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October 16-31, 2013

PP 14252/10/2012(031136)

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ISSUE **176**

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RPP RM29

■ Page 3

Accounting For Their Actions



■ Page 4

Birds Foul-Up Clear Vision



■ Page 5

SeeFoon Goes Gastro Bar Hopping

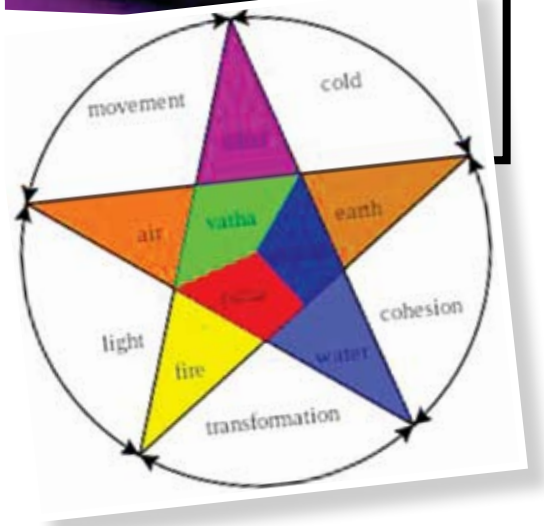
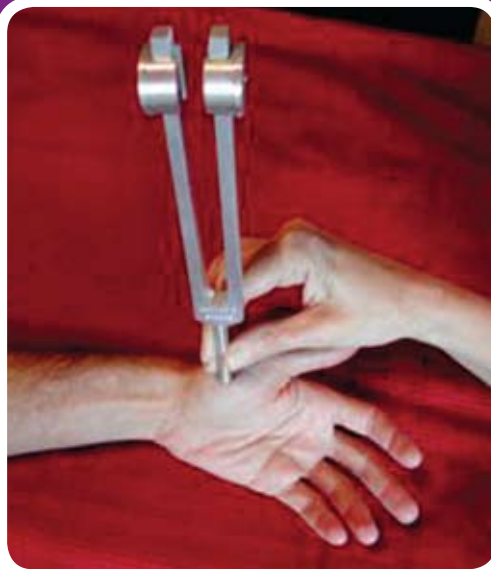


■ Page 12

Datuk Bandar Failure



Complementary Therapy



by Serena Mui

TCM, Reiki, Phytobiophysics, Fast Track and Emotional Freedom Technique, Ayurveda, Karuna, Ki, Sufi, Pranic and Sound Healing. One hears these terms being banded around as more and more people are being introduced to some of these techniques and practices to help heal the physical and emotional ups and downs faced by most people at some point in their lives. Ipoh, being the laggard in new 'things' finding its way here, is seeing a stirring of activity, the winds of change bringing fresh ideas, fresh techniques and fresh faces to the complementary therapy scene. In this and the coming issue, Ipoh Echo takes a look at the plethora of complementary therapies available in Ipoh...

Continued on page 2

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Alternative Therapies to Complement Allopathic Medicine?

With the rising costs tagged to conventional medical treatments available today, more people are seeking out complementary methods of healing to address various ailments. Although one should not carelessly dismiss the benefits of a proper medical diagnosis and its recommended programmes, it is becoming quite a common practice today even among the skeptics, to give complementary therapy a try. Especially when carried out by people who are knowledgeable and experienced.

Complementary therapy practitioners believe that all physical ailments begin with an emotional cause which fester in the subconscious mind and manifests as sickness over time. Hence complementary therapy aims to achieve balance and harmony in all aspects of body, mind and spirit.

Among the more popular examples of complementary therapy are ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicines, energy therapies, homeopathy, naturopathy, chiropractic, mind and body therapies, herbs diet and vitamin therapies, body manipulation, massage and acupuncture.

Practitioners in Ipoh

In and around Ipoh, you will be able to find quite a number of practitioners, who have successfully practised their craft. These people's successes are usually downplayed, as many do not advertise their services. Referrals are usually the main way these practitioners get their patients.

Through the course of research on the topic, I had the opportunity to sit down with a few practitioners and was intrigued with what they had to say. The main message seemed to be, that with complementary therapy, one can enjoy better overall health and well-being, as the various methodologies used, all focused on creating a balance in body, mind and spirit. They all stressed that medical diagnosis is not to be disregarded altogether, but complementary therapy would be a great addition to creating optimal recovery conditions.

Healing the Reiki way

Reiki, a form of energy healing was started by a Japanese, Dr Usui in the early part of last century. I had the opportunity to spend some time with a visiting Reiki practitioner, who has achieved the Master/Teacher level. Andrew Khor, kindly took the time to explain this healing practice and the positive impact it can make in a person's life. It soon became clear to me, why so many people are keenly exploring Reiki, as a safe alternative to addressing some physical and mental issues. A humble and delightful

character, who is bubbling with energy and what I can only describe as a "happy aura", Andrew explained his particular style and why he is confident that, with guidance, anyone can live a happy and healthy life.

Vocal Rather than Touch

Andrew's style takes the basic practice, which involves the laying on of hands and the use of symbols a step further. By vocalizing in multiples, some of these symbols, he claims to dramatically multiply their healing power. This vocal method is particularly appropriate here as "touching" is not something most of us are comfortable with especially when dealing with strangers. Although the original hands-on method is meant to channel universal energy by touch, for self-healing and a state of equilibrium, Andrew's method of vocalizing the symbols can also bring forth similar positive results, as many of his 'patients' will attest.



Cho Ku Rei – Reiki power symbol

Phytobiophysics

This is another style of complementary therapy that utilizes the infinite energy of flowers and plants to harmonize and balance the disturbances of humanity on all levels of consciousness. Striking a balance on all levels would include addressing the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical elements within oneself.

The founder of the Phytobiophysics system, Dr Diana Mossop's, first foray into this field came about after a severe illness, which western medical procedures could not address. Returning to her childhood roots of natural medicine, Dr Diana Mossop started seriously exploring the natural healing and organic nutritional benefits found in plants. Taking her research further she then explored the energetic, vibrational and color aspect of plants.

Here in Ipoh, Mdm Yeap Heong Moi (everyone calls her Doc) helps those seeking to correct their imbalances with therapies such as Phytobiophysics Structural mobilization, Special Lymphatic Stimulation as well as the hundreds of flowers and plant remedies around which the Phytobiophysics healing system revolves. Coincidentally Yeap also turned to complementary therapy remedies when she too was seriously ill and western medicine could do little to help her. After successfully recovering from her illness and enjoying a new lease of life, Yeap devoted all her energy to learning more about this wonderful world of Phytobiophysics.

A nurse by training, Yeap always nurtured a burning desire to help children born with challenging conditions. Her heart goes out to families struggling to cope with such circumstances, especially those with children who suffer from autism. Through the Phytobiophysics healing properties, she has been able to help many families. Listening to her passionately talk about all the cases she has successfully helped, made me want to tell those going through such challenges to beat a path to Yeap's door in Lengkok Canning and get an appointment immediately.

The flower formulae used in Phytobiophysics are therapeutic tools that deliver specific vibrations that can help imbalances correct themselves. Treating different conditions that include stabilizing and harmonizing emotional sadness and trauma or assisting in recovery phases, aiding the body to assimilate nutrients, releasing energy



'Doc' Yeap



blocks, bad skin conditions, are just some of the negative situations Yeap has been able to put right using the Phytobiophysics healing method.

