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REDUCED CRIME RATE

- Reality Or Perception?



*Ginla Chew -
victim of snatch-
theft*



*Dato' Seri Zambry
welcomes Perak's new
CPO Datuk Mohd
Shukri Dahlan*

Although police claim that the crime rate in the city has dropped, many residents in various housing estates are still afraid to even venture just out of their house gates. While those who had been robbed or had their handbags snatched in front of their houses are still traumatised from the experience, others have organised themselves to initiate preventive measures against crime, including holding personal safety workshops for women and gatherings to create awareness and address concerns raised by residents on the crime rate.

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A Spate of Crimes in Housing Estates

This followed several reports of robberies and snatch thefts in various parts of the city, particularly involving women. Most of the incidents occurred in the Canning Garden and Ipoh Garden areas.

However, despite all the initiatives taken by the police to reduce the crime rate, Ipoh Echo have been receiving reports of residents still living in fear because of the increasing amount of criminal activity in their area. The criminals are even getting bolder.

Ipoh Garden

Early last month, a housewife, who refused to be identified, was about to enter the gate to her house along Jalan Yeoh Chai Lye in Ipoh Garden at 4.15 p.m. when a man walked up to her and began to snatch at her handbag slung over her shoulder. On an instinctive impulse she held on to her bag and refused to let go and began screaming for help. She fell to the ground (there was a pause in the struggle) then she saw the attacker's face above her and she started screaming again, this time kicking at him.

Noticing the gold chain around her neck, the attacker switched to grabbing it. However it slipped from his hand and fell into her blouse. Just then her husband came out of the front door and the attacker jumped onto a waiting motorcycle and fled empty handed.

She had bruises on her shins and elbow and a minor cut on her throat probably caused by the attempt to snatch her chain. "It all happened so fast, in minutes," she recalled.

Without cleaning up her wounds, she went straight to Sungai Senam Police Station to make a report. According to the policeman on duty, they have been receiving reports of such crimes daily.

Canning Garden

In another case in Jalan Papan in Canning Garden, Ginla Chew's friends dropped her off at her house at 10 p.m. after a dinner function. As her electric gate remote wasn't working, she called her husband inside who asked her to wait awhile as he was in the shower. Not wanting to inconvenience her friends, who were waiting for her to get in, she persuaded them to leave.

Just then three motorcyclists with their pillion riders passed slowly by. Her hubby hadn't opened the gate yet and Ginla said to herself "sei lor". True enough, one of the pillion riders got off and walked briskly towards her and grabbed her bag. She held on to her bag, fell down and was dragged before letting go.

Ginla immediately drove to Sungai Senam Police Station to make a report. For Ginla making a police report "is my duty and my right. I want to report so the police know



Police dialogue March 2010. Dato' Chang is seated at the table 3rd from left

what is happening and can do a better job."

In Taman Tinggi, a woman was sweeping the porch at 6.00 p.m. when a motorcyclist stopped in front and coolly opened the gate and walked in. He snatched the gold chain from her neck and fled before the woman could recover from the shock and scream for help.

There have been many other cases. Many of them were not reported because the victims felt it would be a waste of time as they had no confidence of recovering the items.

MB Comments on Car Break-Ins

According to a Bernama report, even Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Zambry Abdul Kadir has expressed concern and urged the police to increase patrols to curb the rampant car break-ins in Ipoh.

He noted that of late, cases of smashing car windows to steal valuables such as laptops and cameras were becoming more frequent.

"It is like they (thieves) know that potential victims keep cameras and laptops inside their cars...they may have a type of detector to do so," he said when asked to comment on several car break-ins involving media personnel over the past few months.

Crime Prevention Initiatives

The situation has reached the level where institutions and residents have organised themselves to initiate preventive measures against crime.

A hospital, which rents houses nearby as nurses' hostels, has introduced a van service to take the nurses home at night after two nurses returning to their hostel just 100 metres from the hospital gate were attacked.

As an added preventive measure the hospital organised a two-day 'Women's Personal Safety Workshop' for all their female employees to learn how to ward off attacks from rape and snatch theft. The workshop had a 90% female staff attendance.

The Residents Asso-

ciation of Taman Idris and Taman Cherry held a get-together session recently to create awareness and address concerns raised by the residents. Its president Paul Devadason, described the "rampant theft" in the neighbourhood and related several incidents.

Months ago a resident's maid was in the garden when a thief walked in to snatch her chain. The attempt was unsuccessful but ever since the maid is afraid to step outside the gate.

Paul noted that these theft incidents regularly occurred during the late morning after the household had gone to work but before lunch.

"We have to help our residents rid their fear of going out of the house," said Evelyn Selvarajah, the association's secretary. Even committee members of the association are afraid to walk to their meeting venue just 200 metres away. They would rather drive.

Trauma - Fear from the Incident Remains

From the various inter-

views with the victims, all of whom were women, making a report is not the end of the problem. For all of the victims the fear felt from the incident still remains with them months later, like the maid from Taman Idris who shudders each time she steps out of the gate.

For Ginla Chew she didn't leave the house for three days after the incident. She enjoys dressing and had always carried a matching handbag, but since the incident she wears a dress with a pocket to hold her purse. And when she leaves a restaurant or out of the car to open the gate, she remains alert.

Solution

Commenting on the spate of crimes recently, Perak's Gerakan Chairman Dato' Chang Ko Youn said that although he "believed that the rate has come down, the negative perception has not yet been erased". To counter this Chang suggested that the police utilise the services of the Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) to combat street crime.

Chang's proposal is probably the best solution to improve the perception residents have about security in Ipoh. Hopefully the proposal will be adopted and implemented.

Let's hope the split of the Ipoh Police District into Ipoh Barat and Ipoh Timur, and the anticipated increase in personnel as well as the installation of CCTV in strategic locations in the city, will be able to reduce crime.



Resident Robert Looi explaining his complaint to the panel

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(24765-P)

IPOH **echo**

From the Editor's Desk

● by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

ONE SUPERMARKET Too Many

More developments mean more people and more people mean more cars. Somehow the authorities, for reasons of expedience, fail to anticipate this negativity...

Bercham was once a sleepy hollow famous for its vegetable plots tended by residents of a new village of the same name. Besides being the gateway to Tanjung Rambutan, where the nation's foremost mental institution is located, it boasts a less savoury landmark, Ipoh's only landfill. Bercham is also home to a private crematorium, which is sited about a kilometre from the dumpsite. Since the crematorium uses diesel as its burning agent, the air quality in Bercham is, therefore, suspect.

All these are nothing compared to what this one time semi-rural suburb will soon inherit. When the brand new Giant Hypermarket opens its doors for business in June of this year, Bercham will be "inundated" with hypermarkets and supermarkets, literally. Tesco Extra and Giant operate on one side of the Plus Expressway while Tesco and Jusco are on the other side. Within a space of a kilometre along Tasek Road, you have four "giants" and a shopping mall (de Garden) jousting for a piece of the action.

Is this the kind of transformation that Bercham folks expect? Definitely not. More developments mean more people and more people mean more cars. Somehow the authorities, for reasons of expedience, fail to anticipate this negativity. This oversight will be the cause of residents' grouses in the years ahead. Signs are already there. The perennial morning crawl, the dust, the grime and the cacophony of strident sound, many decibels above permissible limits, have been plaguing Bercham residents for years on end. You don't need a rocket scientist to tell you so.

While it is good to give customers a choice, having four supermarkets competing side by side is suicidal. The goods sold are almost identical and so are the promotional gimmicks. The only difference is the ambience. Tesco and Giant cater to the working class and Jusco, the middle and



Giant Hypermarket under construction

upper middle classes. Perceptive distinction, however, matters little when ambience and space will be the deciding factors in motivating shoppers. Giant and Tesco will face-off one another, as both are located on opposite sides of the Bercham-Tanjung Rambutan road. Will this translate to frenzy buying or will the hype fizzle off once the glitter is gone?

I guess little or no marketing survey was done before the concerned party sought approval from the authorities. If the November 2010 World Bank Report on Malaysia is anything to go by, entrepreneurs would be well advised to exercise caution.

The following findings may sound a little distressing but true:

* Income inequality in Malaysia is among the highest in Asia resembling that of Latin America – the bottom 40% of the population earn 14.3% of the total income while the top 20% earn nearly 50% of the total income.

* Wages are low – 66% of all formal workers

in the manufacturing and construction sectors earn less than RM900 per month.

* Household debts are mounting and have reached 77% of GDP.

* Take-home pay of many is low. This is due to an archaic federal policy that suppresses wages in order to keep jobs aplenty. Many are self-employed in the informal sectors (hawkers, petty traders, taxi drivers, direct salesmen, etc.) which offer little or no financial security.

The number of "moneyed" customers, therefore, is confined to the mid 40 per cent of the population. The top 20 per cent do their shopping somewhere else. This percentage is representative of Ipohites too. The 40 per cent crowd will be "chased" by all hypermarkets/supermarkets in the city. Competition will be intense. The end-result may not be too flattering. And as if to add salt to the wound, plans are already afoot to construct a huge Mydin Hypermarket at Meru Jaya and a gigantic Jusco in Section 18. Our passion for the biggest has not changed.

While the race to build supermarkets and hypermarkets goes on at breakneck speed, the state of Ipoh's public transport, air quality and public safety continue to deteriorate. Where do we go from here?

Don't Worry It Won't Happen To Us

● by Peter Lee

When Chew was diagnosed with terminal cancer, he was advised by some of his family members to prepare a will to avoid family disputes, especially between his mother, wife and three school-going children. One of the three children is in University and the other two in secondary school. However, he was upset with the advice and said to them, "Don't worry it won't happen to us," because everything will be given automatically to his wife and children if he dies. So when he died, his estate was instead distributed according to the Distribution Act, 1958 (amended in 1997) whereby ¼ to wife, ¼ to mother and half to children. His mother now wants to claim ¼ of his entire estate. To unlock his estate, his wife has to apply for the Letter of Administration but requires the consent of all the beneficiaries (i.e., Wife, Mother and Children) to appoint her as the Administrator. That's when Chew's mother refused to consent to the appointment unless she is also appointed as joint Administrator. This led to further argument between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Before this could be resolved, Chew's wife discovered that Chew had purchased 5 properties worth RM4 million without any insurance coverage because he never believed in Insurance during his lifetime and all these properties were charged with the banks. To add salt to the wound, there was an accumulated interest of RM30,000 left unpaid. She is now worried that the estate may be insolvent as she could not service the interest.

