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November 16-30, 2012

PP 14252/10/2012(031136)

30 SEN FOR DELIVERY TO YOUR DOORSTEP - ASK YOUR NEWSVENDOR

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Perak Water Board

Doing it right the first time

by James Gough



The Perak Water Board which manages the supply of clean water to consumers at urban and rural areas as well as to the commercial and industrial sectors, was recently praised by Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir as being "one of the best governmental agencies in the country". At his speech made during the LAP Employees Union AGM, Zambry stated that the Board had recorded a profit of RM104 million from revenue of RM275.46 million for 2011. Its 2010 profit was RM100 million from revenue of RM270.67 million. According to Zambry, this is a performance which exceeds the target originally set for the year 2020. Intrigued by the Boards' consistent excellent performance and equally consistent good annual bonus handouts', Ipoh Echo decided to find out just what made this GLC "tick". *Continued on page 2*



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“One of the best governmental agencies in the country” – Zambry

For its achievement Zambry announced a four and a half month bonus for the Board's 1,100 employees given for “its excellent performance”, which according to its General Manager, Dato' Ir Mohd Yusof Mohd Isa, PWB has been paying bonuses since 1999.

Operations Structure

A quick snapshot of the State's water supply structure revealed that the total area of Perak is 21,005 km² and PWB has 11,098 km² of water catchment areas or over 55% of the state's land under its jurisdiction. Its main source of raw water is from the Perak River followed by mountain water. It has two dams, the Sultan Azlan Shah Dam at Ulu Kinta, Ipoh and at Air Kuning Taiping.

The state is geographically divided into five regions and has a total of 47 water treatment plants. It has a capacity to treat 1,774 mld (million litres per day). It currently produces 1,081 mld with a consumption of 763 mld. Its current *Non Revenue Water* is averaging at 30.4%. The Board has laid out 10,792 km of piping, distributing clean water to 100% of the urban locations and 98% of rural areas.

Perak Water Board – Then and Now

Prior to 1980 the distribution of clean water supply was managed by the Public Works Department (PWD) or Jabatan Kerja Raya (JKR). Besides the section on water management, PWD also was responsible for the maintenance of roads and buildings. Overall each of the 10 Districts in the State was managed by the District Officer and assisted by JKR's District Engineer.

It was during the 70s that the need arose to expand the water supply services throughout the state. Funding for the state's expansion projects then was obtained through the Asian Development Bank (ADB). JKR's engineering superintendent at the time Dato' Chan Kok Pew, generally oversaw the setting up of the infrastructure of the projects and one of the early projects funded by ADB was the *Greater Ipoh Water Supply Project 2* which was initiated to meet the increasing water supply needs of the Greater Ipoh area.

At that time, water supply from Ipoh was sourced from the Kinta River. The new project involved the extraction of water from the Perak River at Parit from where it would be pumped to reservoirs for distribution to the Greater Ipoh area. The demand for water then was projected to increase by 5% annually and would provide for increased urbanization, industrialization and population increase.

Chan who retired in 1988 elaborated that the goal then, was to lay pipes “to the extremes of Ipoh. We had a lot of pipers then and we were very busy laying new pipes and where required replacing old ones”.

Besides funding the Greater Ipoh Project 2, ADB also funded two other projects at Kuala Kangsar region and Kerian and Larut Matang region. According to Chan, Perak was the only state that received the most ADB funding. As such ADB paid regular site visits to audit the progress of work being carried out. Subsequent funding for projects was funded by federal government loans.

Sultan Azlan Shah Dam

The last component of the Greater Ipoh 2 Water Supply project was the construction of a dam across the Kinta River to increase the capacity of raw water resources from 136 mld (million litres per day) to 363 mld as well as providing for adequate reserve water during the dry seasons. It was also aimed at increasing the supply of water in the Kinta Valley to 639 million litres per day to meet the water demand until 2020.

Construction began in January 2003 and upon its completion in November 2006 was testimony to the ability of local contractors to undertake large and complex engineering projects. The project was officially opened in August 2007 and named the Sultan Azlan Shah Dam.

Towards Corporatisation

A condition for receiving ADB funding was that PWD's water section had to operate independently as once all projects were completed “the waterworks department would be very big. Hence it had to organize itself to stand on its own two feet,” said Chan.



Dato' Chan Kok Pew

The Federal government agreed to allow JKR's water section to be independent and in 1980 it was named Jabatan Bekalan Air Perak (JBA Perak) with Chan as its first Director. It was during his time that the current two blocks of 4-storey buildings were constructed as its headquarters with funds provided by the state government.

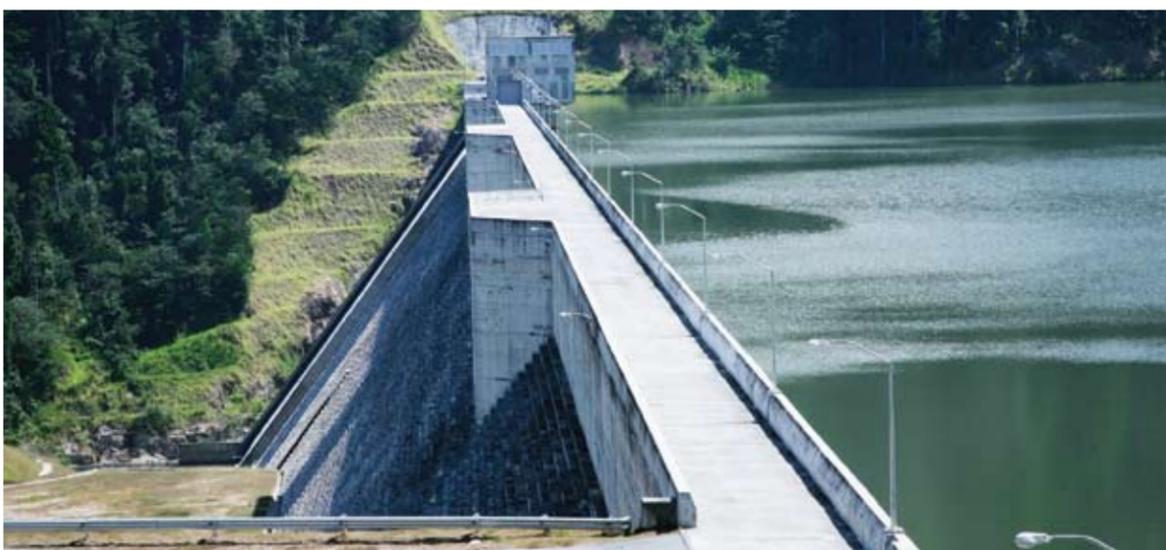
The formation of JBA was just a transition. Another ADB condition was that the department should have a good foundation and be financially sound first before it could be turned into a Board.

Hence after 11 years, in 1991, JBA Perak was called Lembaga Air Perak or Perak Water Board. It was made up of a Board of Directors which according to Chan “included Dr Nawawi Mat Amin and YB Ong Kah Chuan” among others.

Chan, though retired, was requested to sit on the board and remained a member of the Board for 17 years before stepping down.

Human Resource an Asset

At its beginning the Board had considered its human resources as an asset and had initiated steps to reward those deserving, with special incentives. As such although bonuses are paid out to all employees, there are some who received additional rewards, based on merit, a policy that has seen consistent operational efficiency all round.



Restructuring

In May this year PWB handed over RM900 million worth of water assets to water asset management company PAAB or Pengurusan Aset Air Berhad as part of a restructuring exercise.

According to Dato Yusof, the assets transferred were commensurate with the debts owed by the state to the Federal Government. The assets will then be leased back to the State for a term of 45 years at a mutually agreed rate. Yusof added that this restructuring will ensure that there won't be any increase in water tariffs and will allow the Board to focus on its operations and increasing the efficiency of its water supply system.

Non-Revenue Water (NRW)

According to Yusof a challenge for the Board is the reduction of *Non Revenue Water* which currently is averaging at 30.4%. (Non revenue water (NRW) is water that has been produced but is “lost” before it reaches the consumer. Losses can be through leaks, theft or possibly metering inaccuracies.)