Sound Healing

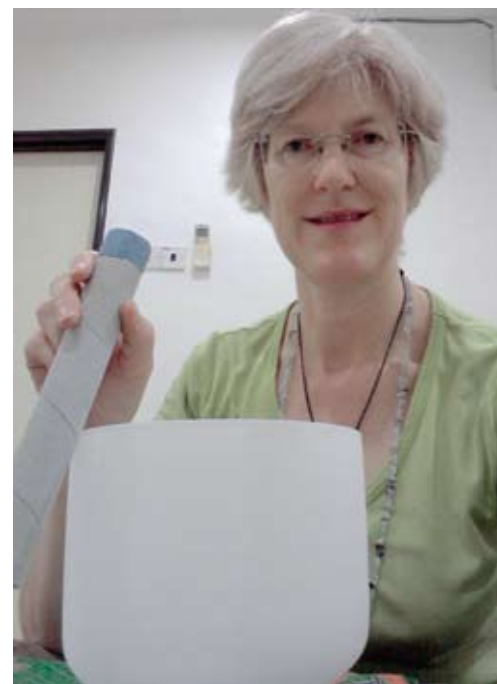
Have you ever wondered why some types of music will automatically relax you, while others, simply make you want to scream? Science tells us that sounds are a form of energy. Most people who are willing to use this energy as a complementary therapy tool have attested to its high success rates.

Anne Huxtable, an Australian living in Ipoh, is a sound therapist who practises in her spare time. I experienced her techniques for complementary therapy and came away pleasantly surprised at its effectiveness.

During a session, she showed me the various different "tools" that can be used in sound healing sessions. The two cloudy crystal singing bowls which were made from pure quartz crystal were beautiful and gave off what would probably be to others a beautiful range of sounds. Unfortunately, I must be among the odd few who found the frequencies generated by the bowls a little disturbing.

Then there was a beautiful sounding tool which looked to me like a mini xylophone. This tool is usually placed on the person's body at his/her seven chakra points and as each piece is lightly tapped, the sound emitted will allow the practitioner to assess the condition of that particular part of the body. If a particular area's energy is negative, then positive vibrations can be introduced into the affected area for healing.

Then came the "tool" that impressed me the most. The tuning fork! I say impressed, because although I was rather skeptical about trying this therapy method, (I had never seen tuning forks, so to me they looked like something a mechanic or electrician would use) I felt immediate effects when Anne placed the tuning fork on the area where I was experiencing a nagging ache. I could feel an immediate tingling sensation as the vibrations worked on my muscles and relieved the tension. I was so thrilled at the immediate results enjoyed, that I am now seriously considering getting one of my own.



Anne Huxtable with crystal singing bowl

Next issue IE177: Karmic and Angelic Reiki, Reiki, Karuna, Ki, Sufi, Imara Attunement, Fast Track and EFT technique, TMC (Traditional Chinese Medicine) and Acupuncture, Pranic Healing.

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Phytobiophysics flower remedies

From the Editor's Desk
by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

ACCOUNTING FOR THEIR ACTIONS

A regimental board of inquiry is required to be convened within 21 days upon the report of a loss or damage of a controlled item(s). That is the Standard Operating Procedure in the army. I don't know about the police...

At the rate things are going today it will be a matter of time before the inevitable happens. Are we heading for a catastrophe far worse than what is experienced by Greece and Portugal? I don't wish to be an odious naysayer or an obnoxious armchair critic who harbours ill feelings towards his kinsmen and country. My forte is definitely not foretelling troubles and bleakness and a future devoid of colour. But being a keen observer of my surroundings, my predictions are seldom wrong.

Take the petrol price hike on September 3, as an example. I have harboured thoughts that the prices of RON 95 and diesel would go up once the general elections are over. It took barely five months after the ruling coalition was reinstated in Putrajaya for it to happen. My other fear is the implementation of the long-awaited Goods and Services Tax, which will come our way soon.

The consensus among economists is that businesses would find a way to escape the tax regime while the rich would not be impacted. As in the past, the well-heeled are never affected anyway, as they have the means and the resources to doctor their documents and to grease the palms of those concerned.

Poor enforcement and rampant corruption are two factors that hamper the proper implementation of government policies and directives. For as long as there is a will there is a way. I have many anecdotal examples to back my claim. Poor monitoring and the "tidak apa" attitude of enforcement agencies at border regions, especially at the Thai border, has allowed foreigners to buy our relatively cheap fuel not in litres but in drums.

The sensitivity of Malaysians to a possible price hike is simply incredible. On the evening of Friday, September 27, I was shocked when the petrol station near my house was swamped with motorists eager to fill up. It did not occur to me that rumours were circulating on the social media that



the price of RON 95 would be increased by another 10 sen. It took none other than the Deputy Prime Minister himself to quash the rumours by issuing a statement to the contrary. Apparently, news of a possible hike in cigarette prices was also making the rounds. No wonder my favourite mamak shop was similarly swamped that very day.

But these minor excitements are nothing compared to the din created by the 2012 Auditor General's Report, which was tabled in Parliament on Tuesday, October 2. Here are some glaring examples of wastage and mismanagement committed by federal agencies whose integrity I question:

Topping my list is the more than RM1.33 million worth of assets lost by the police force. Missing items, according to the auditors, included 156 pairs of handcuffs, 44 firearms (pistols and rifles), 29 vehicles, 26 walkie-talkies and 22 radios. The loss is enormous by any definition and, being a former serviceman, I find the reasons given by the Inspector General of Police simplistic and incredible.

One of my platoon commanders, during an operation in the Belum jungles back in the early 1980s, used his

M16 assault rifle to shoot fish in a creek. Instead of firing the weapon from above he dipped the barrel in the water and fired. The force of the water caused the barrel to split like a bamboo. He was duly charged and court-martialed. His negligence caused him a forfeiture of seniority and was made to pay for the damaged weapon. Another officer lost his 9mm Brownie pistol while on a train ride to Johore Bahru. He too was court-martialed and suffered a reduction in seniority and was made to pay for the loss.

In both instances, the punishments were swift, as a regimental board of inquiry is required to be convened within 21 days upon the report of a loss or damage of a controlled item(s). That is the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in the army. I don't know about the police but I am sure there are SOPs in place. How effective their SOPs are is left to your imagination.

The Home Minister and the IGP have attributed the missing weapons to training – the firearms sank to the bottom of the sea! Seven, according to the IGP, have been recovered making the final number as 37. Thirty seven can equip a complete rifle platoon with some to spare. That is the enormity of the problem. You just cannot dismiss it as something insignificant.

The other on my list is dubious purchases by the Information, Communication and Culture Ministry. Twenty wall clocks at RM3,810 each, three A4-size scanners at RM14,670 each and five A3 scanners at RM103,105 each. The prices are simply unbelievable.

The list of improprieties goes on. My question is why the seemingly lack of action taken against the wrongdoers? Is the AG's Report a mere eyewash and a distraction? Civil servants have to be more accountable for their actions.

But is accountability possible in an environment where political masters are equally culpable? Your guess is as good as mine.

In The Name Of My Father's Estate

Episode 22

by Peter Lee

Since Connie (Lee Sr's 2nd wife) could not agree with the suggestion by Mrs Patricia Lee (Lee Sr's first wife) to renounce her claim to the joint bank accounts between Lee Sr. and Mrs Patricia Lee in ZNA Bank, Singapore which amounts to S\$3 million, Mrs Patricia Lee further asked Connie "So, if you can't agree to renouncing your entitlement to the joint bank accounts between myself and my husband, then can you renounce your rights to the entitlement of shares in my own family Companies and in return my family will renounce our rights to the entitlement of shares in companies which you have set up with my husband?" "No" was Connie's response. Mrs Patricia Lee then said "Ok! What if we share the money in my joint bank accounts with ZNA Bank, Singapore according to Intestacy Law but you and your children renounce your rights to the shares in my family companies?" Connie replied, "I think I still prefer all the assets to be distributed according to Intestacy Law."

With frustration and anger, Mrs Patricia Lee turned to John and Michele (children of the first family) and said "Since she wants every damn thing, I think I am going to blow up if I continue talking to her. So, can you guys talk to her about this?" John then said, "Mum, let Michele and I talk to her privately later." John turned to Connie and said "Connie! Are you okay with this? Connie replied "If you want this so called private meeting, I have no problem but whatever it is, my decision still stays. So! When can we have this meeting?" John replied, "To resolve it quickly, why not after this family meeting. Are you okay with this?" Connie confirms by nodding. Michele also agreed to it. He then asked, "Dave, is it okay to use this room? In reply, Dave said "Yes".

