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PP 14252/10/2011(026531)

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ISSUE **109**

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and Tourism

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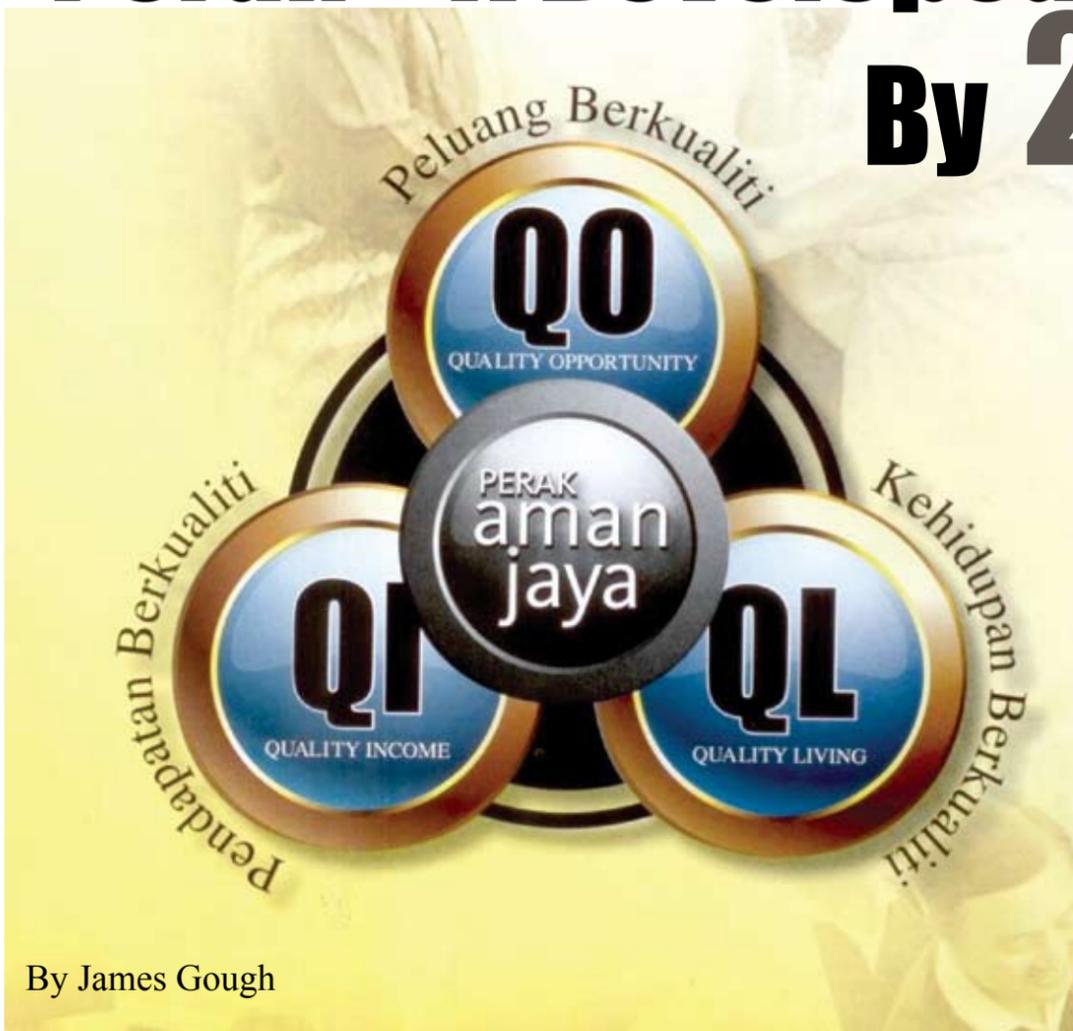
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Perak – A Developed State By 2015



By James Gough

Perak Amanjaya, the Silver State's own comprehensive transformation plan, is to be launched in January next year. Its aim is to achieve a developed state status by 2015. Conceived last year, the plan which has been touted as the plan for the future development of the state outlined three main objectives: Quality Opportunities, Quality Income and Quality Living.

Continued on page 2

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IDR Think-Tank to Handle Implementation

Perak Amanjaya was put together by a think-tank, Institute Darul Ridzwan (IDR), which was set up by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Zambry Abdul Kader in May, last year.

Zambry admitted that he had "contemplated for some time", possibly as early as 2005 when he was then state executive councillor and chairman of the Education Committee, Human Resources and Information Technology, the setting up of the think-tank explaining that most of the developed states "have an institution that determines the policies to implement."

Long Vision

"When I came in I needed to know the big picture, the base lines and the barriers in order to take the state to the next level. I did not want to work like "patchwork" but with a long vision." The role of IDR is that of an independent body tasked to establish a think-tank to look at improving socio-economic policies, propose innovative policies and implement the best strategies to make Perak a developed state by 2015.

Assisting Zambry to achieve his vision is IDR's Chief Executive, Aminuddin Hashim, 40, a Chartered Management Accountant with 15 years of experience in Management Consulting and Corporate Analysis. "I wanted a young and energetic professional with forward vision and intellectual capabilities," added Zambry.

Green Light Given

This resulted in the plan being materialised and subsequently forwarded to the Economic Planning Unit and was "given the green-light" by the federal government in February, this year. At a media briefing last month IDR's Aminuddin explained the concept of Perak Amanjaya.

Perak Amanjaya was named by Zambry to reflect the state government's commitment to bring peace, stability, progress and development to Perak.

The rationale behind its 3Q's objective is to have a peaceful surrounding in order to succeed. "There is no point in having a high income and a posh home if crime is high and pollution is a problem," stressed Aminuddin.

3Qs

- Quality Opportunities are to prepare the people with the necessary skills whenever a job opportunity presents itself.
- Quality Income refers to improving the salary levels in the state similar to Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Achieving this will enable Perakeans to obtain greater purchasing power in a cost competitive living environment.
- Quality Living is the creation of a peaceful, crime free as well as a controlled pollution free environment to enable the development of quality individuals.

Input Sought

When formulating the plan Aminuddin actually met with government departments, NGOs and communities to get their input. The 3Qs' goals may sound Utopian. Hence there are seven Key Result Areas (KRA) stipulated in order to achieve the goals of the 3Qs which covers:

1. Equitable Development and Distribution: Raising living standards of low-income households.
2. Skilled, Ethical and Knowledgeable Society: Improving Student outcomes.
3. Strong, Catalytic and Inclusive Government: Improving government delivery system.
4. Network of infrastructure and public facilities: Improving basic rural infrastructure.
5. Participative youth and social harmony: Improving youth knowledge and survival.
6. Vibrant public sector: Improving investment and business eco-system.
7. Eco-friendly and sustainable development: Improving quality of living and urban public transport.



(l-r) IDR Chief Executive Aminuddin Hashim and IDR Strategic Comm Director Roslan

For each KRA, the respective government agencies responsible for achieving its goals are indicated. Currently 'laboratory-cum workshops' are being conducted with the KRA members to explain the plan's vision and mission.

When formulating the plan IDR considered the total landscape of the state identifying a state still rich in natural resources that had the advantage of vast infrastructure with over 200km of the North-South Expressway passing through it, a long railway line, the Perak River and a long coastline.

Regional Growth Plan

The plan also proposed a Regional Growth Plan identifying five economic zones i.e. Hulu Perak, Beriah Valley, Manjung and Ulu Bernam with Kinta Valley in the centre and consisting of nine growth corridors in between these zones.

According to Aminuddin this "3D Regional Growth Plan" is part of the World Bank "Reshaping Economic Geography" model whose 3D goal is aimed at "Reducing Distance, Creating Density and Narrowing Division" for the purpose of speeding-up development.

Confidence Factor

With such a comprehensive plan is Zambry confident of achieving the 2015 goal of being a developed state? "Well I have a dream to achieve the goal by then though realistically it will be some time after that but before 2020. We can anticipate economic hurdles but we have to work with the plan and not 'patchwork analysis' to achieve the desired goal," he said. When asked if the long entrenched bureaucratic barrier was considered a hurdle, Zambry responded positively describing it as a 'reality of the system'. However the issue was addressed through engagement in workshops and seminars. Zambry added that "the KRA labs too are a form of engagement to align the service providers to the goal of Perak Amanjaya. Everyone has to play their role in order to achieve the goal."

