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# Dedicated Crime Fighter Set to Reduce Crime in Perak

• By See Foon Chan-Koppen

**A**fter six months into his current assignment as the Chief Police Officer of Perak, Dato' Mohd Shukri Dahlan has already made big strides in shaping up policing in the Silver State and with the co-operation and support of the general public, is hoping to drastically reduce crime and make Crime Prevention the number one priority for his police force. Ipoh Echo met up with him recently to seek answers to some of the escalating concerns expressed by members of the public.

*continued on page 2*





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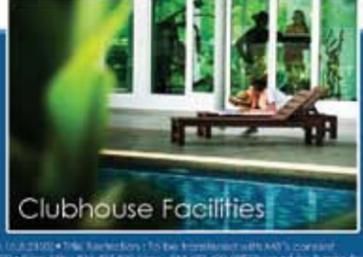
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## “The general public as well as NGOs must support Police to make Ipoh crime free”

Photos By Ed Shahir



**IE:** There have been numerous complaints about the lack of police presence especially in crime-prone areas. What are your plans?

**DATO' MOHD:** I am aware of this issue. The problem here is one of insufficient manpower. The international standard for policing ratio is 1:250 people. Here in Malaysia, we're working with a ratio of 1:1,000. The Federal government has plans to increase the police force by 30,000 but recruitment and training are the obstacles to overcome. I have already put in place four strategies for Perak which will help to address the lack of police presence and these are:

1. I have received clearance from Bukit Aman to deploy members of the Federal Reserve Unit who come to Ipoh every week to boost our numbers. Now more police are being seen in the streets.
2. Permission has also been granted from the Federal government to increase numbers in the Police Voluntary Reserve. With this, additional funds have been approved as the volunteers are paid an hourly rate. This will also assist our efforts in reaching out to the Chinese and balance our ethnicity ratio in the police force, bringing us more in line with the 1Malaysia concept.
3. To further optimise our meagre manpower resources, I have made it mandatory for police personnel working in offices to go on active policing three times a week.
4. Crime Prevention is my number one priority and to drive home my vision of a crime free Ipoh, I have been working at changing the mind-set of police personnel throughout the state. It starts with maximising the productivity of the allocated time each police person spends on duty. So let's take the case of traffic police: when their peak traffic duties are over in the mornings and evenings, they are now tasked with doing crime prevention work by riding their motorbikes through kampongs and crime prone areas so that their presence is visible. Since we started to implement this strategy we are happy to note that no untoward incidents have occurred in the past four months.

**IE:** Will plans to divide police districts improve policing on the whole?

**DATO' MOHD:** It will definitely help. We currently have 24 Balai (police stations) under one OCPD (Officer-in-Charge of Police District). Logistical and ground support are running at bursting capacity. Ipoh is now big enough to divide into two districts with twelve Balai, each under their own chief. Not only will logistical support be doubled but the OCPD can concentrate and focus on more detail and go into more depth on any given problem that arises. And each division will have their own budgets to increase manpower which will effectively double the increase for the whole.

**IE:** How effective is CCTV presently? Cameras are only found in selected areas such as Polo Ground, Greentown and the City Council complex. What are your plans for the uncovered zones? TV monitors are being manned by MBI staff not police personnel. Is this the norm?

**DATO' MOHD:** CCTV is very effective. However they fall under the local authority and decisions for installations are made by them with police suggestions on crime prone areas to be monitored. I personally feel that the monitoring, ideally, should be done by the police as this would hasten the reaction time and police intervention can take place much faster.

**IE comment:** Perhaps the police should have a desk at the CCTV monitoring centre?

**IE:** Students currently account for a huge portion of the Rakan Cop membership. Public participation seems lukewarm. There are inherent reasons why the general public are reluctant to participate. One reason is incentive. Do you have plans to make Rakan Cop more interesting and attractive?

**DATO' MOHD:** Perak has the largest number of Rakan Cop members registered compared to the rest of the country and yet it remains under utilised. I suspect that there is not enough publicity about its benefits and not enough efforts are being made to encourage active participation by its members. We also have the problem of fielding reports from members that stem from self interest rather than for the larger community. I am in the process of conducting a review on Rakan Cop, and we will brainstorm on ways to encourage active participation and developing a community spirit.

**IE:** The former CPO had introduced a number of programmes aimed at improving police procedures. Are these programmes such as SWAT (Stop, Walk and Talk), high profile policing and mobile patrols still in progress?

**DATO' MOHD:** Oh very much so. In fact we've stepped it up even further. As mentioned earlier, our traffic police are being deployed for mobile patrolling, and we have increased our high profile policing by making it mandatory for all police cars to flash their beacons. Members of the public, who see a patrol car at night with the beacon not flashing, must assist us by calling in to report.

**IE:** We see that you have already implemented quite a few changes for the better. What else do you plan for improving policing in general in Perak?

**DATO' MOHD:** I believe that we must educate our young and inculcate them against crime. Every school in Perak has one police officer who acts as liaison with the principal. It is imperative for schools to work with their police liaison to arrange for talks and educational programmes to reinforce this inculcation process.

**IE:** What about the complaint from the public about response time whenever a crime is reported?

**DATO' MOHD:** We have streamlined our reporting system and will begin the process of urging the public to call in to our Operator Police Perak line to report a crime. If they want prompt response, they must call our own Ipoh hotline which is a one-stop centre located in our headquarters here. It will usually take about 15 minutes for a police officer to show up when you call the hotline. When people make the report to the local Balai, the officer

in charge may be busy attending to something else.

**IE:** Considering that you have a wealth of experience and a lot on your plate, how confident are you that the crime rate will be reduced in Perak by the time you're due for retirement next year? Is this another example of government's loss being the private sector's gain?

**DATO' MOHD:** Well, I would love to contribute in an advisory capacity. I feel in the prime of my mental capacity and physically I am in good shape. But 58 is the mandatory retirement age and I hope that my successor will build even more on the foundations established by my predecessors and myself.

**IE comment:** Imagine the boost in manpower and efficiency not to mention financial resources spent on training new recruits if the mandatory retirement age was moved back by a few years. The 30,000 or more members of the force who retire annually nationwide could be put to good use to fight crime.

Operator Police Perak: **05-2451222**

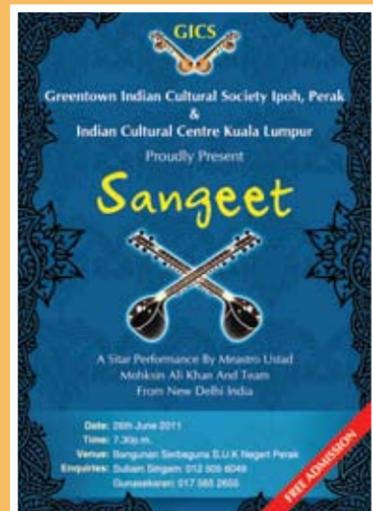
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### ANNOUNCEMENT



## father's day evening reception

CLEARWATER SANCTUARY  
Golf Resort

18<sup>th</sup> June, 5.00pm - Tropical Lagoon (Open Air)

### MENU

Fresh Salad  
Marinated Salad  
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Sandwiches

### HOT DISH

Kampung Fried Rice  
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Chicken Finger  
Baked Potato  
Corn On the Cob

### STALL

Assam Laksa  
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Assorted Ice Cream

### GRILLS

Lamb Shoulder  
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## Thinking ALLOWED • by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

# Obedient Wives' Club

**T**here has been much furore over the formation of the Obedient Wives' Club by a fringe Islamic group causing heated debate among women and men, alike. Ipoh Echo sought the views of two Malay Muslim women who helm a women's rights movement here in Ipoh. Dr Sharifah Halimah Jaafar and Puan Halida Mohd Ali are from the Perak Women for Women Society. Here are their answers to our questions:

**IE: Your views on the formation of the Obedient Wives' Club by Islamic fringe group, Global Ikhwan on Saturday, June 4.**

**SHARIFAH:** Obedient Wives' Club (OWC) is a farce. It has belittled and insulted women's role as a wife. Their calling on women to behave like first-class prostitutes in order to keep their husbands satisfied so they will not stray has reduced women's status to that of a legal prostitute – a sex slave, so to speak. The fact that the statement is being made by a woman is in itself disgusting! We are not a sex object at the beck and call of our husbands. Healthy marriages develop from mutual understanding, love, trust, respect and having similar visions for the family. This club should instead be



Dr Sharifah Halimah Jaafar

**Dr Sharifah Halimah Jaafar and Puan Halida Mohd Ali give their views on the Obedient Wives Club...**

dubbed, "The Stupid Wives' Club" or "The Hot Wives' Club".

**HALIDA:** The club is an affront to women's dignity. It sees women as subservient individuals who have no minds of their own. Are the club's members themselves obedient and exemplary? Are they, being what they are, qualified to counsel us on morality? The club should instead find ways to improve marriage, parenting and empowerment. This is more beneficial.

