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IPOH FACES A CRISIS

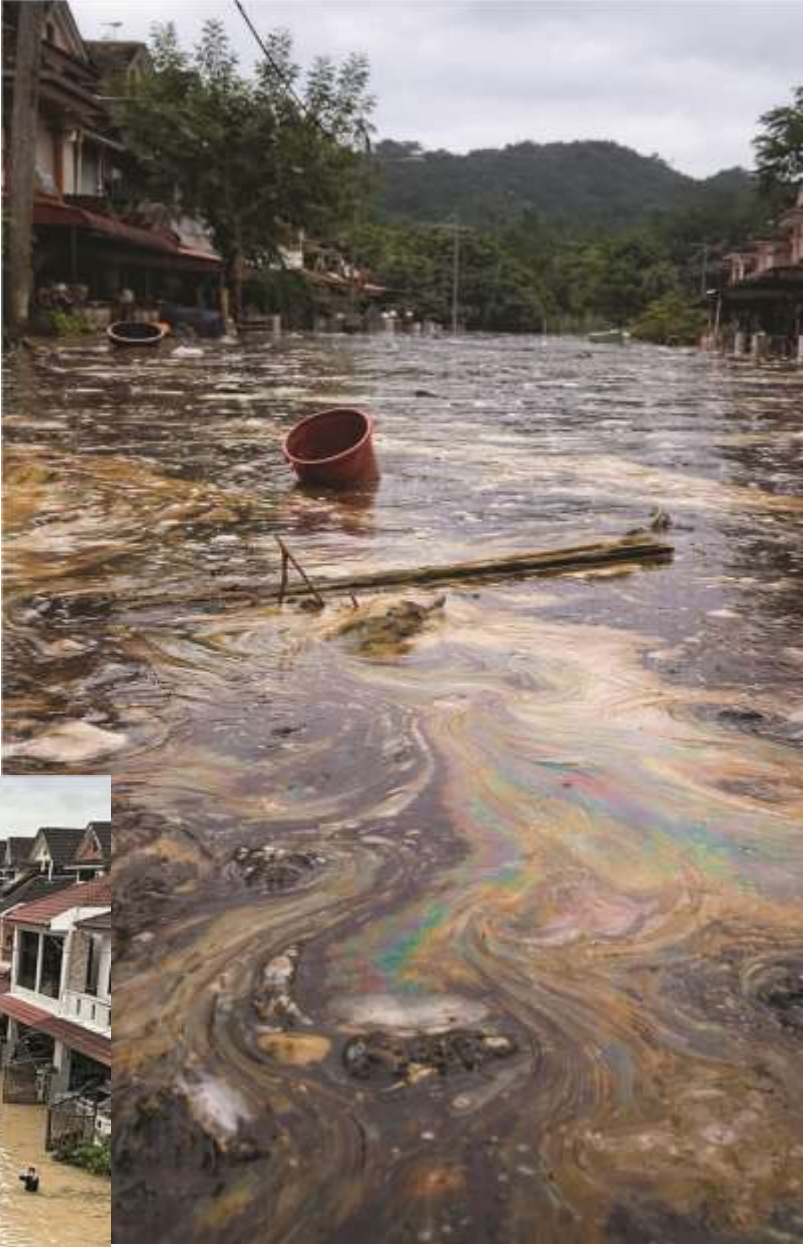
FLOODS, TRASH, AND A CITY FEELING THE STRAIN

By: Zaki Salleh & Aida Aziz
Photo credit: Social Media

IPOH is sending a warning that can no longer be ignored. Repeated flash floods, rivers overwhelmed by rubbish, bridges clogged with plastic waste, and neighbourhoods like Manjoi, Buntong, and Fair Park turning into disaster zones reveal a truth far more serious than heavy rain. The city is drowning under its own neglect.

From Sungai Pari's overflow to oil-filled floodwaters and damaged homes, the crisis now questions not just infrastructure, but enforcement, public attitude, and whether Ipoh is prepared to confront a growing environmental emergency.

Turn to page two for the full report . . .



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Leong King Tao

The recent flash floods that swept through parts of Ipoh, carrying with them piles of rubbish and debris, delivered a stark reminder that proactive action is crucial before disaster strikes. Beyond the damage and loss suffered by residents, the real lesson is clear: prevention must come before repeated devastation.



The Signs Have Been There All Along

Ipoh City Watch President, Dr Richard Ng, said the destruction seen in areas such as Gugusan Manjoi and Buntong last February is undeniable, particularly after Sungai Pari overflowed due to accumulated plastic waste and trash.

Images and videos that went viral showed an alarming volume of rubbish and plastic bottles wedged beneath a bridge near the Gugusan Manjoi gateway.

“Nature has warned us many times, but we continue to ignore it, dumping waste wherever we please,” he said.

He added that short-term measures such as intensive and scheduled cleaning along Sungai Pari, especially before and during the monsoon, are vital.

“Last year, we saw floods in Kampung Kepayang Fair Park and Kampung Tasek. Recently, major flooding hit homes along Sungai Pari in Manjoi and Buntong.



“We need trash traps at strategic points to stop debris from drifting downstream, desilting to improve water flow, and widening the river.

“Immediate enforcement against illegal dumping and rapid response teams to clear blockages as soon as they are detected are equally important,” he said.

Delays and Bureaucracy Hampering Cleanup Efforts

When asked why rubbish removal along Sungai Pari appears to take so long, Richard admitted the issue is tied to bureaucratic procedures and logistical approvals.

“Factors include a lack of manpower and specialised equipment, inefficient inter-agency coordination, and safety requirements that must be prioritised before work can begin.

“Meanwhile, volunteers are often faster because they’re more flexible and not bound by rigid procedures. This shows the need to improve the government’s response system,” he added.

For many residents, the floods have been traumatic. Furniture and personal belongings were destroyed and left unusable.

Tech-Based Monitoring Needed

Richard proposed the installation of monitoring systems such as waterlevel sensors and real-time blockage detection.

“Drones can be used for routine monitoring of river stretches, along with early-warning systems including CCTV at known dumping hotspots,” he said.

But at the core of it, he stressed, public awareness remains the most critical long-term factor.

This includes continuous education through community and school programmes, and cultivating a sense of community ownership over rivers.

“Long-term strategies include Integrated River Basin Management, improving drainage infrastructure, and more systematic land-use planning to prevent development in high-risk areas.”

Crucially, he said, the flooding issues along Sungai Pari are not merely technical; they involve governance, public attitude, and systemic management.

It will take a combination of immediate action, technology, public awareness and sustainable long-term planning. All government agencies involved must act proactively based on rainfall trends and projected rainfall volume,” he said.

Clogged Drains and Rivers: A Mirror of Urban Habits

The issue of indiscriminate dumping into drains and rivers resurfaced after the February floods in Gugusan Manjoi, where just two hours of heavy rain were enough to transform residential areas.

A viral image showing heaps of garbage stuck beneath a bridge along Sungai Pari highlighted the continuing lack of civic consciousness among certain residents.

More worrying, this irresponsible behaviour not only pollutes the environment but is a major factor behind clogged drainage systems — the primary cause of flash floods.

Without a drastic change, similar incidents may recur every time heavy rain hits.

Two years ago, social media was flooded with videos and photographs of knee-high, rubbish-filled water around Arena Kepayang Putra in Fair Park. Residents and rescue teams were forced to wade through debris and oil-contaminated floodwaters.

Education Without Enforcement Is Not Enough

This raises the question: how committed are the authorities to educating the public about the importance of keeping rivers and drains clean?

Has the current approach relied too heavily on the hope that civic awareness will naturally appear without firm intervention?

At the same time, enforcement remains inconsistent, especially in monitoring premises and homes located near waterways.

The absence of regular inspections allows irresponsible individuals to continue treating rivers as dumping grounds.

Despite numerous awareness campaigns, many have been largely cosmetic with little long-term impact.

Cleanliness slogans without consistent, decisive action risk becoming mere rhetoric.

A Collective Effort Needed

Solving this issue will require a combination of education, firm enforcement and coordinated commitment among all parties, not seasonal campaigns that fade as quickly as they are launched.



Ipoh Floods: Nature’s Warning Is Clear, What Are We Going To Do?



Council Members: Not Just a Title, But a Responsibility to the People

●By: Zaki Salleh

Expectations for municipal services are



Rewriting the Standard of Shine: Luxury Detailing, Reimagined for Modern Living

●By: KT Leong



For many car owners today, maintaining a pristine vehicle often clashes with the reality of a demanding schedule. Between long working hours and the inconvenience of driving to a detailing shop only to wait in line, professional car care can feel more like a burden than a benefit.

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Founded by young entrepreneur Kevin Kumar, the brand represents a new generation of businesses in Ipoh, one that prioritises innovation, convenience, and elevated service standards. With a vision to modernise automotive care, Kevin introduced a concept that brings premium detailing directly to the customer's doorstep.

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The result is more than just a clean car—it's a renewed finish that mirrors showroom condition.

Despite its premium offering, Buff N Shine is positioned as an accessible solution for modern drivers. Kevin's goal was not to create an exclusive service but one that fits seamlessly into the lifestyle of busy professionals who value both time and quality.