Alignment with NKEA and 10th Malaysia Plan

At the recent one-day Perak Economic Council meeting which was held to align the federal government's NKEA (National Key Economic Areas) and the 10th Malaysia Plan with the states throughout the country, Perak Amanjaya was able to immediately highlight the disconnects between the two plans whereby three of the states' strongest sectors, namely; palm oil, tourism and, electrical and electronics were "mysteriously" left out from the federal plan.

The Perak Economic Council meeting is a result of Perak Amanjaya and was its maiden meeting. Coincidentally, Perak Amanjaya's plan is structured similar to the NKEA and 10MP plans presented by PEMANDU (Performance Management and Delivery Unit) of the Prime Minister's Department) which made it a snapshot to align the state plan against the federal plan.

Results Being Felt

Indeed the results of Perak Amanjaya are already being felt. Another product of Perak Amanjaya is Yayasan Bina Upaya, the Empowerment Foundation tasked to empower the poor and underprivileged and create opportunities for them to upgrade their living standard. The core of the foundation's activities is micro-credit financing. Other programmes conducted by the foundation include house repair and building for the less fortunate and motivational seminars for exam taking students. Since its inception late last year there have been 69 recipients of micro credit loans and 20 recipients receiving aid to improve their homes. Loan values range from RM1,000 to RM20,000.

Undoubtedly the outcome of Perak Amanjaya is beginning to show results despite being relatively new. More importantly though the structure and the strategy being implemented to proliferate the plan show long term sustainability.

We, Perakeans have experienced several administrations proposing glorified development plans. After several years though, the "plans" simply vanished. Hopefully with Zambry's team of energetic intellectuals and his "no patchwork analysis strategy," Perak Amanjaya will indeed achieve its goal.



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From the Editor's Desk

● by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Some claim that the term "collateral damage" originated as a euphemism during the Vietnam War. It refers to the killing of non-combatants or civilians by friendly fire. It became more pronounced during the Second Iraq War (circa 2003) when aerial bombings by American jet fighters caused considerable loss of Iraqi lives and properties despite the use of "smart" bombs.

The collateral damage I refer to here is less deadly than the blight brought about by the coalition forces in Iraq. It does not involve bombs or weapons of mass destruction which could annihilate a settlement at a push of a button. It has much to do with how Ipoh City Council or MBI manages its affairs. Due to an oversight, deliberate or otherwise, untold hardship has befallen a group of Ipohites for no apparent reason other than being on the receiving end.

The residents of Ipoh Garden South, numbering some 500 in all and

Collateral Damage

The manifestation of these problems shows one glaring deficiency – poor planning by MBI. Why was approval given for the construction of de Garden without due consideration made...



living in houses fronting the newly developed de Garden across Kinta City, are a grieving lot. The inconvenience they face will drive anyone up the wall. Since the completion of this upscale shopping mall early this year, life has become a constant nightmare for them. Indiscriminate parking by those patronising the many restaurants, fast-food and

entertainment outlets at de Garden has turned their lives upside down, literally.

"It's worse during weekends," said Bernard Wong, a member of the resident-action committee. "Some have the audacity to park their cars in front of our gates." The residents got the ball rolling with a signature campaign and made their dissatisfac-

tion known to the Mayor himself. "Why is there no enforcement?" asked one dejected resident. "If they could do so effectively along roads near the race course during race days, why can't they do the same here?"

The council's inaction is not the only icing on the cake. "We've even called the traffic police but to no avail," said Bernard. He fears for the worse, as the situation can turn ugly at times. "There was one nasty incident recently when two motorists, refusing to budge, got out of their cars and fought."

The worse culprits are those who double-park, thus rendering the narrow residential roads, especially Jalan Wu Lean Teh, impassable. "I got locked out a few times," said Loke, another member of the resident committee. "We're at the mercy of these inconsiderate motorists," he bemoaned. "They damaged our properties too."

The manifestation of these problems shows one glaring deficiency – poor planning by MBI. Why was approval given for the construction of de Garden without due thought for

parking and vehicular movement? This little oversight is the root cause of the problems affecting the residents of Ipoh Garden South. The monetary cost to the council is considerable. Imagine the revenue lost in terms of parking fees and fines. "It amounts to some RM16,000 based on 400 cars parked illegally on weekends," said Bernard. The council's lack of interest in doing the needful prompted some to question the Mayor's position.

The residents demand that MBI put up signage along the roads deterring motorists from parking and double parking. They too request that a wall be erected to separate de Garden from their neighbourhood. Closing off Jalan Wu Lean Teh to motorists is one other option to consider.

"We've been made to bear the council's indifference far too long. It's time it takes stock of its responsibility to rate-payers," Bernard remarked.

The reluctance on the part of the council to respond positively is puzzling indeed. Residents deserve to be heard.

From Matrimony to Alimony ● by Peter Lee

When Mick and Alice divorced, they had two children aged 4 and 6. Mick is a businessman while Alice is a housewife. In their divorce agreement, the custody of the children was given to Alice. Mick's responsibility is to pay alimony to Alice and provide monthly maintenance payments for their children. After the divorce was settled, Mick married Gillian, who is a working professional. He has one child who aged 1 from this marriage. Not long after, during one of his business trips he was killed in an accident and it was later discovered that he died without a will. As a result, the immediate funding for alimony to Alice and the maintenance payments for the two children ceased immediately. In addition, his entire estate was frozen and subject to the Malaysian Distribution Act, 1958. That being the case, the children from the first and second marriages shall be entitled to two-thirds (2/3) of his estate equally and the remaining one-third (1/3) will go to Gillian. When applying for the Letter of Administration (L.A.), Gillian was appointed as Administrator for his estate and when she obtained the L.A. after waiting for 7 years, she refused to distribute that portion of his estate to which the children of his first family are entitled.



In this situation, Alice and her two children were caught in a financial dilemma immediately after Mick's death, leaving aside the waiting period of 7 years and Gillian's refusal to distribute Mick's estate to Alice's two children. At least Gillian is working and can take care of herself and her one-year-old child. Therefore, she can afford to wait 7 years. To overcome this problem if Mick was alive and responsible, he would have to do a will for his first family and at the same time set up a Private Trust for Alice and her two children so that his funding for them in terms of alimony and maintenance would not cease immediately but instead continue for a certain period of time until maybe Alice finds a job.

To set up this Trust, Mick is named as the "Settlor". He appoints a Trustee Company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to be the "Trustee" because Rockwills Trustee provides expertise, impartiality, professionalism and perpetual existence. Then he may choose either Alice or his other family members to be the "Protector" who would act as a watchdog on the Trustee. Finally, he has to name Alice and her two children as his "Beneficiaries".

After mentioning all the above, he has to determine the source of funding for the Trust because this is the most important part when setting up a Trust. One of the things Mick could do is to transfer a certain amount of money into his Trust during his lifetime. Alternatively, he could assign some of his insurance policies to his trust because insurance is one of the cheapest funding vehicles for a Trust. When using insurance for funding, there won't be any money in the Trust when Mick is alive but upon his demise, his entire sum assured will be released to the Trust and distribution can take immediate effect. The condition of distribution and duration together with the parties involved will be stated in a legal document called the "Trust Deed".

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He is based in Ipoh and can be reached at: 012-5078825/05-2554853 or excelsec@streamyx.com.

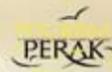
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PUBLISHER

Ipoh Echo Sdn Bhd
(Regd No 687483 T)

No 1 Jalan Lasam
30450 Ipoh Perak Darul
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Thinking ALLOWED • by Ian Anderson

Of Towers, Toilets and Tourism

It was with great interest that I read "Perak Heritage in Limbo" in the last Echo (108) as I also attended the Forum as a guest of the Perak Heritage Society. YB Dato' Hamidah Osman's remarks were certainly to the point, berating the audience for their lack of knowledge of our local heritage and suggesting that we take a leaf out of other's books and learn. I thought that was a bit hard considering the make-up of the audience from both public and private sectors, but maybe the overstatement was deliberate to spur us on to greater things.

Two Key Sentences

As I understood it, the way ahead for Ipoh's heritage tourism was summed up by two key sentences that emerged during the forum:

"We must all love and respect our heritage, before showcasing it to the tourists;" and
"Heritage conservation should be approached both bottom-up and top-down."

Later that day I pondered on these sentences and wondered just how many examples I could find where Ipoh was already following these key points on their way to restoring Ipoh's heritage for tourism and so the following morning I drove around town.