Connie then excused herself to the washroom and while walking to the washroom, she phoned her lawyer, May and said "May! This is Connie. I need you to do me a favour and it has to be today. I need you to write to ZNA Bank, Singapore to inform them of the demise of my husband and to freeze whatever joint accounts he has." May then asked, "Is this joint account with you or someone else?" Connie replied, "This account is jointly owned with his first wife. We are now having a family meeting and looks like she thinks that all the money in this account belongs to her. All I want is for me and my children to claim our entitlement of my husband's 50 per cent in this account." May then replied, "Ok! Can you forward your marriage certificate so that we can prove to the bank that you are the wife?" In response Connie said "I can't because our marriage was not registered but I can provide you the birth certificates of my children which show that my husband is their father." In reply, May said, "I think that's not good enough." Connie then said "If that's the case, can you write for me and I will sign for it." "Okay! I am not sure it will work but I will do it for you." While Connie was talking to May, Mrs Patricia Lee was in Dave's office room booking a flight to Singapore for the next day to withdraw the money in the joint bank account.

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 can be reached at: 012-5078825/ 05-2554853 or excelsecems@gmail.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>. His Book "To Delay is Human but to Will is Divine" (96 pages, RM28) is available at his office: 108 (2nd Floor), Jalan Raja Ekram, 30450 Ipoh; Rashi Mini Market (019-510 6284), 37 Jalan Perajurit, Ipoh Garden East; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.



EYE HEALTH – DO's and DON'Ts with CONTACT LENSES

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking about CONTACT LENS CARE.

Many young people these days prefer not to wear glasses to correct short-sightedness and other refractive errors, preferring to wear contact lenses either for cosmetic or sports reasons. Regardless of the reasons, it is important to know how to look after them to avoid contact lens related problems.

There are basically two general categories of contact lenses – soft contact lenses and rigid gas permeable (RGP) contact lenses requiring different care requirements. There should be no short cuts in the care of these lenses.

Some pointers to take note of are as follows:

- CLEAN YOUR HANDS:** This is the most basic and crucial step before you handle any contact lenses. Failure to do so can result in serious eye infections. It is mandatory to wash hands with soap and clean water, dry them with a clean dry towel, before handling contact lenses. Make sure that the soap is free from moisturizers as it may then end up in the eye, only to cause problems such as eye irritation, eye pain, redness or blurred vision.
- USE PROPER DISINFECTING SOLUTIONS:** It is important to use the proper disinfecting contact lens solutions and enzymatic protein removing cleaners if you are not wearing daily disposable lenses. Never ever use tap water or any other solutions to wash or clean your lenses. Microorganisms easily contaminate the contact lenses and may lead to eye infections. Clean each contact lens carefully by gently rubbing the surface between your palm and fingers. Remember to clean your contact lens case daily too. The contact lens case will also need to be replaced every three months. Never leave the contact lens storage case in the bathroom where moisture and bacteria can settle on it.
- MAKE-UP:** All make-up should be applied after putting on the contact lenses and not before doing so. Likewise, take out your contact lenses before removing eye make-up.
- LEARN HOW TO WEAR THEM CORRECTLY:** Learning the correct method of putting on and taking off contact lenses is essential to prevent the accidental scratching of your corneas or tearing the soft contact lenses. Learn how to recognise whether the contact lenses are the correct way up by placing them on the tip of the finger before putting them on. Make sure that they are the right side up. If not, do remove them and reinsert them into the eyes.
- DO NOT SWIM WITH CONTACT LENSES:** Never ever swim with your contact lenses on. This is because there is a risk of getting an eye infection from a kind of bacteria commonly found in swimming pool water, tubs, oceans and lakes. The organism is called Acanthamoeba. Should this organism get into the eye through contaminated contact lenses, it could lead to an eye infection that is difficult to treat.

Additional pointers:

- Remove your contact lenses if you experience any symptoms of eye irritation, redness or eye discharge, excessive tearing, burning, blurred vision or eye pain.
- Remove your contact lenses if they feel uncomfortable as they may be torn.
- Should you have eye problems associated with contact lens wear, don't throw them away as you may be required to bring along the lenses when you see your eye doctor as he may wish to send them to a laboratory to identify the organisms that may be causing your eye problems.

Contact lenses when used correctly, have been a safe alternative to correct refractive errors like myopia. However, if you do not follow proper procedures, you may be unnecessarily exposing your eyes to problems. If you are in doubt about any contact lens related eye problems, do seek professional help.

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



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Birds Foul-Up Clear Vision

Malaysians are aware that the use of CCTVs has taken off in Malaysia. The idea is to reduce our dependency on security guards, because of problems in finding suitable and responsible workers.

According to one industry expert, CCTV operations are cheaper in the long run. They can be operated 24 hours per day, seven days a week. The CCTVs are not affected by employees calling in sick, staff annual holidays, emergency leave or staff who are absent from their posts for long coffee breaks or extended lunches.

In March 2010, the Ipoh City Council made plans to install an additional 76 CCTVs, to augment the 24 units which had already been approved by the Housing and Local Government Ministry.

Ipoh Mayor Roshidi Hashim said that the installation would enhance security in the rapidly developing Ipoh city and its surroundings. Business centres were being built in areas further from the city centre, like Simpang Pulai, Bercham or Taman Meru, and Roshidi said that CCTVs would help reassure residents, within and outside the city centre, of their safety.

Roshidi said that each CCTV unit was estimated to cost RM3,000 and that funding for the additional CCTVs would be borne by the taxpayer. The CCTVs would be linked to a control room in the city council and also to the Perak police headquarters.

It is gratifying to note that the rural community is not excluded from the promotion of the use of CCTVs. There is a drive by the Malaysian government, to upgrade 15 community colleges throughout the nation, and the Gerik Community College (GCC) has already received 16 CCTVs. The total upgrade allocation for nationwide colleges cost the government RM50.17 million.

The 2012 Auditor-General's Report revealed a huge price difference between the price of the CCTVs supplied to GCC and those supplied to a similar college in Masjid Tanah, Malacca. One CCTV unit in Gerik was valued at RM85,500 compared with the Masjid Tanah one, which cost RM10,249. The CCTVs in Masjid Tanah was approximately eight times cheaper than the cameras in Gerik.

The high cost of the CCTV installation in Gerik can be attributed to its rural location and the difficulty of finding experienced contractors, who were willing to undertake work in the countryside. Gerik is more remote than Masjid Tanah.

The Education Ministry has justified the high cost of the CCTVs, by claiming that they had been purchased separately. They said, "The specifications, design, suppliers, locations



and method of installation were different. The prices had been reviewed during the tender process as part of the entire project cost." This sounds very plausible.

Critics of the audit claimed that a CCTV, which had been installed on the second floor of a college, had lacked a zoom function, whilst another CCTV which could rotate 360 degrees had been mounted on a wall, and was unable to make full use of this function.

These critics failed to note that CCTVs are very expensive and are possibly worth more than the fixtures they are secured to, or even the buildings which they are monitoring. CCTVs need careful positioning.

The audit revealed that one camera had stopped recording because its disc was full, but the more serious issue, was the bird droppings covering the CCTVs, which rendered the cameras useless.

Blame had initially been placed on the maintenance of these units, but it is disingenuous for the critics to blame the maintenance crew, especially as it is common knowledge that the Malaysian work culture does not normally include

maintenance. It is possible that the need for regular maintenance, was overlooked in the tendering process.

Sources, who wished to remain anonymous, said that it is a generally accepted government policy, that it is better to procure new equipment than to maintain old equipment.