**IE: Can the formation of this club cure social ills such as prostitution and divorce, as claimed by Dr Rohayah Mohamad, one of the club's founders and its vice president?**

**SHARIFAH:** OWC is another manifestation of the persistent women-blaming syndrome that dominates discussions on social issues such as divorce, prostitution, sexual abuse and domestic violence. During the launch of OWC, Rohayah said, and I quote, "It's important to be good sexual workers so that the husbands don't go to prostitutes." Her assumption is based on a polygamous experience consistent with the community she lives in. In her closed community, men take another wife because their sexual needs are not being met by their existing wives. Rohayah not only tarnishes women's dignity, she blames her own kind for the cause of social ills. Becoming a first-class hooker will not stop a man from marrying another woman or ensure his fidelity. Neither will it guarantee that incest and rape will not occur.

While society is concerned about baby dumping, unplanned pregnancies, Mat Rempits, bullying, drug abuses, etc. this group of housewives is offering advice to women on how to improve their sexual performance in bed. They should instead find ways on how to be better parents to their kids. Rohayah should do some homework before making far-fetched statements.

The formation of this club will not curb social ills. It will probably add to the problems. Women living in fear will choose to remain silent because they are afraid to be seen as being disobedient to the husbands. PWW

has come across women who have been sexually abused by their husbands, sodomised and forced to have sex everyday, regardless of their health and emotional well-being. They suffered in silence for many years until they couldn't bear it any longer. Most of them felt degraded and suffered a loss of self-esteem. I have encountered a man who got his wife pregnant 13 times. He accused his spouse of being unable to sexually satisfy him and asked me if I had medication to revitalise his wife. The poor woman had to care for and raise his 13 children.

**HALIDA:** The formation of OWC will not cure social problems, per se. Whether or not the wife is a tramp (in bed), the husband will still stray. Men say that marrying another wife is to prevent sin but infidelity is already a sin. Islamic laws allow men to marry 4 wives. The hadith says, "You can marry 4 wives and must be fair to all but if you cannot be fair, then just marry one". Can they be fair? Wives and children in polygamous marriages are not happy. The children are usually involved in undesirable activities because the father's attention is divided. The first wife is always sidelined, as the man concentrates on his younger wives. This creates inadequacy, anger and jealousy among the womenfolk. No amount of seduction will bring the husband back.

**IE: Malaysia's divorce rate has doubled from 2002 to 2009. The rates among Malay Muslims are higher compared to the other races. What are the primary causes?**

**SHARIFAH:** According to statistics, the divorce rates for Malay and Non-Malay have increased equally. Almost 50-60% of reasons for marriage failures are due to infidelity on the part of men. Not only men file for divorce, a significant number of women also file for divorce for a multitude of reasons – irreconcilable differences, falling out of love, domestic violence, drug abuse, communication problems, problems with in-laws, etc. There is no justification in imposing on the wife the burden of making a marriage work. A failed marriage is not the fault of one spouse only. Marriage is a partnership akin to a

*continued on page 4*

## I Just Met My Executor In Heaven! So How Now? • by Peter Lee

**T**an is a widower with three children aged 8, 10 and 12. Not long after his wife's death, he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. The children have been under his care with the help of his mother and sister. Anticipating the worst, he quickly made his will for the welfare of his minor children. In his will, he appointed his sister, Jocelyn to be the first Executor/Trustee and brother, Jason to be the substitute. Subsequently, he also chose Jocelyn to be the guardian of his minor children due to the fact that her own children and husband are quite close to his children. The instructions in his will was to have his estate distributed equally to his three children. The Executor/Trustee is instructed to hold on to the estate and use it for his children's living, medical and education expenses. Thereafter, to release the balance of the estate to them when his youngest child attains the age of 23.



Several months after doing his will, he died. So, Jocelyn, being the Executor/Trustee of the estate, applied for the Grant of Probate. When the probate was obtained, she collected all the movable and immovable assets. Subsequently, she started using the funds in the estate to take care of Tan's children. After six months into her role as the Executor/Trustee, she was killed in a fatal accident and all of Tan's assets, which are now under her name, are frozen. When this happened, I think Tan is going to say "I just met my Executor in heaven! So how now?" To unlock Tan's assets, the Executor/Trustee of Jocelyn's estate must first apply for the Grant of Probate for her estate. Presuming that her husband is the Executor/Trustee, it is his responsibility to execute his wife's estate as well as Tan's estate because Jason, who is the substitute Executor/Trustee, cannot automatically take over the responsibility from his deceased sister.

In order to take over, Jocelyn's husband must resign as Executor/Trustee of Tan's estate and allow the beneficiaries of Tan's estate to appoint Jason to replace him. Since Tan's children are still minors, their guardian must appoint the Executor/Trustee. Thereafter, Jason must apply for "Letters of Administration with the will annexed" to assume the role as Administrator of Tan's estate. This would definitely delay the process of unlocking Tan's estate and while awaiting for the "Letters of Administration with the will annexed", Jocelyn's husband would most likely have to take care of Tan's children financially for the time being. It can take years before Jason can take over from Jocelyn to administer the estate of Tan. In this situation, just imagine the financial hardship Tan's children and Jocelyn's husband will have to go through.

It is not easy for a family to deal with an estate of this kind knowing the fact that most would be lost in normal estate administration. One may argue that it doesn't happen to every family which I agree. But taking Tan's case as an example, would it not be more secure to appoint a Trustee Company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to be your estate's main Trustee because at least it has perpetual existence. In addition, it provides expertise, impartiality and professionalism.

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](mailto:excelsec@streamyx.com). Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>.

### 'City Survival Skills' Workshop

Sunday, June 19, 2011  
8.45 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

Heritage Hotel Ipoh  
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Entrance: RM5 per person.  
Tea and light refreshments will be provided.

**Objective of the workshop is to teach women basic self-defence techniques to overcome physical threats.**

Open to all, especially women.

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Call the Secretary at 05-546 9715 or 012-5212480 for tickets.

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## Thinking ALLOWED ... Obedient Wives' Club ... continued from page 3

contract between two individuals. It takes two to tango. Men too must learn how to make their wives happy and remain loyal, both in good and bad times.

**HALIDA:** The divorce rate is high, especially among young Malay couples. This is due to their marrying young. They are ill-prepared for responsibilities that come with marriage. Parents insist on their children marrying early to avoid the sins of intimacy. Most of these young husbands don't hold proper jobs; indulge in substance abuse and extra-marital affairs. Women are frequently reminded of their pivotal role in marriage but not the men. Men are not told to respect women, practise good values and be good leaders and providers. The emphasis is more on their being exemplary Muslims, pray 5 times a day and follow the Sunnah. The tendency to deviate is therefore greater, as they are susceptible to external influences. Islamic laws on marriage and divorce should be tightened to avoid divorce by utterance (deliberate in most cases) and via text messaging.

**IE:** "Disobedient wives are the cause of upheaval in this world because men are not happy at home and their minds and souls are disturbed," said Dr Rohayah. **Your comments.**

**SHARIFAH:** This is a typical example of blaming women for men's behaviour or seeking justifications for men's actions or inactions. To Rohayah's understanding, men's minds and souls are controlled by their sexual orientations rather than by their intelligence. If a man is sexually satisfied by his wife only then will he be happy and can think straight. If not, God knows what's going happen. He might lose control and rape a minor, commit adultery and abuse his wife and what not. This logic is nonsensical. Rohayah needs to learn that every man and woman is responsible for his or her actions. Isn't that what we teach our children about cause and effect and action and consequence?

**HALIDA:** Rohayah blaming women for men's behaviour is uncalled for. We should respect ourselves and not become a doormat. We are neither chattels nor first-class prostitutes. Why must we be responsible for our husbands' actions? If he is grateful and treasures his wife he would not go astray. Marriage is a team effort. Both parties should work hard to make it work. Men should also learn how to give pleasure to their women, as sex is reciprocal. There must be commitment, communication, trust, respect, love, honesty and faithfulness.

If the wife is unsatisfied in bed can she go astray? I have known of many wives who are denied sex or being rebuffed. Most suffer in silence. The daring ones would look for a lover. A friend tried all the seduction techniques on her husband but her marriage still failed. If a man wants to stray nothing in this world can stop him.

It's not disobedient wives that are causing the problems but irresponsible husbands. Period.

**IE:** The club consists of about 800 members at the time of reporting. Most are members of Global Ikhwan, which is an offshoot of the banned Al-Arqam Islamic Group outlawed in 1994 for deviationist teachings. Do you honestly think that the club, with its idealistic intentions, will get the support of conservative-thinking Muslim women in the country? Will it take root here in Perak?