It is always sad to see many people holding to the belief until death that everything will be fine for their family without planning, especially with regards to preparing a will. Chew could have planned to avoid the above problem by preparing his will. In doing so, he can choose Executors of his choice and if he anticipates that there will be a problem between his family members upon his death, then he is strongly encouraged to choose a Trustee Company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to be the main Executors/Trustee because it provides expertise, impartiality, professionalism and perpetual existence. Then he has to choose a Guardian for his minor children if his wife also passes away. The next important issue to take care of is the distribution of his estate to his immediate family where in his case requires a "Testamentary Trust" for his minor children especially for the maintenance of their monthly living, medical and education expenses.

Presuming that Chew had written his will as mentioned above, he must also have sufficient insurance coverage to cover his loan instalments. Otherwise, the role of the Executors/Trustee will be made tougher because they have to salvage as much as they can from the estate to repay these debts. In Chew's case, the estate may encounter insufficient assets to distribute to the intended beneficiaries and could lead to an insolvent or bankrupt estate by the time the Executors/Trustee settle these debts. That's the reason one has to make it compulsory to purchase an Insurance coverage when borrowing from the bank to purchase a property, even though one believes that he/she has sufficient funds to repay the loan.

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. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>.



Romantic Candlelight Dinner

14th February 2011
7.00pm to 10.30pm
RM200 nett per couple

Menu

Smoked Salmon and Leek Salad
Cream Chicken in Vol Au Vent
Watercress Cream Soup
Strawberry Sherbet
Roasted Lamb Rack

OR

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OR

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Thinking **ALLOWED** • by Mariam Mokhtar



Please Do Not Insult Our Intelligence – Can Trees Be Insured?

Ipohites have long had running battles with the Ipoh City Council (MBI) regarding trees that have been chopped.

Last July, concerned people contacted the Ipoh Echo (IE) to report tree felling activities along Jalan SP Seenivasagam in front of St Michael's Institution. Reporters rushed to the scene and found the remains of a casuarina tree stump. Michaelian students, ranging from their teens to those in their forties who were former students, expressed sorrow as "that was the tree where we waited for our parents after school".

MBI said that "checks on the health of the trees found that the roots and stem of this particular tree was rotten and posed a danger to the public. Hence it had to be felled soonest possible".

'One Birth, One Tree'

IE readers have since highlighted other tree cutting incidents and one reader proposed a more eco-friendly solution to replace trees that have been removed. Perhaps, MBI was listening because at the end of July, last year, a tree planting scheme was started.

An area called Taman Kelahiran (Birth Park) at the Gunung Lang Recreation Park was selected for the "One Birth, One Tree" programme, launched by Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim. Parents could celebrate the birth of their child and pay RM31 for a tree, name plaque and certificate of participation.

Roshidi said, "Like the good qualities we hope from our children, the trees also provide shade and help beautify the environment." Roshidi hoped to plant 2.6 million trees within five years, and stressed that "a condition would also be imposed on developers to plant trees in their project areas".

Trees to be Gazetted

In mid-December, Roshidi announced that some trees in Ipoh would be gazetted and insured after they were found to be worth over RM1 million each.

He said, "We have identified four which have an estimated value of more than RM1 million each. Three are in Taman D.R. Seenivasagam and one is along Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah". According to him, hundreds of these valuable trees would be insured against public acts of vandalism and other damages.

"We hope to gazette the trees by next year and we will also propose for enactment legislation to be drafted to ensure strict action is taken against anyone who purposefully harms or destroys the trees. At the moment, those who vandalise trees or chop them down are punishable under Act 172 of the Tree Preservation Order."

Ipohites Protest Recent Tree Felling

One week after this reassuring announcement, MBI removed five trees which residents believed to be over 50 years old. It was reported that a hotel would be built at that particular site.

Many have written to the Ipoh Echo to question the destruction of the trees and said that the trees would have acted as a buffer for noise, dust,



pollution and also shield the unsightly construction work.

Others wondered why efforts were not taken to replant the trees elsewhere: "It has taken 50 to 60 years for the trees to grow but just a few days to cut them down. How many 50- or 60-year-old trees are left in Ipoh?"

One reader asked "Why can't the developers design and build around these trees and use the trees as a valuable amenity provided by nature." Other Ipohites when interviewed condemned the removal of the trees and mentioned the 'greed of the developers and the authorities'.

Many praised Singapore's efforts at beautifying Singapore with mostly mature trees, and said that we needed to learn from the Singaporeans about maintaining, pruning and tree-disease treatment.

Stung by the barrage of criticisms in the IE, Mayor Roshidi issued a statement on January 4 which said, "The Council finds it necessary to fell the trees based on recommendations by the insurer who said that the trees were old and posed a threat to passers-by".

Tree Insurance Impossible

On January 17, two weeks after the Mayor issued his statement, a report in the Star baffled Ipohites, 'Insurers chop down plan to insure raintrees'. The report said that insurers were NOT willing to insure against trees in Ipoh because the plan was "rather impossible".

The regional manager of an insurance company explained that 'trees, unlike houses, do not have a market value that would appreciate with time'. He was unaware of insurance policies for trees. Moreover, he warned, trees could be vandalised.

Tree Vandalism Punishable?

This manager is right. The trees have been vandalised, by our MBI. So as the Mayor once explained, "...those who vandalise trees or chop them down are punishable under Act 172 of the Tree Preservation Order."

Will Roshidi punish those responsible? Or is it a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is up to? Or perhaps, the Mayor's policies on tree preservation have not been passed down the chain of command?

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Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

SeeFoon goes on an economy drive

With food prices constantly going up and news about the rising cost of living, it is a wonder that people eat out at all. But we in Ipoh are most fortunate in having a huge choice of good eating places ranging in price from the pricey to the economical where a group of friends can eat to their hearts content without breaking the bank.

Recently my group of foodie friends, led by the inimitable Ginla Foo, went in search of places where we could eat well for below RM10 per head. And we turned up a few! Today I will share with readers the first two of the ones that we unanimously voted as tops, both in quality and in price. Naturally these premises are good for your most casual gear and flip flops as the emphasis is on the food and not the ambiance.

Peng Tau

The first one is **Peng Tau**, a very popular 'Tai Chau' local eatery that is always packed to overflowing. It takes quite a fair bit of manoeuvring to find it but the locals who live around Pasir Puteh frequent it often.

Signature dishes here are their homemade **Golden Bean Curd** topped with minced pork, soft and smooth on the inside and slightly crisped on the edges – RM6.50; and their **Kon Jeen Kai** or dry fried chicken, dark soya, slightly tangy with a hint of sweetness – RM7.00.

The **Steamed whole Tilapia** arrived smothered in a spicy taochu (preserved soya beans) chilli sauce, garlicky, with more than a touch of sweetness, the flesh moist with not a hint of the muddiness that Tilapia are notorious for – RM16.

We then had a big tureen of **Watercress Soup** – RM8; the ubiquitous **Sei Tai Teen Wong** or four heavenly kings, of long beans, *petai*, *brinjal* and winged beans, which I found to be too sweet but may appeal to those with a sweet tooth – RM6; and **Pork Ribs** with black bean sauce – RM8.00.

Tai Kung

My next foray into economical dining took our group to **Restaurant Tai Kung**, a corner coffee shop behind the Tow Boh Keong Temple. Here Chef Leong specialises in steamed dishes.

Nary a wok was in sight in this open kitchen beside



the shop. Only rows of steamers and pots of boiling water. All the fare in this restaurant is steamed, making a meal here a healthy one as well.

There is no menu per se and the dishes on offer rotate daily. There are always the steamed soups in tureens, with a daily choice of 6 varieties out of a repertoire of 20 or more. These, at RM3.50 per tureen, are great value for money and sell out rapidly with only 40 tureens available daily. The soups we had that evening were the **Winter Melon With Chicken Feet**, red dates and *gei tse* (goji berries) where I detected a hint of dried octopus for flavour; the **Ham Tsoi Kai Tong**, preserved cabbage with chicken and tomatoes; the **Black Chicken** with ginseng root and goji berries and **Watercress Soup**. All the soups were flavourful and at my probing the chef revealed that no MSG is added to the soups which are steamed fresh daily making it doubly healthy.

Their signature dishes which again are snapped up like hot cakes daily are their pork belly dishes, the **Wu Tao Kao Yoke**, pork belly with taro and the **Mui Tsoi Kao Yoke**, pork belly with preserved vegetables. On the night we were there, it was the preserved vegetables on offer and unlike the usual preparation which is braised, this steamed version was much less fatty and the blending of flavourings hit all the right umami notes – RM8.00

The other very popular dish that sells out quickly is their **Steamed Whole Chicken Leg** with herbs and tong kwai or Chinese angelica – RM6.00

This was followed by **Tong Choy Tsing Chu Yoke**, steamed minced pork with preserved relish; smooth, well flavoured without the preserved relish overpowering the dish which it is known to do.

The steamed fish of the day (the fish depends on what is fresh daily and prices may vary slightly) was a whole **White Seabass**, firm white flesh topped with oodles of chopped fried garlic and doused with garlic oil. Sea-fresh flavours, and steamed to perfection – RM16.00.

This is one restaurant where the old adage of the early bird catches the worm holds true. Chef Leong sticks to his nonchalance of doing the same amount of business day after day. Not for him the modern push for expansion, for more profit. He prepares 25 chickens a day, 40 tureens of



Peng Tau



Tai Kung

soup of six different varieties and buys a few of whatever fish is fresh that day. Greens are fresh in the market that day and are available for blanching and served with soya. When they're gone, they're gone. So the earlier the better to catch the best choice of what is on offer because by 8.00 p.m. he is sold out and ready to close his shop.