Malaysians prefer to replace items, as soon as they become obsolete, through frequent use or a breakdown in one of the components, although the CCTV which stopped functioning just needs a new disc to resume recording.

Anyone living or working in rural locations knows that it is normal for birds to leave droppings on fixed structures like those situated near the eaves of roofs. The amount deposited is directly proportional to the quantity of birds in the area. In other words, more birds mean more droppings. More extreme suggestions to rectify the problem include building a cage to house the CCTVs, or a team of sharpshooters to kill the birds before they can perch on the CCTVs.

A report which has yet to be commissioned, will propose that a team of dedicated workers will be required, to clean the CCTVs on a regular basis. This will provide jobs for people living in the local area and thus, attract praise from the community. A strong message is being delivered, that machines need humans to make them function properly.

Cleaning bird droppings from CCTV lenses is a small price to pay in the fight against crime. Unfortunately, the birds are not the only ones fouling up the system.



THINKING ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar

Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Digestive Health

GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE (GERD)

GERD is a common chronic digestive condition that occurs when stomach acid or bile flows back into your food pipe. The backwash of acid irritates the lining of your oesophagus and causes GERD symptoms. These symptoms can interfere with your daily activities.

Symptoms:

- A burning sensation in your chest (heartburn)
- Chest pain
- Difficulty swallowing
- Dry cough
- Hoarseness or sore throat
- Regurgitation of food or liquid



When you swallow, the lower esophageal sphincter – a circular band of muscle around the bottom part of your oesophagus – relaxes to allow food and liquid to flow down into your stomach. Then it closes again.

However, if this valve relaxes abnormally or weakens, stomach acid can flow back up into your esophagus, causing frequent heartburn. Carbonated drinks, spicy food and alcohol, fatty food can also cause the valve to relax abnormally thus producing symptoms of GERD.

GERD symptoms can also be aggravated by a number of medications – either through impaired valve function or by damaging the oesophageal surface.

This constant backwash of acid can irritate the lining of your oesophagus, causing it to become inflamed. Over time, the inflammation can erode the oesophagus, causing complications:

- Narrowing of the oesophagus (stricture). The scar tissue narrows the food pathway, causing difficulty swallowing.
- An open sore in the oesophagus (ulcer). Stomach acid can severely erode tissues in the oesophagus, causing an open sore to form. The esophageal ulcer may bleed, cause pain and make swallowing difficult.
- Barrett's oesophagus. Changes occur to the tissue lining the lower oesophagus which is associated with an increased risk of esophageal cancer.



Risk factors for GERD include:

- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Smoking
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Delayed stomach emptying.

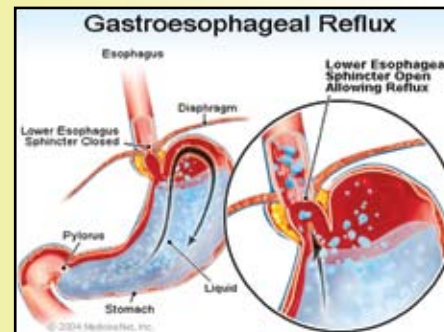
Most people can manage the discomfort of heartburn with lifestyle modifications:

- taking frequent small meals
- avoid food that can aggravate the condition including alcohol
- avoid tight fitting clothes
- elevate the head of the bed by 30 degrees
- to have an interval of 3 hours between meals and bedtime
- weight loss.

When to see a doctor

- If you take over-the-counter medications for heartburn more than twice per week.
- Chest pain.
- Difficulty swallowing.
- Loss of weight and appetite.
- Persistent vomiting.

GERD can be diagnosed by doing an endoscopy which involves inserting a scope through the mouth down to the stomach to assess the internal surfaces of the stomach, oesophagus and duodenum. The scope will show any inflammation and enable a biopsy to be done to determine the presence of cancer.



MUSINGS ON FOOD



By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

SeeFoon Goes Gastro Bar Hopping

Where I used to be the doyenne of pubs and nightspots with loud music I now shun places where the decibel level is higher than 65 (the decibel level for normal speech), seeking instead, venues where quiet conversation, good food and reasonably priced drinks are the raison d'être for going.

So when my gang of office colleagues suggested that I go bar hopping with them, I shuddered and was about to decline when one of them said, "The food is pretty good and if we go early, like after work, its not noisy". After much cajoling, I relented and we all traipsed off to **Bricks & Barrels** for an early dinner.

Arriving at 6.30pm, the lights were dimmed and a few tables were already occupied mostly with drinkers. One big family of varying ages occupied almost one side of the room and it was heartening watching them tucking into platter after platter of food and relishing each bite.

Our 'small' group of seven settled at one of the high tables with their equally high stools and proceeded with our order. Regular tables and chairs are available in the back garden but as the area was only fan cooled, we opted to stay in the air conditioned section in the front. The temperature here was comfortable enough and the piped music bearable to my ears, although the decibel level heats up considerably when the live music from Urban 7 begins at 9.30pm.

Bricks & Barrels is one of the new breed of 'gastro' pubs that have begun mushrooming in Ipoh. Based on the concept of an English pub and instead of serving boring pub grub as most are prone to do, gastropubs are meant to elevate pub food to gastronomic levels offering wholesome well prepared food at prices that while not cheap, nevertheless won't make a hole in people's pockets.

Bricks & Barrels does this well. This is a place where families can come to taste and sample western food and leave before the party crowd descends. This is when the music gets raucous and the beer and booze really start to flow.

The menu at Bricks & Barrels is quite extensive although starters are restricted to three soups, two salads and a ratatouille



which is a mediterranean-style stewed mixed vegetable in a tomato base served with sourdough bread. The **mushroom soup** which arrived was fragrant, thick and creamy and for the small eaters at our table, more than enough for two people. A **Tapas** or snack menu also serves as an alternative to starters and one has a choice of a variety of small tidbits to whet one's appetite as one waits for the main courses to arrive. These range from fried lamb bits to fried calamari or squid, buffalo wings or chicken bits.

The specialty at Bricks & Barrels appear to be meat with Pork dominating the menu and starring in myriad roles. From the English Roast Pork belly to the **Roasted Teriyaki Pork Loin**,

or the Porky Parmigiana which is pan fried, breadcrumb pork loin, topped with cheddar and mozzarella cheese, the pork menu is extensive.

Pork also shows up in their pastas in their Porky Carbonara, with Italian Parmesan cream, portabello mushrooms and bacon; their **Roast Pork Aglio Olio** which is simply spaghetti tossed with virgin olive oil, garlic and topped with roasted pork belly chunks a la our Chinese *Siew Yoke*, combining elements of east and west; and their **Spaghetti Porky Bolognese**, the perfect option for those who don't eat beef.

And if that wasn't porky enough, three of their pizzas feature pork from the **Hawaiian Pork Pizza** with bacon, pineapple, Italian mozzarella to the **Roast Pork Pizza** and the German Sausage Pizza. Their pizzas are thin crusted, crispy and well worth ordering. On the night we were there we ordered the **Smoked Duck Pizza** which I would go back for.

But the crème de la crème and the most impressive dish is their **Porky Platter**, a Hog's heaven for 4-6 people consisting of 3 types of German sausages, barbecued spare ribs, roast pork and potato wedges. Two types of sauce came with the platter as did Sauerkraut (German pickled cabbage) and pickled gherkins. The spare ribs were falling off the bone tender and the roast pork with its superb crackling a real treat, not to mention the crispy potato wedges which I couldn't resist picking at. This platter was certainly enough for the seven of us with leftovers to spare.

We then ordered the **Creamy Seafood Spaghetti** with a white wine parmesan sauce, squid, prawn and capelin roe. This was delectable, with generous chunks of scallop, squid, big prawns, sundried tomatoes and the white wine bringing the right smidgen of tartness to the sauce. And to my delight, the spaghetti was al dente.

