, Gunung Cheroh, the 'Son' temple. The distance between these two temples is approximately 7km. Thaipusam is considered the biggest festival within the Hindu community.

### A Mythic Tale

The mythic tale of Thaipusam began when Lord Murugan had a misunderstanding with his parents after they gave the fruit of knowledge to Lord Ganesha (Lord Murugan's brother). Lord Murugan went up a hill and refused to see anybody. Idumban, a cowherd and a faithful devotee of Lord Murugan wanted to pacify him. However, Lord Murugan created obstacles to prevent Idumban from reaching him. Idumban, carrying milk pots, determined to meet Lord Murugan, finally reached the hill top and poured the milk on Lord Murugan to calm him. Lord Murugan told Idumban to bring all those who suffer to him and he would grant their wishes. Ever since then, devotees come to regard Thaipusam as a day to make vows with Lord Murugan.

### The Chariot

The three-day affair begins on the eve of Thaipusam. The chariot procession takes place on the eve. The 'Ratham' is a chariot decorated with LED lights with a statue of Goddess Parvati (Lord Murugan's Mother) in the middle. The chariot moves from the Maha Mariamman Temple at 4pm. It takes approximately four hours to complete the journey. Upon reaching the Kallumalai Murugan Temple at about 8pm, devotees begin to pour the milk on Lord Murugan. Hence, the arrival of the chariot marks the beginning of Thaipusam.

On the second day of Thaipusam, the chariot returns to the Maha Mariamman Temple. This time with only two statues – Goddess Parvati and Lord Murugan. According to Hindu belief, it is said that the day after Thaipusam marks the day where Goddess Parvati takes Lord Murugan home after their misunderstanding.

Along the way back to the Maha Mariamman Temple, a few prayers will be conducted by the high priest. During the prayers, devotees may give offerings in the form of 'Archanai' (gifts for the God). Besides that, devotees also break coconuts. This act takes place when a devotee's vow has been fulfilled by God.



Preparation before leaving Maha Mariamman Temple

The 'Ratham' is known as a sacred chariot. As the 'Ratham' passes by the stalls that provide free food for devotees during Thaipusam, prayers will be held in front of the stalls as a form of offering. The 'Ratham' reaches the Maha Mariamman Temple around 4am the following day thus completing the journey. The arrival of the chariot at the temple signifies the conclusion of Thaipusam.

### Thaipusam Offerings and the Kavadi

Throughout the duration of the celebration, devotees give Lord Murugan various offerings of thanks. Some provide fruits and flowers and some milk called the 'Paal Kudam', but the most likeable offering is the 'kavadi'.

The kavadi was originally made of wood or bamboo that is attached to a D-shaped wood, wrapped with cloth and peacock feathers (the peacock is Lord Murugan's faithful bird).

Over the years, the kavadi has evolved into various shapes and sizes. According to Vikneswaran Sivanadian, 54, in the early years, kavadis were made using plywood before his father M. Radhakrishnan and his uncle, the late M.S. Lingam, created the first Styrofoam kavadi in Malaysia.

M. Radhakrishnan and M.S. Lingam have been involved in making kavadis at their residence in Buntong for over 50 years. What was then started by them is now being continued by their children who have established their own group consisting of their family members. The kavadis they make are only for their family members and close friends, hence they are free.

Local materials are used to make the kavadi except for the peacock feathers. It is hard to find good peacock feathers in Malaysia. Therefore, the items are imported from India.

In 1968, Radhakrishnan designed a kavadi with lights surrounding the frame. The lights were powered using car batteries. "During the riots on May 13, 1969, the kavadis made by Radhakrishnan and M.S. Lingam were placed on a lorry and taken as a chariot when the government declared the official curfew," said Kanapathy Rasiah (Doc), 68, who is also the crew's technician.

Kanapathy carried his first kavadi at the age of 12. According to him, the kavadi takes about a month or two to complete while assembling the kavadi might take two days. The shape and size of a kavadi depends on the demands of devotees.

"The artwork and peacock feathers is what makes a kavadi special," said Sivanesan M.S. Lingam, 60. Sivanesan carried his first kavadi in 1972 when he was 13 years old. The only problem every devotee faces during Thaipusam is the weather, especially in the evening.

### Body Piercing

Besides the kavadi, body piercing is another act of penance during Thaipusam. Devotees normally pierce on their tongue, forehead and cheeks. According to Sivanesan one can carry a kavadi without piercing the body. During the early years, the 'thool' kavadis were carried. These kavadis did not require piercings.

Most kavadis are made with a 'gopuram' (feet of divinity) on top. It is said that each deity comes with a different 'gopuram'. In a way, the 'gopuram' resembles the deity's temple and hence the kavadis are made based on the temple's structures.

### Pre-Thaipusam Rituals

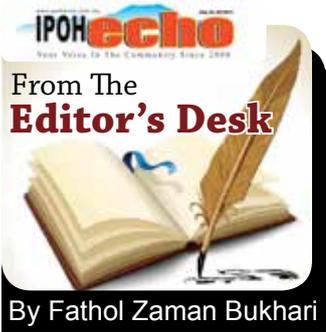
In order to carry a kavadi, it is imperative to observe some of the pre-Thaipusam rituals. Most devotees stick to a vegetarian diet and fast for 48 days. A kavadi carrier, on the other hand, has not only to fast and observe a vegetarian diet but to abstain from sex for 48 days.

"I have my dinner after my 5pm prayers," said Venothan Vimalanathan, 46, who carried his third kavadi this year. Venothan only had fruits for his meals. His kavadi weighed 40kg and was called the 'Paatra' kavadi. The assembling of his kavadi took place at the Maha Mariamman Temple.



'Vel' skewers pierced on Venothan

Continued on page 6



# FATE OF KLEDANG HILL

*This is most disturbing, a designated area of the forest reserve has been de-gazetted since November last year for a mixed housing project by MB Inc.*

The Kledang Range, an offshoot of the Main Range has, since time immemorial, been a source of inspiration to the inhabitants of Kinta Valley. The reason could either be the undulating hills or the greenery or perhaps, the combination of both. No matter what, the Kledang Range will remain an integral part of Ipoh – love or loathe it.

The highest point is none other than the awesome Gunung Kledang standing at a respectful height of 2651ft (808m) above the valley floor. And, as is audaciously claimed, it is the 245th highest mountain in the country. It is accessible via the town of Menglembu. It is a much sought-after trail cum hiking site for health buffs, the country over. You can either walk or cycle up the slope to a point where you can feast your eyes upon the valley below. A tarred single-passage road winds up the hill ending at the telecommunications towers which mark the summit of Kledang. The towers are visible from the city.

The Kledang Range stands like a sentinel keeping watch over Ipoh, a once unplanned and haphazard tin-mining town that has blossomed into a gleaming metropolis it is today. The fate of this imposing yet fragile landscape rests squarely on the shoulders of the inhabitants of the city better known for its hawker food, coffee and pomelos. But at the rate things are going this may soon be a thing of the past unless those in the corridors of power wake up.

Events unfolding the last few weeks have unwittingly placed the hill range and Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu (Peja) on a collision course. Was it destined to end this way? A discourse on the subject matter is desirable considering Kledang Range's significance and relevance to the well-being of Ipohites. Meaning, you and I.

The controversy centres on the Kledang Saiong Forest Reserve, Menteri Besar Incorporated (MB Inc), illegal loggers/planters and Peja himself. It is no secret that the once pristine forest covering the Kledang Range is being eyed by many out to make a quick ringgit. They are just waiting for the right moment to strike. All they need is a momentary lapse of concentration and they will move in with their heavy machineries to stake a claim. Lands in the state are becoming scarce due to over development so lands up in the clouds become the obvious choice.

Residents of Pusing, Menglembu, Jelapang and faraway Sitiawan have alerted Ipoh Echo about illegal activities taking place in and around the Kledang Range. Their favourite hiking site is being stripped of trees and logs are being extracted for commercial use. Those responsible, some alleged, have connections with the high and mighty. They are powerless to act other than to sound the alarm hopefully it would be heard.

And when confronted with evidence, during a Chinese New Year gathering in Sitiawan recently, that a hefty portion of Gunung Kledang has been illegally cleared, Faisal pleaded for time to shift through papers and agreements for the truth.

A stop-work order was eventually issued by the Land Office on Friday, February 8. By then nearly 10 hectares of forest land have been stripped bare. The cleared land has been terraced to prepare for oil palm cultivation.

Oil palm saplings have been planted in areas. That shows how determined these claimants are. They care less for the environment or the well-being of residents living at the foothills. And what I find most disturbing is Faisal's insistence that a designated area of the forest reserve has been de-gazetted since November last year for a mixed housing project to be undertaken by MB Inc.

It does not make sense that a housing project, sanctioned by the state government, will soon appear on Gunung Kledang slopes. We have seen what happened in Penang when hills, ridges and escarpments are being denuded for development purposes. Silting and landslides have resulted in the loss of lives and the degradation of the environment. If this is what the MB wants, the future certainly looks bleak for Ipohites. You say one



thing but do the other.

The question of pleasing some dubious businessmen is not how things are done in the much-touted Malaysia Baru. The *rakyat* voted in Pakatan Harapan during the 14th General Elections in the hope that they will do the right thing; not become an appendage of the corrupt and decadent Barisan Nasional.

The least Faizal should do is to honour his party pledge of ensuring transparency, however difficult it may be. One cardinal rule a sitting government should abide by is to leave business to the professionals. MB Incorporated should be disbanded. Period.

This just got in: DAP Perak, led by MP Thomas Su, has filed a report with the state anti-corruption agency regarding the Gunung Kledang scandal. An element of fraud has happened and the graft busters are being called to investigate.

## EYE HEALTH – Infections of the Eyelid

**In our continuing series on Eye Health, Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talks to us about eyelid infections.**



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

The eyelid has an important protective function over the eyeball, separating the eyeball from the external environment to keep out dust and other foreign materials. Additionally, with every blink it evenly spreads the lubricant tear film over the front of the eyeball (*cornea and conjunctiva*). Like any other area of the skin, it is not spared from various infections that may affect it. There are two main eyelid infections that commonly may occur. They are, stye and blepharitis.



In this issue, Dr Gill talks about about a condition called stye, which is an **infection of the hair follicle of an eye lash**. It is also known as hordeolum. It presents as a small painful bump on the outside (external hordeolum) or on the inside (internal hordeolum) of the eyelid. It basically **looks like a pimple on the eyelid** (called "ketumbit" in Bahasa Malaysia).

A stye is not harmful to vision but does cause a discomfort to the eye. It can occur at any age but most often affects infants and children. It is most often caused by bacteria called staphylococcus which is found in high concentrations within the nose and therefore is easily transferred to the eyelids by unwashed fingers!

When the eyelash follicles get infected with the bacteria, it swells up and becomes filled with pus. The eyelash follicle then looks like it has a pimple on the eyelid that becomes red and painful.