The Bottom-Up Approach

From the point of view of "bottom up" there was not much to be seen, Jalan Ong Siew has gone, although I shall never understand why they could not have kept the facade and built the hotel behind. That has worked well elsewhere. Lam Looking Building has been completed and a pretty good job has been made considering the terrible state it was in, although the orange stripes don't align at all with the original colour and isn't it a pity they didn't paint back the original name! Then a visit to the late Dato' Seri Lau Pak Khuan's old home in Jalan Datoh was thoroughly depressing, as the original roof has been removed and modernised and the inside gutted. It is also a horrendous shade of orange. Do these portray our citizens' love and respect for our heritage? I think not.

...and Top-Down?

Then it was time to consider the "top down" aspects. This was easier because there are three government/city council projects under way on heritage structures/areas; the Old Post Office, Hugh Low Bridge and Little India. Currently the Old Post Office remains fenced off, but at least from the outside it is starting to look good with the majority of scaffolding already removed. Only time will tell what has been done to the inside with regard to genuine restoration. Then it was time to visit the Hugh Low Bridge where much of it has been rebuilt close to the original style, but why has it sprouted four concrete towers? That does not demonstrate heritage conservation at all, but rather shows absolutely no understanding of the meaning of the words by those at the top.

Finally Little India came into view complete with its brand new toilet



1947 The E W Birch Memorial Fountain



19 Apr 2010: The Second Memorial Fountain



Today: the new 'fountain'???

and archway. What a terrible sight! Now I am well aware that this area has had a lot written and spoken about it already, but please bear with me for I believe that this is an important issue for the future of Ipoh, for heritage was one of the two key areas for Perak tourism identified by the recent State Government study – the other being nature.

Memorial Fountains Come and Go

Once there was a beautiful Italian marble fountain on this site. It was put there not by government, but by the businessmen of Ipoh in memory of the 8th British Adviser, E. W. Birch, who unlike his father had been good to Ipoh and Perak during his tenure. Indeed without his assistance, New Town would not have been built. However in the 1980s the memorial was removed by the City Council in the name of development. Then, funnily enough they managed to find room to build a modern (some would say ugly) concrete fountain, which they laughingly called the Memorial Fountain. But then that fountain also had to go for development – of a toilet (a memorial toilet?) – an eyesore that, as you can see from the photograph, takes away all the aesthetic view of the old buildings.

Ipoh's Future Depends on You

Now my point is that a State Government Exco member is desperately trying to spur us all on to work for heritage tourism, but at the same time there is no evidence that this "top down, bottom up" approach, requiring love and respect for our heritage, exists anywhere in our city. If Dato' Hamidah cannot inspire us all to start considering heritage in our daily toil then there will be no heritage tourism, no UNESCO listing and frankly, no future for Ipoh as a city of tourism. Not just Ipoh on its knees, but flat on its face, allowing others nearby to trample all over us. Is that what you really want? Remember it is you who has the future of Ipoh in your hands.

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Chan Sam Lock Photo Studio, 77-81 Jln Sultan Idris Shah.

M & A Securities Sdn Bhd, 52A Jln Sultan Idris Shah.

Pooven Enterprise (opp Super Kinta), 5 Jln Dato Onn Jaafar.

S.Y. Dry Cleaning & Laundry, 1 Jln Chung Thye Phin.

News vendor (morning), Opposite Simee Market.

Perniagaan Sagayah, 22A, Persiaran Bercham Selatan 8, Taman Desa Kencana. Tel: Maniam (014-3035697).

Rasu Enterprise, 271 Jalan Gunung Rapat.

Bawal Jaya Enterprise, 66 Psnr Desa Tambun 7, Desa Tambun.

Perak Academy, 28 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah.

Fitness Junction, 2 Jalan Kelab Golf.

P.N. Book Centre, 7 Jalan Dato Ahmad Yunus.

Simee:

News vendor (morning), Opposite Simee Market.

Bercham:

Perniagaan Sagayah, 22A, Persiaran Bercham Selatan 8, Taman Desa Kencana. Tel: Maniam (014-3035697).

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Tmn Tambun:

Bawal Jaya Enterprise, 66 Psnr Desa Tambun 7, Desa Tambun.

Tiger Lane:

Perak Academy, 28 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah.

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Musings on Food
seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

SeeFoon Continues Her Foodie Feeding Frenzy with Day 2

Ipoh is a paradise for Foodies. Being a foodie is more about appreciation than recreation. It's about being adventurous enough to try new things and to savour flavour combinations you never dreamed of. It's about driving an hour for a bowl of noodles or eating at ten stalls to find the ONE definitive taste that suits your palate. Here is Day 2 of my personal Foodie-Feeding-Frenzy, a selection of tastes and treats that will have you sated and satisfied.

Breakfast

- Hakka Mee** – served with Yeong Liew (tofu and vegetables stuffed with fish paste)
 - Restoran Cathay (17A Jln Dato Tahwil Azar – New Town)
 - The Paris Restaurant (164 Jln Sultan Iskandar Shah – New Town)
- Chu Yoke Meen** (Pork Noodles)
 - Kedai Kopi Kam Hor (89 Jln Canning Estate, Ipoh Garden) with offal including intestines. Ask for their Mee Sua.
 - Kedai Mi Cong Yin (39 Lebuhraya Tmn Ipoh Selatan, Ipoh Garden South). Ask for extra bamboo pith and the Japanese shirataki. Go early and have one each of their glutinous rice dumplings and their fried sui kao (a large ravioli)
 - Kim Keei Seafood Noodles (relocated to a corner coffee shop off Jln Bendahara behind new shop-lots a short distance from Sri Maju bus depot). Offal available. You can also have it with just seafood. Great homemade chilli sauce.

Mid-Morning Break

- Roti Telur** – Restoran Goodshed (opposite Cargo Terminal – Lot 4901S Jln St John)
- Pau** - Restaurant Yee Look (175 Jln Kampar). Large variety of Hainanese steamed Pau...from lotus seed, red beans, coconut, vegetarian, curry, pork – all encased in feather-light fluffy pastry. Also Lor Mai Kai steamed glutinous rice and Malai Kou or steamed cake.

Lunch

- Wong Koh Kee** (3 Lorong Panglima (Concubine Lane) – Old Town, 05-2419474)...IE 71. House specialties: sautéed watercress with sliced roast pork, Hong Siew Yu Tao (seasonal price) – deep-fried Carp's head braised in a soya sauce mixture, and PeiPa chicken.
- Samy Restoran** (70 Main Road, Chemor). Banana leaf rice, Vegetarian, Chicken Curry, Mutton Curry, Crab Curry/kampong chicken/turkey/duck. Air-conditioning available in the back.
- Restoran Ipoh Padang Curry House** (93 Jln Raja Ekram – New Town). One of the few Indian restaurants that serves all day thosai and roti canai; also great kampong mutton curry, kampong chicken curry, fish...IE 84.
- Restoran Salim** (75 Jln Bahru, Off Jln Tokong, 05-2555786). Fish head curry, mutton curry and their specialty sambal...IE 75.

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- Sin Eng Heong** (64 Jln Mustapha Al-Bakri) for *Kaya Puff* and the old-fashioned *Heong Pang* and a host of other delectables. May have to wait as they bake in batches.

Dinner

- Nga Choi Kai:**
 - Restoran Lou Wong Tauge Ayam (49 Jln Yau Tet Shin – New Town). Order the pork balls along with your choice of chicken.
 - Kedai Kopi Kam Hor (89 Jln Canning Estate, Ipoh Garden) touted by the cognoscenti as one of the best but the service is incredibly slow and you may have to wait an hour!
 - Restoran Cowan Street Tauge Ayam & Kopitiam (44 Jln Raja Ekram – New Town)
- Sunny Seafood Beer Garden** (Lot 139474, Jln Raja Musa Mahadi (5-8pm)). To order: **016-5570808** (Ms Lee) Steamed river fish, Glass Noodle Crab, crab with salted egg yolk, wild boar...IE 91.
- Tuck Kee Restoran** (1&3 Jln King, Off Pasir Pinji, **05-2553870/2419071**) booking recommended. Must haves: braised beef short ribs, smoked duck's breast, *Wat Dan Hor*, and the *Har Meen*. Even Foie Gras available...IE 92.