By this time we were groaning with surfeit but soldier on we did and ordered dessert. We only managed one as the others we wanted were out of stock. The ingredients in this dessert intrigued us and proved to be worth the effort. This **Premium Vanilla ice cream** was topped with olive oil, sea salt and a raspberry balsamic glaze, marrying savoury with sweet. This was a mixed marriage that worked, the sea salt and virgin olive oil bringing a hint of the Mediterranean to an otherwise bland dessert.

Of course other meat items are also on the menu with chicken, lamb and even Wagyu beef but for me I will go to Bricks & Barrels for their porky dishes.

Ladies will be pleased to know that on Tuesday nights, selected complimentary cocktails will be served and massive discounts given on other cocktails.



- Creamy Seafood Spaghetti — RM30
- Spaghetti Roast Pork Aglio Olio — RM24
- Mushroom Soup — RM12
- Soup of the Day — RM6
- Caesar Salad (with chicken) — RM20
- Smoked Duck Pizza — RM32
- Roast Pork Pizza — RM29
- Porky Parmigiana — RM23
- Porky Platter (for 4-6 persons) — RM98
- Tapas — From RM13-RM16

Bricks & Barrels

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News

The Role of Civil Society

What does “civil society” mean? Many people associate it with non-governmental organisations and other bodies not linked to the government.

But, in all honesty, its definition is far beyond that.

Civil society is the third sector of society that manifests interests and the will of citizens, independent of the government.

At a recent lecture, jointly organised by Perak Academy and Institut Darul Ridzuan, through Majlis Masyarakat Sivil Amanjaya, speaker Dato’ Dr Muthiah Alagappa spoke on the topic, “Strengthening Democracy in Malaysia: The Role of Civil Society”.

Dr Muthiah is Tun Hussein Onn Chair in International Studies at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Kuala Lumpur.

The first half of the lecture was on how to go about strengthening democracy while the second, on the role of civil society in strengthening democracy.

The lecture began with a general discussion on the principles of democracy, relevant provisions in the constitution and the practice of democracy in Malaysia since Independence in 1957.

Dr Muthiah bared the constitutional weaknesses of Malaysia; two very glaring ones are the lack of a Bill of Rights, which spells out the political and civil rights of citizens, and its over-focus on Federal legislation, as opposed to State legislation, the

power of the State.

Other weaknesses include the fundamental erosion of the judiciary system and the excessive concentration of power with the Executive.

Suggested measures to correct these weaknesses are through four main pillars namely, strengthening electoral democracy, strengthening democratic governance, democratise the state and strengthening civil liberties of individuals.

So, how does one go about strengthening democracy? The initial step is to reform the electoral process, including increasing the equality of votes and improving representation in constituencies.

The judiciary system also needs to be strengthened by rebuilding public confidence.

Ultimately, what is required is a mindset change, to reduce dependency on the government, and to move from an ethnic-based to a civic-based nation.

It is, therefore, important to ensure that democracy is the only form of governance in Malaysia. It is a legacy that should be cherished considering the turmoil in countries like Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and Indonesia.

Emily



Heart Wellness Camp 2013



With the theme, “Take The Road To A Healthy Heart”, Pantai Hospital Ipoh, in collaboration with the Parent-Teacher Associations of three schools, namely SJK(C) Yuk Choy, SJK(C) Ave Maria and SJK(C) Sam Tet, organised heart wellness camps in Ipoh and Malim Nawar. This is the fourth consecutive year that the hospital has organised the programme with non-governmental organisations.

The camp in Ipoh, held on World Heart Day on Sunday, September 29 within the grounds of SJK (C) Yuk Choy, was launched by Azizul Kama Abdul Aziz, political secretary to the Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah. The camp in Malim Nawar was held on Sunday, October 13.

The Ipoh camp saw the participation of over a thousand people consisting of school children, teachers, parents and the public. The focus was on cardiovascular disease prevention. It highlighted actions that can be taken from a young age to reduce the risk of the disease. Some of the activities at the camp included medical talks on stroke and diabetes, a medical exhibition and free health screenings.

In line with the theme of the programme, and to encourage a healthy lifestyle, the camp kicked off with a mass exercise.

Organising Chairman, Albert Looi, said, “We hope that through these activities, individuals will know of ways to reduce the risk of heart diseases in themselves and their loved ones.”

Emily

Memory Walk

Some 1,600 people from all walks of life, both young and old, participated in Ipoh’s second Memory Walk, held on Saturday, September 28 in conjunction with World Alzheimer’s Day. This day is remembered throughout the world on September 21 annually.

Jointly organised by Dementia Society Perak and Universiti Kuala Lumpur Royal College of Medicine Perak (UniKL RCMP), the objective of the 5-km walk was to raise awareness regarding memory impairments, commonly known as dementia, which is often mistaken as part of an ageing process. Alzheimer’s is one type of dementia.

The walk, which was flagged off by Mayor Dato’ Roshidi Hashim, also saw the participation of Dato’ Dr Mah Hang Soon, former Executive Councillor for Health and Dr Esther Ebenezer, Chairperson of Dementia Society Perak. The society was established in October 2010.



UniKL RCMP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Dementia Society Perak on August 30, 2013, to adopt the society’s daycare centre currently located at No. 15, Jalan Foo Choong Nyit, Ipoh. The college sends students to the centre daily to help out with the clients. The students get hands-on training in return.

“Dr Esther has done a very good job in creating awareness in dementia. The adoption of the day care centre by UniKL RCMP is an important milestone for the society,” said Mah to reporters. He urged other corporations to do likewise.

Symptoms of dementia include memory loss, disorientation and emotional disturbances. Although dementia is not necessarily an old age disease, the older one is, the higher the risk of dementia.

As Malaysia moves towards a developed nation status with an ageing population, more and more people are found to be afflicted with dementia, especially among women. About 30 percent of those above 80 run the risk of developing the condition. Although there is still no medical cure for dementia, medication and therapy can reduce the speed of deterioration.

The society’s centre is the only dementia daycare centre in Perak. It can accommodate only 15 per day. The society plans to build a new centre in Gunung Lang next year at a cost of RM3 million. This new centre can accommodate up to 50 clients a day.

The Dementia Society Perak, a non-profit organisation, runs the Dementia Daycare Centre on the generosity of the public. The centre gives caregivers respite from taking care of a family member with dementia for a nominal fee of RM20 per day. Caregivers are also given training on how to care for demented patients and how to handle their behavioural problems. Transport is also provided at an additional cost of RM5. Lunch is provided free by Ipoh Specialist Centre and Pantai Hospital Ipoh on weekly rotational basis.

Those requiring information on the Dementia Day Care Centre can contact the society at 05-241 1691.

Emily

Theme Park Goes Spooky

Ipoh’s only theme park, Lost World of Tambun, has oodles of activity for the coming Halloween. In fact, for the entire month of October, the park has prepared itself for the end-of-month spooky day. Fun and thrills are in the offing for visitors of all ages.

Some of the creepy things on the card are the perennial “Tricks or Treats” at the Treasure Land, ghastly characters lurking around the park ready to pounce on unsuspecting visitors, a museum dedicated to Asian horrors, a haunted chamber and many more.

Make a date with the Lost World of Tambun and get the scare you so eagerly await. Click on the park’s website www.sunwaylostworldoftambun.com for details.

RM



News

Another Budget Hotel Opens

Tulip Hotel opened its doors recently. Located at Sunway City Ipoh within walking distance to the Lost World of Tambun, the Tulip offers business and family-friendly hotel accommodations and services at an excellent value. The hotel rooms are stylishly designed with premium bedding and a choice of pillows for the best possible sleep experience. Every room is attached with a large shower space, which includes a filtered water system and great water pressure to help you start your day off right.

The facilities they provide are free wireless access, air-conditioning, telephone and LED TV with Astro subscription. To ensure guests stay at ease, security cameras and burglar alarm systems are installed to monitor the lobby, hallway and parking area.