### SYMPTOMS:

- Painful swollen and red eyelid.
- Droopiness of the affected eyelid
- A more localised swelling with pus collection as time goes by
- Tearing or watering of the eye, and increased sensitivity to light occasionally
- Later, crusting on the eyelashes if the stye ruptures and pus is expelled out.

### CAUSES:

Pretty much everyone has the potential to develop a stye without any outside contamination since it is most often caused by bacteria from the nose. This bacteria is transferred easily to the eye especially when you rub first your nose, then your eye.

However, people with certain chronic conditions like diabetes mellitus, chronic skin conditions (seborrhoea) and chronic illnesses that reduce immunity are more prone to developing styes than the general population.

### TREATMENT:

Most styes heal on their own within a few days. Warm compresses applied for 10 to 15 minutes, 3-4 times a day, help to relieve the pain and may help "ripen" the stye very much like a pimple. The stye eventually usually ruptures to drain the pus collection and finally heals. Remember never to "pop" a stye like a pimple; but always allow it to rupture on its own. The internal type of stye (that appears inside the eyelid) may sometimes not heal and therefore require drainage of the pus by an eye doctor. For such cases, an antibiotic eye ointment is commonly prescribed along with perhaps an oral antibiotic depending on the severity. If you suspect you have a stye that keeps on worsening, seek medical attention.

For more information, please call Gill Eye Specialist Centre, Hospital Fatimah **05 545 5582** or email [gillyeyecentre@dr.com](mailto:gillyeyecentre@dr.com)

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# Thank goodness, no-one in the Perak administration has a fake degree

**F**ake news. Fake food. Fake degrees. What more do we need?

Some politicians should be careful of the past catching up with them. This happened to Senator Marzuki Yahya, who is also the Deputy Foreign Minister when his academic credentials were laid bare, for all to see.

When Marzuki made his false claim about his academic credentials, many in Perak, breathed a sigh of relief. Some said, "Aren't we fortunate, that no-one in the Perak state administration, is as distrustful as Marzuki?"

It all started on Facebook when Marzuki was accused of falsely claiming to have a Bachelor's degree, in Business Administration, from The University of Cambridge.

An activist, Muhsin Abdul Latheef, had lodged a police report over Marzuki's false claim. He said that despite Marzuki's insistence that he had obtained his degree via distance learning, his enquiries confirmed that The University of Cambridge does not award such distance learning degrees.

When people started to question his fake degree, Marzuki stood his ground.

He lashed out against these allegations, which he said were malicious and were being used to tarnish his reputation. He accused others of "political games" and stressed that he would produce proof of his credentials.

Someone must have talked some sense into him, and that it was futile to protest his innocence as he was only digging a deeper hole for himself.

When he finally had to face the nation's outrage, Marzuki said that others had misunderstood his credentials. He admitted that he had not studied at The University of Cambridge, but at Cambridge International University, in America.

He said, "I was doing logistics (before joining politics). So I just took that certificate for my knowledge to expand my business."

One of the programmes listed on the US institution's website is "logistics".

On its website, Cambridge International University states that it "is not accredited by an accrediting agency recognised by the United States Secretary of Education".

It offers 150 programmes, including "casino management" and it only has 25 faculty members. One profile picture of a female faculty member has a watermark that appears to come from an American dating website.

There are now calls for his resignation, and at least one English broadsheet newspaper, The Telegraph, has printed the Marzuki story and his deception.

So, why do people lie? Why do politicians pretend to be who they are not, or have academic credentials which they do not possess?

Do they have an inferiority complex? Do they have delusions of grandeur?

Why do they feel the need to impress others with fabulous claims? Do they not realise that lying or making false representations is wrong? When they are found out, they lose all credibility.

If they are prone to have lied on one small point, how many other times have they lied? We cannot have politicians who lie, who are dishonest and are incompetent.

Have these politicians been brainwashed by the Ketuanan Baru and NEP complex? Do they think that they need not work hard to be successful?

I know many people who are so ashamed of themselves, their family, or their roots, that they are prepared to lie to impress others. In the end, they end up looking like fools and people belittle them even more.

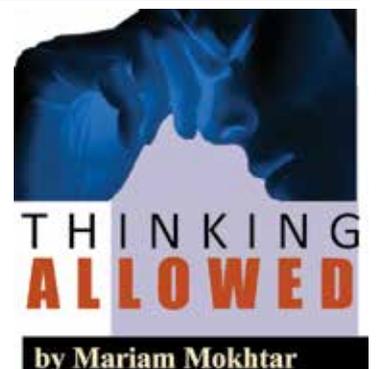
Politicians like Marzuki, who mislead the public, do it to feed their egos. They also play to the crowd. They are aware that Malaysians are a sop for titles, honorifics and awards.

Datukships can be purchased, and in some instances, gang leaders with a Datukship can be treated like royalty. They do it to cleanse their image.

When Marzuki purchased his degree, he tarnished all the other graduates who worked hard to get their degrees from credible universities.

Marzuki is aware that the more prestigious the degree, the more respect, the holder will gain.

People ought to realise that the university which



awarded the degree is less important than the use to which we apply the knowledge.

There was one Oxford graduate, in the previous Cabinet, who did not recognise that he was serving a kleptocrat. One does not need a degree to recognise a thief.

When will politicians, like Marzuki, understand that it is perfectly alright not to have a degree; but it is not okay to lie about having a false one.

One does not need a good University degree to become a successful politician, but one does need to be honest and upright.

Marzuki failed the test in decency and integrity. He made false claims because he knew we would fall for someone with a degree from a world-renowned university, like The University of Cambridge. Little did we expect that he holds a useless certificate, from an unrecognised and virtually unknown, Cambridge International University.

So, how many other skeletons are hiding in Marzuki's closet?

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/02/07/malaysia-deputy-foreign-minister-urged-quit-fake-cambridge-degree/>

## Let's Discover...

# The Origins of "Kai Si Hor Fun"

**I**n recent times, Ipoh has been receiving a lot of attention from food critics around the world, and rightfully so. Here in Ipoh, our culinary traditions are derived predominantly from the Cantonese and Hakka – sometimes even fusing the two or crossing it with other groups. Among the many dishes that spawned as a result of this is the famous bowl of *Kai Si Hor Fun* (shredded chicken rice noodles) that we all know and love today.

During the tin mining boom in the early 20th century, the Kinta Valley was one of the most high-yielding tin mining areas on the planet. Around the same time, China was also undergoing significant changes in its political, social and economic landscape, that combined to create the push-factors that eventually drove the Chinese to a little tin mining town in British Malaya, "Paloh" as they used to call Ipoh.

The Guangdong and Hakka immigrants, in particular, brought with them their local dish in the form of *Kai Si Hor Fun*. As the miners were far away from home in search of wealth together with feeling homesick, they began to cook up bowls of the Tianhe District specialty. Quickly, the miners realised they could start selling these to the locals – and business blossomed.

Just like Malaysia, the meek little bowl of *Kai Si Hor Fun* too saw an evolution. To add a local twist to it, vendors started boiling prawn heads and shells sourced from Tanjung Tualang to release the savoury flavours that also gives it the orangey hues we see today in noodles prepared by stalls such as the ones in Moon De Moon and Thean Chun. The aroma from the crustaceans turned out to blend unbelievably well with the sweet chicken broth.

The most interesting part is that the two most sought-after locations for the dish – Thean Chun and the stall in Loke Wooi Kee coffeeshop – were started by Hokkien immigrants from Nan'an City in Fujian Province, China. This makes complete sense as the Hokkien palate is accustomed to combining meat and seafood together (Hokkien Mee, anyone?). However, the original recipe from China did not have this distinctive property which makes our local recipe quite the unique one.

All in all, it is safe to say that our array of different delicacies and delights had an origin that is humble and full of anecdotes, and this comes as no surprise and that is why Ipoh food is always mentioned in a conversation to be the best, ever.

Jack Foo



# SeeFoon Stumbles Across a Secret Temptation – Red Inn

Pics by Vivien Lian

There is no signboard anywhere. I thought I was in the wrong place. But Foodie Kaki **Ginla Chew** who is my ‘recee food scout’ gave me the correct address. What she forgot to mention was to just push on the unpretentious wooden door and walk right in.

It reminded me of that mouldy oldie, *Hernando’s Hideaway* (and I know this betrays my vintage), *The Pajama Game...I know a dark secluded place...Just knock three times and whisper low....* (google the lyrics)

And what a hive of activity I stumbled upon. Nothing illicit mind you. In fact, it is one of the new “must go” places, if not for the food, then for the drinks, music and ambience.

Located on the corner of Jalan Sultan Yussuf, opposite the Bajet Hotel, diagonally opposite Market Place on Jalan Market, Red Inn Hotpot is the go-to place for deluxe hot pot downstairs and ingeniously curated cocktails upstairs.

## Memories of Ancient China

Aiming to evoke nostalgic memories of Ancient Shanghai, the decor is in the current rave “shabby chic” Ipoh style, with unplastered walls and old-style Chinese furniture and loads of ‘orientalia’ scattered about the restaurant and the bar upstairs. The word *scattered* is used loosely here as there is focused intent in creating the ambience of nonchalance.

## Raison D’être

But there is nothing nonchalant in the food they serve nor in the drinks menu upstairs.

Hotpot is the *raison d’être* to come here. First you choose your soup base. There is a choice of Ma Lat (the Szechuan red pepper) broth which has the distinctive tongue numbing effect to ameliorate the chilli burn; the Signature Sake broth; a fresh tomato soup; the ubiquitous Pork Bone soup and the *pièce de résistance*, their Fresh Clam Soup. The price per soup is RM20 with a special of “four for the price of three” and Clam Soup is RM40. Their pots are able to hold four different soup bases so it’s a great opportunity to order a mixture so your guests can choose to suit their palate. Top ups are included.

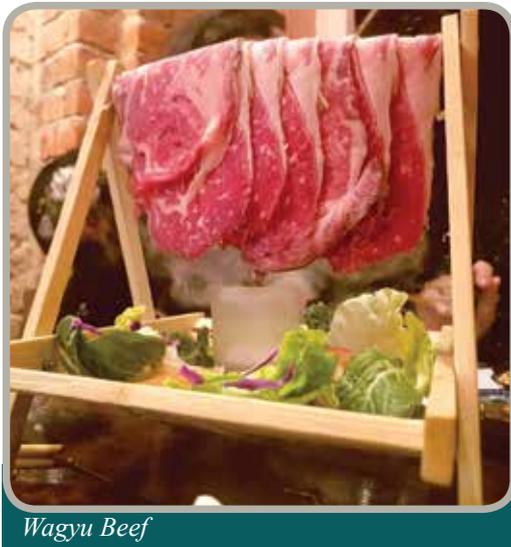
## Fun Begins

Now the fun begins. There is a choice of 10 sauces for dipping with the main ones of Szechuan, satay, signature and sesame to which can be added spring onions, coriander, garlic, birds eye chillies, lime wedges; all of which are lined up in a help-yourself fashion and replenishments are unlimited.