Late Night Supper

- Wonton Mee** – Cheong Kee (542 Jln Sekolah, Buntong)
- Appom** – Sudut Kafeteria (39 Jln Seenivasagam the building next to Prudential Building). Also the *Yeong Liew* with curry soup is extra tasty. If you're still able, order their fish head curry which is cooked a la minute. Scrumptious but perhaps a tad heavy for supper? Closes at midnight.
- Wat Tan Hor**...Kedai Makanan Sun Seng Fatt (25 Jln Leong Sin Nam – New Town)



RECIPE



Ayam Masak Merah

(Courtesy of the Dietetics Department of Hospital Fatimah, Ipoh)

Ingredients (A)

- 5 onions
- 4 cloves of garlic – blend finely
- 50g ginger

Ingredients (B)

- 5 red chillies (deseeded)
- 50g dried chillies – blend

Ingredients (C)

- 500g chicken without skin
- 1 big red onion (cut into rings)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 star anise seeds
- 2 pandan leaves
- 2 tomatoes
- 70g Canola Oil

Method:

- Heat the wok thoroughly and pour in the cooking oil.
- Add the spices, onions and *pandan* leaves and sauté until fragrant.
- Add (A) and sauté until brown.
- Add (B) and combine well.
- Add some water and minimum salt and sugar to taste. Sauté until well combined and add the tomatoes.



- Once the tomatoes have softened slightly, add the chicken and onion rings and let it simmer for 20 mins or until the sauce has thickened.

Nutritional value per serving:

Calories: 196kcal
Protein: 18g
Fat: 13g
Sodium: 97mg
Carbohydrate: 1.4g
Cholesterol: 33mg

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05-2552181**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com.my, by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba 85th Birthday Celebrations on Tuesday, Nov 23, at 7.30 p.m. at the Sathya Sai Baba Cave Temple, 5th Mile, Jalan Tambun, Ipoh. The programme includes a bhajan session, blood donation, pledging of organs and video clips on Sri Sathya Sai Baba. All are welcome, contact: **012-5021269** (Foong), **016-9128538** (Mrs Chan) or **0125020704** (Thiru).

PSPA Singers Choral Presentation "A Message of Love and Inspiration", Friday, Nov 26 at 6.00 p.m., at the Chapel of Hospital Fatimah Ipoh. Admission is free. Donations collected at this first performance will go to the Welfare Community of Hospital Fatimah. Seats are limited. Contact PSPA/Sara at **05-5487814**.

Wawasan Open University Information Day at its Ipoh regional office on Sunday, Nov 28 (10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Counselling for those wishing to enrol. A 50 per cent waiver on processing fee and gifts for those registering on this day. Call: Lee Hoon Erh at **05-2426323/05-2436323**.

Kinta Medical Centre (KMC) Health Screening Campaign from Nov 1-30, Weekdays 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Saturdays 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at the Out Patient Department. Mammogram, ultra sound breast, ultrasound full abdomen, ultrasound pelvis, Pap smear and Thin Prep at discounted rates. Call: **012-5932722** (Dr. Amy).

National Horse Show 2010, Dec 2-5 at the Perak Turf Club Equestrian Centre, Jln Golf, Ipoh. Free admission. Contact: **05-2539006, 2548084, 2540505**. (For details of the programme go to: www.ipohecho.com.my)

"No Democracy Without Gender Equality: The Case of Women's Rights in Malaysia" by Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir. Friday, Dec 3 beginning 7.30 pm at Meru Valley Golf and Country Club, Ipoh (not Syuen Hotel). For details and reservations call Wai Kheng at **05-5478949** or **016-5518172**.

Sultan Yussuf School Old Pupils' Association Golf and AGM on Saturday, Dec 4 at Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort, Batu Gajah. Teeing-off at 7.00 a.m. followed by AGM at 1.30 p.m. Call Dato' Hj Hamdan bin Dato' Hj Ahmad **012-5006454** or Dr. Chew Teik Chye **012-5282112**.

Discover Kinta Treasure Hunt on Dec 19 to promote tourism in the Kinta Valley. Jointly organised by MCA Youth Ipoh Barat, Gerakan Belia Bersatu Malaysia and Magnum 4D Berhad. Winners get RM1,000, RM700 and RM500 respectively with 12 hampers as consolation prizes. Early bird registrations before Nov 30 and entries close on Dec 10. Contact: 012-5127564 (Lim), 016-5207022 (Ang), **012-5507938** (Raymond); or Tel.: **05-5482022**, Fax: **05-5466216**, Email: masterbean6@yahoo.com.

wellness

Now I see you, Now I don't – Part 2

In our continuing series on Eye Health, we interview Dr S.S. Gill, Consultant Ophthalmologist at Hospital Fatimah about Diabetes Mellitus and blindness.



Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident Consultant
Ophthalmologist

Dr. Gill shares with us about patients like Jennifer (not her real name) who was doing household chores at home one day when suddenly her vision blurred. Within minutes, she was nearly blind. Prior to this, Jennifer, who is diabetic, was already having blurring vision for about a month but did not seek any treatment because she did not expect to lose her eyesight so suddenly.

She remembers vaguely when she picked up her regular diabetic medication that her general practitioner had told her in passing to go for an eye check but she did not think much of it then. Now she wishes her GP had put more pressure on her to go for an eye check so she would not have lost so much of her eyesight. This is a common story that Ophthalmologists often hear in their consultation rooms.

Diabetic Eye Disease may include:

Diabetic retinopathy—damage to the blood vessels in the retina.

Cataract—clouding of the eye's lens.

Glaucoma—increase in fluid pressure inside the eye that leads to optic nerve damage and loss of vision.

Diabetic Retinopathy is the most common of all the Diabetic Eye Diseases and the leading cause of blindness. It is caused by changes in the blood vessels of the retina. In some people with diabetic retinopathy, blood vessels leak fluid. In other people, *abnormal and weak* new blood vessels grow on the surface of the retina and these vessels bleed. "If you have diabetic retinopathy, at first you may not notice changes to your vision. But over time, diabetic retinopathy can get worse and cause vision loss," says Dr. Gill.

Diabetic retinopathy has four stages:

Stage 1: Mild Nonproliferative: There is ballooning of small vessels in the retina's tiny blood vessels. At this stage there are no symptoms and vision remains normal.

Stage 2: Moderate Nonproliferative: As the disease progresses, some blood vessels that nourish the retina become blocked. At this stage, again there may not be any symptoms even though the diabetic eye complication is progressing.

Stage 3: Severe Nonproliferative: With vessel blockage, several areas of the retina becomes deprived of blood supply. These areas of the retina send signals to the body to grow abnormal new blood vessels for nourishment. The patient will start having *blurring vision and will require urgent treatment*.

Stage 4: Proliferative Retinopathy. This is the **advanced** stage where new blood vessels grow and bleed profusely. If they leak blood, severe vision loss and even blindness results.

According to Dr. Gill, the main aim is to pick up diabetic eye problems early in stages 1 and 2, and to avoid regressing into stages 3 and 4. Regular eye exams for diabetics offer the best chance of detecting retinopathy in its treatable stages.

"If you are diabetic and have fluctuating and sometimes blur vision especially after a meal, and then it becomes clear again, it often reflects fluctuating blood glucose levels and this signals alarm bells!"

For more information, contact **05-5455582**, email gillyeyecentre@dr.com or visit: www.fatimah.com.my



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wellness

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

A Grand Old Lady Set to Step Into 21st Century

Kinta Medical Centre is all set on an RM5 million extensive refurbishing programme that will see all its facilities and medical services upgraded over a two year period. Beginning in January 2010 when a new management team was put in place, this 48-bed hospital has been quietly renovating its physical premises. Along with this cosmetic upgrade, orders for new equipment have been placed and new facilities are in the pipeline to bring back the glory that once earned this hospital the accolade of being the premier hospital in Ipoh offering affordable medical care.

Re-Engineering Exercise

Spearheading this re-engineering exercise are: Executive Director (Operations) Dr. Suresh Sammanthamurthy who is also a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon based in Kinta Medical, and COO Datuk Dr. Satiadass. With

a vision to be a customer driven and patient-centred organization, they have been tasked with their team members to turn around, upgrade, improve performance, efficiency and profitability of the organization.

The hospital came into being when the late Mr. Foo Yet Kai, a renowned Ipoh philanthropist, bought the Chung Thye Phin Villa from the family of a late Kapitan and donated the property for setting up of a private hospital known as Our Lady's Hospital run by the Congregation of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood. The hospital was for the benefit of people of all races and creeds who require hospital treatment at affordable rates. It has been open to the public since September 1963.

Wide Range of Services

Kinta Medical Centre offers a wide range of outpatient and inpatient services and facilities



supported by dedicated medical consultants, nurses and other support staff. Resident specialities at Kinta Medical include Orthopaedics, General Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Internal Medicine, Medical Oncology, Radiology, Anaesthetic services, and a 24-hour emergency centre. Currently more than 40 visiting doctors and specialists utilise the hospital and they even boast Ipoh's only Podiatrist (think feet).