**SHARIFAH:** Many rational-thinking Muslim women, like me, find this ideology absurd. It is not at all surprising, as these women's minds are being shaped by banned deviationist teachings. Like I have said, they probably want to reinvent themselves in order to be relevant and to make



Puan Halida Mohd Ali

a comeback to mainstream activities. They want to get as much attention as possible, that's why they pick an UMNO leader to launch their club with a lavish western dinner accompanied by music and songs. Their primitive mind-set has not only succeeded in getting the local but the international media abuzz.

On whether it will take root here in Perak, it all depends on Perakians' understanding of Islamic teachings. Islam encourages its followers to conduct their marriages on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. Communication, not submission, is vital in sustaining a healthy relationship.

**HALIDA:** I don't think it will get the support, especially from level-thinking women, regardless of their sexual inclinations. However, one cannot stop women from joining this club. That's their prerogative. It might catch up here in Perak since mufti Tan Sri Harussani has given his blessing.

**IE:** How could social ills besetting the Malay Muslim community be overcome?

**SHARIFAH:** Social ills besetting Malay Muslims will never be overcome so long as

the community keeps harping on petty issues rather than finding solutions for its numerous problems. The belief that men are superior to women results in the lack of respect for women's rights. This is the primary cause of social ills like rape, incest, domestic violence, prostitution, exploitation of women etc. It's about men wanting to exert their will over women. Women are not the cause but are, in fact, victims of men's irresponsible behaviours. Respect begins with acceptance between both genders.

**HALIDA:** Lust, greed, power and infidelity are the root causes of social ills. Men seek variety even if they are satisfied at home. That's the reason why prostitution, pornography and human trafficking thrive. Enforcement is weak or non-existence. The authorities are mostly men; therefore, an element of condoning exists. Muslims tend to have many children. This is a major contributing factor, as overseeing a large family can be taxing financially, physically, mentally and emotionally.

Malay women are being taught (indoctrinated) to be submissive and obedient to their husbands. It's their passport to heaven and a golden umbrella, in the hereafter. How simplistic! Our deeds, good or bad, are not for us to judge but God.

If Muslim men were to go back to the basics of honouring, respecting and loving their womenfolk, social ills among the Malay Muslim community would reduce.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: 05-2552181; or email: [announcements@ipoecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipoecho.com.my), by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

**The Heidelberg Youth Choir** from Germany will perform on Monday **June 20** at Syuen Hotel Ipoh. Contact: Festival Hotline – 016-5334757 or Witzli Leong at 012-5088818.

**Ex-Tarcisians Association (ETA) Ipoh** is organising a cruise for its members. For details call: 05-5278563 (Veni), 017-4872795 (Mutharasi) or 05-5275336 (Ananthu).

**Blood Donation Campaign in conjunction with Ipoh StarWalk 2011**, on Sunday June 19, 9.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. at Stadium Indera Mulia Ipoh.

**Philatelic Society of S.M.J.K. Sam Tet Stamp Fair on Saturday June 25**, 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m., at Bro. John Moh Hall, S.M.J.K. Sam Tet Ipoh.

For enquiries, contact Austin Foo at 012-5128096 or email: [ausfoo@yahoo.com](mailto:ausfoo@yahoo.com).

**Amazing Race of Olympia College, June 25**, 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Flag off: Olympia College Ipoh. Finishing point: Olympia College Ipoh. For information on signing up, contact: 05-2433868.

**'Sangeet' – A Sitar Performance by Maestro Ustad Mohksin Ali Khan & Team from New Delhi India, June 26**, 7.30 p.m. at Bangunan Serbaguna S.U.K. Negeri Perak. Enquiries: Subain Singam – 012-5056049 or Gunasekaran – 017-5652655.

**Kechara Ipoh Study Group is recycling:** metal/aluminium, plastics, newspaper/carton boxes, paper, electrical/electronic equipment and old clothes (not glass), on Sunday June 26, from 9.00 a.m. till 12 noon at 15 Jalan Che Tak, Taman Jubilee, 30300 Ipoh. Call: Wan Wai Meng – 012-215 0968 or Yee Mun – 012-5223200 for enquiries.

**Kiwanis Down Syndrome Foundation Ipoh Centre** is looking for a volunteer piano teacher for its music appreciation sessions, teaching 1 hour a week to children up to 11 years old. Those interested are requested to contact the centre at: 2 Persiaran Bercham Selatan 27, Taman Sri Kurau, 31400 Ipoh, and Tel.: 05-5468386.

**Community Clinic for Ipohites by Pantai Hospital Ipoh** in collaboration with MBI operates from 2.30-4.00 p.m. every alternate Wednesday, twice a month, from June 8, at the Lobby of MBI, Greentown. It provides health checks for blood pressure, body fat, diet counselling, bone density, etc. From time to time, the Clinic will offer discounts on eye, ear and teeth examinations, and fitness tests.

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First Gdn:	LSF Sun Li Hardware Sdn Bhd, 16A Jalan Labrooy.
Labrooy Road:	Golf Reception Counter, Meru Valley Golf & Country Club.
Meru:	Ruba Rubi Ent 154, Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Tel.: 017-5048531 Chan Sam Lock Photo Studio, 77-81 Jln Sultan Idris Shah. M & A Securities Sdn Bhd, 52A Jln Sultan Idris Shah. Pooven Enterprise (opp Super Kinta), 5 Jln Dato Onn Jaafar. S.Y. Dry Cleaning & Laundry, 1 Jln Chung Thye Phin.
New Town:	Desa Corner (opp Open University Malaysia) Jalan Lim Bo Seng, 30300 Ipoh. Tel: Zulhazmi 019-2724552. Newsvendor (morning), Opposite Simee Market.
Simee:	Perniagaan Sagayah, 22A, Persiaran Bercham Selatan 8, Taman Kencana. Tel: Maniam (014-3035697).
Bercham:	Rasu Enterprise, 271 Jalan Gunung Rapat. Perak Academy, 28 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah. Fitness Junction, 2 Jalan Kelab Golf.
Desa	P.N. Book Centre, 7 Jalan Dato Ahmad Yunus.
Tmn Ipoh Jaya:	1-9 Persiaran SCI 2/2, Sunway City Ipoh, Tel. 05-5454398.
Tiger Lane:	CIMB Securities: 8 Persiaran Greentown Business Centre, Tel. 05-2088688.
Golf Club Road:	
Sitiawan	
Sunway College:	
CIMB Securities:	



## Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by Christine Kow

# SeeFoon finds it fun to eat at the YMCA

The lyrics of this late 70s hit song was playing over and over like a stuck record in my head as I was hurrying to meet Dato' Daniel Tay at the YMCA the other evening. Dato' Daniel, ever the affable host, is always introducing me to unusual dishes and unusual places for meals and it was natural for him as President of the YMCA of Ipoh, to wax lyrical about the food served at its restaurant.

I was initially sceptical, thinking, 'Food in a YMCA canteen? How good can it be?' but as the saying goes, 'proof of the pudding is in the eating' I accepted his kind invitation with the proviso and understanding that if I felt that the quality was not up to scratch that I am not obliged to write a review on it.

I am happy to report that my initial scepticism was totally unfounded. Not only is the quality of food in this kitchen good, some of the special dishes border on great.

### Unusual Specialities

This family style restaurant is famous for its shark dishes. Rumour has it that a certain Tan



Sri would come in his helicopter, land in the field behind and buy back these specialities.

I have eaten shark meat before but always in curry and



so my curiosity was piqued by hearing about a Chinese version. And not only one Chinese version but apparently at least 10 preparation styles for shark meat exist in this modest kitchen.

The first to arrive was the **Preserved Cabbage version (Ham Tsui)**; shark meat slices which had been lightly battered, deep fried and combined with sliced preserved cabbage. This was followed by the **Mongolian-style Shark Meat**, a close relative of the traditional sweet sour pork variation, the batter still crunchy at the edges and the sweet sour sauce, neither too sweet nor sour; a perfect blending of flavours. Naturally our group of 10 tucked in with gusto and promptly ordered a repeat of the same which as all Foodies know in hindsight, is a mistake, because the rest of the dishes that followed were equally appealing and satisfying. Because of the variety of cooking styles, it's worth experimenting and ordering a variety to determine which is your favourite – RM14 for the smallest portion.

Next to arrive was the **Chicken in Ginger Gravy**, succulent morsels of chicken braised in a thick ginger sauce, the ginger flavour predominating. The sauce is wonderful over white rice. We also had a portion of the **Marmite Chicken** which was tasty but a tad

sweet for my taste buds.

**Ham Dan Prawns** followed, a huge plate of large prawns, fried to perfection with salted egg yolk, crispy and crunchy to the last bite.



We rounded out the meal with **Bean Sprouts Fried with Egg** and a **Vegetable Curry** which I found slightly on the bland side but probably ideal for those who prefer a less pungent taste.