Restoran Peng Tau (Soldiers Head) (closed Tuesdays)
27 Jln Bunga Raya 6, Taman Boon Bak, Ipoh.
Kedai Kopi Tai Kung
Corner of 18, Jalan Ong Sin Cheong/Jalan Chung Ah Ming
Tel: 016 546 4595 Mr. Leong

I have been asked why I write only favourable reviews and if I am being paid by the restaurants I review. The answer is a resounding No! Most of the time, I go in incognito and only talk to the owner/chef at the end of the meal if I have decided that it was worth a review. As most foodies out there will attest, not all the items in a restaurant are good. I only mention the dishes that appeal to my taste buds and leave out the rest. So when you, dear readers, try out a restaurant reviewed by me, please bring along this paper and order the same dishes. That is: if you share my tasting palate which tends towards the non-sweet. I also have a philosophy of not writing critical reviews as I believe that any restaurant serving poor quality food will soon run out of customers, and mediocre ones I leave to their own devices.

HAWKER FOOD

Bak Kut Teh

Bak Kut Teh is another foodie favourite not indigenous to Ipoh. Even if Ipoh's version does not match the famous Klang Bak Kut Teh, it comes pretty close (according to our 'food-tasting experts' at Ipoh Echo). Just enough (hours of) simmering in a broth of herbs and spices, makes the pork meat and offal, succulent, flavourful and absolutely tender. This 'meat bone tea' is usually eaten with plain rice and an optional side dish of *yau char kwai* (crullers – for dipping into the soup), garnished with coriander or spring onions, and accompanied with chili padi and chopped garlic soaked in soy sauce.

Soon Lee Bak Kut Teh

(7.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m.; Monday closed)

Restoran Lee Soon, 1 Jalan Temenggong, Rose Garden, 31650 Ipoh, Tel.: **019-5577896**. It has the authentic bak kut teh flavour. They also have sweet-sour braised trotters, ribs and others, starting from RM8/serving; rice is RM1 extra.

Loong Kee Bak Kut Teh

(11.00 a.m.-9.30 p.m.; Tuesday closed)

Wooley Food Centre, Ipoh Garden, 31400 Ipoh; Tel.: **016-5475707/016-5423748**. For those who like Chinese mushrooms, its addition in the soup adds just enough flavour but is not overpowering – RM8 with rice.

Restoran Kwan Heong Bak Kut Teh

(8.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m., 6.00 p.m.-10.00 p.m.)

90 Jalan Raja Dihilir, Taman Hoover, 31650 Ipoh, Tel.: **012-6727595**. This relatively new shop hails from Klang, serves an array of choice starting from RM8; order from a menu.

Tong Chew Bak Kut Teh

(8.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m.; Monday closed)

24-1 Jalan Chung Thye Phin, 30250 Ipoh; Tel.: **012-4584786/016-5008324**. For a treat, try the yam rice which is available every Tuesday and Friday – RM1.50/bowl; also has mun ju keok (braised trotters) and a variety of other dishes. Prices start from RM7.80.

At night from 6.00-9.30 p.m., another operator, **Sun Tong Chew Bak Kut Teh**, sells from the same premises; Tel.: **012-5163232/012-5156838**.



RECIPE

By Margarita Lee

Ipoh Chicken Hor Fun



Poached Chicken

One whole free-range chicken. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and place the chicken into the water. Put the lid on and leave the chicken to stand for 45 minutes. The chicken should be cooked by now but sometimes the bone can be still bloody when cut up. If you prefer it to be fully cooked, take the chicken out from pot, bring the stock to boil again, leave the chicken to stand for another 10 minutes to 20 minutes. Soak chicken in ice cold water when done.

Chicken Broth

3-4 whole chicken carcasses
Shrimp's shell (removed from ½ kg shrimps)
300g soya bean sprouts (tai tau nga)
1 small turnip
1tbsp crystal rock sugar
1tbsp whole white peppercorns (crushed)
5 litres water
salt to taste

Shrimp Oil

200 ml cooking oil
Shrimp head or crab with roe

To cook the shrimps

Blanch the shrimps until they turn pink and cooked through. Remove and shock in ice water. Remove the heads and drain dry, to be used for frying with oil. Remove the shells for making the chicken broth.

To make

chicken broth

Rinse the chicken carcasses, place them into a stock pot, add in soya bean sprouts, turnip, rock sugar and peppercorns and the stock which was used for cooking the shrimp and chicken, bring it to boil. Reduce to low heat and cook for approximately 3 hours. Season with salt and strain the stock. Leave aside.

To make shrimp oil

Heat up the cooking oil in the preheated wok, place in shrimp heads and crab roe stir-fry over low heat until the shrimp oil separates. Remove from heat, strain well. Blanch the Hor Fun and Chinese chives in boiling water separately. Dish up and drain.

To serve

Place the Hor Fun in a serving bowl, add in blanched Chinese chives, chicken shreds and shrimps. Serve with hot chicken broth, add in a little shrimp oil and chopped scallions. Serve hot with chopped chilli in soya sauce.



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.

- **MNS Perak's Learning Trip to an Organic Farm (Chederiang)** on Sunday Feb 20, from 8.30 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. Participants are expected to gather at Sam Poh Tong's pomelo stalls at 7.30 a.m. before leaving by car pooling. RM10 is payable to the farm for lunch. Closing date for booking is Feb 12, on first come first serve basis. For registration and details, email Lee Yuat Wah at leeyuatwah@yahoo.com or visit www.mnsperak.wordpress.com.
- **Free Yoga Classes by the Centre for Prana Yoga & Self Transformation** on 2nd & 4th Sundays of every month, at 8.30 a.m. at Wisma Ehsan, 2-5 Jln Sultan Yussuf, Ipoh. Contact: **05-2554590**.
- **MBI Drive-Through Counter** is open Monday-Thursday from 8.15 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., and Friday 8.15-11.45 a.m. & 2.45-3.30 p.m. Payment can be made for all MBI and other utility bills.
- **Perak Malayalee Association Spoken Malayalam Class** for members every Sunday between 6.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. at the association's headquarters, 14A, Medan Istana Bandar Ipoh Raya, Ipoh. For details call R. Udaya Bhanu at 019-2813636 or Radha Narayanan at **012-5257894**.
- **Pamphlets on "Perak Tour Package 2011" and "Ipoh Food Trail"** are available for collection at Tourism Malaysia Perak No 12, Jalan Medan Istana 2, Bandar Ipoh Raya, Ipoh. Call **05-2559962** for details. Pamphlets are also available at Ipoh Echo office.
- **KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital (ISH) Endometriosis Awareness Week and book launch**, on Feb 11-19 at the lobby of KPJ ISH. Guest of honour and speaker is Dr. Susan Evan (Adelaide, Australia).

Young Perak

Chinese Language Week at SMJK Yuk Choy



SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh organised a Chinese Calligraphy contest among the students, in conjunction with Chinese Language Week and Chinese New

Year, recently. Mr. Lee Hah, the school principal, said that the Chinese Language Week is to instil the love of Chinese language among the students and the understanding of Chinese culture. He also mentioned that SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh Chinese Language Department had organised debates, word puzzles, quizzes and treasure hunts for the students.

LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

Dato' K.K. Lim

It was with great sadness that I heard of the passing of Dato' K.K. Lim on Thursday last as he has been a great friend and supporter to me over the previous 7-years or more. A tough businessman with a stern exterior, he had a heart of gold when it came to those, often forgotten, elements of a quality life, education, music, dance, drama, art and heritage. It was therefore that without any fanfare or unnecessary publicity, he unfailingly supported them all financially for many years. He was the silent philanthropist who cared about these things and did everything he could to bring culture and quality education to Ipoh, a town often described as a cultural desert. His departure from this world will leave a gap in many people's lives, including my own.

Personally I have to thank him for supporting the ipohWorld project, based in Tenby Schools, Ipoh. Without his encouragement and sound advice much of the historical information that we have collected over the years would have been lost to the world. As it is we have collected, researched and recorded a large database of local images and facts that are available to students worldwide via the Internet. The database continues to grow daily. Much of this information which covers the ever-disappearing heritage and social history of our area is ignored by the present education system. We therefore fill the gap in our young people's knowledge of the past and their roots, with information not readily available elsewhere. To continually fund organisations that always run at a loss, simply because he maintained the belief that heritage, social history and the arts were important ingredients in education and, at the same time, would make Ipoh a better place to live, demonstrates his determination to succeed where others had failed. He will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace.

Ian Anderson
25 January 2011

Thank You

It is through your paper that I "discovered" Jazzercise in Ipoh, conducted by the ever charming Ms Suraya Khan at Fitness Junction Gym. I have to say that I am glad to have found this place, where I am enjoying the many choices of group exercises being conducted by their certified and trained instructors. I am having fun, whilst trying to stay fit, and am enjoying my golden years. Thank you and do keep up the good work of keeping us informed of happenings in and around Ipoh.

Patsy Yong



Activities:

- Grab ' \$\$\$ ', Lion dance, Bungee Run, God of Prosperity Appearance, Fishing for God of Prosperity, Lucky Dip & Fortune Ang Pows!

Come join us for a day of food & fun!





Lunar New Year Property Showcase

Date : **6 February 2011 (Sun)**

Time : **10:00 a.m.**

Venue: **Show Village @ Bandar Baru Sri Klebang, Jalan Kuala Kangsar, Ipoh**



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Wellness

Who We Are

Autism Asperger's Help Association (AAHA) is a non-governmental and non-profit association registered with the Registrar of Societies Malaysia (1168-10-PRK). Its primary objectives are:

- * To provide support for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families, irrespective of age, creed, race and gender.
- * To create awareness in the general public.
- * To provide early intervention services for children with ASD.

AAHA obtained its registration with the Registrar of Society in May 2010 and received the certificate from the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Dato' Lee Chee Leong on August 5, 2010.