Boutique Hospital

Although no effort is being spared to upgrade all existing facilities to current modern standards, the emphasis for Kinta Medical is for it to be known as a 'Boutique' hospital with all the attendant personalized services that a boutique operation implies. Plans are for retaining the current number of rooms and beds and because it is a heritage building, all its rooms are generously sized and special 'boutique' single rooms are being designed. Operating at a ratio of 1 staff to 3 beds where the national average is 1 to 4, Kinta's approach is focused on warmth and empathy being the key operating philosophy.

Although operationally it has moved away from being a charitable hospital, plans are underway for a separate entity under the

Foo Yet Kai Foundation to continue its former charitable activities with the support of Kinta Medical Centre where Chairman of the Board, Dato' Dr. Foo Wan Kien can carry on the family tradition of philanthropy begun by his father. "With this refurbishment and upgrading, we shall soon see Kinta Medical regain its former glory and taking its rightful place as a top medical service provider while at the same time building its reputation as the top 'Boutique' hospital in the northern region," he said.

New Facilities

A new Day Care Ward is nearing completion for elective day surgeries and a new operating theatre painted in bright green has been completed as is a new Maternity Ward. New equipment such as a 32-slice CT scan,

X-ray machines and Mammogram equipment have been ordered and await delivery.

When asked to define the philosophy of Kinta Medical, Executive Director (Operations) Dr. Suresh had this to say, "This hospital was founded with charity in mind. In keeping with the late Mr Foo Yet Kai's philanthropic motives, we aim to keep our prices affordable while providing quality medical care for all patients."

COO Datuk Dr. Satiadass added, "As a 'Boutique Hospital', we want to be known to be charming, warm, and most of all caring. We are after all in a Heritage Building and we intend to retain all the external character of a grand mansion while creating a modern and efficient hospital operation inside."

This grand old lady looks set to step into the 21st century.



Mini garden – before (left) and after



Datuk Dr. Satiadass (left) and Dr. Suresh Sammanthamurthy (right)

Stop That Itch – Advice on Atopic Eczema

Ipoh Echo talks to Dr. Agnes Heng who was formerly the Senior Consultant Dermatologist and Head of Dermatology Department, Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh. Today she runs a private practice and is a sessional Consultant Dermatologist, Hospital Pantai Ipoh and Ipoh Specialist Hospital.

What Is Atopic Eczema?

Atopic eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is a common chronic skin disease that affects a large percentage of the world's population. In fact, it is one of the commonest skin diseases that I see in my practice.

What Are The Symptoms Of Atopic Eczema?

Eczema patients have dry skin that is easily irritated. The skin becomes red and inflamed, and since inflamed skin tends to be itchy, scratching may cause the patch of skin to thicken. Sometimes it may be dry and scaly with cracking of the skin and at other times it may be weepy. Itch is a universal symptom of eczema and it is what makes this disease so distressing.

Is It Contagious?

No, you can't 'catch' the disease from someone else, although it may run in the family.

What Causes Atopic Eczema?

The cause is incompletely understood but a few factors play a role. Firstly, the lipid or oily layer of the skin tends to be reduced in people with atopic eczema. This leads to an increase in water loss, an impaired barrier function and a tendency to dry skin which in turn allows easy penetration of allergens, irritants and bacterial toxins. When exposed to these allergens, some cells of the immune system release chemicals under the skin which cause inflammation.

What Is The Usual Treatment For Atopic Eczema?

Briefly, we can divide treatment into 3 parts:

1. Avoid irritants to the skin and other triggers, such as soaps, extreme temperature, house dust mites, etc.
2. Emollients or moisturizers. Patients are advised to use it regularly even when the skin is 'normal' to prevent inflammation from developing.
3. Steroid creams and ointments. These work by reducing inflammation in the skin. They are available in various strengths ranging from mild to very potent and it is best to consult your doctor regarding its usage. When used correctly, steroid creams are safe and effective.

It is important to understand that, although the disease cannot be cured, good control and remission is possible. My advice to patients with eczema is to see your doctor rather than suffer silently or be resigned to the fact that there is no cure.

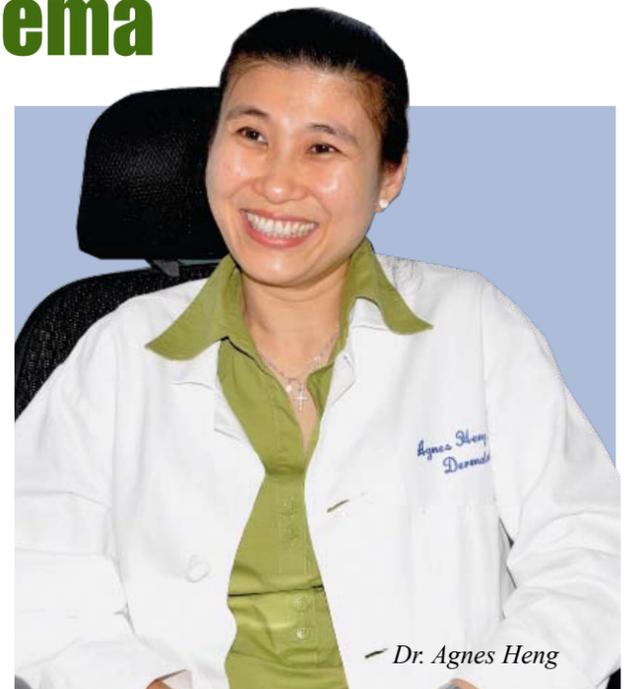
The key to success in the management of atopic eczema includes education, awareness and developing a partnership among the patient, family and doctor. I must commend Ipoh Echo for conducting this interview to create awareness among the general public. Perhaps this may serve as a motivation for patients and their family to come forward to lend support to each other. The formation of an Atopic Eczema Support Group in Ipoh may become a reality one day.

Agnes Heng Dermatology

14 Ground Floor, Persiaran Greentown 4
Greentown Avenue, Ipoh

For more information or if you wish to be part of the Atopic Eczema Support Group, please call 05-2559992 or email: agnesheng@gmail.com.

Look out for the next issue where Dr. Agnes will talk to us on another common skin disease: **Psoriasis**



Dr. Agnes Heng

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news roundup

Buddhist Health Camp

More than 200 residents participated in the free health camp organised by Dhammadipa Buddhist Centre in Ipoh Grove in conjunction with their annual celebration (offering of robes to monks) recently. The health screening included checking of body mass index, blood glucose, cholesterol, bone scan, dental check and diet consultation. The highlight was Reiki healing to alleviate aches and pains. Lunch was provided for the participants.

AJ



Senior Citizens' Club Perak

The Senior Citizens' Club Perak held its 33rd Anniversary Dinner & Dance at the Ipoh City and Country Club on October 6. The occasion was graced by the state director of welfare services, Miss Chong Phaik Kee and attended by about 240 members and friends.

The seniors indulged themselves to a sumptuous dinner followed by a Karaoke session of old favourites then showed their mettle at Ballroom Dancing and Jive to Line Dancing. The usual Lucky Draws were held in between these events. The seniors showed their stamina by dancing until closing proving that they are a force to be reckoned with.

OSH



Councillors need to 'TURUN PADANG'



Councillors in the local authorities in Perak have been urged to 'turun padang' and get to know the problems of the people. The call was made by State Secretary, Dato' Seri Dr. Abdul Rahman Hashim in his welcoming address to councillors at a local government seminar in Ipoh on November 9.

"Councillors must also keep their mobile phones switched on twenty-four hours a day and be prepared to serve the public at all times," he said. Gotong-royong must be carried out in their respective zones at least once a year. Dr. Abdul Rahman added that in Perak they must not only strive for cleanliness but must also beautify the state.

State chairman for local governments, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, said that since the councillors have direct contact with the public, they must project the image of the government.

Their first priority must be service to the people. The local councils must try to improve their star ratings and constantly try to improve their performance.

Dr Mah admitted there are a few non-performing councillors and if details are provided, he would investigate.

AJ

Young Perak

Sixty First Graduation Ceremony

SMJK Yuk Choy Ipoh held its 61st Graduation Ceremony for 400 Form Five students recently. The traditional annual school event was officiated by Mr. Leong Foh Sen, the chairman of the school's board of directors. According to Mr. Leong it was a proud moment for him as he was a student of this school back in the 1970s.