Tulip is designed specifically for travelers who are looking for an affordable stay without compromising comfort. Tulip provides five different types of room to cater for individuals, group corporates, local or foreign visitors and even families. Rooms range from RM70 nett for a single room to RM140 nett for a family room.

For more information log on to www.gotulip.com, find them on Facebook, contact them at +605-541 7199 or write in to info@gotulip.com for booking assistance.



Ave Maria's 'Sparkling' Graduation



On October 4, Form 5 students of Ave Maria Convent held a graduation night themed "Go Forth and Sparkle" at Impiana Hotel. The programme started off at 7pm with speeches from a student representative and Dato' Liew Yin Yin.

Students from every class took their turn to either act or dance on stage. There were many kinds of dances throughout the night. There were Latin dance, rhythmic gymnastics, k-pop dances and even dances from the '60s. Students who danced to One Direction songs and the latest craze "Mother Father Gentlemen" by PSY got the most applause and cheers.

Before the night ended, the students sang their theme song which they composed, filling the ballroom with voices of the Form 5 students. Teachers and students went home with wide smiles on their faces, sparkles in their eyes and pictures for memories while some went home with lucky draw prizes.

Susan Ho

Tourism

Hornbill Feeding at Pangkor

Pangkor Island, Perak's idyllic and laid-back holiday destination, has another interesting product to offer its visitors. This is hornbill feeding where every evening at 6.30pm at the Sunset View Chalets at Nipah Bay, its owner Nordin Bakar, 56, will feed the island's population of hornbills.

Nordin has been feeding these birds for the past nine years beginning at a time when they 'dropped by' usually in the evening. Then one day he experimented calling them by whistling.

The initial response was lukewarm but after seven months, and after trying out various types and tunes of whistling, he would attract 25 birds. Now the birds arrive in batches. On most days the birds would number 25 to 30 but can total to 60 on some days.

Initially, he fed the birds with bread, papaya and bananas but eventually he standardized it to bananas as the birds seemed to like that fruit best. From 2kg of bananas in the beginning it has increased to 4kg per day due to increasing numbers coming to feed. His monthly cost is RM300.

Nordin has now fixed his feeding time at 6.30pm daily as he noticed more would come at this time. His daily routine now includes peeling the bananas at 6pm and by 6.30pm, the birds would fly in and perch around the dining room to watch Nordin while more birds would wait on the cables above the chalets.



Just before 6.30pm Nordin would whistle loudly and from nowhere more birds would fly in. It is quite a spectacular show as Nordin throws the cut bananas one piece at a time into the air as the hornbills catch the fruit while in flight. He also feeds them by hand.

The gathered audience would then join in to feed the hornbills, some throwing the bananas above while others fed the birds from their hand. I tried feeding the hornbills and at one try, saw three hornbills flying down for one banana.

Incredibly the birds always took the banana but never bit my fingers at any time. Interestingly every time they swooped down to feed it was the strength of their wings that created a sense of a strong breeze over my head.

Once the birds had their fill they could be seen playing as they fenced with their beaks. By 7pm the hornbills had dispersed and so too the audience. The event was a lovely experience which visitors should view when they visit Pangkor.

For information you may contact Nordin Bakar at The Sunset View Chalets, Lot 4461, Teluk Nipah, Pangkor Island. Tel: 605-6855448/012-408 2297. Fax: 605-685 5449. Email: sunsetviewchalet@gmail.com.

JAG



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14. Restoran Ipoh Padang, Jln Raja Ekram. Tel: 019-5115137/016-5140122
15. YMCA, Jln Raja Musa Aziz. Tel: 05-2540809/2539464
16. Ipoh Echo's office or Meru Valley Golf Club members' desk.



RPP RM29

Community

“We can do it... bersama-sama!”

The spirit of teamwork and muhibbah – the way we were, the way it should be – beautifully captured in this photo taken during the Brooks-KRI Annual Run 2013 on October 6 at The Haven, Ipoh. More than 1000 runners of all races and nationalities participated in this much-loved event organised by *Kelab Roadrunners Ipoh*. It was flagged off by Ipoh Mayor, Dato’ Haji Roshidi bin Hashim.



Malayalee Harvest Festival



The Perak Malayalee Association recently celebrated their Onam Festival, otherwise called their Harvest Festival, which they co-celebrated with Malaysia Day.

Over 600 members from the community, some from as far as Sitiawan, gathered at the Ipoh Town Hall on Sunday October 6. The actual Onam celebration was on September 16. As it coincided with Malaysia Day it was postponed and a joint celebration organised..

The event which was scheduled from 1pm till 5pm featured the community’s traditional vegetarian lunch, cultural activities and dances performed by their members and the presentation of awards for academic excellence, appreciation and a children’s art competition.

The event was graced by the presence of the President of the All Malaysia Malayalee Association (AMMA) Tan Sri Datuk Ravindran Menon. Other VIP guests present included Deputy CPO Perak, Datuk A. Paramasivam, Tuan Azizul Kama Abdul Aziz the Deputy Secretary to 2nd Finance Minister Dato’ Seri Husni Hanadziah as well as PMA President Mr R. Narayanan.

Before the start of the speeches the VIPs participated in the lighting of the *Nilavilakku*, the traditional lamp used commonly in Kerala and South India. AMMA President Ravindran in his speech said the community should be proud to be Malaysian as despite its diversity there was unity through the government’s policy of inclusiveness.

Ravindran also thanked Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Najib as well as 2nd Finance Minister Dato’ Seri Husni Hanadziah for the government’s financial contributions to the community which totaled over RM8 million recently, which he said would be utilized to improve the economic standing of the community.

PMA President R. Narayanan thanked his hard working committee for their positive efforts to make the event memorable and encouraged more Malayalee’s to be members.

JAG

Disabled Army Veterans Feted

Former sergeant with the Royal Malay Regiment recalled a painful incident during an operation in the Gubir jungles of Kedah in the late 1970s. “It was sometime in 1979. My battalion was on a search and destroy mission. Our platoon was atop a mountain when we received orders to do a sweep along a ridge. It was during the sweep that

I stepped on a bobby trap laid by terrorists on a track which we had taken,” said retired Sergeant Abdul Jalil



Sahli, 58, to Ipoh Echo. “I lost my left foot, as a result. In spite of the loss, I continued in the army until my retirement in 1995.”

Sergeant Abdul Jalil was among a group of 84 disabled army veterans who were feted at a ceremony held in their honour on the occasion of HQ 2 Brigade’s 58th Anniversary. The Ipoh-based infantry brigade has been celebrating its formation day in September of each year. And each time the event is held, former soldiers are invited to attend as a form of recognition for their services to the army.

Brig-Gen Dato’ Md Dzahir Abd Rashid and senior officers of the brigade were on hand to entertain the invitees. The ceremony was held at the brigade headquarters mess hall. Dzahir thanked the retirees and reminded them that their sacrifices to King and Country were not forgotten.

Each received a RM500 cash donation. “It’s the brigade’s way of thanking these veterans for their services,” said the brigade commander to Ipoh Echo.

RM

Sum Meets Residents

Ipoh Police Chief, ACP Sum Chang Keong, attended a meet-the-people session organised by the Rakan Cop Menglembu Branch recently. The session, held at the town’s night market, was attended by state assemblywoman, Ms Lim Pie Har, community leaders and a large number of Menglembu residents.

Sum spoke at length on the objective of the meeting. “It’s the Police’s way of extending our friendship to the people of Menglembu,” he said. He hoped that the residents would in return give their fullest co-operation for mutual benefit. He briefed the audience on the security situation and the actions taken by the police to combat crime in Menglembu.

The function ended with a dinner hosted by the Rakan Cop Menglembu branch. After dinner Sum and his senior officers walked around the night market and got acquainted with both traders and customers.