The angle of the triangle represents the Wing's Triad of Autism:

- * Impairment of Communication
- * Impairment of Social Interaction
- * Impairment of Imagination

The arms of the triangle represent the key areas of managing a child with autism, namely:

- * Diagnosis:
- * Early Intervention
- * Parent Education

The triangle is full of puzzles as autism is a puzzle itself. The family in the centre of the triangle represents the fact that parents are the centre of management of the child with autism.

Children are diagnosed by a multidisciplinary team. The team consists of a Paediatrician, Speech Therapist, Psychologist, Preschool Teacher, Occupational Therapist and a Social Worker. AAHA is working towards setting up this team.

Following Diagnosis, early intervention is important. There are a number of early intervention centres in Ipoh, however, there is no Autism specific early intervention especially for the children with mild to moderate Autism. AAHA has taken on the challenge to set up an Autism specific Early Intervention Programme by 2012.

As stated earlier, parents are the centre of management of children with Autism. Many parents feel lost after the diagnosis. These parents can easily be taken advantage of. There are many so called 'treatments' for Autism. These are not cheap. Parents as parents wanting the best for their child may fall prey. Thus educating parents and empowering them is a key part of managing a child with Autism. AAHA will be carrying out parent education talks from July 2011.

For more info contact:

Dr. Shan Narayanan
016 591 4735

Mrs. Michelle Cheah
012 512 1897

Mr. Yee
012 521 6348



Caring for your eyes (part 6)

In Ipoh Echo's series on Eye Health, Dr. S.S. Gill, Consultant Ophthalmologist at Hospital Fatimah summarizes the key points in the sixth and final part on Diabetes Mellitus and the eye complications (diabetic retinopathy).



Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident Consultant
Ophthalmologist

In Summary

1. Diabetic Retinopathy is a common complication of diabetes mellitus – it's the leading cause of blindness.
2. Examine the eyes annually even if there are no symptoms. Do not wait for blurring vision before going for an eye check. When symptoms occur, it is late because it usually indicates some form of eye complication.

The Eye Examination

After the initial eye check, a mandatory dilated eye examination is done. This is done by placing eyedrops into the eyes until pupils are dilated.

Using special equipment, the eye doctor examines the inside of the eye (retina). After this eye examination, the patient's close-up vision may remain blurred for several hours.

Signs that will be looked for are:

- a) Leaking blood vessels & bleeding.
- b) Retinal (or nerve) swelling (macular edema).
- c) Pale, fatty deposits on the retina.



How is diabetic retinopathy treated?

Laser treatment is given. It's an outpatient procedure. The laser treatment shrinks the abnormal blood vessels. Two or more sessions usually are required.

If the bleeding in the eye is severe, a surgical procedure called a vitrectomy may be needed to be done where blood is removed from the inside of the eye.

Once a person has diabetic eye complications, they will always be at risk for new bleeding in the eye even in the future and need to be checked regularly.

For more information, contact Gill Eye Specialist Centre, Hospital Fatimah (05-5455582), or email gillyecentre@dr.com.



Laser Treatment

New Clinic for Buntong Residents



The new clinic in Persiaran Desa Rishah 2 was opened in mid 2009 and the three-storey building is one of the beautiful modern clinics in the country. The clinic was built at a cost of RM27m, including the cost of medical equipment and other facilities.

The clinic currently provides the following health and medical services: outpatient

clinic, consultation for diabetes, asthma and hypertension, care of pregnant mother and child, postnatal care and immunisation, dental clinic, medical examination and vaccination for prevention of cervical cancer. The clinic has its own laboratory. Emergency services are available during office hours. Each clinic has a play area for children.

The X-ray department will soon be operational as soon as equipment glitches are resolved as will rehabilitation services for back ache, post stroke and occupational therapy.

There is more than fifty staff including six doctors, eleven nurses and three medical administrators. The nurses make house visits for pre and post natal care. The clinic primarily caters to the needs of residents of Buntong which has a population of about 102,000. Most of the patients come from Buntong.

Medical Officer, Dr. Fauziah bt Abdul Karim said that the clinic is open from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on weekdays and closed on weekends. She added that treatment is given to every person who comes regardless of their residential status. More than 4,000 patients visit the clinic every month. However signage to the clinic is inadequate and most people are unaware of its existence.

Raja Pitchay, Treasurer of the Advisory Panel that liaises between the patients and the hospital authorities and highlights the problems and needs of the patients, informed Ipoh Echo about the Open Day in December 2010 which was launched by Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, Chairman, Perak Health Committee to popularise the clinic. The building is new and smells of new paint; all the furniture and equipment are new. It is hoped that the authorities will maintain them. The public must also be made aware to not damage the furniture and other facilities and keep the premises clean.

A. Jeyaraj

PCSH Launches Mobile Clinic

In response to the Prime Minister's, 1Malaysia Mobile Clinic Programme, Perak Community Specialist Hospital (PCSH) Mobile Health Clinic was officially opened by Dato' Dr. Mah Hang Soon, state chairman for Health, Local Government, Consumer Affairs, Environment, Transport and Non-Muslim Affairs. Under

their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, PCSH Mobile Health Clinic organised free medical treatment for the Orang Asli at Sekolah Kebangsaan Pos Dipang, Kampar, recently.

The objectives of the Mobile Health Clinic are to provide basic health care services and treatment to those who have no other access to care and to

increase their health consciousness.

The programme is sponsored by the CIMB Foundation, PCSH in collaboration with CIMB Bank, CIMB Islamic and Community Link. A few low-income/Orang Asli villages in Perak will benefit from this meaningful project.



Community

Ladies Uptown Ipoh



In line with the state government's objective to inculcate self-reliance among the needy in society, Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBUDR), is providing single mothers an opportunity to engage in small businesses based on their individual capabilities.

The programme named, Ladies Uptown Ipoh, is tailor-made for selected single mothers, 29 in all and those who are already in business but are having problems expanding. The venue is Persiaran Bougainvillea, the open space fronting MBI complex.

"Many are of the opinion that the bazaar is just another pasar malam,"

said Isfarina Mohd Bali, YBUDR's customer service manager. "Unlike pasar malam, the goods sold here are unique. They include handicrafts, foodstuffs, clothing etc," she remarked.

"We monitor participants' progress and advise them accordingly. And that includes funding, if need be.

Our motive is to ensure quality not quantity," Isfarina added. "Those keen on participating can apply direct to YBUDR or visit our website yayasanbinaupaya.com for details."

Operators pay a nominal fee of RM25 per stall to YBUDR who then pays MBI. The fair is a

weekly affair operating every Saturday between 6.00 p.m. to midnight. It was officially opened to the public last month by Dato' Tan Chin Meng, MCA Ipoh Barat division chief.

In conjunction with the opening, a mini carnival was held, which included activities such as karaoke and a costume contest for kids. The fun only stopped at around midnight when all raffle-drawn prizes were claimed by winners. To make the draw more meaningful, the organisers got each stall operator to provide a hamper consisting of their products which helped in promoting their wares.

RM

SOUP KITCHEN FOR NEEDY IN First Garden

Every Wednesday and Thursday, a crowd of people, mainly elderly, make a beeline to the playground in First Garden for a hearty chicken curry lunch.

The food is being distributed free to anyone at the "Soup Kitchen", irrespective of race, religion or age. According to a soup kitchen volunteer, an average of 50 people turn up at each session.

The soup kitchen was started about two years ago by groups from the Catholic churches in Ipoh Garden and Silibin. At the moment 10 volunteers are involved in the preparation and serving of food. The menu is always the same, rice served with chicken curry and one vegetable.

Funding for the scheme is from donations received from well-wishers and also individuals and families sponsor cost of lunch for a day in memory of a deceased relative.

"There are always some generous people stepping forward to sponsor the meal," said the volunteer. "A few of them even came personally to see how our soup kitchen operates before making



donations."

Those wishing to support the scheme can give their donation to the

Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Silibin.

A. Jeyaraj

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news roundup

A Caring Gesture



Datin Seri Saripah Zulkifli, President of Baiduri (Badan Amal dan Ushah Isteri Perak) and wife of Perak Menteri Besar, gave away donations worth RM10,000 to individuals and associations, as a prelude to the New Year. In a simple ceremony at the Menteri Besar's residence recently, she presented a cheque for RM2,000 to Persatuan Ibu Tunggal Muslimah, a society for Muslim single mothers and another cheque for the same amount to Persatuan Ching Yoong Perak, a Chinese welfare body.

Heart patient, Muhamad Safawi Anwar, received RM1,000 for follow-up operations at Institut Jantung Negara. Saimah Sanip, a breast cancer victim, received RM2,000 to cover her medical bills incurred at the Ipoh Community Specialist Hospital. Muniswaran, 4, who suffers from paralysis, was given a custom-made wheelchair worth RM3,000.

"Our association's focus this year will be on assisting poor students from the rural areas. Fifty thousand Ringgit will be set aside to buy books, reference materials, conduct tuition and other forms of assistance aimed at improving their academic performance," Saripah told reporters. The donations, according to the Baiduri President, were part of those allocated for 2010.

Ed

Blood Donation & ORGAN PLEDGES CAMPAIGN 2011



Sathya Sai Baba Centres of Perak organised a blood donation and organ pledges campaign together with a medical camp at the Ipoh Kallumalai Sri Subramaniam Temple Wedding Hall during Thaipusam festivities recently.

Dato' Dr Guna one of the key temple committee members was instrumental in getting the hall approval and Bro Vejayan & Dr. Subra helped to get the approvals and support of all the authorities. A total of 75 pints of blood were collected and 71 people made organ pledges.

FMM's Free And Easy Night



The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) Perak Branch recently held a free and easy social gathering for its members.

According to its Chairman Dato' Gan Tak Kong (pic), FMM hosts two dinners each year. One a formal dinner, and the other, an easy going affair which is the more popular choice of its members.