He advised the school leavers to study hard and aim to bring back glory to SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh. Hew Choon Wai was chosen as Best Student of The Year for academic achievement and co-curricular activities. He was given the Leong Poh Sen Challenge Trophy. The ceremony was ended with a traditional bell ringing and calligraphy presentation by Nam Wai Lun to the school.



Lioness Focus on ORANG ASLI



The Lioness Club of Ipoh organised a Joint Health project with Perak Family Health Association (PFHA) and Yayasan Orang Asli Perak (YOAP) with Lioness Datin Tavamani Thambipillay as the organising chairperson. It was held recently at Pusat Kecemerlangan Pendidikan Orang Asli, Kg Kerawat, Simpang Pulau.

The focus of this project was to reach out to the disadvantaged community – the Orang Asli. Services provided included: Pap

smear, breast examination, blood pressure and random blood sugar. A total of 52 residents went through the tests.

Inteyo Club members helped with the registration. They organised games for the children while the parents went for the tests. The children received sweets, buns and mineral water. Extra boxes of mineral water were left to the kindergarten children. Teaching aids and books were delivered to the children.

Past Presidents, Lioness Juliet Putra and Lioness Hjh. Edith Fatimah Naburi and members Lioness Annie Arul and Lioness Sheila Hari provided the refreshment for the volunteers.

Lioness Club Bannerettes were presented to the participating organisations. Pengarah YOAP Dato' Suki Mee presented the book 'Perayaan Jis Pai dan Adat Perkawinan' authored by him to all the visiting members.

感恩園

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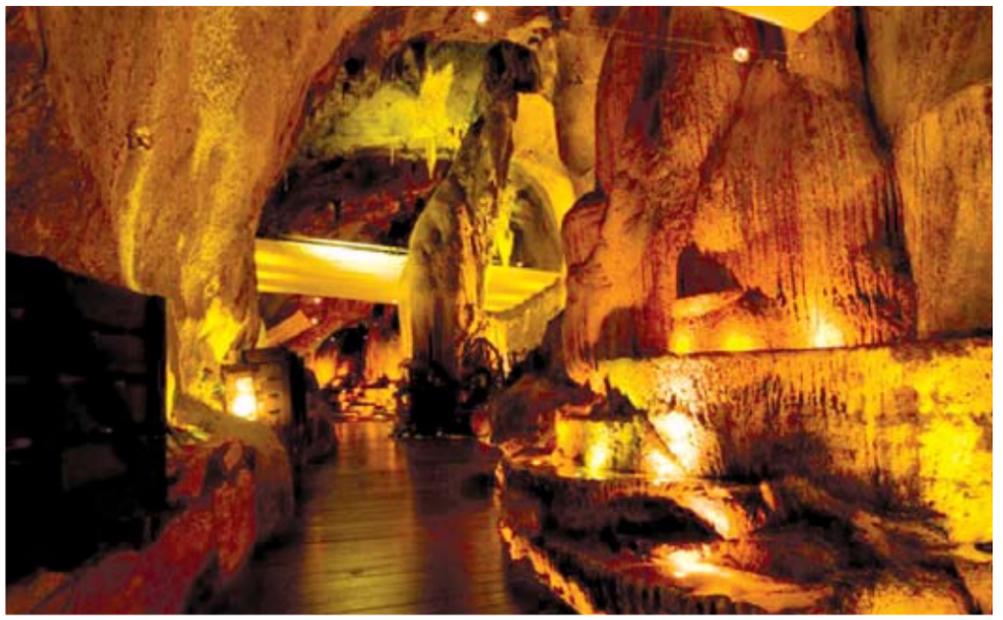
by SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

MOST UNIQUE SPA NOW AT OUR DOORSTEP

Iphohites who love 5-star pampering can now rejoice with the opening of the Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat adjacent to the Sunway development and the Lost World of Tambun. Opening very quietly, early this year, the Banjaran has hitherto been a source of mystery and curiosity. Their early policy of not admitting day visitors to their spa and restaurant miffed quite a few Iphohites and since the arrival of new General Manager Linda Pecararo, they have been making amends and soothing many ruffled feathers.

At a recent cocktail party hosted by GM Linda, a group of us were given a tour around the development and treated to cocktails in the most stupendous cellar in the world. Named Jeff's Cellar, after visionary and tycoon Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah who founded the Sunway empire, this is no ordinary cellar but a huge cave complete with stalactites and stalagmites all in their natural formations; artfully lit and highlighted to create a wonderland straight out of Aladdin's Cave.

Squeals of delight accompanied our group as we gazed awestruck at the tableaux surrounding us. The air was cool and fresh, aided by cleverly concealed air-conditioners; and discreet seating arrangements tucked into alcoves beckon. Meandering from the entrance which is reached by a small flight of stairs, down passageways that wind amidst the smaller limestone formations, a panorama greeted us as we moved into the main cave. Here a giant stalagmite artfully lit in warm hues stood imposingly in a corner with geothermal waters dripping in rivulets into crystal clear catchment pools that in turn reflect the kaleidoscope of colours from the limestone formations. We were all blown away.



Sustenance in the form of delicate canapés orchestrated by Executive chef Rolf Jaeggi accompanied by organic wine from Chile made the evening magical as we listened to GM Linda give us a briefing on the facilities and services offered at the Banjaran.

Ipoh has always been blessed by its Karst formations or limestone hills hidden amongst which in the Sunway development area is one of the best geothermal hot springs in Malaysia. Iphohites of yore could always avail themselves of these curative waters at a very run down facility for which they paid a small entrance fee. Since the acquisition of the land by the Sunway group, this has been denied them and criticism has since been levied at the developers for having taken away one of their natural treasures and making the hot springs inaccessible to most people; as the prices at the Banjaran are well beyond the reach of a lot of its residents. However, this has been

remedied with the opening of a hot spring pool at the Lost World of Tambun where for a reasonable fee local residents can soak to their heart's content.

The Banjaran has an impressive array of facilities and services spread over more than 16 acres of a sweeping valley floor, surrounded by majestic limestone hills that provide a cocoon-like feel to the whole development. Sixteen garden villas and 9 water villas provide luxurious accommodation with each one providing its own private geothermal dipping pool. Open dipping pools are also available for day spa visitors as is a Thermal Steam cave, an Outdoor Rainforest Shower, a Meditation Cave, a Fitness Centre and a Crystal Cave where guests can experience private energy healing treatments such as Reiki in a unique setting.

The Spa and Wellness Centre offers a mixture of traditional and state-of-the-art wellness and pampering treatments including Ayurvedic and traditional Malay massage and facials and body treatments with certified halal and organic products. A special colon hydrotherapy room provides detoxification and colon cleansing and a relaxation area allows the spa guest to unwind before or after treatments.

An unusual treatment originating from Turkey involves dipping one's legs into a pool of Garra Rufa fish (also known as Dr. Fish). Known for alleviating psoriasis and eczema, the fish actually nibble away at your skin and removes dead skin cells, actually creating rejuvenation of the skin. It felt slightly ticklish the first time I dipped my feet in and the fish swarmed around but after a few minutes, it felt very comfortable and I watched in fascination.

The Pomelo restaurant serves spa cuisine with emphasis on light and healthy dishes that are low-fat, low-salt and low cholesterol but rich in taste.

The Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat
1, Persiaran Lagun Sunway 3
Tel: +605-2107777 email: info.kl@thebanjaran.com
www.thebanjaran.com

Letter from ULU KINTA

• by Mariam Mokhtar

Perak's Shameful Statistic

Every day in Perak, around 10 women or children, fall victim to domestic violence. On November 1, it was reported that 97% of the 3,600 cases of violence against women, children and babies in the previous year, were perpetrated by men. Wanita Umno chief, Rosnah Kassim said, "Something must be done to curb the increasing trend of cases in the state."

Repeated Cycle

Earlier in the year, on May 5, Dr. Sharifah Halimah Jaafar said that 'there were still people who see domestic violence as trivial.... to be settled privately between husband and wife'. She said, "Cases of women being beaten up by their husbands are not a one-off matter. It is a cycle that has happened many times." Despite various public awareness campaigns, men continue to treat their wives as personal chattels, to treat as they please and to discard at their leisure.

Grim Statistics

In a report compiled by the Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), with data sourced from the police, the figures make grim reading.