The handmade options include pork, beef, lamb and shrimp meatballs, large, round and juicy. Particularly yummy are their pork (RM7-RM12 half/full portions) and shrimp meatballs (RM10-18) half/full. And you have a choice of handmade spinach or tomato noodles (RM5-9 half/full).

In the meat section, the specials here are their Iberico pork slices (RM26-48 half/full) and their Wagyu Beef (marbling 6/7 RM58-98 half/full) while the usual pork belly, lamb loin, chicken breast and (unusual) duck breast is on offer.

Naturally, there is a cornucopia of other goodies like fried snacks while you wait from fish skin (RM5-12) to pork belly (RM10-18); a selection of fish, a wide range of vegetables, other



Wagyu Beef

noodles and other exotic offerings like pig’s kidneys and liver and the list goes on.

## Upstairs Bar

And I haven’t even talked about the bar upstairs! The drinks upstairs are nothing short of superlative. Here the cocktails steal the show.

Using mundane ingredients which we all take for granted, Desmond the star mixologist combines it with ordinary brands like Beefeater Gin and produces a delight with **Dou Fu Fa** (soya milk), Vanilla syrup and elderflower liqueur, tops it with a chrysanthemum flower and serves it in a Chinese tea mug. Deliciousness itself. Not too sweet even for my non-sweet tooth, RM28.

The next drink had me swooning with nostalgia to see my childhood cough syrup and treats served with such ingenuity. **Pei pa koa**, also known as loquat syrup, is a herbal remedy which has historically been used by the Chinese for coughing and sore throat. Having grown up with this and the **Ga Hing Tse (plum liquorice)** as a treat to soothe childhood tantrums, I was delighted to see it combined with bourbon, triple sec, orange peel, and served in an elegant Chinese wine pourer with the delicate wine cups rimmed with sour plum powder. Kudos for creativity (see pic above).

The next drink was **Ha Gu Cao (Prunella)** honey, ginger, lime and gin. Tangy and interesting. And the list of other interesting cocktails do go on. All RM28 with the exception of the champagne cocktail at RM58. I did want to taste some of their more unusual gins and tried their **Botanist Gin** on the rocks which came with fresh basil and cucumber. Tantalising, fresh and uplifting.

Star mixologist **Desmond Beh**, an Ipoh boy who has worked in Singapore for nine years (and still does), together with his Ipoh mates **Fly Wong** and **Seng Yung Khuat** (both chefs and manager who helm the food part downstairs), started Red Inn in Ipoh only just a few months ago. It is so heartening to see young people return to Ipoh and this enterprising trio appear to be onto a good formula, judging from the people waiting on the pavement outside.

Welcome to the Ipoh Food scene. Long may you create and prosper.

**Red Inn Hotpot**  
124 Jalan Sultan Yussuf, 30000 Ipoh.  
Business hours: Wednesday-Saturday: 12pm-2pm; 6pm-2am  
Sunday: 5pm-2am; closed Monday & Tuesday  
Phone: 012 313 0124



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



(L-R) Desmond, Fly Wong, Seng Yung, Jeffrey



Pei Pa Ko Cocktail



Sauce Station



Cosy Ambiance

If you would like SeeFoon to try your food, contact Vivien at **014 332 3859**.  
Email: [vivienlian@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:vivienlian@ipohecho.com.my)

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

A Religious Festival, Not a Celebration.... Continued from Page 2



The 'urumi melam' team followed by a kavadi

"I felt nervous when I carried my first kavadi three years ago but I was also curious at the same time," said Venothan. He did not feel any pain when the kavadi was put on him followed by the piercings of the 'vel' skewers on his body.

According to devotees, a person will only be able to withstand such weight during Thaipusam. To endure the pain during the piercing, a person should be prepared mentally and physically. "It's difficult to explain the state of mind a kavadi carrier undergoes during his journey," said Vikneswaran.

To reach that state of mind, devotees have to observe the practices closely. It is important to exercise and prepare the body for the journey. He only felt a little pain due to tiredness after the journey was over. Upon removing the skewers, not a drop of blood was shed from his body.

Before starting his journey from Maha Mariamman Temple, Venothan performed his prayers at the temple's main deity area. Family members helped him prepare. During the prayers, Venothan went into a trance before the 'vel' skewers were pierced through his cheeks and forehead. The kavadi was placed on him and little hooks were pierced on his body.

The fitting of the kavadi body takes place before the entire structure is placed on the devotee. This is to stabilise the kavadi before devotees begin their seven-km journey. With the sounds of the 'urumi melam' (Indian traditional musical instrument) in the background, Venothan went into a trance thus enabling him to withstand the pain.

The kavadi carried by Venothan was built by his group members. It had a 'gopuram' on top accentuated by a statue of Lord Murugan below. There were no specific reasons why his kavadi was built in such a way. "The importance of Thaipusam is not how the kavadi looks but the vows you make," said Sivanesan, reinforcing Venothan's statement.

It is important to understand what Thaipusam is all about. It is not a festival of kavadi and chariots only. It is a religious festival and not a celebration. The festival focuses

solely on Lord Murugan.

"Don't insult the religion by carrying out the wrong practices during Thaipusam," said a group member.

Hinduism is a way of life. The younger generation should be educated with the basics of Thaipusam. "Understand the essence of Thaipusam, carry milk for Murugan, focus on your vows and fulfil them," he added.



Volunteers for the preparation prayers at the main deity area

## Ipoh Echo In Education

Ipoh Echo has always been an advocate for English education. We are offering free distribution to schools to use our newspaper as teaching material for students, not only for English learning but also to educate the young generations on the happenings around Perak, covering travel, art and culture, personalities, workshops, health, community, sport, opinions, heritage and also history.

Used by: SMK Pasir Puteh, Ametis International School, St George Institution, SMK Convent, Westlake International School

If you're keen, kindly contact us at 05 543 9726 or [editorial@ipophecho.com.my](mailto:editorial@ipophecho.com.my)

## #IpohAlternatif

### Pendosa: Sebelum Berangkat

'Pendosa: Sebelum Berangkat' is a preliminary touring event by a group of 'Pendosa', a group of people passionate about art, to promote and establish the brand itself. Held on February 2, that was the day when people could buy their hot-selling merchandises, like, T-shirts, beanies, stickers, lapel pins, etc., all of which have the word 'Pendosa' imprinted.

The main purpose of this event is to gain financial support from the local community fulfil their touring mission from Ipoh to Johor Bahru; in addition to screening their documentary entitled 'Pendosa', which is primarily stories about local art and creative artistes from Ipoh.

In conjunction with 'Sebelum Berangkat', the event was a collaboration with 'Another Lo-Fi Show' which was conducted by Amir Anuar. 'Another Lo-Fi Show' is the backbone of Ipoh's finest underground band scene called EF'IL which has featured a few young local talented artistes from Ipoh such as Ippie Gomas, FVRINV and DJ Miko.



'Pendosa' was founded in 2017 by two local passionate youths - Adam Jalaludin and Wanjekk. Both of them are the founders of local street wear 'PeaceBeUponYou' and 'Almost Quaint' respectively. If you are wondering what 'Pendosa' is all about, you may come over to the shop located at 146, Jalan Sultan Idris Shah (PBUY & Drinka Store) or on Instagram @pbuystore. More information can also be found @info.pendosa on Instagram.

Karim Abdullah



## Don't know where and what to eat in Ipoh?

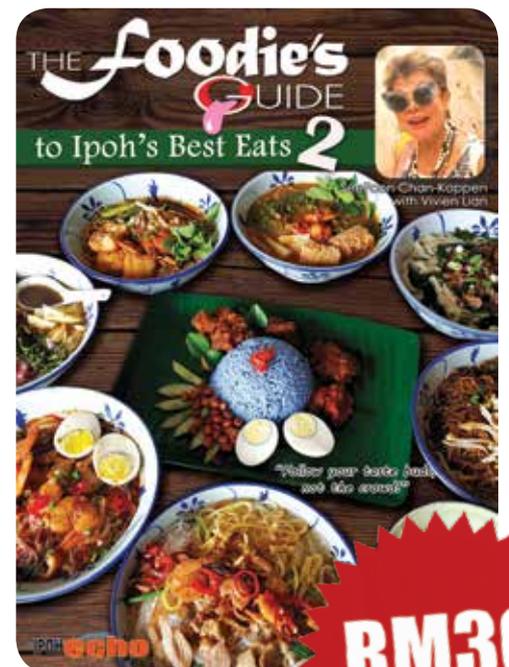
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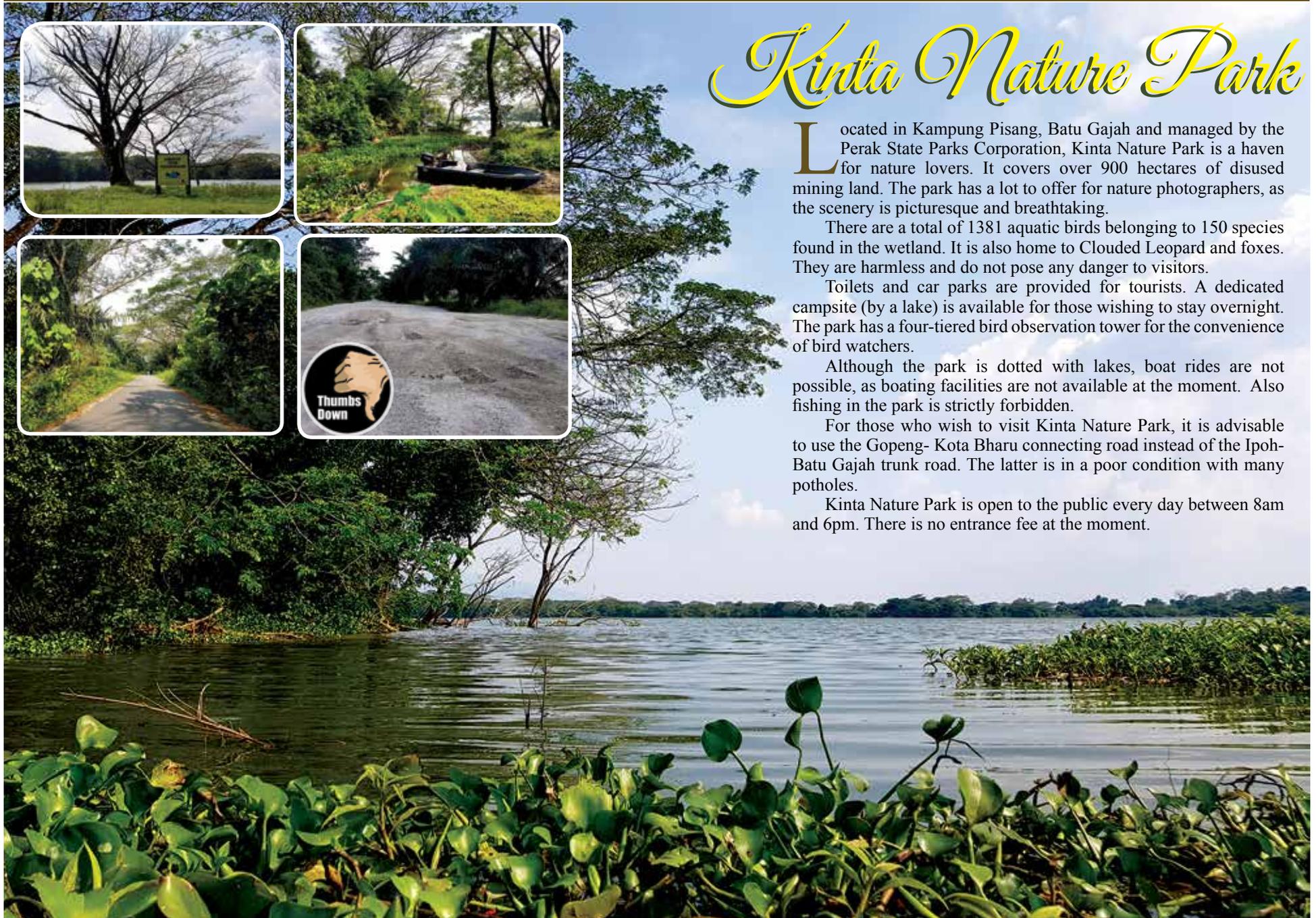
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Available at MPH, Popular, Times, Borders, Kinokuniya nationwide.