Guests included officials from MIDA, MICCI and the Perak Footwear Industry. Over 500 of its members

A Day for the Disabled



About 250 physically handicapped children and adults gathered at Manjung's Association for the Physically Handicapped recently to mark the International Day of Disabled Persons, which falls on December 3. Transport Minister, Dato' Seri Kong Cho Ha, who is the MP for Lumut, in his opening remarks urged parents with disabled children to seek assistance. These physically challenged children, he said, could be trained to be useful citizens. "Once trained they can then seek employment and thus become less burdensome to their parents."

Association chairman, Khaw Eng Aun, said that some 1,200 adults and children with physical disabilities are registered with the association. The day-care centre, where the association is located, faces difficulty in transporting the handicapped, as its van breaks down often. The centre requires a new van, as not all parents have the means to ferry their children. The minister promised to resolve the problem.

A drawing contest was held for the benefit of the children while the adults played games with the guests. Manjung's Territorial Chief, Toh Muda Dato' Abdul Wahab bin Dato' Seri Azizul Hassan, was among the dignitary guests.

SN

Chinese New Year Cheer at Simee Home



Kelab Anak Malaysia Batu Gajah organised a Chinese New Year Caring Society Campaign at the Home for The Aged at Simee recently. According to Mr. Sit Wai Yin, chairman of Kelab Anak Malaysia Batu Gajah, this campaign is to instil meaningful community based activities among the students in the spirit of 1Malaysia.

The function was officiated by Adviser for Perak Menteri Besar Dato' Chang Ko Youn, who praised Kelab Anak Malaysia Batu Gajah for carrying out various communities based projects in Perak and proceeded to give out "angpou" to the old folks and had lunch with them. A special lion dance performance by SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh, as well as Chinese New Year melodies played by SMK St Michael's Chinese Orchestra Club brought cheer to the old folks.

were in attendance and over 220 lucky prizes were won that night.

Entertaining the guests that night was Irena, a popular performer at corporate dinner events, who had the guests "ice-broken" in no time singing along with her and hip-hopping on the stage. She even coaxed Dato' Gan to cha-cha with her on stage.

Undoubtedly it was an easy going night judging from the movement of guests between tables to toast with other members.

JAG

Bus Service for Perakeans



Good news for all public-transport-deprived Perakeans. Three bus companies have agreed to operate under a single banner in order to realise commuters' dream of a viable public transport system in the state, one which will not compromise on quality and efficiency.

Operations Manager of Combined Bus Services Sdn Bhd, the newly-formed bus conglomerate, Zulkifly Amir Hashim, said that the transformation process will be in stages. Presently, the service is already available in the city and in outlying areas covering routes to Kampar, Manjung, Parit, Bruas, Kuala Kangsar, Gopeng, Batu Gajah, Malim Nawar and others. "Public response has been good and the feedback we received is most encouraging," Zulkifly told Ipoh Echo. "It provides us the impetus to strive harder," he added.

For intra-city services, the company has in its inventory, a fleet of blue-coloured buses which come in two specifications – one with a low deck and the other with the normal deck. "The one with the low deck is specially made for handicapped people," said Zulkifly. "It's also fitted with a retractable platform to accommodate wheelchair-bound passengers." These buses are already operating in the city.

The company plans to re-introduce bus service in Gugusan Manjoi. "This decision was made again based on feedback," said Zulkifly. "However, it's still in the planning stage. We'll do a test run soon to see the response." The previous service was discontinued due to poor passenger load.

On the issue of the old Ipoh bus terminal, which has received much publicity of late, Ong Lek Chuan, the executive director of General Omnibus Company Sdn, has this to say. "From the standpoint of heritage, the terminal should be preserved in its entirety due to its immense heritage value," he remarked.

Ong stressed that once the Meru Raya terminal is ready, express buses will be moved there while city buses will continue to operate from the old terminal.

RM

DONATING In Kind



Y's Men Club Ipoh's mission of caring for the four brothers afflicted with cerebral palsy in Buntong, Ipoh, has never ceased. The siblings, Patrick, Morgan, Lawrence and Lourdes, require constant supervision as their physical needs are immense. Morgan, 33, however, passed away in May last year.

The three are now in the care of their sister, Jean Antonia. Since coming to their aid in 2007, Y's Men Club Ipoh has been consistent with its monthly donation consisting of rice, milk, cooking oil, toiletries etc. The members were at the brothers' house in Taman Harmoni recently to perform their obligation.

In spite of the help the brothers received, they are still not making ends meet. Those wishing to help can do so through Y's Men Club Ipoh. Call K. Letchimanan at 012-5381939 for details.

Ed

news roundup

Ponggal 2011



The Indian cultural harvest festival, Ponggal, celebrated by the Indian community at the beginning of the year was a day of family fun for the Indian parishioners from

the Church of Our Mother Of Perpetual Help in Ipoh Garden recently.

At the front entrance of the church a colourful kolam adorned the floor even though the strong shower the previous night had diluted the vibrancy of the design. In the yard a pot of milk was boiling over (pic) before the start of the weekly Tamil Mass. Subsequently a tray of fruit and vegetables was presented during the offertory. After the mass the congregation adjourned to the garden for breakfast and games.

The breakfast menu was the traditional sweet rice and boiled chick peas (kacang kuda). The games included bursting water balloons while blind

folded i which both genders participated. Another game was grating a coconut manually on a coconut scraper.

This was an all male competition. For the kids it was the colouring competition.

The festival which has been celebrated by the Indian parishioners for many years, concluded with a refreshing vegetarian lunch and prize giving.

Meanwhile, about 55 families living at Persiaran Sungai Pari Timur 10 in Taman Mas celebrated Ponggal together by setting up the pot in each house. The street was decorated with kolam (painting using rice flour). B.K. Kumar, chairman of the Ponggal committee said that the function was organised by the youngsters and the tradition is being transferred to the next generation.

In keeping up with tradition, the celebration included folk dances kolaat-tam (dance in which two sticks are used to produce rhythmic sounds while in motion) and kummi aattam (dancers clapping hands to keep timing). The music was provided by urimi melam (a double headed hour-glass shaped drum).

This is one of the occasions during which young boys and girls wear traditional clothes. Teenage girls wear pavadaï thavani or half sari which is becoming out of fashion.

Members of Rukun Tetangga of Taman Mas participated to show their solidarity.

The highlight of the event was shouts of "pongalo ponggal" by those who witnessed the boiling over of the milk.

JAG/AJ

How New Is New?



Much has been said and written about the New Economic Model announced by the Prime Minister last May. The question on everyone's lips is, "How new is the New Economic Policy exactly?"

Professor Terence Gomez, a Professor of Political Economy at University of Malaya, spoke candidly on the NEM at a recent Perak Academy talk. The NEP brought about much good in its first ten years of implementation but thereafter, cracks gradually appeared and by mid-2000s serious structural problems were apparent. The Malaysian economy is in such a state of malaise that only deep structural reforms of the country's political economy can address this problem.

For the NEM to work, Professor Gomez emphasised that several core issues have to be addressed, the most important being affirmative action, a euphemism for race-based preferences.

The NEM promises "market friendly affirmative action", an oxy-moron that does not inspire investor confidence and, until patronage and rent-seeking are curbed, will remain just an empty promise.

Professor Gomez stressed that there is an urgent need to revamp the educational system in Malaysia. There is a limited capacity amongst the workforce to adapt and learn new technology. Statistics show that 80% of the workforce has only up to SPM-level qualifications and an earnest revamp is needed to produce human capital that can feed into new economic sectors.

A devolution of power is important to minimise state intervention and, hand-in-hand with an impartial judiciary, will work well towards instilling confidence at home and abroad.

Professor Gomez observes that Malaysia has a thriving, competent middle class and unless public and institutional reforms are put in place, there will be a net drain of talent and brain. The recent global crisis has shown a need to get our country's much-politicised public policies and its delivery system right.

Professor Gomez ended the talk by asking whether the government has the political will to institute real change. In plain words, will the government walk the talk? And until its political economic policies are rectified, Malaysia's economy will remain in the doldrums and the NEM will just be another NEP.

Valerie Chan

Professor Terence Gomez is an Ipohite Michaelian. Besides lecturing and giving talks, he also writes extensively on his chosen field of expertise and has several books to his credit. He has also served as a Research Coordinator at the United Nations Institute for Social Development in Geneva, Switzerland.

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Bercham to Have another Entrance



Bercham, a high-density area east of the city, is to have another access road. The application for a link from the highway, designed to be located in the immediate area fronting the Giant hypermarket under construction, has been approved.

According to JKR State Director Dato' Ir Dr. Safry

Kamal, the application for the link was made a year ago by Giant Hypermarket. The hypermarket is currently under construction at Medan Bercham Bistari and its location is immediately parallel to the North-South Highway. It is scheduled for completion around the middle of this year.

Dr. Safry Kamal said that two important aspects for

granting the approval are: 1) safety to the public and road users, and 2) there must not be the possibility of bottlenecks or hindrance to the flow of traffic.

"A traffic study as well as a Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been done and found to be feasible to proceed with the project," he said.

Dr. Safry however added that the city council too has made an alternative proposal to have the entrance and exit at the Ipoh East Industrial area and are currently designing a flow linking it to the traffic lights on Bercham main road.

The city council's design plan will be ready next month and the link would be open by the middle of this year to coincide with the opening of the hypermarket.

Bercham's city councillor David Lai Kong Phooi said another entrance to the area had been long felt necessary. It would ease the traffic flow in and out of Bercham, which is bordered between Medan Ipoh, Tanjung Rambutan and Tasek and covers an area of 8,877 hectares of which 56% of the land is utilised for housing, industry and agriculture. As at 2009 the population of Bercham was 150,000.

JAG

Business

Jerneh – Office Relocation

Jerneh Insurance, the specialist/leader in offering comprehensive tailor-made risk management insurance solutions has relocated their office from Greentown Business Centre to Greentown Suria.

Jerneh Insurance was recently acquired by Ace International Limited, a global leader in insurance and reinsurance on December 1 last year.

Jerneh's event of January 26 was to officially open its new premises and to introduce its agents to its new shareholder.