For families looking for a simple meal, the YMCA restaurant is great value for money for good quality food. They have a range of dining packages ranging from sets for two to three people to tables of 10. With prices beginning at

RM29 for 2-3 people; RM39 for 4-5; RM69 for 6-8 and RM89 for 10 people (the latter two sets including one shark meat dish), the value/quality factor is unbeatable. Of course all dishes can also be ordered à la carte.

Is it any wonder that I left the restaurant that evening with my version of the refrain from the hit song YMCA reverberating in my head:

*"It's fun to eat at the Y-M-C-A  
It's fun to eat at the Y-M-C-A"*

### YMCA Kafeteria (Pork Free)

Jalan Raja Musa Aziz

Tel: 05-2421737 (ask for Ms Foo)

Members of the public can just walk into the restaurant. You don't have to be a member of YMCA.

## HAWKER FOOD

### Ipoh Curry Mee – Soup Variation



Ipoh's Curry Mee is unique and different from that which is found in Penang (known as curry laksa due to added santan), or in KL (less spices and served with toufu and cockles). Ipoh's Curry Mee is known to have more spices, thereby giving the dish a more pungent and flavourful aroma. It is usually served with slices of chicken meat, roast pork (if non-halal) and of course, juicy tantalising cockles, towgay and mint leaves. The trick in the dish is in the secret blend of spices in order to create that perfect curry soup that will keep customers hankering for more.

We could easily list 20 places in Ipoh to sample this great, high-calorie dish, but alas, space constraint allows us only 9 references. For the record, our food tasting team usually ventures out far and wide, bringing back a sampling of dishes from hawker stalls all over the city which we then proceed to taste side-by-side for comparison. From the loot obtained for Ipoh's curry mee, here are our top 9 picks:

- Kedai Kopi Nam Chau**  
54, Jalan Leech, Old Town  
RM4.00
  - Curry Mee stall, Anika Selera**  
Ipoh Garden (opp Woolley Food Centre)  
RM3.80
  - Sun Seng Fatt Curry House**  
32, Market Street  
RM4.00
  - Kedai Kopi Keng Nam**  
127 Jalan Raja Ekram (Cowan St.)  
RM3.80
  - Kafe Moon and Moon**  
1 Hala Pinji 2, Pasir Putih  
RM4.00
  - Kedai Kopi & Restoran Sun Heng**  
19 Lebuh Cecil Rae, Canning Garden  
RM4.00
  - Xin Quan Fang**  
174 Jalan Sultan Iskandar, diagonally opp, New Town Police station).
  - Restoran & Kafe New Weng Fatt**  
1 Lebuh Taman ipoh 11, Ipoh Garden South
- Lim Ko Pi**  
10 Jalan Sultan Iskandar, Old Town  
Special with *Udang Galah* at RM5.50



## VACANCY

Principal, Teachers and Office Staff For English Centre (new branch), Gopeng Road, Ipoh.

For interview call: 05-242 7127/016-5597127

## RECIPE

By Margarita Lee



### Smoked Chicken

#### Ingredients:

- 1 chicken
- 1tsp salt
- 1tsp cooking wine
- 1 tsp five spice powder

#### Ingredients for smoking:

- ½ cup Jasmine tea leaf
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup cooked rice

#### Method:

- Clean chicken and pat dry.
- Steam chicken in a wok with high heat for 30 minutes.
- Rub chicken cavity and skin with salt, cooking wine and five spice powder.
- Cover wok with aluminium foil. Put in tea leaf, brown sugar and rice. Heat wok.
- Place an iron rack inside the wok; put steamed chicken on the rack. Cover with lid.
- Smoke for 8-10 minutes. Remove chicken from wok. Leave it to cool.
- Cut into bite size pieces and serve.



## Arts &amp; Culture

## Northern Writers



Saturday June 4 saw Muhammad Haji Salleh – a Malaysian poet laureate, launch Northern Writers at Garden Villa, 5 Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, Ipoh. The Ipoh Book Club ‘girls’ supported the event by bringing finger food. Writer and academic Paul GnanaSelvan lent his support as did the members of The Kinta Heritage Group. The Space Gambus Experiment provided freshly innovative music for the occasion.

Yusuf Martin has brought this idea of ‘readings’ to Ipoh. Northern Writers continues a trend set by Ipoh girl Bernice Chauly back in 2005, when she began ‘Readings’ in Bangsar. Sharon Bakar continued when Bernice had to take a step backwards due to illness in her family. In the first of a monthly series, Yusuf enticed Perak born Muhammad Haji Salleh to read some of his renowned poems including *The Forest's Last Day* – found in his collection *Rowing Down Two Rivers*. Ipoh boy Patrick Teoh regaled with snippets from his latest book – *Teology*, Bernice Chauly read from a forthcoming work and Graham McEune had his audience in fits of laughter reading from his book – *Up Country* – largely set in Perak.

Northern Writers present four different writers, from different aspects of writing and reading, on the first Saturday of every month. Northern Writers is a non-profit organisation, founded by Yusuf Martin, with the concept of bringing an understanding of arts and culture, entirely free, to areas north of Kuala Lumpur. Those writers who participate in Northern Writers do so free of charge and the entrance is free to all.

Yusuf Martin

## 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.

## Shiny Black Gold

I refer to your recent issue 121 and the report about the PSPA production “Shiny Black Gold” therein. Having seen the show I believe your reporter undersold the importance of this production which as their first ever totally in-house production was a very big step for PSPA. As reported, the script was entirely original and written by Datin Rosalina, but the originality went much further than that with a completely new musical score written to match the script and with many of the 50 plus actors never having been on the stage before. The skill with which the original film clips and photographs were blended into the on-stage activities was also very good and enhanced the performance dramatically. PSPA should be heartily congratulated for a job well done.

Your reporter also mentioned the senior citizens, but I believe that more important were the many young people, who not only saw an on-stage musical for the first time in their lives, but also learned a lot about their local history from the ipohWorld team and the Tenby School's exhibition of antique mining artefacts on display in the theatre foyer. Displayed throughout the show's run the exhibition linked the reality of our mining history with the show and undoubtedly enhanced the enjoyment for the youngsters who had probably never heard of dulangs or palongs before. This was a very smart move by PSPA and it was welcomed by all who visited it, young and old, including Raja Muda and the Executive Councillors.

Overall therefore, the production incorporating all the elements of history, drama, music, visual effects was a very important step in the life of PSPA and I look forward to Datin Rosalina and her team providing us with more such quality performances in the future.

By the way, I would point out that I am not a member of PSPA.

Ipoh Boleh

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Courses  
to Improve Performance

Goals set by Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBU) to reduce poverty have been achieved, to a certain degree, since the introduction of the micro-financing scheme six months ago. The scheme has benefited some 331 small-time entrepreneurs who are involved in a number of commercial ventures, ranging from hawking cookies to cultivating rock melons. The foundation has invested almost RM3 million in the scheme, dishing out loans to deserving applicants.

Foundation's Chief of Micro-Credit Services, Ghaffarud-Din Usulud-Din, said that capacity-building programmes aimed at improving business, are in the pipeline. “Two such programmes will be conducted in June,” Ghaffarud-Din told Ipoh Echo. One is on marketing and basic accounting. The other is a practical course getting those with certain business expertise to share their experiences with the rest. “The programmes are geared towards making the participants more productive and resilient.”

The foundation plans to organise a sale carnival to coincide with a momentous occasion in the calendar year. The carnival, according to Ghaffarud-Din, will allow the 300-odd participants to market their goods and services under a single roof. “It'll expose them to a greater mix of buyers.”

The efforts of the hard-working and enterprising ones will not go unnoticed, said the department chief. “They'll be given awards for their perseverance.” This will be the culmination of the multi-layered programmes to assist this business community. The MB will be invited to give away the awards.

Evaluating the entrepreneurs' performance will be the foundation's next target in line with its efforts to enhance efficiency and productivity.

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## wellness

By **Dr. Manuel K. Punnia Raj**

Consultant Physical Therapy Rehabilitation

### What is neck pain?

Neck pain refers to pain originating from the cervical spine which comprises of the top seven vertebrae that form your neck. Common conditions producing neck pain are degenerative disc disease, neck strain, neck injury such as in whiplash, herniated disc or a pinched nerve. It may present as pain along the cervical spine, in the head, shoulder pain or referred arm pain, tingling or numbness. Most neck pain can be resolved with good physiotherapy management.

### Causes

Poor posture is one of the most common reasons so many people suffer from neck pain. This is due to the complicated function of the neck. The neck needs to provide a stable base to support your head, which weighs on average 5kg but also needs to be very flexible in order to move your head in different directions through a large range of movement.

The neck is controlled by a number of muscles which co-ordinate all of its movements. When these muscles are working correctly the neck is well supported and under normal load. However, problems arise when the neck is placed under abnormal load through posture, computer work, inadequate pillow support or injury. This often creates pain through excessive pressure being placed on the joints and muscles in the neck.