## Wandering with Ipoh Echo



# Kinta Nature Park

Located in Kampung Pisang, Batu Gajah and managed by the Perak State Parks Corporation, Kinta Nature Park is a haven for nature lovers. It covers over 900 hectares of disused mining land. The park has a lot to offer for nature photographers, as the scenery is picturesque and breathtaking.

There are a total of 1381 aquatic birds belonging to 150 species found in the wetland. It is also home to Clouded Leopard and foxes. They are harmless and do not pose any danger to visitors.

Toilets and car parks are provided for tourists. A dedicated campsite (by a lake) is available for those wishing to stay overnight. The park has a four-tiered bird observation tower for the convenience of bird watchers.

Although the park is dotted with lakes, boat rides are not possible, as boating facilities are not available at the moment. Also fishing in the park is strictly forbidden.

For those who wish to visit Kinta Nature Park, it is advisable to use the Gopeng- Kota Bharu connecting road instead of the Ipoh-Batu Gajah trunk road. The latter is in a poor condition with many potholes.

Kinta Nature Park is open to the public every day between 8am and 6pm. There is no entrance fee at the moment.

## Waterfront City: High Living



Fancy waking up to a lakeside view with backdrop hills! Waterfront City, an integrated lakeside project development and one of the latest property developments in Ipoh, offers just this.

This soon-to-be development in Lahat spans 303 hectares valued at RM1 billion, features both residential and commercial properties.

The second phase of Grand Summit, comprises 80 grand and elegant double-storey cluster homes, measuring 35' x 75', features four bedrooms and bathrooms, with modern facades and an excellent view from a hill slope.

Excellent Realty general manager Eunice Foo said, "The homes are designed to take advantage of the expansive view of the entire Waterfront City and also the Ipoh city skyline.

"There is ample use of glass for doors and windows, which also makes for better lighting and ventilation."

"The low-density Grand Summit will hold a total of 150 homes, including those from the first phase, over gently sloped land spanning more than 12 hectares," adding Foo.

Located just 3km from the North-South Expressway, it is conveniently situated near Tesco hypermarket, Aeon Mall Station 18 and Aeon Big Falim.

Throughout February, and in conjunction with Chinese New Year, Excellent

Realty is offering a special promotion price from RM468,880 onwards instead of RM488,880, for Phase Two of Grand Summit.

Similarly, a 10 per cent rebate will be given to buyers of Mirage at Clearwater Bay Resort, a project by its sister company, Sunrise Palace Sdn Bhd. Priced from RM398,880, the 20 units of single-storey semi-detached houses measuring 36' x 83', come with four bedrooms and three bathrooms.

"What is unique about Mirage is the 4.5m-high ceiling, not just within the living room but also in the dining room and master bedroom, which means greater spaciousness and better ventilation," said Foo.

Both Grand Summit Phase Two and Mirage at Clearwater Bay Resort are slated for completion in the first quarter of 2021.

For further details or to view the project sites and show units, call **017 578 3880**, **017 5638880** or **012 5762880**. Excellent Realty office is located at No.8, Lahat Mines 2, Bandar Lahat Mines, Lahat, Perak.

## Alarplasty (Nasal Base Surgery)

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

Nasal base varies with one's ethnicity. Wide flaring nostril and large nostril openings are very common among the Africans, Asians and occasionally in Caucasians. In general, the width of the eye or the area between the eyes comprises about one-fifth of the facial width. On a frontal view, a wide nasal base may distract the apparent facial balance or distract the surrounding facial features.

The shape of the nose base, when viewed from below, is generally triangular in shape. The shape of the outer nostril wall (nasal alar) ideally displays a gentle convexity between the nasal tip and nose-cheek junction (alar crease). When the shape of the nasal alar demonstrates an accentuated convexity, this may detract from nasal or facial balance.

**Alarplasty** is a cosmetic surgical procedure aimed to reduce the wide flaring nostrils and nasal base width by removing a wedge of the nose at the alar base. The wound is closed together by meticulous repositioning at the natural crease of the external nose-cheek junction or hidden in the nostril to conceal the tell-tale sign of surgery. This surgery can be done alone or combination with nasal augmentation to enhance the overall appearance (size, shape, symmetry and proportion) of the nose and nostrils.

### Preoperative evaluation before alarplasty

During the pre-operative consultation, a detailed examination and analysis of the nose and alar is performed. 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 the 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 comprehensive surgical plan is customized to address each patient's cosmetic and functional concerns which include:

- 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 of the nose and face
- Photography for preoperative and postoperative evaluation.

### Postoperative expectations

Post surgical swelling peaks at about two to three days after surgery and gradually subsides thereafter. Most patients return to work on 1-2 days after surgery. The recovering time from alarplasty usually takes about 7-14 days in most cases for the swelling and bruises to subside. Any external visible sutures are removed one week after surgery. An appreciable improvement in the visible scars at the alar crease or inside the nostrils is evident at one month and will continue to become inconspicuous 6-12 months after surgery. Routine postoperative follow up are periodically scheduled for the year following surgery to ensure optimal healing.

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

Online consultation is also available if you have any enquiries, please email: [elegantplasticsurgery@gmail.com](mailto:elegantplasticsurgery@gmail.com).  
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## Community

# Bedridden for almost a Year

Members of the Perak Media Sports and Welfare Club visited Noor Azian Ramli, Ipoh City Council's official photographer who met with a motor accident on March 2018.

Noor Azian or also known as Abang Yan, 50, sustained head injuries and some broken ribs. He is bedridden and is unable to talk or walk due to his injuries.

Club president Rosli Mansor Ahmad Razali said that 'Abang' Yan was by nature a jovial and friendly guy. He was very hardworking and would always give his best whenever working with his media partners.

"We felt sad looking at Noor Azian's condition. He looks so helpless. However, we admire his wife for being by his side in his hour of need.

"We hope Noor Azian gets well soon and returns to being the fun guy he was before," he told Ipoh Echo after handing RM200 to the wife at their residence in Persiaran Pengkalan Pegoh Aman 2, Taman Desa Aman, Ipoh on Tuesday, January 29.

According to his wife Junainah Azizah, 42, her husband's condition has improved over time and this was a positive sign. "For almost a year after the accident, my husband couldn't recognise us. Our positive outlook is what has kept us going. Today, he is able to identify us and move his body a little.

"I'd like to thank club members for your support. We're going through a very rough patch now but are pleased that his colleagues are around to help him. I hope my husband will be cured soon," she said.

Noor Azian has been Ipoh City Council's official photographer for 18 years. He has four sons and a daughter ranging from 11 to 21 years old.

**Rosli Mansor**



## NGOs Reaching Out

A group of 25 NGOs in Perak under a coalition known as the Gabungan NGO Prihatin Perak organised an NGO Carnival themed "We Care" on Sunday, January 27 in conjunction with the 37th edition of the Ipoh Car Free Day. The programme held in collaboration with Ipoh City Council was graced by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu.

Present were the Executive Councillor for Communications, Multimedia, NGOs and Cooperatives, Hasnul Zulkarnain, Tualang Sekah State Assemblyman, Dato' Nolee Ashilin, new Perak State Secretary, Zainal Azman and Ipoh City Council Secretary, Zakuan Zakaria.

A total of 30 booths by members of the coalition and several government agencies including Ipoh City Council, Perak Water Board, General Hospital, National Anti-Narcotics Agency and Perak Crime Prevention and Community Policing were set up to showcase the services offered by the NGOs. Over 5,000 people attended the event, which was held every 4th Sunday of the month to help promote Ipoh as a low carbon city.

Among the NGOs who participated in the carnival were Pertubuhan Wanita Prihatin Perak, Yayasan Pendidikan Kampar, Teduhan Kelana, Puteri Islam, KOHIJAU/Ipoh City Watch, Perak Dementia



Association, Malaysia Hindu Sangam and Lions Club of Perak Silver State.

According to NGO coalition chairman, Professor Dr Richard Ng, the carnival was mooted to provide information to the public about the various social services available. It was in line with their slogan "We Care" to make the public aware that there are NGOs in Perak who are helmed by people with various expertise and are passionate in serving society. He hoped that the carnival can also help to get the youths especially school students to take part as volunteers to help provide various services to the society mentored by the NGOs.

Among the services being showcased by the NGOs were health care for the elderly and disabled people, education services for the minority group, environmental and recycling awareness, skills display by the homeless, information on dementia and religious studies.

In his opening speech, Ahmad Faizal congratulated the NGO coalition adviser, Datin Normah Hanum and chairman, Dr Richard for their success in bringing over 30 NGOs and government agencies to come together to showcase their services. He stressed that NGOs play an important role as the third force in helping society with various social problems. He also congratulated KOHIJAU for being awarded the JCIM SDA2018 "Best of the Best" and "Best in Climate Change" award which made Perak proud as the best NGO in Malaysia for its Sustainable Development Goal efforts.

Community

# An App for Toilets



The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has recently introduced the MyWC application to help the public locate toilets throughout the country.