It's a refined balance: high-end results delivered with everyday convenience.

Redefining Local Service Standards

As Ipoh continues to evolve, Buff N Shine stands as a reflection of what the next generation of businesses can offer—efficient, innovative, and customer-focused.

Because today, true luxury isn't just about appearance. It's about how effortlessly it integrates into your life.

To schedule your session, contact Buff N Shine via WhatsApp at [012-246 9117](https://www.whatsapp.com/business/profile/012-246-9117)

IPOH: The public judges the government by the solutions they experience, not merely by plans or reports.

high, covering daily aspects such as cleanliness, infrastructure maintenance, and solid waste management. Every complaint must therefore be followed by tangible action, continuous monitoring, and clear feedback to the people. For this reason, an individual's appointment as a council member in a local authority (PBT) is not merely a recognition. It carries a significant mandate that demands responsibility, discipline, and high commitment, as every decision and action at the local government level directly affects the daily lives of citizens.

Council members must act as effective links between the government and the community by engaging on the ground. They are expected to understand local issues and ensure that public complaints are addressed proactively, effectively, and consistently. Close cooperation between council members and the municipal administration is crucial to ensure that policies and actions are implemented comprehensively and efficiently.

Ipoh Echo congratulates the newly appointed council members across three local authorities in Perak:

Ipoh City Council (MBI), Taiping Municipal Council (MPT), and Kampar District Council (MDKpr).

For MBI, the appointments are for the period from March 16, 2026, to March 15, 2028. The Ipoh Mayor, Zamakhshari bin Hanipah, officiated the swearing-in ceremony, followed by the presentation of appointment letters to the council members.

In Taiping, MPT President

Mohamed Akmal Dahalan led the swearing-in ceremony, followed by 22 other council members for the same tenure.

Meanwhile, 20 council members were appointed to strengthen local governance in Kampar. The ceremony, led by MDKpr President Ahmad Suqairy Alias, included the signing of acceptance letters. The group comprised four members from BN, eight from DAP, six from PKR, and one from AMANAH.

EYE HEALTH - CATARACT - LENS CHOICES

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr. S. S. GILL talking to us about LENSES in Cataract surgery



MONO & MULTIFOCAL IOLS:

WHICH LENS IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Every cataract surgery will require an artificial lens in order to restore vision. Let's explore two options beyond conventional MONOFOCAL lenses. They are the TORIC lens for astigmatism correction and MULTIFOCAL lens correcting for near reading and distant vision.

MONO IOLS – FIXING BLUR FROM ASTIGMATISM

Astigmatism is a common condition where light scatters into multiple points instead of focusing sharply on the retina. If you have it, a perfect cataract surgery may still leave you with blurry vision. Enter the **Toric IOL**. This special lens corrects both your cataract and **astigmatism** at the same time. Before Toric lenses, you'd still need glasses after surgery to sharpen your vision but now many Toric lens implanted patients enjoy clear distance vision without spectacle correction.

MULTIFOCAL IOLS – READING WITHOUT GLASSES

Presbyopia is the natural loss of near focus after age 40. Think of it as "menopause for our eyes." In the past, cataract surgery meant you'd definitely need reading glasses. But modern multifocal (presbyopia-correcting) IOLs change the game. They split light to give you both near and far vision, allowing most people to be spectacle-free for daily life. *image: IOL on a Surgeons gloved finger).*



THE HONEST CATCH:

Multifocals are high-tech marvels, not miracles. Some people may still need glasses for fine work although the majority are spectacle free. Also, some may have glare or halos around lights at night, especially just after surgery. These almost always fade within 6–12 months.

ARE YOU A GOOD CANDIDATE?

If you're a perfectionist, or a taxi/truck driver who drives a lot at night, multifocals may not suit you. Also, those with retinal disease should avoid them. But if you're not overly fussy and want freedom from glasses, you'll likely be very satisfied.

UPDATES:

Newer "Extended Depth of Focus" (EDOF) lenses now offer smoother intermediate vision (viewing computer screens) with fewer halos. Also, surgeons now use better pre-op screening (like corneal topography) to match the right lens to our eye, reducing unhappy outcomes. **The price reality:** Multifocal and Toric IOLs cost 3–4 times more than a standard monofocal. However, for the right person, you'll save years of buying reading glasses and multifocal spectacles. **Bottom line:** Talk to your eye surgeon. If you're suitable, these lenses can give you wonderful, glasses-free vision.

For more information on cataract surgery, contact Gill Eye Centre, 05-5455582 at Hospital Fatimah or email gilleyecentre@dr.com

Recurrent Health Concerns for Specialists at Hospital Fatimah This Quarter

Doctors often see health trends emerging through the patients who walk into their clinics. At Hospital Fatimah Ipoh, two specialists share the conditions they are encountering most frequently this quarter. These concerns affect both mental wellbeing and physical mobility.

Dr Lee Wen Jih
Consultant Psychiatrist

By: Anne Das

Lee Wen Jih says many patients today are seeking help for depression, anxiety and chronic stress. These conditions are becoming increasingly common as modern life places greater emotional and psychological demands on individuals.

Depression is more than simply feeling sad. It affects how a person thinks, feels and functions in daily life. Patients may experience persistent low mood, loss of interest in activities they once enjoyed, difficulty concentrating, and changes in sleep or appetite. When untreated, it can significantly affect relationships, work and overall wellbeing.

Recent national surveys also reflect this growing concern. The National Health and Morbidity Survey reported that depression among Malaysia adults has increased in recent years, with more individuals seeking professional help for emotional and psychological distress.

Anxiety is another frequent concern. Persistent worry and emotional pressure from work, finances or personal challenges can gradually overwhelm coping mechanisms. Recognising these symptoms early and seeking professional support can help individuals



Dr Vicknesh Anandan
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

From an orthopaedic perspective, shoulder problems are among the most common conditions seen by Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr Vicknesh Anandan.

The shoulder joint has a wide range of motion, which also makes it vulnerable to injury and degeneration. Conditions commonly treated include rotator cuff tears, frozen shoulder and shoulder impingement. Patients often experience pain, stiffness or weakness that makes everyday activities such as lifting the arm, reaching overhead or dressing difficult.

Frozen shoulder, also known as adhesive capsulitis, is frequently seen in adults between 40 and 60 years old and is more common among individuals with conditions such as diabetes.



While some injuries occur suddenly through trauma, many shoulder conditions develop gradually due to ageing, repetitive strain or underlying medical issues. Early diagnosis and treatment can help restore mobility and prevent the condition from worsening.

If you have health concerns or would like a specialist opinion, the doctors at Hospital

regain balance and improve their quality of life.

Earlier, the programme was officiated by the Deputy Director of the National Landscape Department, Ahmad Syaharuddin Kamaruddin. SMK Anderson also received a contribution to further enhance the school's landscape. Well done and congratulations to the Anderson community. Fatimah Ipoh are available to provide consultation and personalised treatment plans.

Green Harmony@Anderson Programme Cultivates Sustainable Culture



By: Zaki Salleh
PDH: Encouraging green habits among students and teachers at the school level is a good starting point. This is what SMK Anderson has undertaken through the Green Harmony@Anderson Programme. In collaboration with the National Landscape Department, aimed at greening the landscape and preserving the environment.

In line with SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, the programme educates the Anderson community to respect and care for the environment.

At the same time, it helps create green spaces that enhance the quality of life for urban residents.

As part of the programme, several types of plants were planted within the school compound.

Among them were palm trees, ixora shrubs used for hedging, and caladium plants. Students also painted flower pots and planter boxes at the main building.

For appointments or enquiries:
Hospital Fatimah Ipoh /Tel: +605 545 5777
Website: www.hospitalfatimah.com

Reopening of Lenggong Valley Archaeological Gallery Strengthens National Heritage Tourism Appeal



LENGGONG – The Archaeological Gallery of “This reopening not only revives historical heritage Lenggong Valley, located within a UNESCO but also opens up economic opportunities for local World Heritage Site, has officially reopened.

The symbolic event reflects the nation's continued commitment to preserving historical and archaeological

communities through the tourism industry,” he said.

The event also featured the launch of the Malaysian

World Heritage commemorative coin by Bank Negara treasures.

Malaysia under the theme “Malaysia’s Heritage to the World”. The reopening ceremony was officiated by the

Menteri Besar of Perak, Saarani Mohamad.

The launch serves as a symbol of recognition of the nation’s heritage. The reopening is seen as a strategic move to further global value of the nation’s heritage. strengthen Lenggong Valley as a premier archaeological

World Heritage commemorative coin by Bank Negara treasures. tourism destination in the country.

M Beyond functioning as a museum, the gallery also development models for tourism in the area, providing serves as an educational and heritage conservation insights into future sustainable development in centre, showcasing the history of early human civilisation in the region.

speech, Saarani said the gallery plays an

important role in shaping national identity through a gallery will serve as a catalyst for the Visit Malaysia deeper understanding of history, while also supporting

the growth of Perak’s tourism sector.