Although the industry average for NRW is 36% Yusof is targeting to reduce the loss by 10% over the next three years. Reducing NRW will reduce the strain on the environment and will require the cooperation of the Board as well as the consumer.

For the record PWB annually allocates RM100 million for replacing and rehabilitating new pipes not just to reduce NRW but also to maintain the quality of water for consumers.

Overall the Perak Water Board in its transition to be a responsible independent operator has achieved the title of being “one of the best governmental agencies in the country” which is a testimony of the quality slogan “do it right the first time”.



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From the Editor's Desk

• by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

A Terminal Too Far

If someone has to change buses three times and burn a hole in his pocket to get to his house in Buntong, he will think twice of stopping at Ipoh's gleaming bus terminal...

The newly-opened Ipoh bus terminal in Meru Jaya has many distinctions balanced on both ends of the social spectrum. Without doubt it is spacious, modern and pleasant, as most would want it to be. Chic and comfort alone will not endear it to the public when accessibility is problematic. That seems to be the case with this multi-million-ringgit facility located next to the Mydin Hypermarket in Meru.

Most Ipohites are unsure of its usefulness believing it to be another monstrous white elephant in the same league as Medan Kidd and Medan Gopeng. Ipoh's dalliances with transport terminals or hubs, especially the ones that cater to the needs of the suffering public, never seem to work. The closest it ever came to concocting the right formula was Medan Kidd. In spite of its negativities, Medan Kidd still ranks the best in the city's attempts at establishing something close to being a transport hub, in the true sense of the word.

Medan Kidd was ideally located. It had within its confines the city bus station, the inter-state bus terminal and the railway station. Commuters from outside of Ipoh could hop into a feeder bus for a short trip home or jump into a coach or a train for a connecting journey elsewhere. There was even a bus to take them to the airport although this entailed a much longer wait, as planes were infrequent.

Few complained as the services and facilities provided were good though they might not have been the best. We had what it took to make Ipohites proud, for a moment at least. Things changed when the inter-state bus terminal was relocated to Medan Gopeng in the late 1990s. Medan Gopeng was built for a reason – to satisfy the needs of a growing Bumiputra business class. But the design and layout of Medan Gopeng are flawed. Traffic congestion caused by human greed and insensitivity turned Medan Gopeng into what it is today, a grotesque facility for the physically and mentally challenged.



On Thursday, October 18, members from ten non-governmental organisations, led by the President of the Perak Tourism Association (PTA), Haji Odzman Abd Kadir, visited the Amanjaya Bus Terminal in Meru Raya. The visit was to appraise the suitability of the facility vis-à-vis tourist arrivals. Being bona fide Ipohites, they were equally concerned with the role it plays in the overall scheme of things.

The entourage was briefed on site by the Executive Chairman of the Combined Bus Services Sdn Bhd, Mohammad Mat Isa. He stressed the benefits of the terminal, as was expected. "Since its opening on October 1, we have encountered several problems relating to both commuters and bus operators," he said.

One major hitch which will affect commuters in a big way is the shuttle service. Shuttle service to the city is available from 6am to 9pm and may be extended to 12

midnight, if necessary. What is required, however, is a 24-hour service, one which is hassle-free.

"We're working hard on it. However, taxi service is available at all hours," he remarked. The one problem which commuters find hard to stomach is the atrocious fare these taxis charge. A 10-kilometre one-way trip from the terminal costs anything between RM12 to RM15, depending on the time of the day.

The introduction of coupon-ed taxis, like they do at KLIA and KL Sentral, is the only way out but it requires the blessing of the federal agency, SPAD (Suruhanjaya Pengangkutan Awam Darat). "We'll resolve this in due time," said Mohammed.

Exorbitant taxi fares aside, the terminal's accessibility will definitely have a dampening effect on commuters. If someone has to change buses three times and burn a hole in his pocket to get to his house in Buntong, he will think twice about stopping at Ipoh's gleaming Terminal Bas Amanjaya. That is the truth of the matter.



IN THE NAME OF MY FATHER'S ESTATE

• by Peter Lee

Episode 11

In the family meeting, when John (eldest son of Lee Sr) informed his mother, Mrs Patricia Lee (1st wife of Lee Sr) and five of his siblings that Connie (2nd wife of Lee Sr) and her three minor children are entitled to part of Lee Sr's 70% share in all his three companies according to the Distribution Act, it caused some anxiety among the family members especially the children of Lee Sr because they are involved in the business and the thought of their unknown stepmother and step siblings being the shareholders of these companies by virtue of inheritance really irks them. Nick Lee (2nd son of Lee Sr) asked, "So! How are we going to prevent this from happening?" John replied, "I don't think we can stop this distribution." "Why not?" asked Nancy Lee (2nd daughter of Lee Sr). She continued by saying, "After all, we are the directors of these companies and if we don't approve any transfer of shares through a company's resolution, then no transfers can be done in accordance to the company's Memorandum of Articles and Association."

John then said, "Look, even though directors of these companies have the right not to sign resolutions to approve this transfer, we are just buying time which can lead us to a costly legal battle later on. The other thing I am more concerned about is when the shares are transferred to the Administrators, who shall be the Administrator receiving the shares first, before distributing to the beneficiaries?" "But I thought three of you, that is, John, Michele (eldest daughter of Lee Sr) and Connie are going to receive the shares first as the Administrators?" asked Sandy Lee (3rd daughter of Lee Sr). "Yes, three of us are joint Administrators but shares can be transferred to only one person," replied John. Then Sandy asked again, "then does it mean that those listed shares in the stock exchange work in the same manner?" "Yes" was John's reply. Mrs Patricia Lee said "Goodness me! So who will be the one among the three Administrators who is going to receive the shares first?" John replied, "Mum, I think three of the Administrators would have to negotiate on this to choose one as the representative of the three". Mrs Patricia Lee probed further, "What if you three cannot agree on the choice of representative?" "Then father's shares will be frozen," replied John.

At that moment, everyone shook their heads in disbelief and wondered when can the administration of their father's estate commence. Michelle then said, "I think we need Dave's (lawyer) advice on this when we meet up with him. Furthermore, we also need to know what Connie has with Father before we can decide on how to deal with these shares because I have a feeling Father may have shares in other companies with Connie which we are unaware of." John then asked everyone, "is there anything else for me to know?" Mrs Patricia Lee said, "What about the Insurance and Employees Provident Fund (EPF)?" John replied, "I have to check on Father's nomination and the money from that will be released to the nominees once the death certificate is presented. However, if there is no nomination made, then the monies will be distributed according to the Distribution Act".

To be continued...



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

EYE HEALTH – Nutrition for the Eyes (Final Part)

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us more about NUTRITION & VITAMINS for the eyes.

Good nutrition with vitamins and minerals are important for the eyes to function normally. It helps our body to grow, repair the wear and tear, protect against infections and to function properly. In this final part on the importance of nutrition and vitamins to the eyes, Dr Gill speaks to us about omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids DHA & EPA

Several studies suggest omega-3 fatty acids may help protect adult eyes from dry eye syndrome and macular degeneration (degeneration of the sensitive nerve part at the back of the eye). DHA attains its highest concentration within eye tissue, where it accounts for approximately 30% of the total fatty acids. These essential fatty acids are among the most important nutrients for the development, function, and maintenance of eye tissue throughout life.

Role in Preventing Macular Degeneration

There was a big European study published in 2008, which showed that those who ate fish, (which is a food source of DHA and EPA omega-3 fatty acids) at least once a week had a decreased risk of developing wet (neovascular) macular degeneration, compared with those who ate fish less than once a week. In another study in 2009 called the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS), it was found that those who consumed the highest level of omega-3 fatty acids in their diet were 30 per cent less likely to develop macular degeneration.

Role in Dry Eyes

Omega-3 fatty acids help reduce dry eye syndrome, a chronic eye disease caused by a decrease in tear production or increase in tear evaporation. In a study of more than 32,000 women between the ages of 45 and 84, it was found that those who consumed omega-3 fatty acids in their diet benefited from less dry eye problems.