Jerneh Branch Manager Ms Karen Cheah, in her address explained that the shift to the new premises was not just to accommodate the growing staff force but would also be able to provide more efficient services due to the phenomenal growth over the last few years.

Cheah stated that their gross premium income had achieved a quantum leap from RM12.5 million in 2008 to RM21.5 million in 2010 and thanked her agents and clients for contributing to this success.



L-R: Karen Cheah, Jarrod Hill and Mr Lim Sun (CEO of Jerneh)

Ace International Limited was represented by Mr Jarrod Hill, the Regional Head of Property and Casualty Asia Asia Pacific who presented the Ace company profile to the audience present.

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By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Obituary

Dato' K.K. Lim – Visionary and Iconoclast

There are only a handful of people who come into your world, and touch your life in a meaningful fashion. Some of the people are just flickers of light while others are a bright flame for years. For many, Dato' Lim Keng Kay was that flame, a bright torch that lit the way for his family and community in Ipoh. On January 20, that flame went out and many in Ipoh mourned the loss of this giant of a man.

He was an iconoclast, a man who loved life and threw himself wholeheartedly into any project with passion. He was truly a 'Renaissance' man, with a 360 degree range of interests and passions ranging from food, to the arts, to classic cars and antiques.

I first met Dato' KK over a bed. While this may raise a few eyebrows, it was about him coming down to Kuala Lumpur to inspect an antique Chinese bridal bed which I was selling prior to my move to Ipoh. He came, he saw and concurred – "pack it and bring it with you" was the order and he was gone.

I was subsequently introduced to the 'bon vivant' KK Lim who would come over on a Sunday, pick me up with his wife Datin Stella and he would drive all over the countryside in search of good food.

His generosity knew no bounds. One day on one of these Sunday forays when I got into the car upset after a run-in with the landlord whose house I was renting, he promptly took me to his 'farmhouse' in Chemor and offered it to me rent free!

Oh for the halcyon days when I first moved to Ipoh when KK was still in full swing and I was introduced to home concerts with visiting musicians, where the soirees would end with sumptuous spreads of delectable taste treats.

He loved to engage in debates and we could argue endlessly on any number of topics, with him always taking the role of Devil's advocate. He was not known to suffer fools gladly and was often to be found castigating family, friends and staff in his usual deep throated voice. However, everyone who knew him, knew about his big heart and most of the chastisement would usually end up as water off the proverbial duck's back. In fact, towards the end of his life when he was suffering from his deteriorating emphysema, every time he was



Institution, Ipoh. He was awarded a Federal scholarship to read Mining Engineering at London University and entered the Royal School of mines at Imperial College in 1956 where he received a Bachelor of Science in Mining Engineering. He was a Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and Institute of Mining Engineers.

Returning to Malaysia in 1961, he joined Government service and worked for nine years as Mines Inspector in Ipoh, Batu Gajah and Johor Baru. Subsequent work as a Tin Mining Consultant led to connections that saw him eventually take over Rock Chemical Industries and the Mamut Copper Mine in Sabah.

This led to heady days as a corporate player where he was involved in rescuing ailing companies and acting as a 'white knight', injecting profitable assets and relisting them. Gifted with uncanny sixth sense, he sold Palmco and its assets just before the currency crisis hit in 1996. Facing a temporary cash flow bind in 2003, Dato' KK sold the rest of his holdings and quit the corporate scene for good.

With his penchant for reviving under-performing companies, and in preparation for his 'retirement' as he wound down from the corporate world, he started to acquire stakes in 3 high profile 'ailing' property projects in Ipoh, Greentown Business Centre, Klebang Industrial Estate (now known as EcoCity in Bandar Baru Sri

heard shouting at someone, I would smile and say, "Oh he sounds like he's in good shape today".

Born in Tapah in July 1936, Dato' KK had his early education at the government English School there, followed by secondary education at St Michael's

Klebang) and Meru Valley Golf Resort.

The success of these three projects now speak for themselves and is testimony to the skilled entrepreneurship exhibited by Dato' KK in his business life.

As his health deteriorated in the latter years with the emphysema which eventually took his life, he became more and more involved with his passion to bring Ipoh, his hometown which he loved, back to its former glory. In his philanthropic activities, he adamantly avoided publicity, preferring to donate and support in private.

He supported the preservation of history through his involvement with Ipoh World Sdn Bhd, was a founding member of the Perak Academy and a patron of the Perak Society of Performing Arts in Ipoh. He recently supported the formation of the Kinta Valley Wind Orchestra and was the sole donor to get it started.

When the Ipoh Echo ran into financial difficulties and was about to be downsized by founders Sivaprasagam and Fathol Zaman Bukhari in 2007, Dato' KK stepped in and injected funds and extra manpower, which enabled Ipoh's own community paper to be the vibrant and lively paper that is today, aligning with his vision of 'bringing the buzz back to Ipoh'.

The most lasting impact his philanthropy has achieved is in the establishment of the Siwu Education Trust which runs the Tenby Educare Schools. This not-for-profit Trust which is run by a team of professional educators with schools in Shah Alam, Penang and Ipoh, will continue to carry forward the legacy left behind by Dato' KK, whose vision is that of a 'United World At Peace-through Education'.

Dato' KK had a firm belief that it is only through education that many of the world's problems can be solved. He used to say, "Children are our future. It is the positive experience of growing up, playing and studying together in a harmonious environment in school that will shape them to be open-minded adults. More importantly, in inculcating a genuine understanding of all cultures, religions and differences, then unity and world peace can be achieved."

We will miss you Dato' KK.

G. Sivaprasagam:

I have known KK since he had a mining consultancy practice in Hale Street. He was meticulous and had an unrelenting obsession for detail. To him there was no matter that was too small or insignificant that did not deserve total undivided attention. It was a quality that I was to observe in all his dealings.

An early project I did with him was the formation of the Old Michaelian's Association. He began the tradition of employing the Association to raise funds for the school which continues to this day.

He appreciated good food and had intimate knowledge of what was good whether it be hawker or fine dining.

In 2001 I was involved with him in the formation of the Perak Academy, a platform for the private sector to play a role in reviving Perak. It was to realise his philosophy 'stop complaining – do what you can to bring improvement'.

My most recent association with him has been in the Ipoh Echo. Though domineering by nature he was often generous to a fault. He was one of the rare beings who would go an extra mile to support any project he felt would benefit society.

During the entire time I had known him he never ceased to amaze me not only with his determination and desire to improve everything but the knowledge he possessed of what he was talking about.

His passing is not only a loss to his family and friends but to the Ipoh community.

Fathol Zaman Bukhari:

My introduction to Dato' Lim Keng Kay (or KK Lim to many) would not have happened had it not been for Ipoh Echo, a community newspaper G. Sivaprasagam and I started in mid-2005. The country's only community newspaper would have died a natural death had not KK Lim thrown a lifeline. We were on the verge of giving up, as funding for the paper was fast dwindling. The one option left was to downsize operations or to reduce frequency to one issue per month instead of two, as allowed by the Home Ministry permit.

I made it a point to hand-deliver Ipoh Echo to KK Lim's house and it must have been on one of these forays that the man came to realise our predicament. He called Siva and me over to his house one day and we had a long chat. He asked how he could help make the paper viable and to prolong the project Siva and I had started. Sensing his sincerity in wanting to help, we accepted his offer with open arms.

KK Lim's attention for detail was phenomenal. I liken him to a seasoned general who plans his battle meticulously before committing his troops to battle. And being a former soldier, I find this commander-subordinate relationship most conducive. He was not an easy man to please. I learned this early by observation rather than by experience. In spite of his failing health, he took it upon himself to prepare a solid foundation for the paper to flourish. The rest, like they say, is history.

KK Lim's altruism is not confined to helping a struggling community newspaper only but a slew of other projects, of which education is one. He will be sorely missed by all Ipohites, especially those whose hearts he touched.

Jerry Francis:

A Man Who Treasures Friendships

I have some fond memories of the late Dato' K.K. Lim since we struck a friendship way back in 1982 when I joined the Royal Ipoh Club. Dato' was elected as the club's president in 1985.

As I was one of the members, who was instrumental in moving the dart activities from the "Men's Bar" to another section of the club-house, he appointed me as darts' secretary. With his support, darts became popular in the club.

After his second term as club's president ended in 1987, he was rarely seen in the club. We hardly met. He was busy with his business activities and I was busy as a journalist covering the security operations in Perak.

I was surprised some years later to receive an invitation to his son, Lim Si Boon's wedding. Instead of the customary invitation card, it was very personal in the form of a well-worded letter. I always remember his words that he was planning the wedding reception in a resort in Pangkor Island as an "excuse" to be reunited with his old friends.

As a journalist, I have often received invitations to various occasions and therefore sometimes wonder whether I was being invited as a friend or for publicity purposes.

However, Dato' seemed to have read my mind, ringing two days later and assuring me that he did not want any publicity for the wedding, but my presence as a friend.

How can anyone turn down such an invitation, so my wife and I accepted the three days - two nights stay in the island resort, which he had fully booked. It was a memorable "fantasy island" experience with a well-organised reception team to look after the guests.

It was indeed a reunion of old friends. He had succeeded in getting together over a hundred friends and their spouses for the function. Among them judges, politicians, senior police officers and senior government servants, who had once served in Ipoh and had since transferred to other parts of the country or retired and moved abroad. It was a testimony of how much he treasured their friendships. I was honoured and privileged to be one of his friends.

Ever since we re-established our contact, we have been keeping in touch with each other. Just prior to my retirement as a journalist, he even made me some job offers, which I declined as I wanted to relax after working for over 30 years. When he learned that I had written a book "Turbulent Years in Perak – A Memoir", he volunteered to help publish it.

In late 2009 when he rang me and requested that I join the editorial team of the Ipoh Echo as he wanted to make the newspaper the voice of the local community, I found it hard to decline as it came from a dear friend.