### Muscle Imbalance

If this load is excessive, such as in a whiplash injury or sustained over a long period of time such as with computer work or poor posture, it creates an imbalance of the muscles in the neck. As a result, some muscles become weak and underused and others become tight and overused, often creating pain in the process. This imbalance cannot simply be corrected through correcting your posture but needs specific physiotherapy assessment and treatment to help return the neck to its normal function.

Other common causes of neck pain are arthritis, stress and tension, and sporting injuries. These conditions all respond well to physiotherapy management.

### Physiotherapy Management

A comprehensive approach in treating neck pain gets great results from both acute and more chronic neck conditions. Physiotherapy can help you to become pain-free and a follow-up programme will prevent reoccurrence. These include a mixture of techniques and modalities, such as ultrasound and electrotherapy to relax muscles and reduce muscular spasm, soft tissue/joint mobilizations and manipulations, including manual traction to restore cervical movements.

- Pain relief techniques using electrotherapy devices
- Joint mobilisation/manipulation
- Strengthening and stretching exercises
- Ergonomic and Postural care
- Postural analysis and posture retraining
- Spinal mobilizations / stretches
- Myofascial release of the tight neck and shoulder muscles
- Strengthening exercises for the neck, shoulder blades, rotator cuff and upper back muscles
- Teaching of self release techniques

For more Information on Physical Health Contact your right health partner: PHYSIO BEYOND – The Physical Rehabilitation Specialist at **05-5478786**.



## Swollen Red Eyes – Conjunctivitis?

In our series on Eye Health, Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr. S.S. Gill talks to us about conjunctivitis.

You rub your eyes, but they won't stop feeling uncomfortable and appear red as well as puffy. Your eyes don't hurt, but the discomfort is annoying as it feels like you have an eyelash or a speck of sand in your eye. Later on in the day you start developing yellow discharge. If you have these symptoms, it may likely be a common eye problem called **conjunctivitis**, better known as **pinkeye**.

### What Is Conjunctivitis?

**Conjunctivitis**, also known as pinkeye, is an inflammation of the conjunctiva which is the thin, clear tissue that lies over the white part of the eye and lines the inside of the eyelid. It is one of the most common eye infections and may start in one eye and then spread to the other eye. It usually lasts only a short time, mostly for about a week or less with proper treatment. However, there are some varieties of **conjunctivitis** that may be prolonged and may need specialized treatment. **Conjunctivitis** can also be caused by irritants such as shampoos (causing chemical conjunctivitis), as well as pollen and dust (allergic conjunctivitis) or improper prolonged contact lens wear.

### Types of Conjunctivitis

Pink eye is usually caused by a bacterial or viral infection. These types of conjunctivitis are contagious and you can get infected by contact – simply by touching the hand of a friend who has just touched his or her infected eyes. If you then touch your eyes, the infection can spread to you. The other way it can spread is by touching contaminated articles like door handles, arm-rests of chairs, and the sharing of towels with anyone who has conjunctivitis. And no, it does not spread by looking at a person with conjunctivitis.

The symptoms of pinkeye may include some or all of the following:

Redness in the white of the eye or inner eyelids; Increased amount of tears or discharge; thick discharge that has dried over the eyelashes, especially in the mornings after sleep; itchy and/or burning eyes; blurred vision; Increased sensitivity to light (photophobia).

### Treating Conjunctivitis

As there are various types of causes for **conjunctivitis**, you should visit your doctor to determine the cause and appropriate treatment. Antibiotics are prescribed to treat bacterial conjunctivitis. If the cause is viral, you will need to be patient as it may take a few weeks to settle. There would be a need for your doctor to look out for any complications that may occur during this time.

Contact lens wearers may contract conjunctivitis if they have been careless in handling their contact lenses or are sensitive to the multipurpose solutions. You may find the following tips useful should you ever suffer from conjunctivitis: **Avoid** the use of **eye makeup** and do not wear **contact lenses**; **Avoid rubbing** or touching your eyes; **Wash your hands** frequently with soap and water to avoid spreading it; **Don't share** common items such as towels, blankets and sunglasses.

For more information, contact Gill Eye Specialist Centre at **05-5455582**, email: [gilleyecentre@dr.com](mailto:gilleyecentre@dr.com) or visit [www.fatimah.com.my](http://www.fatimah.com.my).



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

## Banyan Spa Journey

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen



treatments (2 types, shorter duration) with 3 foot reflexology and 2 Trauma Massage sessions thrown in while the 'Sago' package offers 10 spa treatments (5 Cymbopogon Citratus – scrub, steam, Jacuzzi, full body aromatherapy; and 5 Serenity de Paris – steam and aromatherapy) at RM2,688 with 5 reflexology, 3 trauma massage and one 5-element Facial included.

Facial packages are available for Collin at RM1,288 (normal RM1,530) for a mixture of 10 treatments plus two RM100 redemption cash vouchers; an exclusive package of more extensive treatments also with Collin at RM2,688 (normal RM3,208) for a mixture of 12 treatments plus

five RM100 redemption vouchers. Finally the Phyto 5 package is available at RM1,888 (normal RM2,180) for 10 (2 types) treatments plus three RM100 redemption cash vouchers.

Next issue: *Ownership, Membership and Other Services.*

In the last issue, I wrote about discovering an oasis of calm in the heart of Ipoh at the newly-opened Banyan Spa on Jalan Raja DiHilir. Having waxed lyrical about the light therapy and lymphatic drainage for both face and body using the Biodraineur and the Chromapuncture machines from Switzerland, I decided this time to opt for the low-tech Banyan Spa Journey coupled with a collagen treatment facial – pure total pampering with the human touch.

### PHYTO 5

The Banyan Spa Journey uses Phyto 5 products which are based on the 5 elements of traditional Chinese Medicine: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water, designed to restore the body's holistic balance.

My treatment began with a full body Cymbopogon Citratus (lemon grass) Salt scrub to reduce cellulite and tone muscles. Lemon grass which is an antidepressant and a mood enhancer also has antibacterial and anti-fungal properties. This was followed by a Full Body Clay Mask that was energetically balancing and moisturising.

I was then ushered into the steam room where the mask was allowed to do its further magic on the skin with the help of the steam to open up pores. From there, it was a hop into the adjoining Jacuzzi for the Algae-Essence Bath where a further infusion was given to the skin with algae concentrates, plankton and marine minerals in natural essential oils, to hydrate, mineralise and promote vital energy.

Feeling silky smooth and sparkingly vibrant, I was then soothed into a soporific state, with an aromatherapy massage under the magic fingers and hands of my therapist Rico.

### Collin Collagen treatment

The Collin (a well-known range of professional beauty products from France) Collagen Facial Treatment came next; a series of lotions and potions to regenerate the skin and preserve its youthfulness (*my, how we all need this*) while boosting cell and tissue metabolism. This facial is all product-based and totally hands-on with no mechanical aids.

### Packages

The Banyan Spa Journey which lasts for two hours is priced at RM368 for one session but special promotional packages are available. The 'Sugar' Package for example is RM1,188 for 6 spa

### Banyan

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## young perak

### Go Green Students' Conference

SMK Raja Perempuan organised a Go Green Students' Conference for cluster schools as part of its "Towards Green Schools and Green Hostels Programme". Student leaders from cluster schools around the country presented papers on the concept of Going Green while other students dressed up in fancy costumes to illustrate the topics discussed which included developing green culture in schools and homes, organic farming, recycling and eating green.



The school has an organic garden, which harvests rainwater and uses wastes from the canteen for composting. Students from other schools were taken around the garden and introduced to the concept of organic farming. The science laboratories practise the concept of micro scale science whereby specially ordered miniature apparatus are used for the experiments and only small quantities of ingredients are used for experiments, thus reducing pollution.

The school is implementing a policy of Think Green, Act Green and Eat Green.

A. Jeyaraj

### SMJK Ave Maria Convent, Ipoh Overall Champion In First Aid

The St John Ambulans Malaysia's Nursing Cadet team from SMJK Ave Maria Convent, Ipoh, emerged as overall champion at the 53rd National Level First Aid and Home Nursing Competition held at Politeknik Kota Bharu, Kelantan recently, while its senior team, Nursing Adult, managed a second place after the Wilayah Persekutuan team.

The members were tested on their practical skills in Foot-Drill, First Aid and Home Nursing. They were given a scenario to act upon and winners were picked based on how well they responded to the scenario with their First Aid and Home Nursing skills. Apart from that, they also had to sit for a written paper which tested their First Aid and Home Nursing knowledge.

Both teams from Ave Maria Convent represented Perak at the competition. The Nursing Cadet team represented Malaysia at the Singapore-Malaysia First Aid and Home Nursing competition to be held at Stadium Badminton, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur, recently.