What are the Sources of Omega-3 Fatty Acids DHA & EPA?

Omega-3 fatty acids DHA & EPA can be found in foods like oil-rich fish, fish oil, nuts, plus fortified foods like eggs, bread and fruit juices. The variety of fish included sardines, salmon and tuna. It is not surprising though that the seawater varieties were found to be better sources than the farmed variety of fish partly because these were typically subject to higher levels of pollutants.

If you don't like eating fish, another way to ensure enough omega-3 intake is to take fish oil supplements. These are available in capsule and liquid forms. There are some varieties that have even taken off the fishy taste and smell from the fish oil supplements.

Other good sources of omega-3 fatty acids include flaxseeds, flaxseed oil, walnuts and dark green leafy vegetables. The only downside is that our bodies cannot process the omega-3 fatty acids from these vegetarian sources as easily as the omega-3 fatty acids that are found in fish.

Key points to remember:

- Eat a good, balanced diet with lots of fish, fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Discuss improving your diet or taking vitamin supplements with your GP.
- Avoid smoking. A healthy lifestyle makes all the difference!

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah (05-545 5582) or email: gillyecentre@dr.com.



Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident Consultant
Ophthalmologist,
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(Regd No 687483 T)

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An Experiment in Speeding

Not all government departments are inefficient. Late one Tuesday afternoon, a friend was caught speeding on a highway by an *Automated Enforcement System* (AES) camera. A few days later, on a Friday morning, a postman knocked at his front door and handed him a traffic summons. How's that for speedy service? If only the local council and agencies of the state could be as efficient when ratepayers demand that their drains be cleared, their rubbish collected, and the arrest of Mat Rempits who race on residential roads.

Malaysians are more annoyed about the way in which the contracts to supply and operate the AES cameras were awarded, than they are with the eventual 831 cameras being deployed nationwide.

They are angry that the project, awarded to two private companies, involved a process that was neither transparent nor clear. Having experienced regular toll charge increases, they are afraid that the AES will be open to similar abuse.

They want monies from the fines to be diverted into programmes which will improve the transportation network, including the repair and maintenance of roads, and not be used to enrich individuals of the two AES companies.

A mainstream paper reported, in November, that the Road Safety Department director-general Leslie Leon said, "You say people are angry. Of course they are angry. Before this, people could do whatever they wanted on the roads but now with the AES, they can't..."

This writer has seen vehicles reversing and making U-turns on the highway, parking or reversing on roundabouts and drivers who do not indicate. There are lorries and buses which do not use lights at night, have broken tail lights, belch thick, black smoke, and have number plates which are obscured with mud. Some lorry and bus-drivers overtake dangerously and some lorries can barely move because they are overloaded.

Many of us have witnessed policemen driving their official cars recklessly and parking in dangerous places. Who dares report them, for fear of being harassed by the same people who should be setting a good example on the roads?

The AES only addresses speeding, it will do nothing to deter other selfish road users.

Leon also claimed that police statistics show that motorbike crashes involved speeding cars. He also claimed that the AES would make motorbike riders safer, because vehicles would slow down thus allowing more time to react, and avoid accidents.

It has been shown in England that speed

is rarely a factor in crashes, but it is very easy to fine motorists for exceeding an arbitrarily enforced limit.

This writer was once driving at 30 mph, along a road, when a motorbike suddenly veered across her path to turn right, into a kampong. The rider who was not wearing a helmet, did not indicate.



The villagers from the kampong surrounded my car and threatened me with parangs when I tried to swap insurance details with the rider. At the nearest police station in Batu Gajah, several hours were spent making a report.

The police investigating the crash replied many weeks later, to say that they could not (or would not?) prosecute. The motorbike rider was not the vehicle owner, nor was the motorbike insured and she did not have a valid driving licence. When the authorities are reluctant to prosecute offenders, few people will bother to report crimes, or traffic violations.

A young friend who drives to college stayed behind after normal school hours, to do some research. As she drove home, her vehicle was surrounded by several cars driven by young men, the equivalent of Mat Rempits in cars, who tried to force her off the road.

Shaken by the incident, she is now ferried to college by her parents. How does one instil independence and confidence in our youth when road bullies are allowed to get away with their crimes?

The AES will do nothing to improve the road manners of drivers, nor will it reveal uninsured vehicles, or un-roadworthy vehicles, or road

bullies. The AES will not solve the problems caused by bad roads, poor road signs, inadequate lighting and badly timed traffic lights.

Instead of paying for the AES, the Ministry of Transport should spend money on educating road users and ensure there is strict traffic enforcement at all times, not just before a festival or the balik-kampong rush. The AES will not induce better road manners outside that particular speed-trap zone.

Malaysians who drive cars in Europe, America and Australia, respect the highway codes for fear of prosecution. They realise that back home, the same enforcement does not exist and that there are easy ways to "settle" traffic violations.

Penang, Kedah, Kelantan and Selangor have opted to ban the AES, thus presenting Leon and the Ministry of Transport an opportunity to study trends in the behaviour of road-users.

A comparison of serious accidents and fatalities between the states which have, and states which do not have the AES may prove useful. The states which use AES are unlikely to show a reduction in serious accidents, but the directors of the two companies will be rich from speeding fines.



THINKING ALLOWED

• by **Mariam Mokhtar**

News Roundup

"Trip of a Lifetime"

For the second year running "adoptees" of Chief Minister Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir were once again privileged to travel outside of Perak. The fortunate children visited historical Malacca, as part of the on-going motivational "travel and learn" programme undertaken by Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBU).

The entourage, consisting of 98 school children from outlying areas of Perak and 50 teachers and staff of the foundation, left for Malacca in four coaches recently.

The first point of call was Kompleks Seri Negeri, the Chief Minister of Malacca's office. They were then taken to the many historical sites in the city state such as Bukit Cina, A Famosa, Stadthuys, Town Padang, Jonker Street, zoo, planetarium and the famous crocodile farm. The kids got to see Malacca at night while cruising down the Malacca River.

On the whole, the two-day trip was so meaningful to the young visitors that it prompted one to say, rather profoundly, that it was the trip of his lifetime. **RM**



MUSINGS ON FOOD



By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by Ginla Foo

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

I have always enjoyed spicy food, my taste for chillies having been honed from childhood. But it was only in my working life that I was first introduced to the mouthfeel of 'Mah Lat', that numbing sensation created by Szechuan peppercorns, ubiquitous in Szechuan province in China but not used as liberally outside.

Many people are surprised to learn that Szechuan peppercorn is not a pepper at all – the distinctive red-dish-brown berries hail from the prickly ash tree. When married with chilli peppers (the other key ingredient in Szechuan cuisine), chefs believe this numbing effect reduces the chilli pepper's heat, leaving diners free to appreciate the capsicum's intense, fruity flavour.

Stewart Hoo who invited me with some friends to try the newly-opened **Xiang Man Lou** (next to Impiana Hotel) would beg to disagree as I found him spluttering and gulping down cold beer to help dissipate the fiery sensations caused by some of the dishes.

I, on the other hand simply revelled in the unique taste treats, hitherto unavailable here in Ipoh and one for which I have been hankering as I have not been to Szechuan province in quite a few years. Added to this was the abundance of offal on the menu and I found myself in eclectic gastronomic heaven.

In fact being the first to arrive, I couldn't resist ordering an appetizer portion of their **cold beef tripe** while waiting for the others. Tripe here comes in many forms, the two which I had were wet and dry respectively, the former with chilli oil, sesame oil, Szechuan peppers and the latter was especially delectable and made a lovely snack – chewy slices of beef tripe sprinkled with again the 'de rigueur' spices but with subtle

hints of other herbs. Totally scrumptious RM15 each. Still on appetizers, the **cold 'mook yee' or 'wood ear'** was interesting, unlike our local monstrosity large variety, these were petite, each a bite-sized piece and marinated with less fiery pungency, receiving favourable comments from around our table of 10 – RM12. And while this was vegetarian, the next cold dish wasn't, being the **cold sliced pig's ear**, lean with little fat, cartilaginous, sliced appetizingly thin and doused in a similar marinade – RM15.