According to the Deputy Minister of Housing and Local Government, Senator Datuk Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah Raja Ahmad Baharuddin Shah, the application allows users to access information about Malaysia's public toilets in terms of grades and charges.

Users can also get information about related facilities available such as disabled-friendly toilets and diaper-changing rooms.

"In order to have a functional application, the Ministry has surveyed 2620 public toilets belonging to local councils throughout the country to obtain the required data.

People can now download the application. Hopefully, it'll benefit everyone in finding the best toilets in Malaysia," he said.

The Deputy Minister said so during a media conference after officiating World Toilet Day and launching the MyWc application at Stadium Indera Mulia, Ipoh on Saturday, January 26.

Present were the Executive Councillor for Housing, Local Government, Public Transport, Non- Islamic Affairs and New Villages, Paul Yong Choo Kiong, Director-General Department of Local Government, Datuk Noor Ihsan Che Mat and Ipoh City Council Secretary, Zakuan Zakaria.

Before officiating the launch, a prize-giving ceremony to acknowledge winners of the Best Toilet Competition 2019 was held.

The 12 competition categories were local government, religious houses, institutions of higher learning, shopping centres, restaurants and schools.

In his speech, Raja Kamarul Bahrin said that the celebration was held for nine consecutive years. He hoped the completion would encourage the public to keep toilets clean.

"The theme, 'Clean Toilets, Healthy Community', will have a positive impact on the public and inculcate in them the importance of maintaining clean toilets. I hope the public will keep supporting the government's efforts in providing good and clean toilet services," he remarked.

Luqman Hakim

Connexion

By Joachim Ng

## 'Quick money' schemes bleed the nation



Some Ipohites may remember that their city was once noted for gold mining. Not gold from the ground but gold investment promising 100% net yield annually. However, the only investors who got rich were the pioneers. The rest saw their money washed away like the sand.

A week before Chinese New Year, two elderly women died in a crush to get free meal coupons. The tragedy is a harbinger of bad times for aging folks whose money runs out. An economic downturn is the ideal climate for mushrooming of "quick money" schemes that promise you a fortuitous cash flow. You invest \$2,500 and get \$250 dividend every month!



Note that the investment is in US dollars. This sounds grand but it also means that your fistful of dollars could have already gone overseas. The investment product may be tangible like gold or financial like currency exchange. It's just a facade. Chances are high that you will be entangled in a "quick money" scheme because it is founded on trust. You trust your own family member, relative, old schoolmate, or workplace colleague who recruits you. In turn you recruit your social connections — getting an overriding commission, of course. They trust you too.

The cash you deposit as an investment pays the dividends of your upline — all the way up. Even if you remain a passive investor, many others will be tempted by the commission earnings to become active recruiters. But at some point in time, the plug is pulled and all the water (shui: prosperity) flows out. The reasons given for closure are usually that the authorities have received complaints from dissatisfied investors. This cleverly puts the blame on the investors themselves.

"Quick money" schemes are a financial cancer that leads to massive bleeding of the national economy. The lost money is irrecoverable, as it has gone overseas. The Ministry of Finance needs to be fast in shutting down these schemes within their first year. It should also inform the public that if a genius could double his money in a year through real market activity, that genius doesn't need you to invest in his scheme. His start-up capital of \$10,000 would grow to become \$1 million in less than eight years.

However, many small-timers prefer risking their life savings in "quick money" schemes because financial institutions are giving them measly yields that are only slightly better than the inflation rate for essential consumables. Some financial products come with hefty sales charges, putting you into negative zone for a long time.

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## Community



### Taiping Zoo's Latest Addition

Taiping Zoo welcomed two new members, a male baby elephant and an African Spoonbill, at the end of last year.

President of Taiping Municipal Council, Dato' Abdul Rahim Md Ariff said, the birth of the baby elephant, who weighed about 90kg, makes the overall number of elephants in the zoo nine in all – seven females and two males.

According to Rahim, the mother of the calf, named Taiping, last gave birth in 2011.

"This is Taiping's fifth baby," Rahim told reporters. "Calf and its mother will be separated from the other elephants for a few days before being reunited," said Abdul Rahim.

The zoo also witnessed the hatching of an African Spoonbill known by its scientific name *Platalea alba*, weighing 50g. With the latest addition, the number of African Spoonbills now stands at three – the parents and the hatchling whose sex is still unknown.

The African Spoonbill has its own distinct features. Its beak is in the shape of a spoon. The bird builds its nest on shrubs and in mangrove forests in order to hide from its predators.

"The births help to sustain the zoo's wildlife population," said Rahim. Taiping Zoo recorded 34 animal births in 2018. These new arrivals add on to the zoo's wildlife population. Presently, there are about 1400 animals from 140 different species, in all.

Meantime, the exchange of animals between Taiping Zoo and Fukuoka Zoo, Japan will be incorporated in the Memorandum of Understanding between Taiping Municipal Council and the City of Fukuoka, Japan.

"Other than the zoo, Fukuoka is also interested in what Taiping has to offer. Their officials make frequent visits to the town," said Abdul Rahim.

Luqman Hakim



### Thanks, but no Thanks!

Someone conveniently hung a packet of, probably, half drunk Ipoh White coffee on our (Ipoh Echo) fence recently. What's happened to our civic-mindedness? Where has it gone?

It's also not uncommon these days to see a neighbour casually walking from across the road with a bag of garbage and plonking it in front or the back of your house, whichever the case, together with your rubbish. What happened to the civic lessons we learnt in "elementary" school, or do they even stress that nowadays? "Give back to the teacher" as the saying goes. Shall we sing "this land is my land, this garbage is yours...?" and we complain that MBI is not doing their job in keeping our beautiful bougainvillea city clean. Come on people, do your part and 'Make Ipoh Clean' again!

SH Ong



### New Year with PEAP

The Portuguese-Eurasian Association of Perak (PEAP) ushered in 2019 with a dinner on January 13. Daniel Thexeira, the proprietor of Cherish Café whipped up a menu of Portuguese-Eurasian dishes to tease the taste buds of members and friends who attended the function. Some of the specialities of the night were Pineapple Prawn Curry, Curry Seku, Grilled Mushroom Chicken, Fried Ladies' Fingers, Portuguese Shepherd's Pie and Penne ala Vodka besides other mouth-watering salad and dessert dishes. During dinner guests were entertained with light music from the 60s played in the background.

Members and guests had a whale of a time interacting with each other in the fun games that followed after dinner and Michael Dourado donated a bottle of wine which was auctioned and bought by John Robson for RM200, a welcome gift to their welfare fund.

In closing and after presenting prizes to winners of the various games, president Jude Monteiro thanked the committee for sacrificing their time and effort in organising this dinner and to all present for their support in making this event a success.

SH Ong

### Special Needs Children get Hearing Tests

Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah (YSIS) together with Best Hearing Aid carried out a partnership event to provide special needs children in school the proper treatment they require. SK Coronation Park was the school where this event took place on January 23 at the school hall. SK Coronation Park has a little over a hundred students enrolled, among the students almost 70 of them enrolled are special needs children.

As the partnership was carried out with Best Hearing Aid, the special needs children who were accompanied by their parents were given a free hearing test, using only the best equipment to carry out the hearing test. The reception of this event by the parents of the special needs children was positive and welcoming.

YSIS CEO Dato' Dr Ramanathan Ramiah said he was looking forward to collaborating with many more companies to provide the disabled with the proper treatment they deserve.

YSIS has visited 10 schools and carried out free assessments for special needs children.

"We target 10 to 15 schools per year to visit and assess them to see how YSIS can help them for their future as far as therapy is concerned to improve the condition of the children," said Dato' Dr Ramanathan.

YSIS's vision for special needs children is for them to learn to become independent and not be dependant on their siblings and parents because as they grow old, so will their siblings and parents. Soon the parents will be the ones in need of help and the special needs children will be unable to help them if they do not learn to become independent.

The hearing aid programme started when Dato' Dr Ramanathan joined Yayasan Sultan Idris Shah which was a year and a half ago in June 2017. It is since then that YSIS has embarked on trying to work with various specialists in different fields to help the special needs children, as in speech therapy, physiotherapy, etc.

Thanusha and Joelyn



Community

# Lady in Dire Straits

“We depend on the rain for our water supply. During dry spells, water is sourced from the highly contaminated river that flows through the industrial park behind my house,” said Nurul Huda, 32, when met recently.

The single mother lives in an abandoned termite-infested hut at the rear of the Yeo Hiap Seng factory in Jelapang, Ipoh. Her three children, one who is gravely ill, live with her.

“Ever since my husband left me, I’ve been attending to my children’s needs single-handedly. I’ve no other options but to strike out on my own for my kids’ sake,” she told Ipoh Echo.

Nurul Huda suffers from a thyroid disease which affects the left side of her neck for the past two years. She has to delay a needed operation, as there is no one to care for her children. The youngest, Nur Ain, 2, is being diagnosed with hydrocephalus (excess of cerebrospinal fluid in the head). She suffers from this condition since birth.

Nurul Huda’s thyroid problem is getting worse by the day but she gets on with life in spite of the discomfort and the pain. “I’ve to leave Nur Ain alone every morning while I send my two other kids, Saiful Amin, 9, and Mohd Amirul, 6, to their school in Silibin which is about 4km away.

“My daughter’s condition worries me all the time. Each time she wakes up from her sleep, she tends to fall and hit her head on the floor. The pressure in her head makes her dizzy.

“I depend solely on the monthly stipend given by the Perak Social Welfare Department. The RM300 is grossly insufficient for my family’s needs but what



choice do I have? I divide the money equally for my children’s education and our daily necessities. I’m unable to pay my electric bill for many months already. The accumulated bill amounted to RM1155.40, as of now,” she said forlornly.

The gritty woman seeks assistance from well-meaning Ipohites to help lighten her burden. She hopes to own a house, as she has been squatting on government land all this while. She fears being evicted anytime, as the authorities have already warned her.

“We can only afford one simple meal a day, as money is tight. My main fear, however, is my family’s safety. My house is surrounded by a secondary jungle which restricts visibility, especially at night. The wooded area attracts drug addicts who come for their fix at odd hours of the day. They may harm us if we’re not careful,” she lamented.

Readers wishing to lend a helping hand can contribute in kind via Nurul’s bank. Details are as follows:

Saving account number: **BSN 0800741100000311** in favour of Nurul Huda bt Abdul Malik / Nurain bt Rosdi.

**Rosli Mansor**



## Accreditation for the Handicapped

The Ministry of Human Resources encourages differently-abled entrepreneurs to certify all skill-training courses they attended at both public and private institutions.

Deputy Minister of Human Resources, Dato’ Mahfuz Omar said presently some disabled entrepreneurs have no accreditation yet have the required skills to manage their businesses.

Skill training, said Mahfuz, would help ensure the credibility of their business in the long run.