In addition, the Northern Corridor Implementation

Authority (NCIA) showcased infrastructure development models for tourism in the area, providing serves as an educational and heritage conservation insights into future sustainable development in centre, showcasing the

Lenggong Valley.

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture In his

(MOTAC) expressed optimism that the reopening of the Visit Malaysia deeper

2026 campaign.

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Is Counselling Alone Enough to Treat Hoarding Disorder?



By: Aida Aziz

Many people assume that hoarding disorder only affects the elderly, as most reported cases have



people of all ages and backgrounds.

He said individuals with hoarding disorder find it difficult to let go of accumulated items, regardless of their value. Those classified under this condition experience high stress when discarding possessions.

“There are cases involving both adults and children, but most extreme cases reported involve the elderly.

involved homes overflowing with items or waste.

Unknowingly, others may also be affected, holding onto or struggling to discard items that are no longer needed at home.

According to Kalki Karl, Chairperson of the Psychoeducation, Correctional & Rehabilitation Division at Prime Academy Malaysia, this mental health issue can affect

“From a psychological perspective, hoarding stems from highly complex factors. The individual has a deficit in processing information and often experiences stress.

“Hoarding does not happen overnight. Elderly individuals may begin collecting items in midlife, and as they age, they struggle to manage them.

“This leads to space issues, causing clutter from the front door to the living room, sometimes filling the entire home,” he said, adding that he is a Registered Psychologist with the Malaysian Psychological Association (PSIMA).

Addressing hoarding issues that have previously surfaced around Ipoh, he noted that the mental attachment to possessions makes it difficult for individuals to be advised or separated from their original location.

“In cases where elderly individuals live alone or with a spouse without children, the situation becomes more challenging.

“The habit of collecting has become routine, as they derive satisfaction from bringing items home daily. Most



of these items are picked up from the streets or from anywhere accessible.

“Many of the items—plastic, bottles, paper, metal, or furniture—have already been discarded by others. Unlike those who collect items to sell as recyclables, hoarders have no intention of selling.

“Extreme or irrational hoarding cases are often reported to, or acted upon by, local authorities (PBT),” he said.

He stressed that cleaning operations and fines imposed by local authorities to address extreme hoarding are lawful and intended to ensure residents’ well-being.

However, he noted that individuals with this mental disorder should be referred to psychiatric specialists with assistance from the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

“Counselling alone is insufficient to address their mental state.

“Cleaning a hoarder’s home can make matters more complex, as they may not accept the intervention, worsening their mental health,” he said.

He therefore recommended that local authorities seek psychiatric guidance when handling such cases.

“Psychiatrists will use Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to treat these cases. Individuals must be referred for proper care to avoid being left without rehabilitation.

“Resident committees should be involved to play a role in supporting the recovery process. Hoarding

How Do You Handle Stress?

Event Manager, Jane Wong

“I usually get stressed when I have too much work at the same time and tight deadlines to meet.

“To manage stress, I take a short break and rest, then scroll through social media to calm my mind. After that, I return to work more focused and composed.”

Technician,

Aron Presley Sebastian “Everyone experiences stress in daily life. For me, it happens when problems arise,



such as a machine breakdown that requires immediate action.

“To deal with it, I remain calm and follow the set work procedures, prioritising what is most important first. This way, problems can be solved without mistakes.”

Housewife, Adzlin Mohamad Fu’ad

“Stress usually comes when we feel pressured, tired, or have too many things to think about at once. “As a housewife, many overlook that the workload is significant—managing the household, caring for children, lack of sleep—which can lead to emotional strain, overthinking, and having no time for oneself. “My way of coping is to choose the right person to confide in instead of keeping everything inside, and to pray for peace of mind.”



issues can be managed and even resolved positively with cooperation from all parties,” he added.

● *By: Anne Das*

Modern life rarely switches off. Emails arrive late at night. Phones buzz during dinner. News and messages stream endlessly through devices that follow us everywhere. Many people feel permanently “on”.

Stress itself is not new. What doctors say is changing, is the nature of it. Instead of short bursts **6**

of pressure followed by rest and recovery, most people now live in a constant state of mental alertness.

To understand what modern stress is doing to our minds and bodies, Ipoh Echo spoke to four professionals whose work deals directly with these pressures.

Each point to the same conclusion. Small daily habits can go a long way in protecting both your mental and physical health.

The Workplace That Never Switches Off

When the Mind Never Gets a Break

Stress can sharpen focus in small doses. The prob- types of content, the more the platform feeds them lem begins when it becomes constant. similar posts, sometimes trapping them in a cycle of Many people now live in a prolonged fight-or- negative news or opinions. flight state, where work pressures, financial concerns and Without proper recovery, the mind does not have responsibilities keep the nervous system permanently the opportunity to reset. This is why many people feel activated. mentally exhausted even when they have not done

When the body remains in this heightened state for physically demanding work. too long, it begins to affect emotional control. People Early warning signs often include sleep problems, may find themselves reacting more quickly, feeling irritability and persistent anxiety. overwhelmed by small issues or struggling to switch off



even when there is no **PRO TIP** immediate pressure. Being constantly busy is not a measure of success.

T e c h n o l o g y Working longer hours and pushing yourself without intensifies this cycle. rest will eventually take a toll on both your mental and Messaging platforms physical health. A sustainable routine must include allow work to follow proper sleep, physical activity and time with people who support you. If these are missing, it is time to reaspeople into evenings sess your priorities. and weekends, leaving

little room for genuine **Dr Ding Kwong Sen** recovery.

Consultant Psychiatrist at Perak Community Specialist Hospital with over a decade of experience also

increase emotional treating depression, anxiety, addiction and other stress. The

more people mental health conditions.

engage with certain (PCSH @ <https://www.pcsh.com.my>)

One of the biggest drivers of modern stress is the expectation that we are always reachable. Messages arrive after hours. Notifications appear during weekends. The boundary between work and personal life slowly disappears. Yet the human brain was never designed to operate continuously.

Many people appear productive but feel mentally drained, a state often described as being “wired but tired.”

This constant connection means the mind never truly switches off. Even outside of working hours, many people remain mentally occupied with tasks, messages or expectations. Over time, this lack of proper recovery builds into chronic fatigue, reduced concentration and declining overall wellbeing.

Workplace stress is increasingly psychological. Excessive workloads, unclear expectations and workplace conflict are now recognised as psychosocial risks that can damage both mental and physical health.

Constant busyness is not a sign of productivity. In reality, mental overload often leads to more mistakes. Rest is not a luxury. It is a necessary part of maintaining performance and health.

PRO TIP

Create a clear end-of-work ritual every day. Turn off work notifications, step away from work devices and do something completely unrelated to work. Without that boundary, the brain never truly switches off.



Dr Monesh Pillai

Chairman, Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) Perak. Occupational Health Physician specialising in workplace health, psychosocial risk and modern occupational stress. (Clinic Manalan@ <https://klinikmanalan.com/>)

What Stress Does to the Body

Stress triggers powerful biological reactions inside the body.

When the brain senses danger, hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol are released. In short bursts this response is useful. But chronic stress keeps cortisol levels elevated and disrupts the body’s natural rhythm.

Sleep becomes disturbed and metabolism begins to change. Many people experience fatigue, poor sleep quality and cravings for high-calorie foods.

Over time chronic stress has been linked to cardiovascular disease, diabetes and digestive disorders.

PRO TIP

Fix your sleep first. Going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time each day helps regulate cortisol and restore the body’s natural balance.



Dr Tivya Soundarajan

Consultant Physician and Endocrinologist specialising in diabetes, thyroid and metabolic disorders, with a focus on long term metabolic health. (Pantai Hospital Ipoh @ <https://www.pantai.com.my/ipoh/ms/doctors/tivya-a-p-soundarajan>)

Building Inner Resilience

Stress is shaped not only by external pressures but also by how individuals respond internally.

When people lose awareness of their emotional signals, stress tends to escalate quickly. Developing self-awareness allows individuals to recognise tension earlier and respond more calmly.

Reflection, mindfulness and emotional regulation are tools that help people regain balance even when pressures remain.

PRO TIP

Create moments of quiet reflection each day. Even a few minutes of mindful breathing can help reset emotional balance.



Kalki Karl

Registered Psychologist with PSIMA and Chairperson of the Psychoeducation, Correctional and Rehabilitation Division focusing on behavioural psychology, personal development and resilience training. Prime Academy Malaysia@<https://primeacademymalaysia.com>



Stress in the Age of Overload



Jeff's Cellar Offers One of Malaysia's Most Remarkable Dining Experiences

By: Anne Das

Carved into a 260-million-year-old limestone cave in Ipoh, Jeff's Cellar at The Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat presents a dining room unlike any other in Malaysia. Towering rock formations and softly illuminated chambers create an atmosphere that feels both intimate and extraordinary.

Over the years, Jeff's Cellar has become a destination in its own right, sought out not only for its cave setting but also for the exclusivity of the experience. It is a place where diners come expecting something far beyond the ordinary, whether for a special occasion, a private celebration or simply the pleasure of dining somewhere truly out of the ordinary.