The competition is held bi-annually with Singapore and Malaysia taking turns to host it.



### PUO Convocation

More than a year after launching the Polytechnic Transformation Plan, Polytechnic Ungku Omar witnessed the graduation of 3,084 students at its 40th Convocation ceremony. The ceremony was held over a two-day period days and spanned four sessions.

Dato' Hj Mohlis Jaafar, Polytechnic Education Department Deputy Operations Director, Dato' Sri Che Khalib Mohd Noh, Tenaga Nasional Bhd Chairman, Dato' Samsudin Hashim, CEO of Perak State Development Corporation and Aminuddin Hashim, Darul Ridzuan Institute CEO graced the four sessions, respectively.

About 700 graduates were from the Marine Engineering and Mechanical Engineering Departments, which were the focal areas of the premier polytechnic. The Director's Awards were also presented to students who excelled in both academics and co-curricular activities. The recipients from the January 2010 session were Mohd Hazri Abdan and Muhd Najib Aziz, while Muhd Farid Fazin and Muhd Noor Shafei were picked from the July 2010 session. All four received a plaque and a laptop each. Their parents were presented with gifts from the polytechnic.



## news roundup

### Wavelight Refractive Suite – First In Asia Launched

Lee Eye Centre (LEC) launched their WAVELIGHT Refractive Suite which is the first commercial suite of its kind in the Asia Pacific Region. Dato' Dr. Lee Yooi Chyun, Chairman of LEC, informed that the suite is the world's fastest laser vision correction platform for disorders that include short-sightedness, long-sightedness and astigmatism. He added that the advanced technology is a cost-effective and convenient



option for those who want to dispense with wearing spectacles and contact lenses and also for those who do not wish to be burdened with repeated corrective procedures.

Medical Director of LEC, Dr. Lee Mun Wai explained that the state-of-the-art suite with the integrated computer network provides a high level of safety when performing laser vision correction. The procedure is quick, less than ten minutes, safe and painless and requires only the use of eye drops as anaesthesia. Visual recovery is very fast and patients will be able to resume normal activities like driving, reading and computer usage within a day or two.

Dato' Dr. Mah Hang Soon, State Exco member for Health officially launched the suite by unveiling the plaque and signing it.

AJ

### Low Cost Flats Get Cleaned Up



In conjunction with World Environment Day, Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Perak organised a community cleaning programme at First Garden's low-cost flats. M. Thiru from the centre said that the flats were selected for the gotong royong because he had received complaints about the garbage problem.

The flats are poorly maintained and the residents

do not clean the common area. Leong, a resident of the flat who took part in the cleanup said that the place was cleaned a few years ago under a gotong royong project.

He added that garbage would start piling up until the next gotong royong exercise. The poor attitude of the residents towards hygiene is the cause of garbage piling up.

Dr. Elangovan, a member of the centre, called on the residents to pay more attention to the importance of cleanliness of the environment and to lead a healthy life.

Meanwhile, another resident, Adward Soosay, wrote in to Ipoh Echo complaining about the drains at Taman Pertama (Hala Bekor 13) being really dirty and clogged, and hopes the authorities will do something.

A. Jeyaraj

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## news roundup

### Station Hotel Ipoh



Iconic Moorish architecture Ipoh Railway Station is now bustling with activity since the introduction of the Electric Train Service between Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur.

Quickly becoming the preferred mode of transportation, thousands of commuters pass through the railway station daily and the completion of the dual electric track had resulted in a massive renovation of the platforms, which are now connected with escalators and lifts. However, the old building is yet to be given a facelift by Keretapi Tanah Melayu so as to keep pace with the rest of the development.

A large section of the railway station has been closed for renovation. The question is whether it will include a hotel, such as the well-known old Station Hotel Ipoh?

"In my opinion it is timely and it's an opportunity for the parties concerned to collaborate and bring the hotel back to its former glory," said president of Perak Tourism Association, Hj. Mohd Odzman b. Abdul Kadir.

"Station Hotel Ipoh in its heyday was befitting to host dignitaries, corporate leaders and even the Royal families. I remember seeing our first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman staying and dining at the hotel."

"The proprietor even named one of the rooms as Tunku Abdul Rahman's room. I have seen the late Raja of Perlis a number of times having his lunch at the hotel with other well-known personalities."

Mohd. Odzman, who had his wedding reception at the hotel in 1974, said the hotel was renowned for its large rooms, en suite with a cloak room before entering the large bathroom. The restaurant on the ground floor was a fine dining restaurant specializing in good western and Chinese cuisine.

He urged the State Government to play its role by allocating a budget to refurbish the space on the ground floor. It can turn it into a one-stop Tourist Information Centre, souvenir outlets and even a small exhibition centre.

The landscape outside the hotel and garden in front also needs to be improved to match the restored grandeur of the overall facade.

JF

## Yau Tet Shin Bazaar Redevelopment Gets Moving

At long last the site of the once well-known landmark of the city, Yau Tet Shin Bazaar, along Jalan Raja Ekram, is to be redeveloped. Tenders for the construction of a 17-storey complex, comprising of a Podium Block of 6 floors and two tower blocks, have been called.

One tower block will house 11 floors of service apartments and the other block of 10 floors will be for a budget hotel. The ground three floors will house a shopping centre for local produce, offices, an exhibition gallery and a cultural show centre and will have a capacity for 500 parking bays.

Talks of redeveloping the site have been going on since the bazaar, which was also popularly known as "Pasar Bulat" due to its circular shape, was demolished in 2001 by Ipoh City Council as it was deemed "unsafe".

The Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI), which has been entrusted by the Perak State Government to develop the site, announced its development plan recently.

Its president Dato' Lim Kok Cheong said the project is on a joint-venture basis with PCCCI. Interested parties are invited



to submit their tenders for participation. Tenders close at 4.00 p.m. on July 15. The management Committee of PCCCI believes that development of the Complex should be private sector driven to expedite its development and be economically viable.

The complex is proposed to be the hub of the city's cultural district, covering the southern parts of Jalan Sultan Iskandar Shah, Jalan Sultan Idris Shah and Jalan Jubilee, to include Chinese and Malay economic activities in Gerbang Malam along Jalan Dato' Tahwil Azhar and Chinese Association houses along Jalan Theatre.

At the Q&A session after the briefing, the majority of the questions raised were to give prominence to the Hakka design of the complex. The original Yau Tet Shin Bazaar featured a traditional Hakka circular design bazaar and was referred to as "Pasar Bulat" by the local residents.

Yau Tet Shin Bazaar was constructed in 1961 and named after a Kah Ying Hakka community leader, Yau Tet Shin. It was a popular rendezvous for tourists, where they could pick up souvenirs, pomeloes, Menglembu groundnuts and other local goodies from around Ipoh.

JAG

## Gathering of Veterans

It was time again for military and police veterans from Commonwealth countries and Malaysia to gather for the annual remembrance services. The services, spread over a three-day period and in three different locations – Taiping, Ipoh and Batu Gajah – were well attended by both local and foreign veterans. Each location bears its own significance, characteristics and sentiments.

The Kamunting Christian Cemetery in Taiping is where British, Australian and New Zealand troops who were killed in harness are buried. Ken McNeil, President of the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association of Incorporated Australian States, paid tribute to his fellow countrymen who were interred at the Kamunting graves.

The service held on the morning of Thursday, June 9 was a poignant reminder of the contributions made by Australians in the defence of Malaysia during the Emergency (1948 to 1960) and Confrontation with Indonesia (1962 to 1966).

McNeil, in his closing remarks, alluded to the uniqueness of military service by declaring emphatically that, "No matter what the danger is, the duty of a soldier is the achievement of the military mission. When engaged in the battlefield, the danger must be faced and the consequences accepted whatever they may be." This is what separates men from boys and the weak from the



strong.

Services in Ipoh were held on Friday, June 10 and Saturday, June 11, respectively. The cenotaph in front of the railway station, unveiled on Armistice Day, November 11, 1927, is to remember military personnel who fell during the Great War (1914-1918) and the Second World War (1939-1945). The Gurkha Cemetery in Kem Syed Putra (Tambun Camp), where a hundred Gurkha soldiers and family members lay buried, is the other location.

The memorial service at God's Little Acre in Batu Gajah is the origin of the annual services in Perak. Held on the morning of Saturday, June 11, it brought friends and relatives of the dearly departed from near and far. The service is dedicated to planters, miners and policemen who were killed during the Emergency and buried in the cemetery.

FZB

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## Community

### Ahmad in Dire Straits

Former Ipoh Municipal sweeper, Ahmad Idris, 80, is in dire straits. Indisposed and in poor health, he is confined to his bed at his house in Taman Meru 2C, Jelapang and cared for by his wife, Mariam Putih Nikmat, 71. The couple have three married daughters but they seldom return home to check on their parents. "I can't blame them, as they have problems of their own," said Mariam to Ipoh Echo.