“The government has established many skill training centres in the country. If they face accreditation problems, recourse for recognition is available at the Department of Skills Development.

“I urge the department to help these entrepreneurs obtain accreditation for their skills,” he said when launching the Career, Skills and Entrepreneurship Carnival for the Differently Aabled at Kampung Batu 6, Jalan Tanjung Tualang on Thursday, January 17.

He encouraged collaboration between NGOs and training institutions to complement the government’s effort in providing skills training to disabled entrepreneurs.

“We’ll provide them with grants, as an added incentive. Hopefully, the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority and Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) would play a role in developing these programmes,” he added.

Mahfuz presented business grants, amounting to over RM300,000, to 11 participants under his ministry’s Aid for Disabled Businessmen Scheme.

Last year 60 entrepreneurs in the said category received aid. Of this, six were from Perak.

## Caring for the Elderly

McDonald’s Malaysia (Ipoh branch) organised a charity programme at the Blissful Care Centre, Ampang on Wednesday, January 23. It was part of the fast-food chain’s social responsibility programme.

Twenty-six elderly residents of the centre were entertained to food and drinks in conjunction with the upcoming Chinese New Year celebration.

McDonald’s Medan Gopeng general manager, Mohd Azharmarudin said his team of ten spent time organising a number of social activities at the centre.

“Hopefully, our visit today will bring joy and merriment to the residents besides instilling a feeling of empathy among our staff. Time spent with the elderly is very meaningful,” he told Ipoh Echo.

Other than games and a karaoke session, they had the prosperity toss (lou sang), a Chinese New Year tradition.

The residents were also given free haircuts courtesy of Olivia from Hair Emotion Unisex Salon.

**Luqman Hakim**



Noorazidah Zamri, 23, who has a learning disability, expressed her gratitude after receiving a van worth RM74,326 for her family business which she started in 2014.

Her fragrance and reflexology products are now marketed throughout the country, including Sabah and Sarawak.

“The vehicle makes me and my business more mobile,” she told reporters.

The event, which attracted over a hundred physically-challenged entrepreneurs and students, was aimed at empowering the handicapped and the dissemination of information.

**Luqman Hakim**

## Arts & Culture

### Linking Marriage with Mutton Curry

“My mother is my inspiration,” said Dato’ Dr M. Shanmughalingam when asked about his book entitled, “Marriage and Mutton Curry” during the fourth Sharpened Word talk held on Saturday, January 26 at 22 Hale Street, Ipoh.

The novel “Marriage and Mutton Curry” is listed as one of the bestselling novels. Dato’ Dr Shanmughalingam (Dato’ Shan), had written a few poems and short stories before publishing his first novel.

It consists of 15 short stories, nine light short stories and six dark long stories. All 15 stories relate to the Jaffna Tamil community in Malaysia. The novel covers three major milestones in Malaysian history, namely, the colonial period, World War 2 (Japanese Occupation) and the early years of independence. “I wanted a balance and different perspectives in my book,” he said.

Shan links marriage to mutton curry for a number of reasons. “Marriage doesn’t only involve men and women, it’s about the important relationships in life while mutton curry talks about the food and how it unites us,” he added.

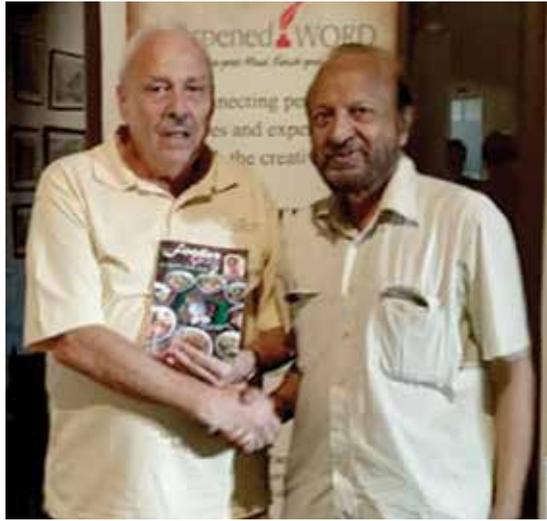
When asked about his readers’ response, Shan quoted feedback from three major authors namely, Catalina Rembuyan, Gillian Dooley and Lawrence Pettener. In Catalina’s response, she stated that the community’s high regard for work and personal achievement was reflected in the book.

He mentioned Thomas Edison as his inspiration to finish the book, “I remember a quote by Thomas Edison. He said that genius is one per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration”.

According to Shan, the reason he included a few Tamil words in his short stories was because he believes in taking a bit of pride in his culture and language. He also said that in the future, he might write more stories that have a mixture of both Tamil and the Jaffna Tamil community. He hopes readers will read the stories, as each story tells a different story.

Priced at RM39.90 (paperback), it is now available at all major bookstores.

Joelyn



Shan receiving the Foodie Guide to Ipoh’s Best Eats 2 from Peter Bucher



### Of Dance and Divine Union

The beautiful art of the oldest Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam was brought to life through “Samyoga – The Divine Union” in January to a full house at the auditorium of the Perak Department for Arts and Culture (JKKN).

Set in the Kalakshetra style of Bharatanatyam, it was produced by Kalpana Dance Theatre from Kuala Lumpur and presented by Ipoh Fine Arts Society (IFAS) together with JKKN.

One would especially love their attention to detail, as the venue was decked in customary Hindu wedding style complete with laddu (sphere-shaped sweet) for each guest to bring home.

Featuring sought-after artists from as far as India, the evening of romance unfolded as the ancient art depicted the justice of the sacrament of marriage through episodes of divine matrimony, each act with a unique plot.

Choreographed by Shri P.T. Narendran, the dancers were accompanied by a live orchestra and renowned vocalist Shri K. Hariprasad.

The enthusiasm for dance shone through and connected with the audience as the graceful dancers portrayed mood via facial expression and gesture.

“2019 marks the 30th anniversary year of IFAS which was founded in 1989. To start our anniversary year with this beautifully crafted and auspicious dance drama is indeed a beautiful beginning,” Shanti Lingam, president of IFAS said in her closing address.

Present were special guest Jayalaximi Kulasegaran, wife of Human Resources Minister, M. Kulasegaran and patrons of IFAS, Dato’ R. Thambipillay and Dato’ Dr Madhuri Majumder, among others.

As they say, marriages are made in heaven but that night it was brought to us on Earth, thanks to the original production.

Mei Kuan

## Upcoming Event

### A Book about the People

No-nonsense writer Kee Thuan Chye will be in Ipoh on **Friday, March 8** to talk about his new book, *The People’s Victory*.

The event should be all the more significant as it would also commemorate the 11th anniversary of the watershed 12th general election of March 8, 2008, which arguably marked the beginning for a change of the Malaysian political landscape.

Kee will be speaking at the Royal Ipoh Club commencing at 5pm, as the guest of the Perak Academy, the organiser of the talk.

*The People’s Victory* is the first book published that gives an account of the dramatic struggle by Malaysians, against all odds, to topple the corrupt Barisan Nasional (BN) government.

The narrative begins from the time of the 13th General Elections in 2013 and builds up to the climax of the 14th General Elections on May 9, 2018. From despair to hope to euphoria.

It’s about ordinary Malaysians, as well as the political bigwigs, engaged in the battle for Putrajaya. It pays tribute to all those who have stood up against the repressive BN regime, those who fought on despite having to face persecution – brave hearts like cartoonist Zunar, activist Maria Chin Abdullah, Major Zaidi, graphic artist Fahmi Reza, founders of *Malaysiakini* Steven Gan and Premesh Chandran etc.

Thoroughly researched, the book tells a story of intrigues, of twists and turns, of guts and sweat and tears. It is an important document of a historical phenomenon, a true victory of the people.

The book became a bestseller within two weeks of its release.

Kee has written ten political books since 2008. The first one, which documented the watershed general election of that year, was called *March 8: The Day Malaysia Woke Up*. It was also translated into Chinese.

Other significant titles following that include, *Can We Save Malaysia, Please!, Unbelievably Stupid* and *You Want This GOONvernment Ah?*

But his most popular book has been *No More Bullshit, Please, We’re All Malaysians*, which turned out to be a huge seller. It was also translated into Malay titled, *Jangan Kelentong Lagi, Kami Semua Orang Malaysia*.

Before he started writing political books, Kee was a full-time journalist for more than 30 years until he retired in 2009. Apart from that, he is a playwright, actor and voice talent.

To promote his book *The People’s Victory*, Kee has made numerous appearances in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. His appearance on March 8 will be his first in Ipoh.



## Government

### MBI Full Board Meeting

The first Ipoh City Council Full Board meeting for 2019 was held on Thursday, January 31. Council Secretary Mohd. Zakuan Hj Zakaria chaired the meeting in the absence of the mayor. The meeting began with the announcement of award winners in a council-sponsored clean-toilet competition held recently.

#### Income and Expenditure

A sum of RM210.3 million was collected in 2018 which was 1.5 per cent more than the amount collected in 2017. The total expenditure for 2018 was 93 per cent of the approved 2018 Budget.

#### Assessment Tax

Notices for half-year and full-year assessment rates have been mailed to all property owners in December 2018. Payment (half-year and full-year) must be made by February 28. Owners issued with E-notices must settle their dues immediately to avoid punitive action.

Payments can be made at the following places:

- Ipoh City Council counters.
- UTC Ipoh.
- Post offices.
- Online banking.

#### Parking Rates

Motorists now have the option of using parking coupons or via the newly-introduced Park@Perak application to park their cars at council’s parking bays. Prices of parking coupons will be standardised throughout the state effective February 28.

#### Safe-City Programme

The council is in the process of enhancing security coverage throughout the city especially along alleys and back lanes.

#### Business Permits

All business premises within the city are required to have operating permits. These include business offices, retail shops, games outlets, etc. An operating permit is priced at RM120 and is valid for a year.



Joelyn Jonathan

**LETTERS**

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

**10 Hectare Clearing of Kledang Range**

We are the residents of Taman Buluh Emas and are very disappointed with the development that's taking place in our area.

We used to see this beautiful mountain scenery welcoming us...as we step out from our house...now it's getting bare.

Bulldozer sitting up there.

See a road path, a beautiful green hill is going...going...gone!! Sad.

Why should we compromise our beautiful nature to some developers who are not taking into account the damage that's going to happen in the future: flooding erosion... the heat is getting unbearable each day.

What measures are we taking to protect and preserve nature that's God-given??

**Bala**

I read with dismay about this happening in the Star newspaper.

Apparently, the land belongs to MB Inc. Do you have any idea about how the land status was changed from forest reserve to development?

This is sad indeed and obviously requires a study on the laws governing development on hillside land.