At the helm is Executive Chef Boon Lee, whose tasting menus celebrate refined techniques and premium ingredients. Each course unfolds as a carefully composed journey, combining locally sourced produce with carefully selected imports and ingredients harvested from The Banjaran's own organic farm.

Guests can explore a selection of multi course tasting menus that celebrate premium ingredients and thoughtful culinary craftsmanship. Each course unfolds gradually,

guiding diners through a carefully curated sequence of

opportunity to explore exceptional labels that would normally only be available by the bottle. Curated tastings invite enthusiasts to explore vintages from renowned vineyards around the world.

The dramatic cave setting also lends itself naturally to private celebrations. Jeff's Cellar hosts exclusive dining experiences for groups of 15 guests and above, with specially tailored menus designed for birthdays, anniversaries and corporate gatherings. These curated dining journeys begin from RM390+ per person depending on the customised menu.

Recognition has also followed this distinctive dining experience. At the **Tatler Best Awards 2026**, The Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat was named among **Malaysia's Best 10 Hotels** and **Malaysia's Best Destination Hotel**.

Jeff's Cellar was named **Malaysia's Best Hotel Restaurant** at the **World Culinary Awards 2024**, and recognised by **Tatler Dining as Best Restaurant and Best Dine-In Service in 2021**. It was also ranked among the **five most magnificent bars in the world** by CNN Greece.

For diners seeking something extraordinary, Jeff's Cellar continues to draw international attention while remaining one of the most remarkable dining experiences found right here in Ipoh.

For dining reservations and enquiries:

Tel: +605 210 7777 Website: www.thebanjaran.com

NOTE: The Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat welcomes guests aged 12 and above.





Wine plays an equally important role in the experience. Advanced preservation systems allow rare wines and champagnes to be served by the glass, giving diners the


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23rd MAY 2026
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CHICKEN QUESADILLA
Chef Kenny
21st NOV 2026
Saturday 2PM - 4PM



BURNT CHEESECAKE
Chef Annis
19th DEC 2026
Saturday 2PM - 4PM



SAMOSA TWIST
Chef Pram
18th JUL 2026
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For more details and enquiries:
Golden Harvest Care Centre
 59, Kampung Baru Lahat, 31500 Ipoh
 Visiting Hours: 8.00am – 7.00pm
 Stephen Yaw **019-5762563**
 John Lee **012-4884708**
 Google Maps: <https://g.co/kgs/BPJboSF>
 Facebook: Golden Harvest Care Centre
www.goldenharvestcarecentre.com



Michelle Yeoh in Mikimoto's 2026 global campaign "1893 - Time on a String"



Michelle Yeoh at the unveiling of her star at the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Michelle Yeoh's Star Moment, Etched in Hollywood

By: Anne Das

Ipoh's own Michelle Yeoh received her star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in February, becoming the first Malaysian to be honoured with the recognition.

Awarded in the Motion Pictures category, the honour marks another milestone in a career that has spanned more than four decades, from Hong Kong action films to major international productions.

Her Academy Award winning role in Everything Everywhere All at Once brought renewed global attention, following standout roles in Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon and Crazy Rich Asians.

In Los Angeles, she was joined by directors Jon M Chu and Ang Lee at the unveiling.

The recognition came during a strong run of international work. Yeoh is set to appear in Wicked: For

Good and will take on roles in Avatar 4 and Avatar 5, as well as the series Blade Runner 2099.

She also stars in Sandiwara, a short film shot in Malaysia, where she takes on five different roles. The film was screened at the Berlin International Film Festival, where she also received the Honorary Golden Bear for Lifetime Achievement, becoming the first Asian woman to receive the award.

Outside of film, Yeoh continues to front major global campaigns, including her recent work with Mikimoto, the Japanese house credited with creating the world's first cultured pearls.

Her name now sits on one of Hollywood's most permanent stages.

WEIL Hotel Makes History as Malaysia's first ESG, Certified Hotel



By: Rosli Mansor Ahmad Razali

IPOH: WEIL Hotel has made history after being recognised by The Malaysia Book of Records as the first hotel in the country to receive Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) certification.

The recognition positions the hotel as a pioneer in sustainable tourism, integrating environmental stewardship, social responsibility and governance practices into its daily operations.

The certificate was presented by Malaysia Book of Records official Megat Faris Hussein Megat Muzaffar Shah to WEIL Hotel Chairman Liew Sew Yee, witnessed by representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC), Tourism Perak and industry players.

Managing director Liew Yu-Wei said the recognition goes beyond an achievement, reflecting the hotel's long-term commitment to ESG principles.

"This is not just about being the first, but about the responsibility to continuously improve operations and contribute to the future of the hospitality industry," he said.

The hotel's ESG certification was implemented through a programme developed by the Malaysian Association of Hotels in collaboration with SGS Malaysia and Saimatrix Integrated, with support from MOTAC.

In addition, WEIL Hotel recently received the LEED Gold Operations and Maintenance (O+M) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

The Haven Ipoh

conferred ASEAN Green Resort Excellence and its mover, Peter Chan, The ASEAN Icon Leadership Award!
What has been hoped for Ipoh two decades ago is now being realized.

● By: James Anthony Roberts. UK Journalist

Ipoh is currently “emerging from its cocoon” after decades of stagnation. Peter Chan had predicted this when he contributed an article in Focus Malaysia’s maiden publication in 2012.

In the article, he says that “what Ipoh needs is an impetus to regain parts of its former glory and that a catalyst for an infusion of confidence is needed to set the city back in the arena, like a caterpillar to a butterfly.” His use of the butterfly metaphor brought home in picturesque way the kind of transformation he was determined to bring about.

The last decade has convincingly shown that Ipoh has emerged from the cocoon. The humble, little-known project hidden away at the fringe of the forest, The Haven Hybrid Hotel and Residence has been the catalyst. Both the railway and the airport have recommenced operation. There are now 5 daily flights from Singapore.

Before 2010s, the city’s skyline was modest, with only a few high-rise buildings. The most notable structure was 18-storey Sungai Pari Tower, which had been a key landmark for decades. The development of The Haven Resort, launched in 2009 and completed in 2013 injected enthusiasm, hope and confidence to the industry and the acceptance of luxurious living in Ipoh. It also sets a new benchmark for modern urban living and signalled a shift toward vertical expansion. Following the success of The Haven, 45 high rise condominium projects have been completed in Ipoh in this decade alone.

Dubbed “The Pride of Ipoh”, The Haven captured the world’s attention. The Haven has been accorded an astonishing 68 awards across local, regional and international platforms – an achievement that places it in a league of its own. Each accolade is a testament to its unwavering commitment to excellence, sustainability and innovation. Just last year, it was crowned Best Geopark Hotel/Residence Resort, a prestigious recognition that celebrates its seamless integration with the surrounding natural landscape. This year, it clinched another illustrious honour that is the ASEAN Green Resort Excellence Award.

The hitherto unknown project of The Haven has now achieved recognition as an extraordinary hotel and residence hybrid with exemplary management. The Haven Hybrid Hotel & Residences is more than a development or hospitality or luxury residence; it is more than a destination. It is a pioneer, a mover and a symbol of what visionary ambition can achieve.

Peter Chan often wondered and even often publicly questioned why he is in Ipoh doing what he does there. He has been literally a man of the world, performing important senior roles for various enterprises in major global centres and capitals from Singapore to New York; from London to Sydney; to Hong Kong and China and now Malaysia. Providentially, in February 2026, he found his long-lost birth certificate and he was astonished that



ASEAN Outstanding Icon Leadership Award Given by YAB Dato Sri Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof

As the concept is new in Ipoh, it has indeed been a most tedious task for Peter Chan. Some parcel owners induced complaints and accusations. The trials and tribulations that Peter Chan has been forced to endure are immense. Success breeds jealousy, and jealousy breeds persecution. He has manoeuvred his way around bizarre legal cases, all needless and frivolous, to accomplish his undertaking.



Yet because he is a selfless man of integrity, he has prevailed.

The task confronting him has indeed been daunting, most from the industry have not been optimistic that he would be able to overcome even the natural obstacles confronting him and the development. This was due to the quality and concept of the development being ahead of its time. He has borne the extreme hardships, overcome numerous obstacles and succeeded in the contribution to Ipoh outstandingly. This caused President Jose E. Prieto, the presenter of the Quality and Innovation (Gold) International Arch of Europe Award to The Haven to announce this

insight at the presentation at Frankfurt, his mother, Mdm Sin Kum Hung, with whom Peter was very close, was born in Perak. Now, he feels that he has been divinely directed to serve in his mother’s homeland and that he destined to contribute even more.

“Ipad, Iphone..... Steve Jobs; Icon, Ipoh..... Peter’s Job.”

At the heart of Ipoh’s transformation, The Haven remains the defining landmark – the spark that set evolvment and progress in motion.

It is not luck that Peter Chan has been conferred The ASEAN Icon Leadership Award by The Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato Sri Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof on 9th April 2026.

YOUR VOICE IN THE COMMUNITY

www.ipophecho.com.my Ipoh Echo Foodie
Guide Ipoh Echo May 01- August 31, 2026

The location and its hybrid hotel and residence concept delivers a rare experience, combining world- class amenities with the calm of untouched nature. Guests wake to sweeping limestone cliffs reflected in still waters, in a tranquil and havenly environment. To date The Haven resort has attracted over 150,000 foreigners from over 120 countries.