Every year the police receive in excess of 3,000 reports of domestic violence. Apart from a dip in 2002 and 2003 which could be attributed to increased awareness or possibly under-reporting, the trend of attacks against women is on the rise. The same occurs for rape, incest and child abuse. Nevertheless, few people realise that the figures compiled refer to reported cases only. The true figure is higher.

Mammoth Task

If Wanita Umno reported that Perak has the most cases of violence, then the task that is faced by women's organisations such as the Perak Women for Women (PWW) is a mammoth one. On October 31, the PWW held the 'Men against violence campaign' at the Polo Ground in Ipoh. There were various activities and free ice-cream for participants.

The aim was to increase awareness among the public, and include men and families, in the day's event. The irony of this campaign was that it was the women who organised, managed and ran the event, for which the men's contribution was to either officiate or join in the activities.

Domestic Violence Act

Many women have not heard of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) 1994 which says that domestic violence is a crime punishable by law. Besides their ignorance, women are reluctant to lodge police-reports. They fear being humiliated, ridiculed or even blamed for the violence. They fear for their future if the only breadwinner in the family – the man, is jailed. Others fear for their children's safety. Although 3,600 cases were reported in Perak last year, the chances are that more women are affected.

Violence against women includes domestic violence, rape, sexual violence, sexual harassment, trafficking and sexual exploitation. Most of the time, this violence

is committed by men who are in a close relationship with the women, or who are known to them. These women suffer bruising, broken limbs, miscarriages, mental and physical scars, risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases or HIV/AIDS. Some women die from the attacks.

Great Losses Incurred

The damage in human and economic terms is also great. Loss of income, hospitalisation, medical treatment, family care, incapacitation, disability, deprivation and absence from work or school, are some of the ways the violence manifests itself.

Unfortunately, our culture can stand in the way of helping these abused women. Ours is a male-dominated society where women are afraid or are reluctant to report such crimes, thus bringing further shame onto the family. Many children may also witness the abuse of their mothers or sisters, but are afraid of reporting when threatened by the perpetrators.

The way forward is for the community to realise that women who are abused are protected by the law. Promotional campaigns, information leaflets in hospitals, clinics, community halls, places of worship and education in schools, all help. People must be prepared to come forward and report any suspected cases of abuse either in their own family or community.

We must break the social taboos and speak out against the violence towards women because to keep silent means that their suffering will continue unabated. Ours should be a vision of a society where our womenfolk can lead a normal life free from violence or even the threat of violence.

community

Dental Care



Mentally challenged children from Sekolah Semangat Maju, Sitiawan, numbering some 70, underwent a complete dental check-up recently. A team of dentists and nurses from the dental ward of the district hospital was on hand to assist. The programme, said Mrs. V. Satyavani, the school's principal, was initiated by the Parent-Teachers Association and the school authorities to cater to the dental needs of the children.

Being mentally challenged, getting them on the dental chair required patience and a cool head. The nurses did an excellent job coaxing the kids to open their mouths and to endure a little pain. Many had irregular teeth which were in poor condition. Scaling, filling and extraction were done within the space of a few hours. The whole programme was completed without any untoward incidents. Besides treatment, talks on dental hygiene were also conducted. The programme will be continued from time to time based on needs, said the principal.

SN

Food Festival at OLOL



Food, music and games – this is a combination which simply cannot go wrong when a fair or festival is called for. This is certainly what Ipoh's Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic church had in abundance during their Food Festival recently.

Meanwhile, the highlight of that lovely Sunday morning was the

cooking competition called "So You Think You Can Cook". This competition saw adults and children alike whipping out pots and pans and secret recipes to whip up dishes designed to win the hearts of the judges.

The adults served main dishes while the children tried their hand at creating delicious sweets and painstakingly decorated desserts.

There were a total of 17 entries in the adult category which saw pasta, steak and curries while the kids undoubtedly had fun creating the cakes and cookies which certainly drew the admiring glances – and taste buds – of many.

Great prizes were awarded to the winners, sponsored by generous corporate bodies such as Datuk John Coyle of Giant and Peter Voght of Nestle, as well as numerous private individuals.

The cooking competition was organised by Protokol Amen Sdn Bhd, an entity of one of the parishioners.

Elaine Jeyakumar

Bus Service In Perak



In an effort to improve the bus service in Perak, newly-formed Kumpulan Bas Perak Sdn Bhd (KBP), will invest RM50 million to enhance its capacity to serve the public. Managing Director, Syaiful Abdullah, told reporters that KBP had spent RM5 million to purchase 10 new buses to serve some of the routes allowable in its permit. "We'll buy the buses in stages until we acquire a fleet of 100," he announced. The new buses will then serve all routes in the state. He said this at the launching ceremony of KBP in Sungai Siput recently. The company is a consortium consisting of bus companies which have been in the forefront of the public transport scene in the state. "Since Perakeans living south of Ipoh have the Ipoh-Kuala Lumpur trains at their disposal, KBP will concentrate on the Ipoh-Sungai Siput-Kuala Kangsar-Taiping-Parit Buntar route," said Ahmad Marzuki Mansor, KBP's Chairman. "Our aim is to improve services within our area of responsibility to match those in Klang Valley and Penang. The launching ceremony was officiated by Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir. Zambry, who in his opening remarks, invited other bus companies to join the consortium to make it a more viable entity.

RN

Money Talk



The Rotary Club of Kinta recently organized an excellent dinner talk with a most interesting topic "How to Make Money from the Share Market – A Personal Experience" which was presented by millionaire philanthropist Mr Koon Yew Yin (seated centre).

Koon had been in the news recently because University Tunku Abdul Rahman, Kampar (UTAR) had rejected his offer of RM30 million to build a hostel at its campus. Nevertheless Koon is not perturbed by the rejection saying it made him famous instead "I got so much publicity without spending a cent".

Indeed he was the reason the talk had a good attendance of professionals and captains of industry which was confirmed by Rotary Club President Dato' Dr M. Subramaniam.

Koon did not divulge his personal wealth currently though at the introduction it was mentioned in the Kulim Berhad 2006 Annual report that Koon was in the top 30 shareholders list with 7 million shares. The price then was RM7.

Koon's selection criteria for picking good share counters are to check out the companies for their:

1. Good profit growth prospect. Never buy any share without this quality
2. Low price/earning (P/E) ratio.
3. Revenue growth, increasing sale per share and net tangible asset.
4. Healthy account, good cash flow
5. Good company with good business.

His other advice is to not speculate and have patience.

Regarding his philanthropic activities he has over the last 4 years sponsored over 80 students from poor families to further their studies at UTAR Kampar a dozen of whom were present at the talk.

JAG

Men Against Violence



The Men Against Violence road show, jointly organised by Wanita Umno Perak and Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) held at the Polo Ground Ipoh on Sunday, October 31, was well received by Ipohites. The objective of the show was to encourage men to take the lead in stopping violence against women and children. The opening ceremony was performed by Dato' Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, MB Perak. In attendance were the MB's wife, Datin Seri Saripah, Adun for Ulu Kinta, Dato' Hajjah Rusnah Kassim, Datin Normah Hanum, Chairperson Public and Social Development Secretariat Wanita Umno Perak and Dr Sharifah Halimah, President PWW. Some 20 NGOs and government agencies, which included Perak Family Health Association, Good Shepherd, Legal Aid Perak, Police and the Social Welfare Department, participated. Wanita Umno Perak Choir sang the theme song "Hentikan", an original composition by Perakean Wah Idris. The highlight of the event was the "stamping of the palm" by Zambry as a sign of support for the awareness campaign. Other highlights were a children's colouring contest, sketch, cultural dances and lucky draws. The audience was entertained to songs by internationally acclaimed singer, Iqwal.

FZB

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Business

Perak Trade DELEGATION TO SINGAPORE



Handover of the advertorial to SMA. From left: Mr Low Beng Tin (SMA), Dato' Muhiyuddin, Dato' Hamidah, Dato' Samsudin & Dato' Gan Tack Kong

Dato' Samsudin CEO of Perak State Development Corp & Pro-Tem Chair of Perak Business Council led a group of Perak Business organisations to Singapore recently. Comprising delegates from Invest Perak, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (Perak), Perak Malay Chamber of Commerce, Perak Foundry and Engineering Industries Association, Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association - Perak Branch, Perak Footwear Industries Association, Perak Furniture Makers & Dealers Association and MICCI - Perak Branch, the group's main objective of the visit was to negotiate an MoU between Singapore Manufacturers Federation (SMA) and Perak Business Council to formalise the annual visits and the promotion of trade between businesses in Perak and Singapore.