**Julian Putra**

*\*For more, refer to the Editorial on page 3*

**"Ipoh is a Chinese Town"**

Thank you Cmdr. Anderson for the informative history about our Ipoh pioneers. The towkays Mr Foong Seong and Mr Lau Pak Khuan were well known to me as my maternal Grandfather's mining colleagues. They were probably members of the mahjong club "Lok Lam" in Ipoh where the amenities and services were provided by the "Mah Jeahs" in the 1950s. One cannot miss the mansion of Lau Pak Khuan when driving along Jalan Bandahara towards the Hakka Association on the left-hand side and the solitary bungalow of Chong Soon Fan in Menglembu. I was hoping you would consider continuing this series with other towkays including my great grandfather Foo Choon Yit, OBE, my grand uncle Foo Yet Kai and my maternal grandfather Chong Soon Fan (and his colleague Choong Sam). Like most immigrants to Malaya, they came with nothing more than "a singlet and blue underwear" – a common description of these towkays of humble and impoverished beginnings. There were also famous professionals, medical – Drs Chong Tak Nam, Ong Liang Seang, Ng Yuk Hing; lawyers – Yeoh Kean Teik, Seenivasagam, etc. Their contributions to Ipoh should also be written.

**Ipoh-born Kid**

**Heritage**



**B.M. Iversen Created Memories of Ipoh**

B.M. Iversen was tempted with an offer to explore the Far East by his elder brother Werner, who had been a planter in Malaya since 1918. Ten years later, Iversen did come to Malaya and began his career in two architectural firms before starting his own firm in Ipoh – Iversen, van Smitteren & Partners – in 1936. Among the many famous landmark buildings which Iversen was responsible for (in Ipoh) were: the Grandstand at the Ipoh Race Course, five of the numerous cinema halls (Majestic, Rex, Ruby, Cathay and Lido) established by the Shaw Brothers, Jubilee Park, the Mercantile Bank, an art deco row of Fair Park Shophouses (now demolished), and the Lam Looking Bazaar. After setting up his own firm, he went on to design the Ipoh Swimming Club, the MCA Building and the Geological Survey Building in Ipoh. His daughter Ruth Iversen Rollitt recalls that before leaving Ipoh, her father "hired a car and drove through the country" to say "goodbye to every nook and cranny". Both Iversen and his family had many fond memories of Ipoh. The Iversen family house (built by Iversen himself) was at No. 110, Tambun Road (now demolished). Ruth remembers the sitting room in the house, which had a large desk. It was at this desk that her father would work on his masterpieces while listening to classical music and opera.

Source: [www.ipohworld.org](http://www.ipohworld.org)

Photos are taken from "Iversen: Architect of Ipoh and Modern Malaya" by Ruth Iversen Rollitt

**Nostalgia**

By Ian Anderson

**Dr Wu Lien Teh**



Dr Wu Lien Teh was born in Penang in March 1879, educated at Penang Free School and Cambridge University and is well known as the first Malayan to be nominated for the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1935. He was known worldwide as the "Plague Fighter" for the groundbreaking work he did in Manchuria.

According to the National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) it was Dr Wu who identified the cause of a deadly epidemic that broke out in 1910 that killed more than 60,000 lives in the first four months in Manchouli, a border town in North Eastern China. In the first post-mortem ever conducted in China, Dr Wu identified 'Yersinia Pestis' in the body tissues of a Japanese woman who had succumbed to the epidemic and identified her death as due to pneumonic plague, transmitted by human breath or sputum (a saliva/phlegm mix from the lungs).

His diagnosis was not welcomed by his colleagues who did not believe his findings, which were contrary to their understanding that the disease could only be spread by rats or fleas. Indeed, one particular critic, Dr Mesny, a prominent French doctor, simply refused to accept Dr Wu's diagnosis and wear a protective gauze mask. He died of pneumonic plague several days later, a victim of the epidemic. His death greatly shocked the international community. Dr Wu's findings were soon accepted internationally.

In the early days in Penang, Dr Wu played a major role in the community, both in the medical fields where he worked on that dreadful disease, Beri-Beri and as a public figure willing to comment on public issues affecting the population. He was the founder and vice-president of the Penang Anti-Opium Association in 1906.

Sent to Harbin, China in 1910 to investigate the epidemic, he remained in China until 1937, only returning to Malaya and Ipoh after his home in Shanghai was destroyed during the Japanese invasion of China. Here, he started a small practice at 12 Brewster Road, where he provided free medical treatment for the poor; gave his support to the Perak Chinese Amateur Dramatic Association and the Ipoh library project (now the Tun Razak Library). He practised medicine until the age of 80 when he retired and moved to Penang. He passed away on January 21, 1960, aged 81 and he is remembered with a road bearing his name in Ipoh Garden South.

Source: [IpohWorld](http://IpohWorld), [Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia), [NCBI](http://NCBI)

**Forgotten Buildings**

Pics by Vivien Lian

**Historical Mansion at Karai, Kuala Kangsar**

According to Orang Perak, there were a few NGOs and agencies attempting to promote this mansion as the next tourism hotspot. However, due to its poor condition, the high restoration cost might be the factor which puts it back into the shadows. This mansion was originally owned by Datuk Setia and he left the house when the Japanese attacked Malaya in 1941. The residents who have been staying there revealed that there was a cannon in front of the house but it has vanished, believing it was stolen. This beautiful mansion was once the headquarters of the Japanese military and temporary police department. Later it was used as an Islamic school in 1980 and was left abandoned since 2004. We hope the Perak state government will restore this icon of Karai town, adding value to tourism.



## CNY Round-up

By Tan Mei Kuan & Rosli Mansor



## Students Celebrate CNY

Performance galore as students of St Michael's Institution (SMI) put together a Chinese New Year celebration at the school assembly ground on Friday, February 1. The highlights included 24 seasons drums and diabolo performance by pupils of SMK Pinji Ipoh. In addition, there were a lion dance, traditional dance and tunes played by the Chinese orchestra and Michaelian military band.

Present were guest of honour, Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian, the Chairman of the Board of Governors and Sit Wai Yin, Excellent Principal.

"The important thing we must remember is that we are all Malaysians. I'm very happy to see SMI and other schools are taking the opportunity to celebrate the culture of this event. It's important that we learn the culture of each race and celebrate together. Thank you very much especially to the organising committee for this initiative. I hope also to celebrate with you all the Hari Raya, Deepavali, Christmas and other events," Lee enthused.

The morning concluded with the distribution of red envelopes, mandarin oranges and decorative Chinese calligraphy written by the students.

## NGOs

Over 200 people attended Professor Dr Richard Ng's Chinese New Year open house at his residence in Desa Tambun Indah, Ipoh on Monday, February 5.

Richard heads two very active Ipoh-based non-governmental organisations namely, Koperasi Hijau and Ipoh City Watch.

"Most of my guests are members of NGOs who are very involved in ongoing community programmes."

He hoped they would work harder for the betterment of Perakeans.



## Colourful CNY @ Meru Valley Resort

## PCCCI Open House @ WEIL

The Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) held an open house on the fourth day of Chinese New Year at WEIL Hotel with Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu as the guest of honour.

"We are very grateful to the state government under the new leadership of Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal for the continuous support given to PCCCI. The support enabled us to carry out the Octagon Chinese New Year Festival two weeks ago successfully. This collaboration between the government agencies and NGO like PCCCI serves as a good example that we Perakeans can work hand in hand with the state to ensure sustainable enhancement of the state economy and its development," Dato' Liew Sew Yee, President of PCCCI explained.

"PCCCI will be organising the Perak Trade Expo in Ipoh in early November this year. We are working closely with Perak Malay Chamber of Commerce, Perak Indian Chamber of Commerce, Malaysia International Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers Perak Branch to promote Perak products to the consumers. We will also collaborate with overseas business chambers to bring in overseas investors and buyers to this expo," he unveiled.

Present were Human Resources Minister, M. Kulasegaran, Dewan Rakyat Deputy Speaker, Nga Kor Ming, Life Honorary President of Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) and PCCCI, Dato' Lim Kok Cheong and Chief Executive Officer of Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad, Tan Sri Lee Oi Hian.

The crowd decked out in new clothes of red hues flooded into the lobby of the Meru Valley Resort clubhouse on Thursday, February 7 to catch a glimpse of the performers in lion costume as they pranced around the clubhouse. It was performed by Persatuan Tarian Naga & Singa Chiau Hooi Bee, Kuala Kangsar.

This year, the celebration was made merrier with the performance of Northern Lion and the Neon Dragon Dance. The Northern Lions performed in pairs resembling Pekingese or Fu Dogs in Northern China, featuring thrilling acrobatic stunts like lifts or balancing the giant ball. Following that was the appearance of God of Prosperity and the 'Fu', 'Lu', 'Shou', the Chinese Three Star Gods of happiness, prosperity and longevity to give away oranges.

Equally iconic was the Neon Dragon Dance which took place in #18 of the golf course.

A bright blue neon light shone from the forehead of the dragon as bright fire-red ears flopped back and forth and googly dragon eyes blinked and fluttered. Intricate wavy dragon scales and feathers resembled the elegance of the dragon and the passionate fierceness of the celebratory dragon dance. Grace and strength shown through as the dragon dancers performed acrobatic moves and body positioning.

The event drew hundreds with the young ones receiving gifts of 'hongbao' (red packets) as a symbol of luck from the directors of the resort. The lively affair was aimed to strengthen the relationship between people of different ethnic groups by bringing them together.



## Reunion at Market Lane

The idea of having a culture and art corridor at Market Lane was conceived by Ipoh-born trio, Tan Kai Lek, Ewe Hock Seng and Chin Choon Yau, who are art enthusiasts or talented artists themselves. In conjunction with Chinese New Year, the trio together with other volunteers organised the first ever reunion feast for over 600 at Market Lane, also known as Third Concubine Lane on Saturday, February 9.

"Our NGO aims to provide a nostalgic gathering spot for Ipohites who return from working outstation for the lunar new year as it had never been organised here before," Kai

Lek explained to Ipoh Echo.

Present were Tan Kar Hing, Executive Councillor for Tourism, Arts and Culture and Dr Ko Chung Sen, Adun for Kepayang.

Stretching along the lane were rows of red lanterns and a long table covered with red cloth. Guests were served with auspicious dishes.

Meanwhile, in the morning, there were arts and culture bazaar, lion and dragon dance with the highlight being a string of 400 feet firecracker which covered the lane with bright red confetti once lighted.

## Personality

# An Exceptional Mechanic

“To lead a normal human life, having sufficient food and clothes are enough. There’s no necessity for a luxurious lifestyle.”

These words were uttered by Azhar Ibrahim, 36, who is visually impaired. Azhar owns a motorcycle workshop right below his house in Kampung Batu Enam, Tanjung Tualang, Batu Gajah. Income generated from his makeshift workshop enables him to support his family of six.



When it comes to motorcycles the guy is all ears, as he is so passionate about his profession. His love for the two-wheeler has transformed him into a mechanic of some reckoning. He has been tinkering with the machine since 2008.