The Haven is more than a place to stay – it is an experience. It reflects a clear shift: Ipoh is no longer a hidden gem waiting to be found, but a destination of recognition. What began as a vision as a Hotel Resort Hybrid has not only been achieved but has been surpassed.

A great growth expectation for Ipoh has begun. The Haven is not just a chapter. It is a starting point!



A WHOLE NEW PLAYGROUND AT PERAK TURF CLUB

T By: Anne Das he Perak Turf Club has just opened one of the newest recreational spaces in Ipoh. Its brand new sports and fitness facility is now welcoming the public onto the grounds for the first time, introducing a functional movement centre, swimming pool and multiple courts within the historic racecourse compound.

Built beneath the grandstand and operated by Urbax Fitness, the fully equipped centre brings together a swimming pool, tennis courts, squash courts, and indoor and outdoor pickleball courts.

The facilities are open to both Perak Turf Club members and the public. For non-members and the wider community, annual subscriptions are priced at RM1,499, offering Ipoh residents a new place for fitness, sport and recreation.

The new addition brings fresh energy to the grounds, where activity has already been building over the past year. Sin Yoon Loong White Coffee at PTC continues to draw visitors through the week, while upstairs at Crazy Horse Bar, Friday nights fill with the sound of Ipoh's only 6-piece live band.





A short walk away, the Ipoh Stables Market has brought new life to the former horse stables. Now billed as Asia's first stable market, the space has quickly become a weekend draw, with food vendors, artisans and visitors exploring the unusual setting.

Arriving this May is Hoof Tap Sports Bar, a new concept run by a group of young entrepreneurs. Overlooking the Turf Club course, the venue will introduce another latenight hangout within the grounds.

Later this year, visitors can also expect a popular Japanese dining concept led by an Ipoh born owner to open within the compound, adding another distinctive dining option to the mix.

Plans are also underway for a boutique food court on the first floor of the Turf Club building overlooking the racecourse, while renovations for a new event hall capable of hosting up to 450 guests are expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

Chairman Dato' John Lim says the developments across the grounds are part of the club's vision.

"More Than Racing is the direction for the Perak

Turf Club as we continue expanding these grounds into a destination for sport, dining and community life alongside our racing heritage," he said.

With the Sports Centre now open and more lifestyle concepts steadily taking shape across the grounds, the Perak Turf Club is welcoming the community to explore its latest offerings.

Membership is now open to the public. Early bird applicants can enjoy a special rate of RM699 for the first 100 sign-ups.

For more details and enquiries:

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Modern Medicine, Women's Confidence

DR CHUAH JOO NGOR
Obstetrics & Gynaecology

DR DEBORAH DING YING-SAN
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

● *By: SeeFoon Chan- Koppen*

For many years, women quietly accepted certain medical practitioners following proper consultation. changes to their bodies as simply a part of life. Women experiencing symptoms should first seek After childbirth. With age. Through menopause. professional medical advice to understand the cause of Concerns such as vaginal dryness, reduced tissue elas- their condition and the treatment options available. ticity or mild urinary leakage were often endured in si- lence, uncomfortable and sometimes embarrassing, but rarely discussed openly.

A Patient’s Story: When Silence Turns to Relief

Today, that silence is beginning to lift.

One patient’s experience illustrates how common and treatable these concerns can be.

In a recent conversation with two specialists at Hospital Botani, obstetrician-gynaecologist Dr Chuah changed), a 42-year-old mother, began noticing changes Joo Ngor and plastic surgeon Dr Deborah Ding Ying- she had never expected. Activities such as exercising, San, it became clear that modern medicine is opening coughing or even laughing sometimes caused discomfort new conversations about women’s health, confidence and embarrassment. and wellbeing.

Many of the issues women quietly worry about are not only common, but increasingly treatable.

“For a long time I thought this was simply something women had to live with after childbirth,” she says.

It was only during a routine medical consultation that Sarah discovered many women experience similar issues

When Women’s Intimate Health Changes After

and that treatment options are available.

Childbirth

For her, learning that the condition was common and manageable was a turning point.

Dr Chuah Joo Ngor explains a growing field of medicine

now explore treatments designed to improve comfort,

“It gave me back my confidence,” she says.

“Many women experience changes after childbirth, function or appearance with minimal disruption to their ageing or hormonal shifts, but they often feel too **Beyond Beauty:** embarrassed to seek help,” says Dr Chuah.

The Medical Role of Plastic Surgery

Dr Deborah Ding Ying-San explains aesthetic and recon-

These changes may include vaginal dryness, structive care **Choosing the Right Medical Professional** reduced tissue elasticity after childbirth, mild urinary Despite these advances, both specialists stress the impor-

leakage or discomfort during daily activities or intimacy.

While Dr Chuah focuses on women’s intimate health, tance of careful medical guidance.

Although common, such symptoms can affect both Anyone considering aesthetic treatment should another important aspect of aesthetic medicine: the role of plastic surgery in restoring appearance, function and take time to evaluate their options and seek advice from qualified medical professionals. confidence.

Dr Chuah explains that these concerns fall within an emerging field known as gynaecological aesthetic

Plastic surgeons are trained not only in cosmetic

medicine, which focuses on improving intimate wellness specialists

Patients are advised to:

Despite the name, the goal is not cosmetic beauty benefits and expected

procedures but also in reconstructive surgery, treating and function.

- consult trained and registered medical

Modern treatments often involve technologies

patients with conditions resulting from burns, accidents,

- ensure the clinic or hospital is properly licensed
- understand the potential risks,

always be the priority,” the

skin lesions and other medical issues. but restoring comfort and function.

outcomes

Within aesthetic medicine, plastic surgeons

commonly perform procedures such as: designed to stimulate tissue regeneration and improve “Patient safety should

the health of intimate tissues. In many cases these

- eyelid surgery

procedures are non-surgical, allowing patients to recover activities with minimal

- facial rejuvenation procedures
 - scar revision
 - body contouring
- doctors emphasise. Proper consultation ensures that treatments are appropriate and carried out under safe medical quickly and return to normal supervision.

“These procedures address real functional Dr Deborah notes that many patients today are not seek- What emerges clearly from speaking with both concerns,” Dr Chuah explains. ing dramatic transformations. doctors is that aesthetic medicine is not simply about

“They can improve comfort, restore confidence and

“Most people simply want to look refreshed and feel appearance.

help women feel more like themselves again.” confident in their appearance,” she says. At its best, it is about restoring comfort, confidence At the same time, she emphasises that such The focus is increasingly on achieving natural and and quality of life.

treatments should always be carried out by qualified

balanced results, enhancing a person’s features rather than

For women who quietly worry about changes in





changing them.

Advances in surgical techniques and medical technology have also improved safety and recovery times. As Dr Chuah and Dr Deborah both agree, the first step often begins with something simple. procedures with greater confidence.

A Shift Toward Minimally Invasive Treatments

Both doctors point to one of the most significant developments in aesthetic medicine: the move towards minimally invasive treatments.

Modern technologies allow doctors to perform many procedures using smaller interventions with reduced risks and shorter recovery periods.

In some cases, treatments can be carried out as day procedures, enabling patients to return quickly to their daily routines.

For many individuals, this has made aesthetic

3, Dataran Botani 2, medicine less intimidating and more accessible.

Rather than undergoing major surgery, patients can

their bodies, the message is reassuring: these concerns are often common—and help is available.

DR CHUAH JOO NGOR
Obstetrics & Gynaecology
Tel: **05-226 2737**

DR DEBORAH DING YING-SAN
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
Tel: **012 2478776**

Consultation Hours

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Protecting Your Health in a Screen-Filled Workday

Beat the Heat and Your TNB Bill



By: Dr Monesh Pillai

*Occupational Health Physician
Chairman, Malaysian Medical
Association (MMA) Perak.*

One are the days when our grandparents or even parents walked or cycled to work. Even office jobs once involved more movement. Today, for many of us, work happens almost entirely indoors: behind desks, in front of screens, and under artificial lighting.

This shift has undoubtedly improved comfort and productivity. But it has silently introduced a range of health issues that often go unnoticed until they begin affecting daily life.

One of the most common problems I see in my practice is vitamin D deficiency. Sounds surprising for a country blessed with year round sunshine, yet many people do not get enough exposure to it. We drive to work, spend days indoors, and socialise in enclosed spaces. Even I have developed vitamin D deficiency because of this routine. Sunlight has quite literally disappeared from our daily lives.

Vitamin D plays an important role in bone strength, immune function, and overall well-being. Low levels can present as fatigue, muscle aches, and skin issues, and over time increase the risk of osteoporosis. There is also growing evidence linking chronic D deficiency to low mood and depression.

Another major factor I notice is screen overuse. Many people spend a large portion of their waking hours looking at laptops, computers, or phones. Digital eye strain is increasingly common, presenting as dry eyes, headaches, and blurred vision that can affect concentration at work.