It was also to reciprocate the visit by Singapore Manufacturers Federation (SMA) in Nov 2009 and International Enterprise Singapore (IE) in June 2010 which began with the maiden flight by Firefly in July 2009. It is hoped that the cross border visits between Perak and Singapore can continue, Singapore for the last 5 years has been amongst the top 10 investors in Perak and, Singapore companies account for 2 out of the 10 largest investors in Perak.

While in Singapore, SMA offered to provide advertorial space on its website and its magazine 'Connect' for promotional Articles on Perak. The trip began with a dinner hosted by SMA with SMA immediate Past President, a visit to IE, lunch and negotiations with SMA, visit to LHT (member of SMA) recycling of wood waste and culminated with Dato' Hamidah (exco Perak) witnessing the handover of the first advertorial which was made by Dato' Samsudin to Mr Low Beng Tin of SMA at a dinner hosted by SMA on November 10.

Heritage

LOST LIVING HERITAGE



Tan Khar Mee from Ipoh

The Kinta Heritage Group, the group that came out with 2 Ipoh Heritage Trail maps will be organising "Perak Lost Living Heritage" a showcase featuring the traditional arts and crafts found from throughout the state.

The exhibition to be held at the Garden Villa 5, Jalan Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah, from November 27 till December 5, will feature tradesmen demonstrating their craft on site at the premises.

Tradesmen such as Tan Khar Mee, 67, from Jalan Tingkat Pasar Ipoh will demonstrate how to make a Lion's head used for the traditional Chinese Lion Dance.

Similarly Abdul Mazin bin Abdul Jamil, 60, from Bukit Chandan, Kuala Kangsar will take you through the steps on the traditional way of making a keris.

Besides the display of craftsmanship there will also be cultural activities and martial art display.

The purpose of the event is to create awareness and hopefully preserve these cultural heritage traditions before they all quietly fade into oblivion.

JAG

WOU Degree for Broader Job Choices



The 38-year-old senior operations manager of Pantai Hospital, Ipoh can cite lots of reasons why she decided to continue her tertiary education.

Joanne Rose Wong enrolled for the Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Management at Wawasan Open University (WOU) because she wanted to broaden her job choices in life. "Instead of taking up a degree in nursing, I was looking for something that gives me different opportunities to develop my career," said Wong, an ex-senior staff nurse who holds a Diploma in Nursing and also in Public Relations and Corporate Communications.

"After years in nursing, I was offered an opportunity to handle public relations in a private hospital," she said. A high achiever who is not afraid to try new things, she then ventured into public relations, dealing with customer care as manager of marketing and public relations before assuming her current position.

She was challenged to rise up academically by her former boss' remark that paper qualifications were more important than experience when it comes to career. Little did she know that the statement turned out to be positive in motivating her to pursue a degree despite her apprehensions.

Being an adult learner made her a better student as she could clearly understand why certain procedures are implemented in the workplace. "When I study from the course modules and compare them with what exactly happens in the office, I believe that working and studying at the same time makes the syllabus more relevant."

As she strongly believes in lifelong learning, Wong perseveres and makes sure to spend at least four hours reading and revising her studies after work. She is comfortable with the open distance learning mode and logs on to WOU's learning management system, WawasanLearn, to connect with her course mates. She maps out a schedule plan for her studies, revision and assignments and carries her laptop wherever she goes.

Her advice to working adults planning to further their studies is to "choose programmes which are flexible as then you need not rush to complete your degree. Although the courses may be tough, with a little bit of self discipline, you will achieve self-satisfaction and be a step closer to achieving your goals".

Over 6,000 working adults like Wong have to date seized the learning opportunities afforded at WOU while they continue in their jobs.

WOU's School of Business and Administration (SBA) offers eight degrees, four graduate diplomas and two graduate certificates in the fields of management, accounting, banking and finance, logistics and supply chain management, sales and marketing, business information systems, corporate administration, and in entrepreneurship and small business management. The programmes focus on work-based learning approaches to develop and disseminate business management knowledge to fulfil the needs of the business community. The School also offers the Commonwealth Executive MBA (CeMBA) and MPA (CeMPA) programmes, coordinated by WOU's Centre for Graduate Studies.

For details on WOU programmes, call the toll-free Careline at 1 300 888 WOU (968) or visit: wou.edu.my.

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my say



By Jerry Francis

Final Decision on Sultan Azlan Shah Airport Needed



The future of the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport in Ipoh still remains uncertain with proposals swinging back and forth for the last three decades.

There have been talks of relocating the airport, which then swung to calls for improvement, and it was even mooted as a feeder airport for the region. It appears to be the most talked about airport in the country.

Last month, the Menteri Besar of Perak Datuk Seri Zambry Abdul Kadir reassured Perakeans that Sultan Azlan Shah Airport will not be relocated, but there is a plan for the possibility of setting up another international airport elsewhere in the state. He added the state government felt that the current location of the airport is very strategic and can act as a catalyst for the city's economy. Therefore, the state government is of the opinion that the upgrading of the airport should be continued to enable small-sized aircraft to land.

I hope his reassurance will put to rest further talks of relocating the airport as there have been a lot of conflicting views. But, I have my doubts that the state can facilitate two airports. Why the need for an international airport, when there is one in Penang in the north, and KLIA and Subang in the south, a short flying time away? Why not develop Sultan Azlan Shah Airport into a feeder airport for low-cost carriers to link with other South-East Asian countries?

Ever since the late 70s, there have been talks of relocating the airport to Bota in Perak Tengah District where the land is flat. It was considered to be ideal as the proposed location is midway between Ipoh and the tourist resort of Lumut-Pangkor.

Sultan Azlan Shah Airport is considered unsuitable for expansion due to the surrounding limestone hills and as well as being a stumbling block to development of high-rise buildings in the city. However, the airport was later improved to accommodate medium range jetliners covering domestic and international destinations in Indonesia and Singapore, and added various facilities, including an instrumental landing system.

At its height in 2003, the airport handled about 116,000 passengers and 500 metric tonnes of cargo with 1,572 aircraft movements. It started to slide in 2005 when the North-South Expressway was completed and travelling times by road to the Penang and Kuala Lumpur were sliced. Malaysian Airline System (MAS) stopped flying into Ipoh, followed by Air Asia which terminated its Senai-Ipoh route citing the airport's runway as unsuitable. The airport was practically closed as a passenger terminal, except for chartered flights and light aircraft maintenance services.

Then just before the general election in 2008, very convincing news emerged,

probably politically motivated, that the world's first international humanitarian airport (a transit hub for global relief operations) was to be constructed near Bandar Seri Iskandar also in Perak Tengah District, which could be used as commercial airport. Soon after the general election, not a single word of the airport was uttered. All the planning and approvals appeared to be non-existent although it was claimed to have the approval of the Civil Aviation Department.

After failing in its bid to have a Low-Cost Carriers' Terminal (LCCT) located in Batang Padang early last year, the then Pakatan Rakyat State Government turned to the Transport Ministry to honour its promise to improve and develop the under-utilised airport, or alternatively hand it over to the state government. But before any decision could be reached, the opposition state government fell and the Barisan Nasional took over. A RM60 million allocation to upgrade the runway was then approved.

Since then, there have been other talks to turn it into a feeder airport and as well as an air-cargo terminal. Hardly two weeks after the announcement in June of a direct Ipoh-Singapore all-cargo flight, it was postponed "indefinitely" and is unlikely to materialise.

Now even the much publicized decision to upgrade the airport is also in doubt. The Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan was recently quoted as saying that "Even if you extend the runway, there's no point. It can only qualify as a domestic airport. We have to find a new airport, that has always been on my mind."

And just last month, an MCA special committee set up to gather feedback on the proposed Ipoh Draft Local Plan 2020, had also recommended that the airport be relocated. The committee's chairman Datuk Yik Phooi Hong said that the airport should be moved to Seri Iskandar, which had been earmarked as a possible site for a new airport.

Offering a different opinion, the Perak Chinese of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) president Datuk Lim Kok Cheong said the airport should be upgraded and offer flights to Asean destinations, such as Bangkok, Hanoi, Jakarta, Macau, Hong Kong and Guangzhou in Southern China. "It is within four hours of travelling time, which could enhance foreign investment and tourism," he said in his speech at the PCCCI's anniversary dinner recently. "At the moment, we are unhappy that plans to upgrade the airport have yet to take off."

A final decision on the future of the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport is therefore very much desired. The issue must not be prolonged as it will affect investments in the city, and Perak as a whole.

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