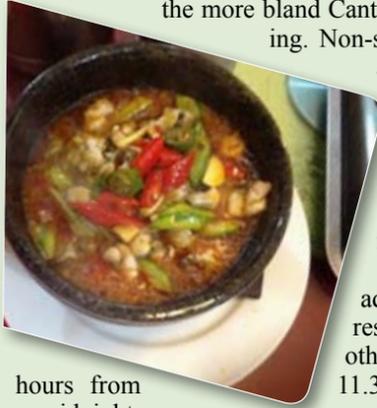
So far, we had been indulging in appetizers, nuances of pungency and aromas celebrating the taste and textures of the ingredients on the plate. Next came the beginning with the **'Saliva Chicken'**, basically a mild steamed chicken to appease the flaming taste buds at RM15 and followed by one of their signature dishes, the 'Hao Yu' or Sekap fish, sliced with skin intact, with tofu, and the larger bean sprouts called '**Tai Dou Nga**' served in a searingly hot (both in mouthfeel and temperature as it comes with a burner) broth, the top smothered in dried red chillies. Although a few at our table were taken aback by the preponderance of floating chillies in the dish, on tasting, the broth was surprisingly not as spicy as it looked and the fish slices were velvety smooth as was the tofu – RM68. This for me was one dish worth coming back for.

Many other dishes followed, notably the **fried pig's large intestine** which was served with vinegar and garlic – RM23 and the **stoneware frog legs**, not spicy which came piping hot in the stoneware bowl – RM30.

We finished off the meal with a **Szechuan hotpot** with a choice of spicy or herbal soup. We opted for the combination with separate sections for those who like their soup spicy or bland. With 30 different options in the meat and fish section and 18 vegetables as well as bean curd and noodles to choose from, one is spoilt for choice. The beef and mutton were thinly sliced, tender

and flavourful – RM18 per plate and the combination soup RM20.

The menu at **Xiang Man Lou** is extensive, and it'll take many visits to exhaust the selection. Some dishes are Hunanese in origin, emanating from the chef who hails from Hunan. Hunan food too is spicy and very robust but does not use Szechuan peppers. Nevertheless a new taste sensation for most people in Ipoh used to the more bland Cantonese style of cooking. Non-spicy regular fare is also available for the timid palate and one can also request for the fire to be toned down for any of the searing hot dishes.



The biggest advantage that this restaurant has over others is their opening hours from 11.30am to 4.30am. So a midnight supper or even later is definitely on the cards for all the Ipoh night owls looking for a pick me up after all the bars have closed.



Xiang Man Lou

Block A-G-9, A-G-11, Bangunan Perdagangan Casuarina 1, Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah
Tel: 05 255 2873
Open 11.30am-4.30am

HAWKER FOOD

By Wern Sze Gill

Nasi Biryani Ayam (Chicken Biryani Rice)

Nasi biryani is a traditional Indian Malaysian rice-based dish with a signature reddish-orange color and a strong, spiced flavour. This meal-in-one begins with washed uncooked rice fried gently in ghee or vegetable oil, together with a selection of spices and herbs such as cinnamon, cardamom, star anise, pandan leaves, ginger, saffron and garlic.

This is then steamed in a stock made from chicken or mutton bones, together with portions of chicken or mutton. The result is a fragrant meal of spiced rice and meat, served with curry gravy. The dish is sometimes accompanied by a plain salad of sliced cucumber, tomato, onion and green chili. You can also opt for a side order of *raita* (cucumber and yoghurt salad), fruit or vegetable pickles, and *papadam* (fried lentil crackers).

There are many Indian Muslim restaurants serving biryani in Ipoh, but the authentic ones are those which are cooked with chicken and a variety of spices in them. Places to try the authentic biryani in Ipoh:



Ipoh Padang Curry House

93 Jalan Raja Ekram (Cowan Street)
Opens daily from 5:30am – 8:30pm
RM7 per plate. Served plain without curry gravy or veges unless requested. Very tasty and flavourful even on its own.

My Nasi Kandar @ Mydin Meru Raya, Ipoh

(opposite passport/IC office, Ministry of Home Affairs building)
Jalan Jelapang - Meru
Open 23 hours (closed between 4-5am)
RM10 per plate. Served with cucumber salad and curry gravy over chicken.

Nasi Kandar AK

6c-6e Jalan Labrooy
Opens daily 6.30am – 11pm
RM7.50 per plate. Served with cucumber salad and curry gravy over a whole chicken thigh.

Restoran M Salim

75 Jalan Bahru, Off Jalan Tokong
Branches:
Kompleks Silveritage Galleria, Medan Gopeng
20 Jalan Yang Kalsom
Opens daily from 6.30am – 12.30am.
RM7.30 per plate. Served with cucumber salad with curry gravy over chicken.

Restoran Nasi Vanggey

5A Lebu 1, Greentown Business Centre
Opens 24 hours daily
RM6.00 per plate. Served with cucumber salad, half a salted egg and gravy over chicken.

RECIPE

By Margarita Lee



Vietnamese Chicken Curry

Ingredients:

1.5 kg chicken – cut into bite-sized pieces
1 onion – cut into wedges
300 gm sweet potato – peeled and cubed
500 ml of coconut milk
300 ml water
3 Tbs fish sauce
Salt and sugar to taste
80 ml Cooking Oil

Ingredients (A):

6 Tbsp of meat curry powder
2 Tbs of roasted chili flakes
5 shallots – roughly chopped
3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped

Ingredients (B):

1 stalk of lemongrass – bruised
3-4 slices of ginger – sliced thinly
3-4 kaffir lime leaves

Method:

- Mix chicken pieces with 3 Tbsp of the curry powder and a pinch of salt. Leave it for 30 minutes.
- Saute ingredients (A) until aromatic. Add in the chicken pieces. Continue to stir and cook for a few minutes on high heat.
- Add in ingredients (B), add in water and coconut milk bring to boil. Then simmer for 10-15 minutes.
- Add sweet potato and onion wedges and simmer uncovered until the sweet potato pieces are tender.
- Add in salt and sugar to your liking.
- Serve immediately with rice or a French baguette.





iSpeak

A. Jeyaraj

MBI Does Listen

Ever since the last massive flooding of Lim Garden, residents have been having sleepless nights fearing when the next flooding would occur because the cause(s) of the flooding has not been identified. Dato' Haji Abdul Rahim, Secretary MBI agreed to meet the residents to discuss their problems. The meeting was attended by Dato' Daniel Tay, councillor for Lim Garden and staff from relevant departments of MBI and a representative from DID.

The main concern was installation of a new pump at the retention pond. Initially MBI informed that the pump would be installed in July, but now it has been postponed to March next year. The rainy season has started and residents are worried that the single pump installed will not be able to drain the water. They requested that at least two pumps be installed.

During heavy rainfall the drains are full and the water overflows into the compound. The drains are not cleaned and overgrown with grass and prevent flow of water. Drains are also damaged. MBI informed that they are short of staff and cannot clean the drains every 21 days as mentioned by the Mayor in Issue 151 of Ipoh Echo. Drains are normally cleaned when complaints are received.

Residents voiced concern about dilapidated empty houses with their compounds overgrown with weeds. To their relief, the toe drain along the river bund was

cleaned by MBI and DID workers and weeds in a few of the empty houses were cleared a few days after the meeting.

My opinion is that instead of only acting on residents' complaints, MBI/DID engineers must make their own studies and come up with solutions. During heavy rain engineers must visit the site and assess the flow of water.

The retention pond only handles about one third of the drainage system. The two pumps planned to be installed at Lorong Pari and Jalan Abdul Manap are outstanding. These are low-lying areas which have a separate drainage

system and are prone to flooding after heavy rain.

What makes me wonder is that most of the issues raised are common to all housing estates. It was a good gesture of Dato' Rahim to meet the residents, but if he is going to meet the residents in other housing estates; then when is he going to do his job?

Maybe, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon, Exco for Local Councils should restructure MBI to enable it to function efficiently. Make it easier to hire and fire staff like private companies. It is no point having a bloated organisation if it cannot deliver.