Equally concerning is how little we move. The human body is designed for



movement, yet modern office life keeps us seated for hours. Over time this leads to poor posture, neck stiffness, and chronic back pain. Prolonged sitting is also associated with obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

There is also a mental cost. Constant notifications, emails, and digital demands create an “always-on” culture where work rarely feels like it truly ends. This blurring of boundaries can lead to mental fatigue, stress, and eventually burnout.

The encouraging news is that small changes can make a big difference. Spending just 10 to 15 minutes outdoors daily can help restore vitamin D levels while providing a mental reset. Taking short breaks to stand, stretch, or walk can counter the effects of prolonged sitting.

Sometimes, the most powerful changes are also the simplest. step outside, move a little more, and give yourself permission to “switch off”, you deserve it.

About the Writer:

Dr Monesh Pillai specialises in workplace health, psychosocial risk and modern occupational stress.

For enquiries: Klinikmanalan@gmail.com |
05-5462880 | klinikmanalan.com

● **By: KT Leong** etween the volatile weather where it is scorching hot one minute and thunderstorms erupt the next, as well as everyone feeling the economic pinch, we have to start looking into investing not just for our planet’s future, but our wallets as well.

Which is why solar may be the right move for many people right now.

Solar energy is one of the best tools for environmental protection because it deals with the core issues of carbon emissions, resource depletion

and pollution. Solar drastically reduces That’s an annual ROI of 13.64% and will the need for carbon emissions, water take you 7.3 years to pay back.

is conserved because solar uses zero Now compare that to say, a Fixed water to generate electricity, and it Deposit (FD) with an optimistic 3.5%, even improves air quality because it’s that’s an annual ROI of RM770 which emission-free. will take you just over 20 years to recoup

With ample sun in Malaysia, it that original RM22,000. In fact, by the should be a no-brainer to switch to solar, time you earn that money back through but the thing that’s always made it hard FD, you could have saved RM38,550 to justify getting solar is the upfront through your solar system.

cost. Nowadays though, there are many Solar offers one of the best returns payment options to take the sting off and even raises your home’s market that bite. From 0% interest monthly value.

instalment plans for up to 60 months to Schemes like the Solar Accelerated solar financing or 0% interest credit card Transition Action Programme (Solar payments, or if you have the cash, you ATAP), which started on 1 January 2026 can just buy the solar outright. to replace the old Net Energy Metering

But the key is to look at the long (NEM) Programme, allow you to use selfterm. How long would it take you to generated power first, then export surplus “break even” or Return On Investment to Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) for (ROI) and how much can you stand to monthly bill credits. It features a single save in the long run? bi-directional meter, no fixed national

Assuming you get a system that quota, and a 10-year contract. costs you around RM22,000 and shaves An Ipoh company that offers free site off RM250 from your RM300 monthly visits (locally) and custom solar proposals bill, it means you’re enjoying an annual is Total Energy. Contact 011-51806030 savings of RM250 x 12 = RM3,000. for inquiries.



Personality

Perak: A Complete Tourism Destination

– “Not Just Seen, But Experienced”

● **By: Rosli Mansor Ahmad Razali**

Perak stands out as a tourism destination, blending natural beauty with vibrant cultural heritage, arts, and authentic experiences.

In an exclusive interview with Suhaimi Abu Hassan Shari, Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Perak Management Sdn. Bhd., he acknowledged that the responsibility entrusted to him requires a clear focus on the state’s tourism direction.

“Our plans for Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2026 target tourists from nearby neighbours such as Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand. For more distant markets, China is a key focus as they are now the second-largest contributor of tourists to Malaysia,” he said.

He emphasised that Perak currently receives the highest number of domestic tourists compared to other states.

“Statistics show domestic visitors outnumber international tourists. Our target this year is over 10 million domestic tourists and 1.1 million international visitors,” he added.

Suhaimi explained that Perak is introducing a variety of new attractions, including ecotourism, adventure activities, and unique accommodations such as glamping and motorhomes.

He highlighted that Perak’s motorhome sites are the first in Malaysia, located in Taiping, Lenggong, and Kampar.

“These new offerings appeal to young travellers, families, and those seeking a different experience,” he noted.

He also praised the scenic beauty of Tasik Raban, surrounded by the Banjaran Bintang.

“The scenery resembles the fjords in Norway, but without the ice. In the morning after rain, the lake is misty, providing a breathtaking natural experience.”

Beyond natural attractions, Suhaimi emphasised Perak’s rich arts and cultural heritage.

“Each of the 12 districts has its own unique arts, from Dabus, silat, to tekak and batik,” he said.

He stressed that Perak’s tourism stands out because it offers more than just physical attractions; intangible cultural elements give visitors genuine and memorable experiences.

Tourism Perak now focuses on promotion through social media and AI technology.

“Facebook targets the ‘Golden Age’ demographic, while TikTok engages younger audiences. We have also introduced ‘Perak Pages,’ a digital directory where tourists can access information on homestays, local guides, and tourism packages,” Suhaimi explained.

“Our goal is to provide a complete, safe, and accessible tourism experience. This ensures economic benefits are shared across all levels of Perak society, from small vendors to five-star hotel operators,” he added.

He noted that ASEAN tourists are a priority because they make quicker travel decisions and are already familiar with Perak.

“Tourists from neighbouring countries know the area well and can plan their trips easily. For more distant international visitors, we focus on China due to convenient flight access and high tourist volume,” he said.

Suhaimi also highlighted the wide employment opportunities provided by the tourism industry, ranging from small vendors selling nasi lemak to five-star hotel operators.

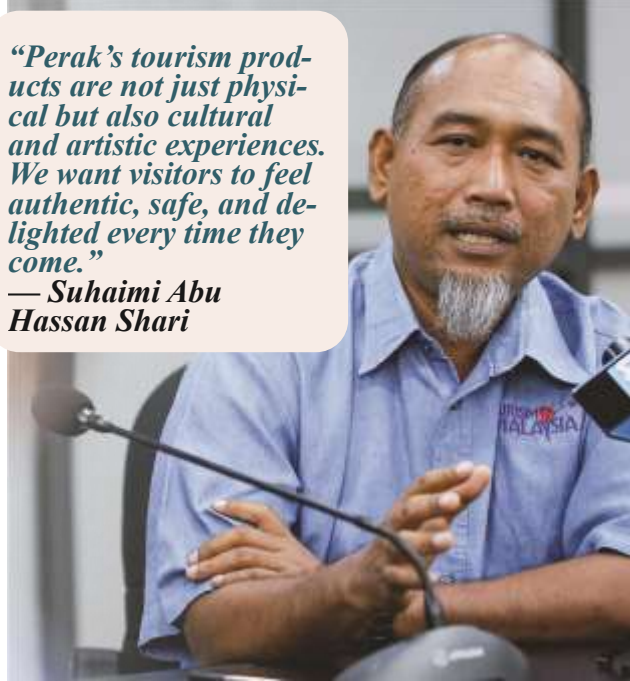
“If properly packaged, tourism products ensure visitors return and provide sustained economic benefits,” he added.

He praised Perak’s uniqueness, including its diverse natural attractions, less congested towns, and rich culture.

“In Ipoh, you can have breakfast while enjoying the

“Perak’s tourism products are not just physical but also cultural and artistic experiences. We want visitors to feel authentic, safe, and delighted every time they come.”

— **Suhaimi Abu Hassan Shari**



Quick Facts: Suhaimi Abu Hassan Shari
Position: Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Perak Management Sdn. Bhd.
Appointment: 2 January 2026
Hometown: Kampung Pecah Batu, Manong, Perak.
Experience: Over 15 years in tourism marketing and international promotion.
Background: Started as an Economic Affairs Officer at Tourism Malaysia, managing international promotion strategies for Southeast Asia.

view of surrounding mountains and ranges. The fresh air and relaxed atmosphere provide a different experience compared to other major cities,” he explained.

Suhaimi stressed that the combination of nature, culture, and artistic creativity makes Perak a unique destination.

“Perak is not just to be seen, but to be experienced. Each visit leaves memories, and every experience inspires a desire to return,” he said.

The Ripple Effect of Dato’ Bindi Rajasegaran

● **By: Anne Das** **aking** a difference in the lives of others through one’s own effort, Dato’ Bindi Rajasegaran believes, is a blessed opportunity. Over the years, that belief has shaped a lifetime of service that reaches far beyond the people she first set out to help.

Her journey began through Rotary International, where a simple desire to support those facing hardship found structure and direction. What started as curiosity soon became commitment. Rotary gave her the platform to organise people, mobilise resources and turn good intentions into real outcomes.

That path eventually led her to the organisation’s top leadership role as District Governor of Rotary International District 3300 Malaysia, overseeing more than 80 clubs nationwide. Her tenure came at a difficult time, as the country navigated the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Rotarians across Malaysia mobilised quickly. Under Bindi’s leadership, the network raised close to half a million ringgit for ventilators and essential hospital equipment, helping hospitals respond to urgent needs across the country.

Another initiative close to her heart is mental health

advocacy. Determined to address the stigma surrounding the issue, Bindi established the National Coalition for Mental Wellbeing, bringing together professionals, educators and organisations to strengthen support systems.