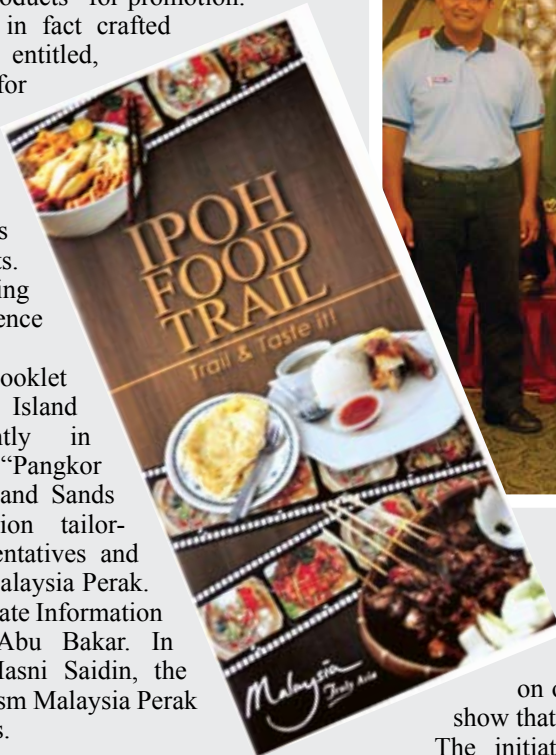
Tourism

Booklet on Ipoh Food

Photo by Ed Shahir

Good food is synonymous with Ipoh and this has been acknowledged by all and sundry. Realising its potential vis-a-vis the tourism industry, Tourism Malaysia Perak took the initiative to make Ipoh food one of the many "touristic products" for promotion. The Perak chapter has in fact crafted a promotional booklet entitled, "Ipoh Food Trail" for distribution to tourists – local and foreign. The 12-page booklet provides details on well-sought-after food outlets within the city limits. Some 25 premises are being illustrated for easy reference by readers.

Launching of the booklet was done at Pangkor Island Beach Resort recently in conjunction with the "Pangkor Island – The Sun, Sea and Sands Escapade", an excursion tailor-made for media representatives and sponsored by Tourism Malaysia Perak. It was officiated by the State Information Chief, Dato' Hamidi Abu Bakar. In attendance were Nor Hasni Saidin, the Deputy Director of Tourism Malaysia Perak and members of the press.



"The allure of Ipoh food is not something peculiar to locals only but foreigners, as well," said Hasni to Ipoh Echo. "Tourism Hong Kong sent its reporters recently to write on our food," she remarked. "This goes to show that Ipoh food is a marketable product." The initiative by Tourism Malaysia Perak to promote food was a step in the right direction, said Dato'

Hamidi. "The availability of this booklet will help tourists, and those keen on savouring Ipoh's culinary delights, to find their way in the city." "Ipoh Food Trail" is available at all Tourism Malaysia offices in the country and at Ipoh Echo. Tourism Malaysia Perak office is at: 12, Jalan Medan Istana 2, Bandar Ipoh Raya. Call 05-2559962 for enquiries.

RM

Community

Photos by Ed Shahir

Thaipusam – A Comparison

Thaipusam is a Hindu festival celebrated by the Tamil community on the full moon in the Tamil month of *Thai* (January/February). The word is an amalgam of the month *Thai* and *Pusam*, a star which is at its highest point during the festival. The event commemorates the occasion when Parvati gave Murugan a *vel* (spear) so he could vanquish the evil demon Surapadman.

Murugan was created during one of the battles between the *Asuras* (Surapadman) and the *Devas*. The latter were defeated several times by the former. In despair, the *Devas* approached Shiva and begged him to give them an able leader to fight the *Asuras*. Shiva granted their request by creating Murugan out of his own power. Murugan assumed leadership of the celestial forces and defeated the *Asuras*. To honour the occasion, the people celebrated Thaipusam signifying the victory of good over evil.

What has *kavadi* to do with Thaipusam? Murugan was caught eavesdropping Shiva and Parvati and was severely reprimanded. Murugan vowed not to repeat the mistake and decided to do penance to please his guardians.

Kavadis are carried by devotees who wish to fulfil a vow. They will pierce their bodies with iron skewers and carry the *vel*, acknowledging Murugan's mettle in destroying the forces of evil.

This year's Thaipusam provided me an opportunity to witness the event in Batu Caves, Kuala Lumpur and the Kallumaalai Temple, Ipoh. My uncle carried the *kavadi* to fulfil a vow he had made.

As we inched our way along the path leading to the temple, I witnessed some very poor habits of the Indian community. The temple is supposed to be a sacred place but rubbish was everywhere. The crowd was large and uncontrollable. In spite of the



mayhem, my uncle accomplished his mission of paying homage to Murugan. I then returned to Ipoh to see how the festival was celebrated.

It was like two extremes. Things were more organised in Ipoh. There were sufficient security personnel present to prevent any untoward incidents. Kavadi bearers were given priority. Garbage bins were provided thus the area looked clean. It was unlike Batu Caves.

Of the two, Ipoh's Thaipusam was most pleasant.

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Sport

IPOHBUG SPORTS Carnival 2010



IpohBug is a non-profit organisation established with the primary aim of establishing healthy communities especially among youths through sports, music and social projects. Director William Chang believes that the discipline and good values cultivated through sports and wholesome activities will have an impact on the youths and their communities.

"Sports is a powerful tool to unite and educate today's youth," he remarked. True to the organisation's vision 'Where Sports Meets Friendship', IpohBug recently organised a sports carnival for the Ipoh youths. Basketball U18 and football U18 competitions were held in JKKK Gunung Rapat basketball court and Taman D.R. Seenivasagam football fields respectively.

The competitions attracted many aspiring players from the city's community. In the basketball competition, Tasek Tayar was crowned as champion, followed by first runner-up Elim and second runner-up JKKK Gunung Rapat. In the football competition, Suria FC was crowned champion and second place went to IpohBug Team A. The third placing went to Perak Chinese Recreation Club (PCRC). Prizes and medals were presented to the winning teams at the end of the sports carnival.

"IpohBug will continue to partner with individuals and organisations in Ipoh and beyond to make a greater difference for the communities," says William.

Junior Hockey Training By Kelab Sukan 30-50 Ipoh

About Hockey

When one talks about hockey to the players of yesteryear their memory floats back to the hockey team of 1975 when Malaysia came fourth in the World Cup. That achievement was definitely a catalyst that spurred the growth of hockey at all levels. The inter school hockey competition in Ipoh Padang in the late 70s and early 80's used to generate so much interest. The keen competition was only matched by the intense rivalry of the respective supporters. Then hockey was played at a recreational level in the evenings as how football is even played today. However with the advent of sports schools and the need for excellence in education to secure places in institutions of higher learning, the fate of hockey has been relegated to a sport of the bygone era. We cannot see hockey being played in the evenings anywhere.

History of Kelab Sukan 30-50 Ipoh

However there are still amongst us who love the game of hockey, so much so that in the late 80's a loose coalition of player who have played at district, state, national and international level got together and founded a hockey club, called the Kelab Sukan 30-50 Ipoh. This club was meant for players who have passed their prime in terms of playing but still interested in knocking the ball around. The Kelab was officially registered on April 15, 1998 and it has around 20 members at the moment. Even though it is funded by the members the Kelab Sukan 30-50, Ipoh can boast of a club house at Medan Istana which is frequented by members and their families.

Activities

The members regularly get together to play hockey every Saturday in Sultan Azlan Shah turf in the evening. The Kelab also regularly plays host to local as well as out station and foreign veteran hockey teams. The outstation as well as the foreign teams are normally hosted at the club house with refreshments and drinks after the game in

a relaxed atmosphere. The epitome of the Kelab's activity is the hosting of the annual veterans hockey fest (40 years and above). The recent 13th Hockey Invitation held on October 2, 2010 attracted a record number of 12 teams from all over the country which was held at the Sultan Azlan Shah turf and thereafter a dinner was hosted for all the participating teams. Also a 'pot-luck' style dinner is held regularly where all the members and their family get together for a night out.

Junior Hockey Programme

As hockey is hardly played as a recreational game it is not hard to foresee its future. Therefore in order to attempt its revival, the Kelab decided to run a junior hockey clinic for children ranging from the ages of 5 to 18 years. The programme has been successfully ongoing for 10 years. For those who are interested in sending your children. The junior hockey clinic is held every Saturday at the Sultan Azlan Shah turf (subject to availability of turf) from 3-5 p.m. A fee of RM30 is charged per child for every 10 sessions as the money is needed to defray the cost of booking the turf and payment of other incidentals. Those interested in sending your children can contact either Mr. S.V. Namasoo (012-5083702) or Mr. Thambirajah (016-5233442) for further information.

Let's keep the game of hockey alive. Anyone who falls within the category of veterans and interested in a workout at the turf can join us during the weekend.

S.V. Namasoo

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Moonlight and Magic at The Haven as Contest Winner Walks Away With RM25,000

It was truly a magical evening with a full moon that cast a silvery glow over the entire site of The Haven Lakeside Residences in Tambun on January 22. The occasion was the announcement of winners of The Haven's "Name the Rock" contest organised by Superboom Projects Sdn Bhd, developers of The Haven.

The contest winners had come from far and wide to receive cash prizes totalling RM50,000. The press and public were invited to witness the exciting finale to a month-long contest that had attracted over 2,000 entries from all over the world, including Hong Kong and the Middle East.

Rockhaven Wins

In the end, the lucky winner was Cambridge English for Life Centre Manager Lydia Teh from Kuala Lumpur, who took the RM25,000 grand prize for her name for the rock, which was simply "Rockhaven". The overwhelmed mother of four was at a loss for words when she was informed that she was the grand prize winner.

"I found out about the contest from a random contest website and decided to take part just for fun. I had submitted three entries and did not know until the final moment which name had won the prize.

"I'm really delighted and this is the best ang pow for me just in time for Chinese New Year!" said Teh, who had come with her family to Ipoh to collect the prize.

A panel of three judges, headed by Ipoh Datuk Bandar, Dato' Roshidi bin Haji Hashim (the other two were Professor Dr. Bernard Pierson, Shell Chair at Universiti Petronas, and Ms SeeFoon Chan-Koppen, director of Ipoh Echo) selected the winning name "Rockhaven" for its

simplicity and the fact that it would be immediately associated with The Haven.