Sport

Perak Closed Swimming Championship 2012

The Perak Closed Swimming Championship 2012 was held at the MBI pools recently. Nearly 250 competed in the swimming events with 70 in water polo. The participants were between 7 and 17 years old.

Beside the senior and junior categories, a category for boys and girls was created for the water polo competition. This is part of the Amateur

Swimming Association of Perak's efforts to source for new players. Perak was once a leading contender in water polo but has suffered due to falling standards caused by a number of reasons.

Ten teams comprising senior, junior, boys and girls participated in the competition. In a hard fought final, Group 7, helmed by Chiang Wai Hoong, defeated Group 2 led by Loh Siu Leong, 5-4 to

emerge champion in the senior category.

In swimming, Loh Jin Wen of SMJK Sam Tet clinched the overall champion title for Boys with 10 gold medals, two in record-breaking time. The 13-year old broke the 50m backstroke record with a time of 32.18 seconds and the 50m breaststroke in 33.18 seconds. He was also the Group 3 Boys champion.

Lim May Shan, 15, of Chinese Recreation Club Taiping, won 8 gold and 2 silver medals beating Nur Diana Balqis, 17, from MGS for the overall Girls champion title. She clinched the Group 2 Girls champion.

Group 5 Boys champion, Hor Jean Chen from SJK Yuk Choy Ipoh, won 4 gold medals and broke the 50m backstroke record with a time of 47.69 seconds.

SMJK Ave Maria Convent and SJKC Ave Maria Convent swept all the relay events for Girls while SMJK Sam Tet won the relay events for Boys.

The Perak aquatic team has many talented swimmers for the picking. Unfortunately, there is one major drawback – poor training facilities. For

years swimmers have had to get up as early as 5am to train. Due to this, parents are hesitant to send their children for training.

The one thing that is holding back the sport is the condition of the council pools. "A complete overhaul of the pools is necessary if the state wants to see results," said Association Secretary, Yam Chee Keong to Ipoh Echo.

Other results:

- ▶ Group 5 Girls: Candice Ang (Chinese Recreation Club Taiping) 2 gold and 2 silver.
- ▶ Group 4 Boys: Max Heong (SK ACS) 9 gold.
- ▶ Group 4 Girls: Nurazmina bt Mohamed Yunus (SK Marion Convent): 5 gold and 3 silver.
- ▶ Group 3 Girls: Lau Jia Yi (SMJK Ave Maria Convent) 5 gold
- ▶ Group 2 Boys: Khor Thing Phong (SMJK Sam Tet) 6 gold
- ▶ Group 1 Boys: Wong Jun Jie (SMJK Sam Tet): 11 gold
- ▶ Group 1 Girls: Nur Diana Balqis (SMK Methodist Ipoh): 8 gold.

Tiffany



YBU Football Club Aims High

Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan's (YBU) newly minted football club, YBUFC, has set its sights high in spite of its being a new kid on the block. The team will participate in the Ipoh Football League for a start while eyeing the competitive premier league as its ultimate goal.

Team Manager, Hairul Anwar Mohamed Noor, who is also YBU's Director of Finance, is optimistic of the team's chances. "I've had to set the bar high in order to inspire the players to greater heights," said Hairul to Ipoh Echo.

"Winning the Ipoh League will pave the way for a shot at the FAM League," he added. "It's not something impossible,"

insisted Hairul. "Based on the players' capabilities, I am confident this is achievable."

The team's first eleven has been identified but the selection process will continue until an eventual eleven is picked. "We've got to be serious if we want to win," said Hairul when met at a meet-the-press session held at YBU's Greentown Square office recently. The session was to introduce the players and officials to the media.

The team has a formidable line-up consisting of former players from the Super League, President Cup and the Perak Youth Cup. They are being beefed up with rookies picked from a series of trials held in the preceding months.

The team will be managed and trained by people well versed in the game of football. Post of Assistant Manager is taken by Khairul Sharil Mohamed while the job of keeping the players in form is given to Salim Abd Wahab, as chief coach and Raja Azhar Raja Ayob, as his assistant. All three come with very strong credentials having been involved in the game for several years.

The players, for reasons of expedience, are being co-opted as volunteers of YBU.



This is to reinforce the seriousness of YBU in eradicating poverty among Perakeans. "The appointment of the club players as volunteers is indicative of the foundation's desire to honour its mission," said Hairul. "Let it be known that game is an integral part of YBU."

The forming of a football team may seem petty to some but if the team is successful it will have a definitive impact on the foundation. After all, team games is all about bonding and teamwork, whether on the field or on the job.

RM

Education

UTAR Holds First ICBSSR

As part of its year-long 10th anniversary celebration, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FAS) held the first *International Conference on Behavioural and Social Science Research (ICBSSR) 2012* at UTAR Perak Campus on November 2.

Themed 'Celebrating Scholarly Connections from Global Interchange and Interdisciplinary Perspectives', the conference aimed to provide the platform for academicians and researchers to present and exchange views on social and behavioral sciences and to bring together diverse avenues to explore theoretical and practical discussion to advance knowledge.

Officiating the conference, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Malaysia, Dato' Lee Chee Leong said, "With the advent of technology and innovation, holistic solutions take a myriad of perspectives and an inter-disciplinary approach. It is thus an encouraging step that the faculty has taken to motivate interdisciplinary research in the field of behavioural and social science".

Also present at the opening ceremony were UTAR President Ir Professor Academician Dato' Dr Chuah Hean Teik, Vice President (Student Development and Alumni Relations) Assoc. Professor Dr Teh Chee Seng and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Assistant Professor Dr Sebastian K. Francis.

A total of 200 participants, presenters

and paper reviewers from Malaysia, Singapore, China, USA, Hong Kong, Australia and other countries attended the one-day conference. There were 70 research papers presented at the conference. Assoc. Professor Dr Teh Chee Seng, the keynote speaker at the conference, presented his paper on 'Challenges and Current Issues in Behavioral and Social Science Research – Going the Way Forward'.

Renowned criminologist, Professor N. Prabha Unnithan, Director of the Center for the Study of Crime and Justice, Colorado State University and former editor of the Social Science Journal conducted a workshop on 'How to publish in ISI-Indexed Journals'.

The conference covered a wide interdisciplinary discussion such as online teaching and learning issues, sustainable development, marginalized communities, universal cultures, cyber psychology, online behaviour, neuropsychology and others.



Photo from UTAR

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News Roundup

Miss Malaysia Kebaya 2012

A nationwide road show by finalists of *Miss Malaysia Kebaya 2012* saw ten of the fifteen contestants making a pit stop at MH Hotel Ipoh one recent afternoon. The finalists, resplendent in their “kebaya” paraded for a photo session with the media.

The Miss Malaysia Kebaya 2012 Grand Final is the culmination of an extensive search for the most beautiful “kebaya” dresser in six states earlier this year.

The Miss Perak Kebaya 2012 was won by Olivia Teng Mei Xian. She had to withdraw from this pageant, as she was recently crowned Miss Malaysia International 2012. Olivia went on to represent the country at the 52nd Miss

International 2012 in Okinawa, Japan. The ladies stopped over at Penang and Malacca, where they made similar public appearances.

The grand finals to search for that one lass with beauty and brains, a charitable heart, and be Malaysia’s ambassador to promote the country’s “kebaya” heritage, was held at Swiss Garden Hotel in Kuala Lumpur on Friday, November 9. The winner will represent the country at the Miss Kebaya World, which will be held in June, 2013 in Kuala Lumpur.

The beauty pageant is endorsed by the Ministries of Tourism, Culture, Arts & Heritage, Youth and Sports, and Women, Family and Community Development.

Emily



Society of Aeromedicine Malaysia

The *Society of Aeromedicine Malaysia* (SAMM) will celebrate its first anniversary at the end of November. To commemorate the occasion, it will be conducting a course named, “Concepts in Retrieval Medicine Course”, at the Royal Malaysian Police Air Wing Unit Training Base (Pangkalan Latihan Pasukan Gerakan Udara PDRM), Sultan Azlan Shah Airport, Ipoh.