With a grant from Rotary Foundation, more than 350 school counsellors were trained in Mental Health First Aid using an accredited international programme. The training ultimately reached over 250,000 students across Malaysia, many facing stress, anxiety and emotional struggles that had long remained hidden.

Advocacy from the coalition also contributed to a significant policy shift. An outdated law that treated attempted suicide as a criminal offence was eventually repealed, marking an important step forward in Malaysia’s mental health landscape.

In recent years, Bindi has expanded her focus beyond national borders through regional peacebuilding initiatives. The ASEAN Youth Peacebuilders Programme recently graduated its first cohort of 43 young leaders from 11 ASEAN countries, equipping them with skills in dialogue, conflict resolution and community leadership.

“We may not be able to stop wars around the world,”



she says, “but we can certainly create peace within our homes, our communities and our region.”

Away from official roles she enjoys interior decoration and landscaping, and admits to a love of dancing and singing, although she laughs that her singing voice is far from perfect. Her grandchildren remain her greatest joy.

After decades of advocacy, her passion remains unchanged. Helping others, she says, has given her far more than she has ever given in return.



Cheryl Lum ~ Global Hotelier Returns Home

Cheryl grew up in Ipoh in her grandparents’ home along Jalan Gopeng. Her roots trace back to the well-known Yeoh family, a name woven into the city’s history. Her grandfather, Yeoh Kim Tian, donated the Chamberlain Road Fountain in 1963, which once stood at a New Town roundabout in Ipoh.

After graduating from Sekolah Raja Perempuan, Cheryl left Ipoh to pursue a career in hospitality. What followed was a professional journey across some of Asia’s most dynamic cities. Over the years she gained experience in Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and the Maldives, building a reputation for strong leadership and the ability to bring teams together

in demanding hotel environments.

her global hospitality experience back home.

Cheryl believes Ipoh holds strong potential as a tourism destination and remains passionate about contributing to the city’s growing hospitality landscape.

Always striving to grow, she is currently pursuing a Masters in Hospitality Management at Sunway University. She is also in her fourth year of learning Spanish, a personal challenge she continues to pursue alongside her demanding career.

Beyond the pace of hotel operations, Cheryl enjoys singing and has been known to perform at friends’ weddings and celebrations. Cooking for family and friends is another

passion, and when travelling she prefers to discover cities

Hospitality is a fast-moving world that demands resilience and the ability to lead people well. Cheryl Lum has spent more than three decades her career in that environment. Today she serves as Cluster General Manager for Travelodge Ipoh and Georgetown, overseeing two busy hotels and the teams that keep them running smoothly. the strength of any hotel lies in the people behind it.

Working across these diverse markets sharpened Cheryl's ability to lead people from different cultures and backgrounds. Colleagues often describe her as energetic, decisive and deeply people oriented, a leader who believes

Last year Cheryl returned to Ipoh after nearly three decades away, joining the Travelodge group and bringing

through their food. Hence, she is a member of Chaîne des stinct, Rôtisseurs, a global community whose focus is friendship, Cheryl camaraderie and sharing a passion for the culinary arts. building Ipoh Echo welcomes Cheryl Lum back to Ipoh as she leads Travelodge into its next chapter, with fresh exciting developments to be announced soon.



Wellness

Understanding Behaviour in Neurodivergent Children: What Are They Really Telling Us?

By Dr. Shan Narayanan
Consultant Paediatrician, Life & Executive Coach

MATCHING SUPPORT TO NEEDS: NEURODIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM



Sensory overload and lack of clear support can lead to distress and shutdown.



Tailored environments, visual aids, and adult guidance empower focus and engagement.



Instead of expecting more than they can manage, it helps to provide support such as clear instructions, visual routines, short breaks, and calm reassurance. When support matches ability, children are more likely to succeed. Over time, skills improve with the right help.

Conclusion

Behaviour is not just something to manage—it is something to understand. When we shift our perspective, we begin to see the child behind the behaviour.

With patience and support, children can learn, grow, and

Every child behaves in their own way. Neurodivergent children—such as those with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, or other differences—may express their needs and feelings through behaviour that adults sometimes find confusing or challenging. Instead of seeing behaviour as “good” or “bad,” it helps to remember that behaviour is communication.

When we learn to “listen” to behaviour, we can better support children to feel safe, understood, and confident.

Adam is a 6-year-old boy who often runs around the classroom and refuses to sit during lessons. His teacher feels frustrated and thinks he is being disruptive. At home, his parents notice he becomes upset before school.

With closer observation, it became clear that Adam was overwhelmed by noise and found it hard to sit still for long periods. His behaviour was not about being naughty—it was his way of coping.

With simple supports like movement breaks, a quieter space, and clear visual instructions, Adam became calmer and more engaged.

Behaviour Is Communication

Children may not have the words to express how they “feel overwhelmed”, or “I don’t understand”. When we look beyond behaviour, we can respond to the real need.

Look for Triggers

Behaviour usually follows a trigger. Notice what happens just before the behaviour. Common triggers include noise, crowded spaces, sudden changes, difficult tasks, or being tired. When we spot patterns, we can adjust the environment, give warnings, or offer support earlier to prevent distress.

feel. Behaviour can mean “this is too hard”, “I feel overwhelmed”, or “I need to shine in their own way.

Support Based on the Child's Ability Sometimes expectations do not match the child's current abilities. Sitting still, waiting, or managing emotions can be difficult for some children.

Paediatrician's Insight



Photo credit: MBI

Homelessness in Ipoh: When Will It Be Resolved?

By: Aida Aziz proactive effort to address the issue of homelessness and understood to choose to continue this lifestyle despite the presence of homeless individuals in public areas, while having homes and employment.

POH: The issue of homelessness in the city continues ensuring the city remains clean, orderly and safe for public It is understood that most homeless individuals in to draw attention as local authorities carry out an integrated operation at several hotspot areas to address the use. Ipoh are men, falling under categories such as former presence of homeless individuals in public spaces. In addition to enforcement and cleanliness efforts, the drug addicts, those with mental health issues, scam

The Integrated Operation to Address Homelessness operation also places emphasis on the welfare of homeless victims, and elderly individuals abandoned by their w conducted by the Ipoh City Council (MBI) in individuals through a more comprehensive and humane families.

collaboration with the Social Welfare Department (JKM) and the National Anti-Drugs Agency (AADK)

social intervention approach.

Some are employed at wholesale markets, while others face family and personal difficulties.

“The operation was also supported by the MBI Health Department’s cleaning team, involving the use of an open

around Hotel Lotte, Jalan Dato Onn Jaafar and Jalan Foo Yet Kai.

lorry and a tanker lorry to carry out cleaning and sanitation works at the locations.

A total of 24 personnel from various agencies were involved in the operation, comprising 15 MBI officers, five JKM officers and four AADK relevant agencies in addressing social issues in a holistic, supported by logistics involving two lorries and prudent and effective manner for the well-being of city a van. residents. Such efforts will continue from time to time to

“Throughout the operation, eight individuals were ensure public areas remain conducive, clean and safe,” he detained o undergo urine screening tests conducted by said.

AADK at the Jalan Bandar Enforcement Office.

Members of the public are urged to cooperate and

“Of the total, one individual was subjected to further channel information to the authorities should further action by AADK, while the rest were handed over to action be required regarding homelessness issues in the JKM for follow-up action and appropriate welfare Ipoh area.

intervention,” said an MBI spokesperson. Homelessness is not a new issue in the city. While The operation represents a (coordinated and many have received assistance, a small number are



When behaviour feels challenging, ask: “What is this child trying to tell me?” Understanding leads to better support and better outcomes.

If you have concerns about your child’s behaviour or development. Make an appointment today.

Contact & Enquiries: First Bridge Early Intervention Centre 13 Jalan Perpaduan Indah 5, Taman Perpaduan Indah, 31400 Ipoh, Perak.
Phone Number: **016-609 3525**
Email: firstbridge007@yahoo.com



MPM Strengthens Turtle Conservation Efforts Along Manjung Coastline

sustainable coastal management initiatives.

One of the key efforts includes the adoption of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), particularly through the planting of coastal vegetation such as the AmbongAmbong tree.

This vegetation helps stabilise sand, reduce erosion and maintain temperatures suitable for turtle nests.

It also acts as a natural buffer zone to reduce human disturbance in turtle landing areas.

These conservation efforts are carried out through **By: Zaki Salleh** collaboration with government agencies, educational **Photo credit: Social Media** institutions, NGOs and the local community.

MANJUNG: The Manjung district continues to be MPM is also actively implementing environmental recognised as one of Perak's key coastal areas awareness and education programmes to ensure the for natural turtle landings. continuous protection of marine biodiversity.

Segari Beach, Pasir Panjang Beach, Teluk Senangin and Pangkor Island have been identified as suitable habitats for turtle nesting and hatching.

Among the main species recorded are the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the Olive Ridley Turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*).

The presence of these species indicates that Manjung's coastal ecosystem still holds significant marine biodiversity value.