Having face-to-face contact with locals is one of the ways the Police have adopted, to tackle crime within an area. Known officially as High Profile Policing, it involves senior police officers meeting the people through informal meet-the-people sessions such as this.

OSH

Invalid Lawrence Passes Away



The second of the four invalid Francis brothers passed away on September 19. Lawrence Francis, 34, was a cerebral palsy patient along with his three other siblings. Elder brother, Morgan Francis, 36, died in his sleep in May 2010. They, with the exception of Patrick Francis, 41, who moves about in a wheelchair, are confined to bed as they are incapable of bodily movements due to their conditions.

The Francis brothers were adopted by the Y’s Men’s Club of Ipoh since 2007. The club sees to the siblings’ needs such as: food, clothing and limited financial support. Members of the club visited the bereaved family recently to hand over some much needed necessities.

Readers wishing to donate can contact Jean Antonia at 016-519 1563 for details.

Ed

Community

Beginning of a New Century

More than eight hundred former Michaelian's gathered in the basketball court on the grounds of their Alma Mater to usher in the 2nd Century of St Michael's Institution (SMI). The school had celebrated its 100th years of its founding last year. Hence the theme for the night was 'The Beginning of a New Century...the end of an Era'.

As is tradition, the annual dinner of the Old Michaelian Association (OMA) is held on the last Saturday of September each year. OMA President Adrian Tsen in his address welcomed the former students "to another evening of Michaelian fellowship".

This year there were 90 recipients for the school's jubilee certificates. SMI Principal Madam Loh Wei Seng was one of them, having left the school 40 years ago. All recipients after receiving their certificates from Dato Bro Vincent Corkery fondly sang their school song with gusto in true Michaelian spirit of fellowship.

JAG



iSpeak

A. Jeyaraj

Need for a Second Hospital

Considering the hardship Ipohites face to access Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh's General Hospital, it is about time that a second hospital be built. Roads leading to and out of the hospital are virtually clogged up daily.

The tempo builds up and around mid-day, getting to the hospital is an exercise in futility. This is being exacerbated by inconsiderate motorists who park their cars by the sides of the main road. The situation becomes ugly on Fridays when Muslims flock to the nearby mosque for prayers. The hospital's car park is simply too small to accommodate even the minimum number of vehicles.

Space is definitely a problem and unless this is adequately addressed, there is little prospect of it being resolved.

Under the Tenth Malaysian Plan two new hospitals were built, one in Kampar and the other the upgrading of the Kerian District Hospital in Parit Buntar. These additions may help overcome problems in the state but not in Ipoh, per se.

Ipoh, with a population of over 670,000, needs another hospital to meet growing demands. The present hospital with its existing structure and facilities cannot cater for the city's residents. It was okay during the colonial period, as conditions then were not as complicated as they are today.

Seeing is believing and all one needs to do is to take a ride along Jalan Hospital

during noon hours to see the mayhem. It becomes more acute on Fridays when Muslims perform their obligatory Friday prayers.

The state government should consider the implication of a delay. The state may not have the funds to build another hospital on its own. But rather than waste money on unnecessary projects, it is prudent to build a second hospital for the benefit of Ipohites.

Expanding Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, as a stopgap measure, is impractical as space is a major constraint. Therefore, the reasons for a second general hospital are valid. Turning to the Federal Government for funding is one possible option the state government needs to consider seriously.



Young Perak

Nirmal Tops the List



Nirmal Kumar Mahindran, 22, of Chemor had every reason to be proud and happy, as the occasion was his to cherish. The lad from Chemor was adjudged the best graduate at TAJ International College's 4th Convocation. The graduation ceremony, held at the banquet hall of Kinta Riverfront Hotel, Ipoh recently, was graced by the college's Chief Executive Officer, Puan Tina Dato' Hj Tajuddin and Executive Director, Mohd Azzad Jasmi. Tina gave away scrolls to 170 graduates from five diploma-level and one certificate-level disciplines.

Nirmal, a Diploma in Business Management student, gained a CGPA score of 3.85 points for his exams. "It's been a challenging time for me at TAJ College. The knowledge I've gained will be beneficial for my further studies," said Nirmal to Ipoh Echo.

The young man plans on pursuing a bachelor's degree in business administration at a private university in Kelana Jaya soon. Nirmal won the college's valedictorian award in recognition for his achievement.

Ahmad Adid Jeman, 22, of Sibu, Sarawak was the top Faculty of Science, Innovation and Technology student. Ahmad gained a CGPA score of 3.70 points. "The result will brighten my prospect of a meaningful career in the motor industry," said Ahmad who is currently on practical training at UMW Toyota, Sibu.

RM

Business

FMM Annual Dinner 2013

The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) 45th annual dinner provided an insight of the direction the state's manufacturing sector going forward. The dinner was officiated by YB Dato' Mohammad Zahir Abdul Khalid, the state exco for industry, investment and corridor development who represented Perak Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Dr Zambray Abdul Kadir. Also present were FMM Perak Chairman Dato' Gan Tak Kong and FMM Vice President Dato' Saw Choo Boon.

In Zambry's speech read by Muhammad Zahir he noted that the current global economic scenario is a concern. Although domestic demand remained strong, nevertheless exports had declined. As such Bank Negara has revised its growth target to 4.5-6% from 5-6%.

On the part of the state government, it has initiated a plan to address the issue via Perak Amanjaya's development plan called Perak Industrial Development Action Plan (PIDAP). This target plan is to increase the contribution from manufacturing from 18% (currently) to 25% or RM12.73 billion by the year 2020.

The state's plans include attracting and promoting new high impact and capital intensive investments. It has identified 12 sectors initially such as iron and steel and the transport and equipment sector amongst others.

The plan also seeks to develop more industrial estates as the current sites are nearing maximum capacity. Some of the sites identified include Greater Kamunting and the completion of the Perak Hi-Tech Industrial Park which has been delayed for many years. The SEDC has been tasked to develop these new industrial estates which will attract hi-tech industries.

With the impending introduction of LNG to the Kinta Valley, the state government is also identifying the new industrial areas to be covered by the pipeline. Currently discussions are ongoing between the state government, Gas Malaysia, FMM and MITI.

The Kinta Natural Gas Distribution System will be implemented in two phases. The first phase is from Ayer Tawar to Lahat while the second phase is from Lahat to Chemor.

In his speech, FMM Perak Chairman, Dato' Gan Tak Kong, thanked the state government for its close rapport with the Federation. Stating that it was a strength enabling issues and problems to be raised and resolved in the true spirit of Malaysia Incorporated to the benefit of all parties involved.

Gan also highlighted the low activity at the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport which currently serves two flights daily between Ipoh and Singapore. He added that efforts must be accelerated to turn the airport into a regional hub to Bangkok and Hong Kong to encourage more investments and boost the State's tourism industry.

Another concern addressed by Gan was that the Vendor Development Programme had not benefitted local SMEs when potential investors introduce mega projects into the state. He suggested that a special task force be set up to look at these opportunities for the benefit of local SMEs.

JAG



ARTS & CULTURE



Perak Needs an Art Gallery

“Perak needs an art gallery” said State Exco for Tourism, Culture and Health, YB Nolee Ashilin Mohd Radzi. Nolee made the statement at a press conference after the closing of the ‘Ipoh Drawing Marathon 2013’, the Perak chapter of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture’s ‘IMCAT’ (1 Malaysia Contemporary Arts Tourism) programme.

Nolee was responding to a closing speech made by the President of *Persatuan Pelukis Perak* Dr Ahmad Lothfi Hj Ibrahim, who urged YB Nolee to look into the viability, not just as an opportunity for Perak’s artists to display their works but also, to “preserve Perak’s heritage for future generations”.

Noting that Perak was the only state without an art gallery, she stated that the state was currently identifying a suitable location for the gallery and would be discussing the issue with the National Visual Arts Gallery. “A permanent gallery can also display other forms of visual art including cartoons and would be suitable to display the expensive works of art such as those on display during the marathon.”