Ahmad's monthly pension can barely see them through. A major portion of it goes to paying his housing loan and buying diapers to keep him dry. Ahmad is diabetic and requires medication which he can ill afford. "I am left with only RM142 after all the deductions," he declared.

Ahmad's hard luck story caught the attention of PERMAI (Persatuan Persara Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh) or the Association of Ipoh City Council Retirees. The association, formed in December 1, 2009, looks into the welfare of retired council workers and seeks ways to improve their lot. It currently has over 80 members and operates from a shop lot in Greentown – a gift from the council.

Former mayor and PERMAI President, Dato' Mohamad Rafiai Moktar, presented Ahmad with groceries, household necessities, boxes of diapers and cash worth over RM1,000 recently. The handing-over ceremony, held at the retiree's in Taman Meru, was witnessed by association members, medical staff of Ipoh Specialist Hospital, students of Institute of Technology Perak and well-wishers.

The students helped to clean up Ahmad's house while the medical staff of Ipoh Specialist Hospital attended to his medical needs. Ajimil Hussain Maidin, proprietor of Restaurant D'Niana, gave the retiree a portable-wheel toilet to help ease his suffering.

"The number of retirees keeps increasing every year", said Rafiai in his opening address. "I hope they'll become members of the association so we can help one another." PERMAI's Tel. & Fax is **05-2410355**.

Ed



### Ipoh Animal Welfare Society – An Appeal

Time is running out for the Ipoh Animal Welfare Society as the land at Ulu Kinta on which the shelter has been operating for the last 10 years has been sold and they have been given less than two months to vacate the premises. The shelter currently houses about 30 dogs and 20 cats, most of which come to them in a sorry and heart-breaking state. This small group of caring individuals desperately wants to provide these animals with a safe haven or until such time as they are adopted by caring families.

They urgently need a suitable piece of land and are appealing for cash donations to rebuild their kennels as the deadline draws near. It would be a tragedy if they had to stop caring for these animals. With new kennels and cattery, they are hoping to have facilities to board pets. Help of any kind is welcome. Contact: Peggy at **012-5220910** or Nitya at **012-5068253**.



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### Dedicated Fire Fighting Volunteers of Pasir Pinji



Members of the Voluntary Fire Fighting Unit of Pasir Pinji are dedicated to saving lives and properties in their densely populated area of largely wooden and zinc houses.

They are drawn from various walks of life, which include young graduates, traders and retirees. Currently there are 55 volunteers including 10 women. Their ages range from 18 to 70.

The fire fighting unit was formed in 1992 following frequent bush fires, which threatened the houses in Pasir Pinji New Village and the surrounding housing estates. Its formation was initiated by a former president of the Rotary Club of Ipoh, Mr. Chan Swee Yee. Thirty members were trained by the Fire and Rescue Department and given certificates as qualified fire fighters.

The fire fighting unit's founding chairman, Stephen Ng Lai Peng, said the Fire and Rescue Department have given them a vehicle, including a pump, hoses and tools to carry out their duties. However, the unit is faced with the problem of having to pay for insurance and road-tax for the vehicle.

Another pressing problem is that the volunteers are not insured against injuries sustained while carrying out their duties.

Stephen, a 65-year-old retired headmaster, who was one of the two recipients of the Ipoh Rotary Club's Pride of Workmanship Award recently, added that over the years they had successfully put out five major fires and many minor ones.

They also train residents on prevention of fire and fire-fighting. The residents are encouraged to keep a fire extinguisher in their houses.

The members are also called on to burn beehives and hornets' nests and this is done at night. They also carry out routine maintenance work on fire hydrants in Pasir Pinji and surrounding areas.

According to Stephen, posters have been put up in Pasir Pinji to inform the public of their services. Their office is located at 282, Jalan Sultan, Pasir Pinji, but is not permanently manned.

The Government does not give any funding and they have to raise their own funds.

Steven said that the response time after receiving a call is between 5 to 10 minutes depending on the distance. Steven can be contacted at 012-5822007.

The other recipient of the Ipoh Rotary Club's Pride of Workmanship Award was Tan Swee Kong, chairman of the security unit of Kampong Bercham.

A. Jeyaraj

### Simee Aged Feted



Impiana Hotel Ipoh together with Mayflower, visited the Home for the Aged (CWS), Kg Simee in Ipoh, and feted the residents with goodie bags, lunch and light entertainment from the Impiana's resident band 'Mac & Zel'.

More than 60 volunteers turned up and helped in cleaning the home while those with 'green fingers' assisted in gardening and landscaping.

Prior to the visit, Mayflower had organised a donation drive at their offices to collect basic necessities and cash. Thus far, Mayflower has managed to raise RM5,631 for the home.

Likewise, Impiana Hotel Ipoh pledged to donate RM3.00 for every room reservation confirmed from May 16 to May 31, 2011.

"We believe we need to help the less fortunate and will continue to give our undying support and help in any possible way", said Carl Isaac, General Manager.

Public donations are much appreciated. Please contact Ms. Helen Lai at 05-547 3252 or visit the Home for the Aged (CWS) Simee at Jalan Kompleks Sukan, Simee, 31400 Ipoh, Perak.

## Tourism

# What Tourists Say About Perak

K. Raja, Ipoh's senior tourist guide, has compiled a Tourist "Wish-list" from his interactions with the hundreds of tourists he has led on tours in and around the Kinta Valley. Here are some of them:

- \* Both local and foreign visitors feel that Ipoh, Kinta, and Perak have all the tourist attractions one dreams about. These are the tourists' first comments, once they have seen what Perak has to offer.
- \* Tourists like to see and experience what they don't have in their home state or country. Natural surroundings, jungles, and hills which are perfect for adventure tourism, and are felt to have a huge potential being so close to home (Ipoh). However, they caution that Gopeng hill is already over developed.
- \* Visitors don't wish to see sky-scrapers everywhere as they spoil the beautiful view of the encircling limestone hills.
- \* Perak, Kinta, has such a colourful history/heritage which has to be explored and showcased, a tourist attraction par excellence.
- \* For most domestic and Singapore tourists, the mention of Ipoh immediately brings food to their minds. But once they're here and catch sight of the natural surroundings, they are astonished. They often wonder why visitors are not told about Perak's other attractions prior to their arrival in the Silver State. Aggressive marketing and promotion is essential.
- \* The Ipoh Heritage Trail, with its old buildings, is beyond visitors' expectations. Often they are mesmerized by Kinta's history.
- \* Tourists expect places of interest and landmarks to be well maintained and clean which is not the case in Ipoh. As a result, we have received very negative comments from visitors from far and near. Notice boards are the business cards of our town, and presently are way below acceptance!
- \* Visitors from Singapore are willing to invest in Ipoh by buying old houses and have them restored professionally (Badan Warisan guide-lines)
- \* Two daily Firefly flights have boosted the arrival of visitors from Singapore, but the current infrastructure, especially as regards public transport in the state, is sadly inadequate and inefficient.
- \* Tourists are pleading to all industry players, travel agents, tourist guides, hotels and taxi drivers to be HONEST in their dealings. Short-term gains are like throwing sand in one's own rice bowl.
- \* The potential of Belum, Temenggor is completely under-promoted as it has a huge capacity for responsible tourism development.
- \* Other neglected destinations include Mangrove forest, charcoal factory, Kuala Gula and the epoch-making town of Taiping.
- \* Kinta Valley, Tin history, limestone hills, caves, Kinta Nature Park and the many precious small towns in the state to be explored by nostalgic train rides and eco-friendly bicycle tours. NOTE, please remove Go-kart and other inappropriate activities around Gua Tempurong or it will lose its natural attraction.
- \* Lenggong Valley – "The Perak Man – The Missing Puzzle", is a huge tourist attraction



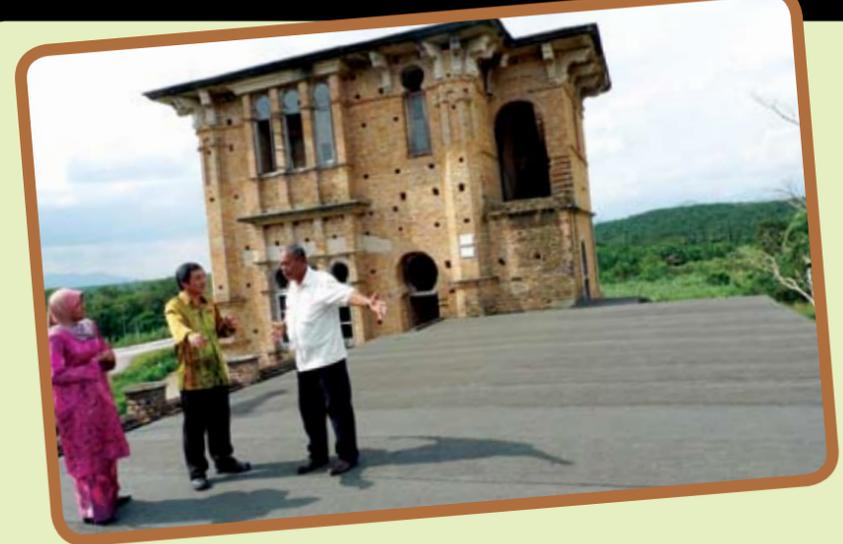
K. Raja (right, with backpack) briefing tourists

- in the making.
- \* Proclaim the orchid *Vanda hookeriana* – (Kinta weed) as the Perak State flower.