This course, conducted in collaboration with CareFlight NSW for the second time, is open to medical staff (doctors, paramedics and nurses), non-medical support staff (pilots, policemen and fire and rescue personnel) and air crew, especially those involved in transferring critically-ill patients by air. It is heavily subsidised; therefore, participants need only pay RM100 (public-sector employees) or RM500 (private-sector employees) each as registration fee. Travel, accommodation and other incidental costs are to be borne by the participants themselves.

The Concepts in Retrieval Medicine Course is funded by the Commonwealth through the Australia-Malaysia Institute, which is part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. For further information on the 3-day course (Nov 22 to 25), call the society at +603-22820900.

SAMM is a non-profit organisation registered with the Registrar of Societies. It regularly receives requests to repatriate patients from overseas to Malaysia. This is a costly affair, as it involves complex medical logistics. Commercial bodies that offer such services (there are three in Malaysia) would charge anywhere from RM50,000 onwards, depending on the distance.

As members of SAMM are volunteers, the society is only able to take a couple of cases this year done on a case-by-case basis. While SAMM does not charge for aeromedical services, the patient would still have to take care of the other “costs”.

“Therefore, it’s essential that travellers purchase appropriate travel insurance before leaving the country,” said Dr Gunalan, the Vice President of SAMM to Ipoh Echo. “The benefits are far greater than the cost of the insurance premium.”

Emily



Windfall for Watermen

The Workers Union of Perak Water Board (LAP) received a windfall of RM50,000, an allocation from the State Government. This was announced by Chief Minister Dato’ Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir in his opening address at the Union’s biennial general meeting in Ipoh recently. Zambry is also the LAP chairman.

Employees will receive a bonus of 4.5 months, an increase of a half month from last year. This is in line with the water board’s remarkable financial performance this year. As they have already received a 2.5-month bonus earlier, they will receive a one-month bonus in November and the balance, prior to the start of the new school term next year.

The success of an organisation, said Zambry, depends on team spirit. While the top management rejoices in the outstanding financial performance of

LAP, employees must also feel they are being appreciated and share in the joy. They must know that the harder they work, the greater will be the benefits.

On the other hand, the management must adopt an open-door policy and be able to iron out issues with employees despite the many differences.

LAP is one of the best performers in terms of sales and has the best water management system in the country. It is also the most generous in terms of bonus payment to employees. In fact, it has set the benchmark for other organisations to follow.

Emily



Memory Lane Gets a Facelift – What Next?

Memory Lane the flea market on Jalan Horley, acclaimed the biggest and well known all over the country, has had a facelift with new canopies. However, a number of traders are still using their own umbrellas, spoiling the efforts from the State Government to make the place attractive to tourists.

However, there are some set-backs and the place is becoming very congested with the addition of more traders. A few irresponsible traders have set up their business in the middle of the road, blocking the movement of people. The roads adjacent to the market are jammed and parking is a problem.

In contrast, there is a popular weekend market in Bangkok which attracts tourists and locals. It covers a very big area and

even has a guide book. It is crowded, but not congested and is clean. Friends of mine had an unpleasant memory. One of them threw a piece of paper on the ground and was caught and fined on the spot. This is how enforcement works there. Our enforcement people could learn a lesson from Bangkok.

The flea market was relocated to this place from Peoples’ Park because of congestion. The time has come to move to a bigger place. An ideal place would be Medan Istana which is adjacent to the present site and is a large area and the surrounding roads are not busy. The authorities must look into this. Next year is Visit Malaysia Year; let us get prepared.

Meanwhile, we must be innovative and unique to attract tourists.

AJ



Tourism

Joint Consultative Council

A declaration of intent on creating an entity, known as the *Joint Tourism Consultative Council*, was made at the Lost World Hotel, Ipoh recently. The declaration was signed by representatives of 11 tourism-related non-governmental organisations in the state. It was witnessed by Syahrudin bin Abdul Hamid, Director of the Ministry of Tourism (Perak).

The NGOs concerned were Perak Tourism Association, Persatuan Homestay Perak, Perak Heritage Society, Taiping Tourist Association, Persatuan Pengusaha Hotel dan Resort Pulau Pangkor, Taiping Heritage Society, the Perak Chapter of Malaysian Association of Hotels, Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents, Malaysian Budget Hotel Association, Tourist Guides’ Association and Malaysian Chinese Tourism Association.

The Joint Tourism Consultative Council’s primary objective is to help make Perak a major tourist destination. To achieve this objective the council

will encourage tourist organisations to participate in the council, collaborate in all tourism-related efforts, share information and communicate with stakeholders and the community. The council will devise plans, policies and strategies to increase tourist arrivals and deliver satisfaction to visitors.

Topping the list of priorities of the council is the improvement of all tourist information centres in Perak, with the Ipoh City Tourist Information Centre a model in Malaysia. The other is the development of domestic tourism.

Emily



News Roundup

Meru Valley Charity Golf

Meru Valley Golf and Country Club celebrated its 20th Anniversary by organising a charity golf tournament recently. The club's intention was a noble one – to donate in kind to deserving social entities. The four fortunate bodies were Pertubuhan Wa Khiew Yi Shea, Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak-Anak Yatim Ar Raudhah, Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak-Anak Yatim Gembala Baik and Pertubuhan Kebajikan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Negeri Perak. They received RM2000, RM5000, RM5000 and RM8000 respectively. The size of the cheque was determined by the extent of their responsibilities.

The tournament, according to Shahzan Bahari, one of the directors of the private golf club, was to promote a healthy lifestyle through golfing. "We play and donate all at the same time," he remarked in his opening speech during the presentation ceremony. A sum of RM20,000 was collected from participants and well-wishers. All were donated to charities.

Seasoned golfer, Hashim Naian (7), who scored 41 Stableford points, was adjudged the winner. Teh Chew Choong (4) beat Lee Keng Kah (11) on count back scoring an identical 37 points. The winners took home a trophy each and some attractive golfing equipment.

Secretary of the State Royal Council, Dato' Ayob Hashim and Taiping High Court Judge, Dato' Ahmad Nafsy Yasin were among the VIP golfers,

Sarah



Zambry Awards Innovative Perakeans



Considering that the 40-odd entries to this year's *Anugerah Inovasi Menteri Besar* (Chief Minister's Innovation Award) "were not up to scratch" (according to the selection committee), a new category was created named, "Anugerah Potensi Inovasi" (Potential Innovation Award). The award was won by Associate Professor Dr Ismail bin Zainol from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris for his halal collagen and hydroxyapatite extracted from fish scales. The award came with a cash prize of RM10,000 and a trophy.

At the ceremony themed, "Sinergi Inovasi, Strategi Transformasi" and held at the State Secretariat Building in Ipoh recently, other awards presented were Anugerah Inovasi Pentadbiran Daerah dan Tanah (Land and District Administration Innovation Award) which was won by Kerian District Office, Anugerah Inovasi Pengurusan Teknologi Maklumat (Information Technology Management Innovation Award) won by the Treasury Department of Universiti

Pendidikan Sultan Idris and Anugerah Inovasi Pengurusan Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan (Local Authority Management Innovation Award) which was won by Teluk Intan Municipal Council.

Winners of these categories received RM5000 cash and a trophy while the first and second runners-up received RM4000 and RM3000 cash respectively.

Winner of Anugerah Tema Hari Inovasi Terbaik (Best Innovation Day Theme Award), Ahmad Sid Hijaz Md. Said, a lecturer at Politeknik Ungku Omar, took home a cash prize of RM300 for his winning theme.

The ceremony was officiated by Chief Minister, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir. In his speech, Zambry reminded that innovations do not necessarily mean an earth-shattering creation by scientists. Anyone can be innovators, as long as they keep improving on their lives and the way they work. It is all about translating ideas into innovations and applying them into daily life.

Emily

Honouring the Media

Philanthropy is as old as the hills but Rotary showed the new way forward – public service carried out in a systematic manner without strings attached. The introduction of Rotary to Malaya in the late 1920s had some impact on the social landscape. Founder James Davidson left Malaya believing that "Rotary was firmly established in our land".