Azhar is blessed with an extraordinary gift. He is able to identify problems affecting a motorcycle by simply listening to the engine’s sounds. He has honed this extraordinary skill since he was a 7-year-old kid.

“Maybe, it’s a God-given gift stemming from my deep love for the two-wheeler,” he told Ipoh Echo when met at his workshop recently. He earns around RM800 a month. “I’m grateful to the Almighty for giving me this talent,” he added.

Deputy Minister of Human Resources, Datuk Mahfuz Omar visited him at his workshop early last month. Present was Sivanesan Achalingam, Executive Councillor for Civil Society, Consumer Affairs, National Integration, Human Resources and Health who presented the blind mechanic a donation of RM5000.

Although Azhar was born blind, his other senses are perfect. Thus he is able to earn a living like any able-bodied guy.

Azhar is thankful to the state government for financial support to upgrade his workshop. He felt indebted for the empathy.

Luqman Hakim

## Fond Memories of Ipoh

### Contributions from readers on their memories of Ipoh

# Old Ruby Cinema Ipoh

In days gone by the Ruby was the place to go and meet A Cinema with latest technology and a comfortable seat! People from far and wide came to see the latest film stars A Bruce Lee film opened at the Ruby, like he had come from Mars! Air cond, modern lighting, widescreen and much to see After performance everybody goes to a cafe for noodles and tea! Alas times change, Ruby only remains Nostalgia in a certain way Today it is semi-abandoned shop awaiting a better day!

Nickolas Mallcott



## iSpeak

By A. Jeyaraj

# Allow Public to Participate in Decision Making

When I was on holiday in Winnipeg, Canada, I visited the Legislative Assembly Building of Manitoba which is listed as a tourist destination. I went there on a Saturday mid-morning when the temperature was minus 15 degrees centigrade. In spite of the cold, a group of people were protesting against their PM in front of the building. I was wondering what would happen to a person protesting against our PM in this country. Probably it would be the end of the road for him.

The building is at the centre of an open space which was covered with snow. There was no fencing. At the entrance of the building, there was a security guard who checked my IC and asked me to sign a register. He returned my IC and handed over the pass.

Since Saturday is a holiday no one was working and the place was deserted except for a few sightseers. While walking along the narrow corridors of the building which was built in 1920, I noticed a signboard on one of the rooms saying Opposition Leader. They give due recognition to the opposition leader.

At the entrance to the Public Gallery, there is a signboard saying “Members of the public are welcome to observe proceedings of the Legislative Assembly when it is in session from the Visitor’s Gallery. Question Period (Oral Questions) is probably one of the most exciting times for a visitor to view the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.”

Timetable of sittings from Monday to Friday was given and the Question Time was specified. There is a code of conduct for the visitors, but there is no mention of dress code. When I went to observe the opening ceremony of the first sitting of the PR government in SUK building more than 10 years ago, I was not allowed into the main hall because I was not wearing a coat. I don’t know why we want to ape the dress code of others. We are living in a tropical country and must dress accordingly.

Coming back to our country, the public is more interested in knowing the affairs of the local council rather than proceedings of the state assembly. The decisions of MBI affects our daily life.

As far as MBI is concerned, the Mayor is interested in inviting residents to attend gotong-royong and car-free days only.

The ratepayers are interested in attending the meetings of various sub-committees that are made up of heads of departments and councillors. These committees come up with plans for the development of Ipoh and new projects. Our future depends on them. The ratepayer is interested in how decisions are made on various proposals and projects.

The public wants to know how specifications for contracts are prepared and approved, for example, currently, the person who cuts grass along the road shoulder does not clear the grass. The grass falls into the drain and get clogged and breed mosquitoes. The person cutting the grass must clean the place. That’s how the contract should be. Residents comments should be incorporated into the contract.

The public like to know the criteria for selection of contractors and how contracts are awarded. Is it open tender or negotiated? PH government wants transparency in awarding contracts. Why is MBI secretive?

MBI website states that it is practising Local Agenda 21 (LA21) and specifies the Role of Stakeholders. Under Community it is written

“Members of the community comprising people with diverse interests and backgrounds. Representative members of the community will forward their respective views in the LA21 partnership and to bring LA21 revolution back to the community and their respective neighbourhoods.”

How are the ratepayers to forward their views if they are ignorant of what goes behind closed doors at the committee meetings. There are many members of the public who are

### THE MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE BUILDING visitors

Visitors are always made welcome at our magnificent Legislative Building. When the Legislative Assembly is in session everyone is invited to watch the proceedings from the vantage point of the Public Gallery.

Question Period	
Monday	1:30 p.m. until question period ends
Tuesday	1:30 p.m. until question period ends
Wednesday	1:30 p.m. until question period ends
Thursday	1:30 p.m. until question period ends
Friday	10 a.m. until question period ends

experienced and know what is best for Ipoh and can advise members of the committee.

If there is nothing to hide in the dealings of the committees, then why is the Mayor refusing to allow the public to attend the committee meetings. Our appointed Councillors do not interact with the public and inform of the activities of MBI.

Local councils in cities like Melbourne even allow outsiders to participate in their discussions. If we want to achieve first world status, this is the way to go.

LA21 states the public and local council should work together and make decisions from bottom up. Without further delay, ratepayers should be allowed to attend committee meetings and participate in discussions as practised in local councils of developed countries. We cannot continue doing things with fourth world mentality.

## Seeking Contributions from our Readers

How has Ipoh Echo made a difference to the community? Send your stories to: [editorial@ipophecho.com.my](mailto:editorial@ipophecho.com.my)

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

Sport

# Muaythai Championship Challenge



The Muaythai Championship Challenge Perak 1.0 2019 held on Saturday, January 26 at the Headhunters Muaythai Academy, Ipoh, saw 10 pugilists – four females and six males – taking part. Out of the number, three (one female and two males) were from Thailand.

There were a total of five bouts of varying weight categories for both male and female. The first bout was between Nur Fatihah from Club Tomoi Burung Hantu, Baling Kedah and Nur Fatin Nabila from Headhunter Muaythai Academy Perak. Nur Fatihah was declared the winner. The next bout saw Mohd Fauzan from MPP Helang Lagenda, Penang taking on Mohd Fakrul Azam from Headhunter Muaythai Academy Perak. The Perak boxer won the match.

The third bout saw Pech Panbumrong from Thailand taking on Mohd Amirul Nusri of Headhunter Muaythai Academy Perak. Mohd Amirul Nusri won.

Thai Janjira Chaleenaprinses fought Nor Atasya Mohd Nor of Headhunter Muaythai Academy in the following bout. The Ipoh lass won in a hard-fought match.

The final bout was between Dolla Chaleenaprinses from Thailand and Mohd Rifdean from Headhunter Muaythai Academy. Mohd Rifdean came on top. The 17-year-old boxer is from Sarawak and has been training at Headhunter Muaythai Academy for over a year. He has represented the nation in many kickboxing competitions.

Dato' Zainol Padzli presented the winners their championship belts.

Thanusha Vikneswaran

Arts and Culture

## Mobile Photography Competition

People of Remarkable Talent (PORT) celebrated the top 15 winners of the Ipoh Mobile Photography competition recently.

According to PORT General Manager, Zamari Muhyi, the third edition of the competition ran on the theme of local cakes as the subject.

The contest conducted from December 15, 2018 to January 15, 2019 received almost 200 pictures from 55 participants.

"The response was encouraging with participation from all races and all walks of life. The theme was chosen, as we want to promote our traditional cakes to the public. It's also part of our short-term plan to record a traditional song on cakes unique to Perak," he added.

The competition was also aimed at promoting arts and culture to the community, especially on smartphone photography.

He said this during the prize-giving ceremony at PORT on Saturday, January 19.

Muhammad Syafiq Zainal, 27, from Kemuning, Taiping was adjudged the champion. He took home a cash prize of RM500.

Nooreman Noor Faadi, 37, from Ipoh took second spot. He received RM300 while the third-place winner was Norazwani Ibrahim, 26, from Baling, Kedah. He took home RM200.

Rosli Mansor



## 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@ipöhecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipöhecho.com.my), by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

COMMUNITY

**LOGO DESIGN CONTEST in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of Ipoh – Fukuoka sister cities celebration.** Prize of RM1000 on offer. Contest is open to all residents of Ipoh. **Closing date: 28 February.** Entry forms available at Ipoh City Council counters, UTC Ipoh, Tun Razak Library, Ipoh Tourist Information Centre and online: [www.mbi.gov.my](http://www.mbi.gov.my) For additional details please call: 05 2422743 (Afizza)

**KPJ IPOH SPECIALIST HOSPITAL ANTENATAL CLASSES. MARCH 16, MAY 18 (Mandarin), JULY 20, SEPTEMBER 21, NOVEMBER 16 (Mandarin), 1pm-5pm at 5th Floor, Dewan Anugerah, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital.** Goodies for participants. Contact Customer Service at 05 240 8777 ext. 8111 for enquiries.

**ALPHA @ CGMC (For Non-Muslims only). FEBRUARY 24 to MAY 26, 2019 (every Sunday), 1pm-3pm at Canning Garden Methodist Church, 23 Jalan Keliling, Canning Garden, 31400 Ipoh.** An opportunity to explore the meaning of life and faith through a series of talks in an open and friendly setting. Starts with lunch. For further information, call 05 546 2023 or email: [cgmcpoh@gmail.com](mailto:cgmcpoh@gmail.com).

**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).

**FREE SEMINAR: TRANSFORMING YOURSELF FOR YOUR FUTURE. FEBRUARY 9, 2pm-3.30pm at YMCA Ipoh.** In this seminar, learn tips on how to transform yourself. Registration is limited to the first 20 people. Free admission and open for young working adults. Register online: <http://bit.ly/dmfree2> or contact Debugging Minds at 013 734 5008.

**INDIAN GENEALOGY RESEARCH SEMINAR. MARCH 2 (Saturday) from 7pm-8.30pm at 12 Lorong Cheah Cheang Lim, Greentown, 31350 Ipoh.** Organised by the Ipoh Family History Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints conducted by Peter Bushi, Area Manager Familysearch International. Non Muslims interested in researching their Indian ancestry are welcome. For details call 016 538 0121.

EDUCATION

**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](mailto:infoipoh@sunway.edu.my) or Whatsapp us at 019 368 1096.

**WESLEY METHODIST SCHOOL IPOH (INTERNATIONAL). SCIENCE FOR ALL. FEBRUARY 23, 9am-2pm at Wesley Methodist School Ipoh (International), 42 Jalan Silibin, 30100 Ipoh.** Activities: competitions, science talks, science activities, experiments, etc. Participants: open to all. Free Admission. For more information, view Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/wmsipoh/>.

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](mailto:adudisiplin@moe.gov.my). You can also call 15999 Childline to report bullying.