The Manjung Municipal Council (MPM) plays an important role in supporting turtle habitat conservation through

Cable Theft Leaves Open Manholes as a Common Sight

again," the resident said.

Meanwhile, members of the public argue that cable theft would not be rampant if there were no buyers.

"If scrap dealers stop buying and accepting these items, then there will be no market for stolen cables.

"Authorities, including local councils and related agencies, must carry out inspections at scrap yards to curb the purchase and disposal of illegal materials," another resident said.

This includes detecting items such as cables, wires, scrap metal and vehicle components suspected of being stolen from being sold or bought by premises owners.

By: Aida Aziz Photo credit: Social Media

IPOH: Wide-open manholes, believed to be the result of cable theft around Ipoh, have increasingly become a familiar sight.

Almost every day, social media circulates videos of individuals or groups boldly stealing cables, whether in broad daylight or late at night.

Once the cables are taken, the manholes are left open, posing serious danger to road users, especially motorcyclists.

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dy been stolen.

“Although police have made several arrests, these thieves do not seem to learn. Tougher action must be taken against them.

“When the manhole is opened, it is only covered again by the relevant parties after several days, and this is extremely dangerous to the public.

“Sometimes residents have to write messages like ‘no cables here’ or ‘cables already stolen’ on the manhole cover to deter irresponsible individuals from opening it



By: KT Leong

The archery scene in Perak, particularly in Ipoh, is currently experiencing a renaissance. Since the pandemic, especially in the last couple of years, it has transitioned from a niche hobby into a structured community sport.

A Young Chef Quietly Winning Hearts at Laut Yee

By: SeeFoon Chan- Koppin

discovering new food — **The Sliced Pork** but sometimes the best finds are not the **16 Belly with Chilli & new** the flashiest, but the one that quietly — **Garlic (RM25)** delivered exactly what one hopes for — rich slices of pork belly tucked along Osborne Street in Taman Jubilee lifted with garlic and chilli. Simple cooking, but deeply is Restoran Makanan Laut Yee, a modest-looking satisfying.

ing shop that you might easily walk past with- Then came a dish that raised a few curious out a second glance. But step inside and you eyebrows at the table — **Fallopian Tube (Intestines)** will find a young chef cooking with confidence, **LY Charcoal Tofu LY Kungfu Fried Seafood Stir-Fried with Onions & Pork Lard (RM27)**.

skill and a very good understanding of flavour. The restaurant is run by Mr Teoh Kok Yee delicacy is probably the least objectionable of the lot, (38) together with his wife Kate Leong Lai offering a pleasant chew and robust flavour. One of my Ting, a young couple raising their family while friends, normally an outspoken critic of all things offal, steadily building a loyal following among ended up enjoying it — which must surely count as a diners who appreciate honest cooking. small culinary triumph.

Chef Teoh’s background is rather more **LY Lala2 LY Garlic Fried Chicken Chef Teoh’s Homemade Padong Sauce with** impressive than the humble setting might **Cuttlefish & Ladies’ Fingers (RM35)** introduced a suggest. Before returning to Ipoh, he spent slightly different flavour profile. The tender cuttlefish three years in Abu Dhabi working at Hakkasan in Emirates Palace, a fine-dining restaurant and okra were coated in a distinctive house sauce that gave the dish its own personality.

known worldwide for its modern Chinese cuisine. Fortunately for us, Chef Teoh has brought those skills home — but instead of creating **(RM10 per plate)**. elaborate restaurant theatrics, he applies that training to solid, satisfying seafood dishes with The curry leaves lend a lovely fragrance, while the Chinese sausage adds sweetness just enough finesse to make them memorable. and depth. Most importantly, the rice itself was excellent — every grain intact, lightly In other words, the kind of cooking one happily returns for. coated with oil, fluffy and aromatic.

What We Ate

Our meal began with **Kungfu Fried Kuey Teow with Seafood (RM40 sharing / RM20 individual)**.

In truth, this dish is closer to a luxurious Wat Dan Hor, and it was quite superb. Crisp-fried Ipoh hor fun lay beneath a silky egg gravy, studded with medium-sized udang galah

Practical Details

Restoran Makanan Laut Yee
A15, Jalan Dato Tahwil Azar
Taman Jubilee (Osborne Street)

Opening hours:

11:00am – 10:00pm
Closed Thursdays
Reservations:

But archery isn’t just a sport for those in their prime or aiming to play competitively. It is accessible for the young as well as the aged. Boys or girls, from Under-12 to Under-18, all the way to Masters (50+/60+) and Master Seniors (70+) can still play this sport, which is not only one of the safest sports in the world, but also among the least injury-prone.

Archery has become a staple in the District Schools Sports Council (MSSD) circuit, such as the Kuala Kangsar MSSD Archery Championship 2026 held in April 2026, which shows that schools in the Perak region are heavily investing in the sport. With competitions like the YMCA Ipoh Archery Open 2026, held in February 2026, giving even more opportunities for the sport to flourish.

The most notable development would be The Young Man’s Christian Association (YMCA) of Ipoh’s collaboration with V Club Archery, which resulted in the YMCA Archery Range. This is a major milestone as, unlike many ranges that charge “per arrow”, the YMCA Archery Range lets anyone just walk into the YMCA Ipoh on any day, between 7 am to 11 am or 4 pm to 7 pm, and shoot for just RM15 an hour with unlimited arrows. This ability to enjoy high-volume training at affordable rates is crucial for competitive skill development. On top of that, bows are available for renting from as low as RM5.00 for recurve bows to just RM10.00 for compound bows. Traditional bows are also available for shooting at V Archery Club.

Michael Lim, who runs V Club Archery with his partners, has seen a growing interest in archery in Ipoh. Michael has been working to raise awareness for this sport. They have visited and provided lessons to schools across Ipoh.

“My goal is simple: To make archery accessible to everyone in Ipoh”, said Michael Lim.



30300 Ipoh, Perak. **011-5585 8981** and infused with lovely wok

hei. It was one of those dishes that makes you pause after the first bite — comforting, savoury and immensely satisfying.

Next came the **Garlic Fried Chicken (RM25)**, which quickly proved to be one of the homestyle warmth.

Golden, crisp and fragrant, the chicken was generously scattered with crunchy fried His fine-dining experience shows in the balance of flavours and careful cooking, yet the garlic. The seasoning was spot-on, and the plate emptied with impressive speed. dishes remain approachable and satisfying rather than complicated.

Another standout was the **Homemade Charcoal Tofu with Dried Shrimp (RM17)**.

The tofu is made in-house and carries a subtle smokiness from the charcoal preparation. In short, it feels like the sort of neighbourhood restaurant where you could happily Paired with dried shrimp and a house soy sauce, the result is silky, aromatic and beautifully become a regular. balanced. Live river prawns are available (market price). They also serve grass carp (about RM90/kg).

Why Laut Yee Works

What makes Laut Yee appealing is the way Chef Teoh blends professional technique with stars of the afternoon. The portions are generous, the flavours confident and the prices refreshingly fair.

My favourite way to enjoy it is steamed with dried black beans (tau see), ginger, scallions and plenty of pork lardons — absolutely heavenly. Advance booking is recommended on weekends.

The Food Diva Verdict

Ipoh has no shortage of seafood restaurants — but Laut Yee stands out for its thoughtful cooking, generous portions and very fair prices. Chef Teoh is clearly a young chef with imagination and solid technique. The restaurant may still be flying under the radar for now — but once word spreads, I suspect that may not last very long. And deservedly so.

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And deservedly so.



LY Sliced Pork Belly



LY Intestines

My Favourite Curry Mee

Ipoh has no shortage of good curry mee, but every now and then one comes along with its own personality. This stall — run by **Ah Soon, a cheerful Malaysian** who shares the cooking with his lovely Thai wife — produces a bowl that feels like a small culinary marriage: not quite Malaysian, not quite Thai, but a very happy union of the two.

They start early — 7.30am sharp — and by 11 to 11.30am the curry usually sells out, so the wise come early.

The stall sits in a corner coffee shop lot with several other vendors, yet this curry mee is the one you will notice first. The place is clean, airy and surprisingly comfortable despite the heat, thanks to the open corner layout and ample additional RM5. Another version comes topped with char siew and roast pork, pig skin fans. Ah Soon himself is wonderfully affable, greeting regulars like old friends and even and Tao Foo Pok, equally satisfying, with optional cockles RM5. Extra prawns are offering me a beer, which I politely decline. At that hour of the morning, curry mee is RM3 each. Everything tasted reassuringly fresh — the prawns sweet, the cockles plump, and richness of coconut milk yet remains light



The curry broth is the star. It carries the the roasted meats pleasantly indulgent. A simple bowl, done very well — and one well worth getting out of bed for. When enough to finish the bowl comfortably. The you sell out every day, you never have to worry about stale ingredients. flavour leans toward deep umami, with a medium spice level that can easily be lifted Restoran Khong Fei with their excellent homemade sambal.

1A Lebu Bercham Selatan 1 You can choose your preferred noodles. Taman Kinta Mas A generous bowl with three large fresh 31400 Ipoh Perak prawns costs RM11, while cockles are an Tel : **016 5662335**