Incidentally, the third club formed in Malaya was the Rotary Club of Ipoh,

established on October 11, 1929 and chartered on January 18, 1930.

Rotary Club of Greentown held a guest cum press night at Impiana Hotel recently. President, K. Nachemuthu briefed the audience on the club's achievements and its upcoming charity projects. The objective of the function, said Nachemuthu, was to honour the media for its contributions in promoting Rotary Club activities.

Kani



Legal Aid for AES Victims

Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) Perak, in a media conference on Monday, November 5 held at the party's Medan Istana office, Ipoh, declared its willingness to provide free legal aid to motorists who run afoul of the controversial Automated Enforcement System (AES).

The system is essentially a speed trap and is installed along accident-prone areas in Perak, Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. There have been calls, from both sides of the political divide, for a deferment pending a detailed study of the system. The controversy involves the outsourcing of the system to two companies believed to be cronies of the establishment.

Deputy Commissioner of PAS Perak, Ustaz Misbahul Munir Masduki stated that the stance taken by the party was in response to the Perak State Government's refusal

to delay the implementation of AES.

"Our panel of lawyers from the party's Strategic and Issue Committee will undertake the responsibility of defending the victims in a court of law," said Munir to reporters.

Zamri Ibrahim, Director of PAS Youth (Perak) Legal and Human Rights Department questioned the use of Section 79 (2) of the Road Transport Act 1987 to frame charges. "The section has nothing to do with speeding." "We'll call for a meeting soon of those who have asked for assistance and brief them on the procedures involved," he added.

The committee is providing a hotline for those wishing to take the offer. The number to call is **013-349 3848**.

Ed



Young Perak

Boy-Girl Relationship



Generation Young Society Ipoh (Gen "Y" Ipoh), with the collaboration of the Perak Women for Women Society (PWW), conducted a workshop at SMK Tanjung Rambutan recently. The workshop was attended by nearly 80 upper-form students. It was incorporated into the "Kem Kecemerlangan Akademik dan Sahsiah" programme organised by the school.

The focus of the workshop was on Boy-Girl Relationship and Respect. The primary objective was to create awareness in youths about gender equality. It was also aimed at enlightening the participants about personal safety when dating, relationship between ideas, behaviour and

characteristics of an ideal partner. The programme was communicated via presentations and discussions. Participants were given case studies to discuss. Two short films entitled, "Mabuk Cinta" and "Lelaki Matang Trang Tang Tang", were shown. The films depicted some risky situations and personal safety youths should be aware of especially during dating.

The students participated keenly during the question and answer session. Judging from feedback, the programme was a success.

Gen "Y" Ipoh plans to conduct similar workshops at other schools if requested. For details call PWW at **05-546 9715**.

Ed

SIROM – PWW Event

Soroptimist International Region of Malaysia (SIROM) in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is organising "Walk the Talk from Perlis to Sabah" with the theme, "Stop Violence Against Women", to take a stand against all forms of violence from domestic violence and sexual abuse, to crimes of violence against women. Walk The Talk seeks the public's support for zero tolerance to all forms of violence against women and girls.

Join Soroptimist International Ipoh and **Perak Women for Women (PWW)** to "Walk The Talk – Stop Violence Against Women".

Date: **November 27 (Tuesday)**

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: Gather near Body Shop in Kinta City Ipoh

Call to Register: Soroptimist International Ipoh

012-501 9250/012-519 0189 or PWW – **05-546 9715**

We need sponsors and participants. Get your friends and have a fun walk for a good cause.

For every RM50 raised, 70% of the proceeds will be retained by Soroptimist International Ipoh and PWW for projects to help the cause of victims of violence and for advocacy workshops to create awareness on all forms of violence against women and girls.

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.

'**Leadership Camp for Young People**' organised by Perak Family Health Association, **November 16 to 18** at SUFES Campsite, Tapah. The camp is focused on teenagers between 14-19 years old. We tap on participants' physical, mental and emotional strengths to make them better leaders of the future. For more information, contact: Ms Angilin at **05-547 7849** or **05-546 7633**.

Malaysian Gospel Music Ipoh (Workshops & Concert), Saturday **November 17**, Workshops: 10am-12pm & 1pm-3pm, Concert: 7pm-9.30pm. Ticket: RM20 inclusive of workshops, concert and Adore CD. Contact: Emmanuel Assembly Of God, 127 Jalan Treacher Selatan, Ipoh, Ms Karen Kong 05-243 7172 or Mr Raymond S.P. Tan **012-471 0996**. Website: www.mgm.com.my. Email: admin@mgm.com.my.

Nature Survival Camp for Students (10 to 17 years old) organised by Malaysian Nature Society (Perak), Saturday & Sunday, **November 24 & 25** at Tapak Herba, Papan. Call Ms Lee Yuat Wah **017-577 5641**, Pn Lee Sook Heng **010-387 2994** or Mr Lee Ping Kong **016-565 5682**, for details and registration.

Public Forum on "Life's Sweeter With Less Sugar" organised by Pantai Hospital Ipoh in collaboration with Persatuan Diabetes Malaysia (Perak), Wednesday **November 21**, 5.30pm to 7pm at Dahlia Utama, Level 4, Pantai Hospital Ipoh. Admission is free; refreshments provided. For more information, contact En Harith or Ms Gloria at **012-521 8956 / 012-430 3391**.

2nd Public Policy Lecture, "The Future of Malaysia" by Dr Farouk Musa and Mr Ahmad Fuad Rahmat of the Islamic Renaissance Front, Saturday, **November 24**, 2.30pm at Auditorium Ritz Garden Hotel, Ipoh. For details and reservations call Melissa Siew **016-593 3068** or Emma Zainal **05-2252 850**.

'**Transfer of Technology Seminar & Exhibition 2012 – Investment Opportunities in Oil Palm-based Technologies**' and '**The 10th Anniversary Perak Lecture by Tan Sri Dato' Lee Oi Hian**', Monday **December 3** at Kinta Riverfront Hotel, Ipoh. Admission to the Exhibition at the same hotel from 10.30am to 5pm is free of charge. Registration fee for the Seminar: RM250 (inclusive of materials and meals); closing date for registration forms is November 29. Enquiries: Perak Academy (Mrs Lee or Wai Kheng) **05-547 8949**; email: contact@perakacademy.com; website: www.perakacademy.com.

Perak Society Day 2012 (Hari Pertubuhan Negeri Perak 2012), Sunday, **December 9** from 8am to 5pm at MBI Square (Dataran MBI). Official launch by Regent of Perak Raja Nazrin Shah. All are welcome. For details call Dr James Ratnam of Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Negeri Perak at **05-42 4569 / 05-254 5505**.

Free Pranic Healing for Physical & Psychological Ailments at Pranic Healing Centre, Wisma Ehsan, No. 2-5, Jalan Sultan Yussuf, 30000 Ipoh. Contact: Mr Maran **05-255 4590** or **017-519 6501**.

Education

Forum on Education Blueprint 2013-2025

PAGE (Parent Action Group for Education) Ipoh Chapter organised a forum at the Andersonian's Club Cafeteria to discuss the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. Dato' Dr Anwar, Co-ordinator of Ipoh Chapter said that since the Education Ministry was not willing to have a public dialogue in Ipoh to discuss the report, PAGE has organised this forum.

Liong Kam Chong, a retired secondary school principal who was the guest speaker, explained the education blueprint in relation to Teaching of Science and Maths in English (PPSMI). He said there was not much of a problem with the high ranking officers in implementing the policy of soft landing of PPSMI. The problem was with the principals of the schools who set the policy in their schools. When principals are transferred there is a change in the policy. He added there were basically three categories of parents; English speaking families, those starting to speak English and those who trust the system.

Dr Anwar said that he was disappointed with the blueprint which omitted a number of important issues. Page Ipoh Chapter seeks to have the following proposals seriously considered by the Ministry of Education in finalising the preliminary blueprint.

- Reinstatement PPSMI or at least provide provision for it.
- Establish permanent PPSMI schools.