K. Raja leaves us with his thoughts on tourism, "The way forward for Perak is to focus on nature & history with innovative and aggressive marketing while constantly focus on customers' needs and expectations – and not on our whim and fancies, I am convinced we can make tourism a major source of revenue for the Silver State."

SFCK

## Kellie's Castle to Be Upgraded



Kellie's Castle located in Batu Gajah will be given a RM5 million upgrade under the 10th Malaysia Plan allocation. The upgrade plans include an integrated amphitheatre, an English tea garden and a maze.

"The whole upgrade will focus on the surrounding exterior and will not touch Kellie's Castle". The upgrade plan was announced by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism Dato' Dr. Ong Hong Peng when he visited Kellie's Castle recently with officials from Batu Gajah District Office and the Economic Planning Unit.

Tenders will be called next month and work on the site is scheduled to start in August and expected to be completed between 15-18 months.

The number of visitors to Kellie's Castle have reflected an increasing trend yearly of 48.4K (2008), 68.1K (2009) and 80K for 2010.

Ong also announced that his Ministry had allocated RM1.7 million for the Lata Kinjang Project and RM600K for Tasek Raban.

JAG

## Heritage

# Preserving Old Town (Update)



In our March 1 issue of Ipoh Echo 116 under the title "Preserving Old Town" we reported on a group of individuals who purchased a prime heritage property in Old Town with the intention of preserving it for the next generation.

Well the group has already started with its upgrade beginning with the lane and the Dramatist Hostel.

The Dramatist Hostel is a 3-storey building. The ground floor houses Kong Heng while the 2nd and 3rd floors

all the way from Jalan Sultan Yussuf (Belfield Street) to Jalan Bandar Timah (Leech Street)

Behind Kong Heng a 2-storey building has been built over the old kitchen which is an extension for the 2-storey hostel. The original kitchen has been preserved and still retains its façade.

Ipoh Echo met with one of the owners of the property, Ng Sek San over lunch at Kong Heng.

were used by the students of the hostel. Currently the 2nd floor is used for boarding by Kong Heng workers while the 3rd floor is an open floor which was presumably used for drama rehearsals. Behind Kong Heng was the hostel's kitchen.

As at the beginning of May the lane shared by coffee shops Kong Heng and Thean Chun has been resurfaced with a brick pavement and its drains covered except at intermittent intervals

Sek San, a landscape architect based in KL, explained that he planned to green the lane with suitable trees and wall creeping plants.

As for the 2-storey extension at the back, he indicated that the 1st floor could be used as a multi-purpose hostel while the top floor as a single suite but quickly added "nothing is firm just yet".

The renovation work is scheduled to take six months. Hence when I requested to view his plans he promptly replied "no point, it keeps changing".

Undoubtedly it is most assuring to note that there are people passionate enough to walk the heritage talk.

Sek San has a website highlighting his work which can be viewed at <http://www.seksan.com>.

JAG



## My Say

By Jerry Francis



Mayor Datuk Roshidi Hashim seems to be satisfied that Ipoh need not necessarily be as clean as during the era of the Seenivasagam brothers.

He stressed that the area under the city council now is many times bigger than it was in the sixties. Hence on the basis of this, he added, there is no justification in comparing the cleanliness of Ipoh now with that during the Seenivasagam era. This was told to the residents of Kampung Tersusun Buntong during one of his "turun padang" (meet the people) programmes recently. The residents had complained about clogged drains, uncollected rubbish and problem with stray cattle.

Such a conclusion was not easily accepted by most residents. In fact some of them rang Ipoh Echo criticising Roshidi's justification. They claimed that the Mayor was merely finding an excuse for the failures of the city council to keep a clean image of the city.

There is no doubt the city's jurisdiction has expanded over the years but then so has the manpower in the city council. It is estimated that there are over 2,700 employees now compared to just a few hundred before Ipoh was upgraded from a municipality to a city 23 years ago. So, the manpower too is "many times" bigger.

The city council's office had also moved from a congested complex at Jalan Tun Sambanthan to an impressive multi-storey complex at Dataran MBI in Greentown.

Therefore, if any fair comparison is to be made between then and now one must look at Taman D.R. Seenivasagam, which has not expanded ever since it was set up in 1970. It still covers an area of 14 hectares.

It was then a premier family recreation park. Despite

## Mayor's Justification Not Valid



Japanese Garden in the Taman

just a handful of employees tasked to look after it, there were boating facilities at the artificial lake, as well as other facilities such as a ferris-wheel, merry-go-round, mini-train, dodgem cars, skating rink, traffic game and wading pool.

There was also a mini zoo with Seenivasagam's pet honey bear as the centre of attraction and deer, while television sets were installed at various parts of the park and piped music streamed over the area. Every evening the park attendants, who were smartly dressed in orange tunics and blue trousers, were on duty directing traffic and maintaining the various facilities.

Parents would spend quality time with their children at the park at every opportunity they could get. It was a joy to see the children happily interacting and participating in the activities. Just ask those who grew up in the city in those days, and they will relate many happy memories of the Taman.

Now the number of employees maintaining the park is probably the same, if not more, yet the park has lost its glitter.

This is just an example; there are many other amenities within the city to which the city council needs to pay extra attention.

Giving the excuse that the city's limit has enlarged as a justification for its failure to be efficient and to keep it clean will not hold water when the number of employees have also increased.

The city council should instead examine whether there is a need for greater supervision of the employees and whether they are dedicated in carrying out their tasks.

The city's anti-dengue campaign too does not seem to be successful. Residents have been complaining that drains throughout the city are dirty.

However, much of the illegal rubbish dumps within the city have been cleared after they were highlighted by the press, including an ongoing campaign for cleanliness by Ipoh Echo.

I am surprised that the Mayor is now talking about his



Deserted artificial lake and its lovely bridges..

determination to bring back the city image as one of the cleanest in the country. Can he achieve it? Can he walk the talk? Of course he can, if he and the councillors and employees are determined to achieve the goal.

## sport

### Ipoh City Veteran Football Carnival

In conjunction with Ipoh City Day, Ipoh City Council organised the Ipoh City Veteran 9 A-side Football Carnival at Ipoh Padang recently. The carnival, into its seventh year and held over a two-day period, attracted 28 teams from around the country. Majlis Sukan Jajahan Tanah Merah, Majlis Perbandaran Kota Baru, SMZ Engineering Melaka and Kiara Batik Kelantan advanced to the semi-finals, but MPKB and SMZ were knocked out by the two Kelantanese teams. Heavy rain did not deter a large crowd consisting of the mayor and state officials from watching the intense match between the two teams in the final. Decked in their orange jerseys, Kiara Batik was on the offensive right from the start. They scored a goal in mid-game to clinch the winning point. The team received RM5000 cash, a hamper, medals and the championship trophy. Muhd Azhar and Abdul Rashid Mohd of Kiara Batik were named best player and goalkeeper, respectively.



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## Community

### CIMB Gives Back To Society

For three consecutive years CIMB Bank, via its Community Link Programme, has provided monetary aid to enhance Persatuan Daybreak's nursery project. Executive Director of CIMB Bank, Dato' Sulaiman Mohd Tahir presented a RM150,642 cheque to Persatuan Daybreak Executive Chairperson, Puan Sri Dato' Sandra Lee at a simple ceremony at its premises recently.

The aid has enabled the society to acquire specialised equipment and a 1-ton truck which will transform the first phase of its horticulture programme into a viable enterprise. Various improvements have been made at the nursery, notably, the installation of a semi-automatic irrigation system, an additional deep well, a concrete water tank and a composting shed.

The bank also pays the nursery supervisor's salary. These value-added benefits help increase the sale of plants. Dato' Sulaiman lauded Daybreak's noble attributes of giving hope to a group of marginalised people. "It's vital to be relevant and meaningful to the community. In 2011, CIMB plans to be involved in 150 initiatives all over Malaysia by contributing RM7.5 million," he said.

Lee expressed her gratitude to CIMB Bank for supporting Daybreak's efforts in improving the livelihood of those with physical disabilities. The guests were then brought on a tour of the nursery and were shown its training facilities.

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