Extensive Geological Study

The Haven has been home to this 14 storey high imposing rock for more than 260 million years, according to Professor Dr. Bernard Pierson, who dated the rock after an extensive geological study into it. "Only three other places in the world have such rocks - Guilin, Halong Bay and Phuket. So Malaysians, especially Perakeans, should be very proud of the fact that we have such a rare species of geology in our own backyard, so to speak," says Prof Dr. Pierson, who is passionate about his work. CEO of Superboom Projects Mr Peter Chan said that the contest was inspired by the rare geological find that the rock represents.

"We are very conscious of the environment and every effort is being made to ensure that natural state of the site of The Haven Lakeside Residences and its surrounding areas are carefully preserved. The rock and the pristine lake in which it rests will be left untouched so that our residents can enjoy them in their natural state," said Chan.

Chan added that the lake was a "live" one that was home to many varieties of fish and other lake life. "We are very excited at the geological discovery by Prof Dr. Pierson and organised the contest to name the rock so that Malaysians and even people around the world will get to know about 'Rockhaven' and visit it," Chan said.

Supermodel Amber

The magical moonlit evening was also given some "star attraction" by the special appearance of Malaysia's Supermodel and celebrity Amber Chia, who gave away the prizes.

"It's such a beautiful night and I am so happy to be here to see the rock for myself at night. It looks truly magical, with the full moon reflected in the lake in which the rock sits. I have been to The Haven before in the day, and was so impressed that I immediately booked a unit. But at night it is truly a magical experience", says Amber Chia, who is from Ipoh but now is based in KL. Amber bought a condo at The Haven "for investment as well as for "holidays here with my family, especially my husband and newborn baby son."

Winning Slogan

The winning slogan, "Brings heaven, earth and man closer together" - submitted by Mr Lee Tak Lung from Penang - earned the top prize of RM5,000 cash.

The Haven is an eco-resort development on the edge of a virgin forest, surrounded by limestone hills and with a pristine lake that is only minutes away from the city centre. When complete, its three tower blocks will be the tallest buildings in Ipoh, equipped with full five star condo facilities, and state of the art security. Two of the three blocks are almost sold out. The remaining tower, Tower B, will be unveiled on 30 January in conjunction with The Haven's official launch, with special launch promotions for the first 50 buyers.

More information is available from 1-700-8-1700-0 or www.thehaven.com.my.



Thumbs Down New Dump Site below Kuala Kangsar Road Flyover



Residents living on Jalan Lang are concerned about the safety of the retaining walls of the flyover along Kuala Kangsar Road. They feel that the plants and trees growing in the gaps between the concrete slabs of the retaining wall could cause it to collapse.

When I visited the site to take photos, I noticed that plants and trees are growing on the wall and, more importantly, found that the ground below the flyover is being used as a dumping ground, especially for construction materials. There is a gap in the safety barrier along Jalan Anthony and unscrupulous people are using this space to enter and dump their wastes. The drains are also overgrown with grass and weeds preventing water from flowing freely. A number of drain pipes meant to carry rain water from the flyover to the ground are broken.

The land under the flyover and connecting roads is rather big. This ground can be converted into a park and the trees and flyover would provide shade. This would provide an ideal recreational facility for residents living in nearby housing estates.

Experts from MBI must visit the site and decide what remedial work has to be done to maintain the place.

A. Jeyaraj



IWFS at the Banjaran

The Committee

The Ipoh Wine and Food Society held their first dinner of the year at the Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat on January 14. The Ipoh branch of this international society was started in 1996 and has been holding their quarterly gatherings where

members meet in convivial settings for the express purpose of enjoying good food and wine.

For this function, members from the sister club in Kuala Lumpur and a President of the club in Victoria Australia, Ms Yvonne Wallis joined the

rest of the Ipoh members for a memorable evening of camaraderie, canapés, champagne and Cono Sur, an organic wine that was served with the delectable spa cuisine.

Fifty guests, the ladies in all their evening finery, gathered first in

Jeff's Cellar, named after founder and developer of the Sunway group which owns the Banjaran, Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah, as they sipped champagne and ogled his formidable private wine collection. Many were totally awestruck by the setting and ambiance of this giant cave with its stalactites and stalagmites artfully illuminated and tastefully furnished in understated seating configurations.

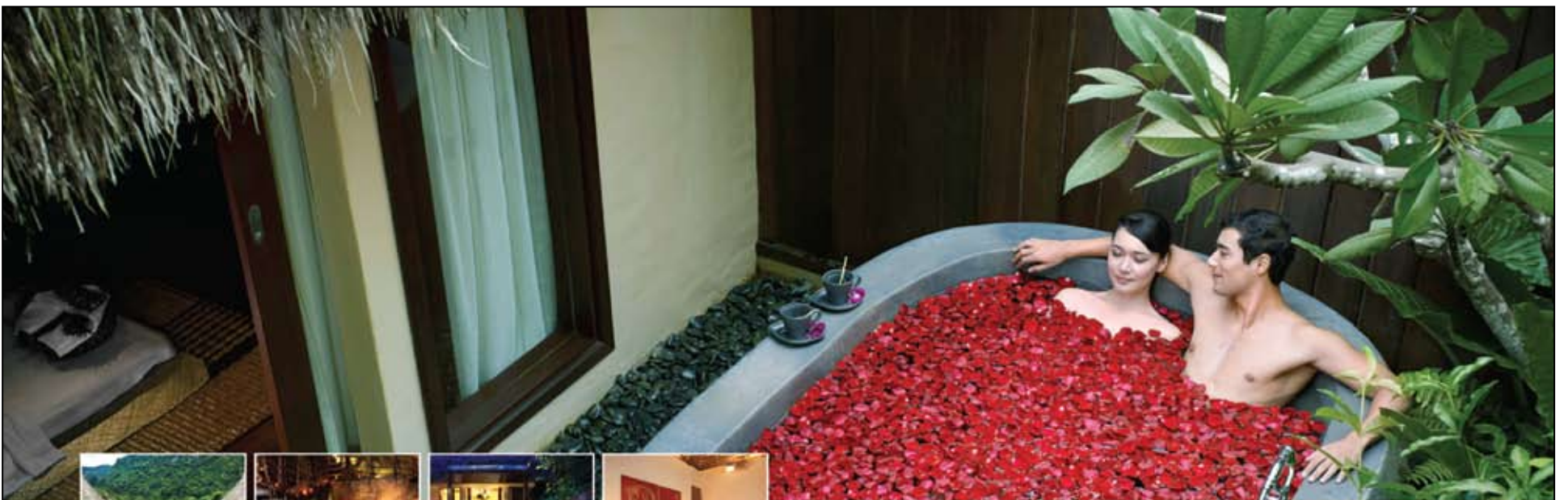
Dinner in the Pomelo restaurant was a raucous affair as President C.K. Cheah welcomed guests from out of town and acknowledged the people who helped to make the evening a success.

More information on becoming a member may be obtained from Doreen at 019-510 3270 or email: doreenkam@gmail.com.

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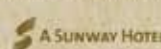
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My Say



• By Jerry Francis

Don't Wait For Another Royal Visit To Start Cleaning Up



about taking action. Post plainclothes enforcement officers at such illegal rubbish dumps to catch the culprits, as mere warnings do not seem to work. Those caught must be slapped with heavy fines, which can be channelled towards clean-up operations.

Failure by the city council to deal with the illegal rubbish dumps (estimated at over 15,000) would further aggravate the problem. Certainly the city council does not need to wait for another Royal visit to get serious about clearing the rubbish dumps scattered throughout the city.

The clean-up at Rapat Setia is a lesson. It needed 600 lorry loads to remove the heaps of 12,000 tonnes of wastes at Taman Harmony and Taman Koperasi, and another month (perhaps a thousand more lorry-loads) for the contractor to clear the balance of the two-third of the wastes accumulated there over the years.

Why must ratepayers' money be used for the clean-up operations? Why not let those guilty of dumping rubbish illegally pay for the cleaning up? The biggest culprits are the operators of small lorries, who would, for a fee, cart away wastes and dump them at the nearest convenient place.

The city council also needs to ensure that every household is equipped with a rubbish bin. As it is, many households are hanging their domestic wastes in plastic bags on the fences or trees in front of their houses, like Christmas decorations. Such bundles are often rummaged by stray cattle or dogs, resulting in the wastes being scattered about. Residents have often been seen throwing plastic bags of domestic wastes into monsoon drains and along roads on their way to work each morning.

I had expected that the recent call by the federal government to all states and local governments to step up the move against Dengue would result in a major cleanliness campaign. But it appears the efforts in Ipoh have fizzled out. Heaps of rubbish and clogged drains are seen all over the city and there seems to be no attempt being taken to clear them.

The clearing up of illegal rubbish dumps in the Rapat Setia area is only "the tip of an iceberg". There is still a mountain of wastes from the thousands of such illegal rubbish dumps in the city.

Therefore, the Ipoh City Council needs to be very serious about clearing them. Otherwise, the council could be caught with its pants down, just as when the Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah, decided to personally inspect the affected area in Rapat Setia last September following a letter published by Ipoh Echo.

Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim must have felt rather speechless when Raja Nazrin saw for himself the seriousness of the situation resulting from the city council's failure to respond to the residents' complaints about the illegal dumping and open burnings in the area.

The city council must start to initiate the clean up throughout the city and at the same time be serious about enforcing regulations to act against the irresponsible people who would immediately start dumping the moment each illegal dump is cleared.

Some of those irresponsible residents must be dragged to court to show that the city council is serious

Ipoh Echo, in its effort to serve the community, will continue with the "dirt vigilantes" campaign to spot dirty places and highlight them.

It hopes that together with the city council and the residents, the city can restore its lost image as one of the cleanest cities in the country, and only then can the city live up to its slogan of "Bersih, Hijau dan Membangun (Clean, Green and Progressive)."

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