- Reinstatement English-medium schools.
- Moral Education should remain compulsory, but it should cease to be an examination subject.

There was a call that PAGE must be more aggressive and to show its disappointment, copies of the Report must be publicly burnt at various places in the country to attract the attention of the public, media and the authorities.

It was sad to note that in spite of the wide publicity given about the forum only about 50 parents turned up.

AJ



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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.

An Appreciation to MAS

I am writing in to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to Malaysian Airlines (MAS) and a few individuals for their kind assistance in helping my family during our recent misfortune while on holiday in Mumbai, India and hope this letter can be published in your newspaper.

My family and I went for a short vacation to Mumbai, India in October 2011. Much to our dismay, on the 4th of October my mother collapsed in the hotel on the day we were supposed to return home to Malaysia due to a ruptured brain aneurysm. She underwent emergency brain surgery and although it went smoothly during the operation, her level of consciousness after the operation was poor and she remained in the ICU of Bombay Hospital in Mumbai for more than a month. Sometime in mid-November, her surgeons finally considered her stable enough to be moved back to Kuala Lumpur. We were also under a lot of financial constraints as the hospital bills were high and our family had to commute between KL and Mumbai in order to take turns to take care of my

mother. We did not purchase any travel insurance prior to the trip.

It was at this juncture that we started to look at options and spoke to a number of air ambulance service providers to provide an estimate for their services to bring my mother home. As she was not on any travel insurance, we had to figure out how to come up with the money for the transfer which was estimated to be almost RM80,000, a rather hefty sum for my family. Not only that, there were many complex procedures, protocols and logistic arrangements that had to be done even before she could be safely moved out of the hospital.

We were very fortunate when we heard of some work done by two Malaysian doctors in transferring patients internationally. They agreed to assist my family to bring my mother home without charging any fees when they heard of our financial difficulty. They planned the transfer, coordinated with all the relevant authorities as well as made sure that the treating doctors as well as the receiving team in Malaysia were well informed of the transfer. They even accompanied and

monitored my mother throughout the entire transfer. They had been a tremendous help and had given much assistance at no cost whatsoever. The help that we received did not only stop with the doctors.

We approached MAS and much to our relief, they were most sympathetic and very willing to help us. In fact, they went well above to make sure they did everything they could to help bring my mother back in the least amount of time and at minimum costs. The MAS staff were prompt and efficient in making possible all the arrangements, in particular Mr Lokman from External Relations Department who was quick to review the case and decisive in making arrangements. I would also like to thank Mr Yusni for being so patient, kind and helpful as well as Raja Zamilia, Mr Aziz, Mr Nathan and many others who had helped as well as the MAS medical team, Dr Daljit and Dr Ashok for their assistance in coordinating with the two doctors who went to Mumbai to bring my mother home.

On November 26, 2011, the transfer was performed and everything went smoothly. My mother arrived in KL the

next day. MAS handled everything in a prompt and efficient manner from the ground staff led by Mr Milind in Mumbai to the team waiting for us at KLIA. There are no words to describe the MAS team; they were just very efficient, kind, and gracious as well as patient with us as we were very nervous that something might happen to my mother during the transfer.

We sincerely appreciate what MAS had done for my family and sincerely hope MAS continues to value doing this as part of their corporate social responsibility.

My mother is now back at home and recovering from her illness. Our family would like to take this opportunity to thank again the two doctors from the Society of Aeromedicine Malaysia, Dr Jaseemuddin and Dr Gunalan who helped bring my mother home together with all the staff from MAS. You have our family's gratitude and appreciation. You have all shown the true meaning of what Malaysians can do for each other in times of need irrespective of our race, language and religion! Malaysia Boleh!

Stephanie Lee
Taiping

Community

PCSH Reaches Out To Underprivileged Communities

The Orang Asli community and other low-income groups living in rural areas will receive free medical treatment and medicines again through the *Perak Community Specialist Hospital (PCSH) Mobile Health Clinic* this year.

State Health Committee Chairman Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon said the initiative was an effort to help the rural community to gain medical care and treatment. "More private organisations, especially health institutions should organise similar efforts for the benefit of the community in remote areas," he said after the launching of *PCSH Mobile Health Clinic* at Kg. Ulu Groh, Gopeng.

PCSH Chief Executive Officer, Rajindar Singh, said the project featured doctors and nurses providing free medical consultation, medicines and health screenings such as blood pressure, blood glucose, diet counselling

and body mass index.

Rajindar said this is the second time that PCSH is conducting the project after a successful run last year. Villagers who were found in need of further medical attention would then be brought to the PCSH for screening and treatment. "For example, we encountered a 29-year-old woman suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, who lost the use of both her legs last year. We have given her free treatment, including prostheses."

The *Mobile Health Clinic* was funded by CIMB Foundation. Present at the launching were State Health Committee Chairman, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon; The Perak Chinese Maternity Association President, Dato' Lee Hau Hian; PCSH Chief Executive Office, Rajindar Singh and Jalan Raja Permaisuri Bainun CIMB Bank branch manager, Teng Tuck Oon.



News Roundup

IIUM to learn from YBU's Microfinancing Programme

Ten students from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) led by Dr Mohamed Eskandar Shah visited Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBU) to conduct a study of YBU's *Credit Microfinancing Programme* with a view to implementing Wakaf principles in the poverty eradication programme.

IIUM has previously collaborated with other institutions such as UTP and UTM as well as the Ministry of Entrepreneur delegation from Brunei Darussalam.

The delegation from IIUM joined officers from YBU's Micro Credit Services in visiting profile groups to conduct inter-

views with a cross-section of the community consisting of single mothers, disabled, hardcore poor and indigenous people. The types of businesses involved in this research include food, manufacturing, services, retail and

natural resources.

The results will be analyzed for both parties to ensure that it can help in solving the problems of poverty more efficiently especially for the people of Perak.

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85% Clean Ipoh

Uncut Grass – 2 weeks or more?

Every other month I need to remind by way of photos as evidence that grass along the drains in Jalan Carlos Taman Ipoh has not been cut and that drains are being blocked! Ipoh Echo pointed out that grass is cut by contractors every two weeks.

Please see the photos attached and ascertain whether it had taken two weeks or two months for the grass to grow that much.

I am paying an odd-job labourer to clean the street along our houses so when are you sending the street cleaners if ever!

A large pile of rubbish (illegally dumped) has been accumulating for

months behind the Gribbles Pathology store-house at No. 94 Jalan Carlos, Taman Ipoh, and none of the MBI staff seem to notice it! Yet I see the MBI van coming to warn or compound fine the contractor who keeps his pile of building bricks on the back lane!!! Is there any motivation of staff to be proactive?

I hope that MBI senior management takes notice that the public will not keep quiet anymore as they pay their taxes dutifully and want to see results and money's worth in the efforts of MBI to govern a clean Ipoh City!

Augustine Basnayake
Taman Ipoh



Arts and Culture

Cultural Festival

Over 150 students between 7 and 17 years old were involved in the recently concluded state-level Festival Bimbingan Seni Budaya (Cultural-Support Festival). The one-day fest was held at the auditorium of the Perak Cultural and Arts Department at Jalan Caldwell, Ipoh.

It was aimed at finding the best performers from among the many participants. A combined total of 73 schools in the state were involved. The fest was a culmination of a 6-month effort to instil traditional and cultural values in students in the fields of music, theatre,

dance and top spinning. It was conducted in collaboration with the Perak Education Department.

A gala show wrapped up the day's activities. It included top-spinning, kite-making demonstrations and children's karaoke competition. The show was a mixed performance, incorporating the different fields of arts and culture. Students from SK Buntong, Ipoh, presented an Indian cultural dance while those from SK St. Bernadette's Convent, Batu Gajah, did the Sumazau dance from Sabah.

A play entitled, "Pemetik Api" was staged by students of SMK Dato' Abdul



Rahman Yaakub, Bota. It was about an abused daughter taking revenge on her abusive father.

The night ended with an energetic

Joget Perak number performed by the entire cast of the gala show. The finale brought the audience to their feet.

Emily