The event was launched by Datuk Dr Ong Hong Peng, Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. It included the Ipoh Drawing Marathon, a 24-hour event which started at noon on Saturday. It attracted over 50 artists with some artists coming in to participate at different times throughout the event.

Held at Kinta Riverwalk the artists were required to produce artworks using charcoal and draw figurative or non figurative images surrounding the Riverwalk. Sixty of the drawings were selected for a coffee-table book to be exhibited at the Tourism and Culture Ministry and at hotels.

JAG



Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: 05-255 2181; 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.

“Get your eyes tested this October and let’s work together to eliminate avoidable blindness on World Sight Day!” Lee Eye Centre will be having a Charity Free Eye Screening from **October 14 to 18** from 1pm to 4pm. Patients accepted strictly by appointment basis only. For more details, call **05-254 0095** or **05-254 4951**.

Perak Academy’s Perak Lectures Series entitled “Goh Keng Swee, the Malayan”. Talk by Dr Ooi Kee Beng, Deputy Director Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Friday, **October 18**, 8pm at Symphony Suites, Ipoh. For details and reservations, call Wai Kheng at **05-547 8949** or **016-551 8172**.

Salvation Army Ipoh’s Open Day, Saturday **October 19**, 9am to 2pm at the Ipoh Children’s Home at 255 Jalan Kampar, Ipoh. There will be stalls selling cooked food, drinks, groceries, toys, handicraft and used clothing. Enquiries, call: Elena Wong at **05-254 9767**.

Public Forum on “Stomach & Liver Cancer” and “Getting Past the Fear of Chemotherapy”, Saturday **October 19**, 2pm to 4pm at Dahlia Utama, 4th Floor Pantai Hospital Ipoh. Admission is FREE! For further information, please call Ms Gloria/Ms Renuka at **05-540 5725** or **540 5712**.

Free Eye Screening in conjunction with World Sight Day 2013, October 19 from 9am until 4pm at Chew Eye Specialist & Surgery, 23-27 Jalan Kamaruddin Isa (Jalan Fair Park). Examinations include screening for vision/refractive error, cataract, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and general eye care. For further information, call **05-547 0008**.

Organ Donation Walkathon, Sunday **October 20**, 6.30am to 2pm at Ipoh Padang (in front of St Michael’s Institution). Free participation. Register at: Pusat Pendermaan Organ, Kompleks Klinik Pakar, Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh. Tel: **05-208 5161** (Monday-Friday 8am-1pm & 2pm-5pm). Registration limited to the first 1000 participants. Registration forms can also be downloaded from website: <http://hrpb.moh.gov.my> or <http://www.facebook.com/ipohwalkforhope>.

Sam Chai Charity Night 2013, Saturday, **October 26**, 7pm at Poi Lam (Suwa) High School grounds, Jalan Simpang Pulai, Kg. Changkat Larang, Lahat. The event is to raise funds for a 4-storey block to replace two existing termite-ridden wooden blocks. Tickets by donation (RM50 and RM100) are available at all Hush Puppies outlets in Perak, Scud Sports Equipment (Persiaran Greentown 4, Greentown Avenue, Ipoh) and Sam Chai school **05-254 0087** or **05-241 5483**.

Charity Food Fair [Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS)], Sunday **October 27**, 9.30am-3pm at PPCS, 54 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, Ipoh. Coupons available at PPCS **05-546 4732**. Website: www.ppcs.org.my.

Launch of Pink October Carnival and Flag Off Walk-a-Hunt by Mayor Dato’ Roshidi Hashim. Jointly organised by Perak Women for Women Society, Pantai Hospital, Pink Champion Perak and Ipoh City Council in collaboration with Maybank. Sunday, **October 27**, 7.30am at Arena Senamrobik, Taman Rekreasi Sultan Abdul Aziz (Polo Ground) Ipoh. Breast cancer awareness, women’s issues, health screening and many more. For details and registration call Ms Yip **05-546 9715**, Ms Gloria **05-540 5725** or Ms Betty **05-540 5723**.

Taiping Raptor Festival 2013 organised by MNS Perak Branch Bird Group, Sat & Sun **October 26 & 27** at Taiping Sentral Mall & Scott’s Hill, Taiping, Perak. During the autumn months beginning late September, thousands of raptors (or birds-of-prey) can be seen migrating over Taiping, enroute to the Indonesian archipelago. This is an opportunity to view this spectacular show. For more information, email: mpbg88@gmail.com or contact Lim Kim Chye **016-553 8431** or Ng Kit Wan **019-543 9647** (after 5pm).

Children’s Nature Camp, November **23 & 24** at Taman Herba, Papan, Perak. A 2 days 1 night nature camp for children organised by the Malaysian Nature Society, Perak Branch. Activities include jungle trekking, bird watching and nature & recycling activities. Students between 9 and 12 years old are invited to take part. Registration closes November 3. Those interested can contact Lee Yuat Wah at **017-577 5641** or email: leeyuatwah@yahoo.com.

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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.

Lafarge Malaysia Berhad – Kanthan Quarry Development

In view of the letters titled, "Quarry's response to complaints" and "Historical limestone gone forever" published in the September 1-15 issue of the Ipoh Echo, Lafarge Malaysia Berhad (formerly known as Lafarge Malayan Cement Berhad) would like to reassure the public that it is committed to working with local stakeholders to promote and protect biodiversity. Around the world and in Malaysia, Lafarge employs a sound and responsible approach to its quarrying activities, and has in place quarry development plans which take into account sensitive environmental aspects.

Underground mining is a common method employed for mining coal, gemstones and rocks. Mining techniques deployed are dependent on geological and hydrological conditions. Each situation is very unique and the area where underground mining takes place needs to be very stable. In the case of Gunung Kanthan, taking into consideration the necessary conditions required, we are not looking into this option.

To address biodiversity concerns, Lafarge is currently working with local stakeholders and, more specifically, is collaborating with a qualified and independent team at the University of Malaya's (UM) Institute of Biological Sciences to assess biodiversity sensitivities in the area. The UM team is working in partnership with Lafarge's International Biodiversity Panel whose members include representatives from IUCN France and the Wildlife Habitat Council amongst others.

Moving forward, Lafarge will continue to engage environmental groups, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to work towards preserving biodiversity at Gunung Kanthan. We will only make a decision on how to proceed with our quarrying operations once the relevant studies, including biodiversity have been completed.

Sekar Kaliannan
Kanthan Plant Manager
Lafarge Malaysia Berhad

Ipoh Public Transport below Expectation

Of late the public transport in Ipoh has been a disappointment to the public. With Perak Transit running the show and with the new manager, little or nothing is taken to improve the bus services, especially to Kampung Bercham, the destination with the most number of passengers. There is no bus schedule in the bus or at the station showing the actual departure time, as the drivers leave the station (Medan Kidd) as and when they like. Five buses are supposed to be on the road, but on one occasion, I noticed that only two buses were running, causing one to wait for more than an hour to get a bus.

With the express (bus) terminal located at Amanjaya, passengers are cheated by irresponsible taxis at night, charging expensive trips, as the bus services stop at 9pm.

Even worse is the express bus going to Teluk Intan with frequent late departures and cancellation of trips due to poor management. Once I booked a 5pm ticket on Sunday hoping to reach home by 7pm, only to be informed that the trip for that timing was cancelled and I had to take the 6pm bus. The bus finally departed at 6.25pm and I reached Teluk Intan at about 9pm! I thought that the purpose of advance booking was to assure passengers of a time and a place on the bus, not add to their problems. I hope the relevant authority will look into this.

Johnson D'Cruz
Ipoh

Announcement

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My Say



By Jerry Francis

Datuk Bandar Failure

Dato' Roshidi Hashim was reported to have admitted that he had failed as the Mayor of Ipoh for being unable to keep the city clean.

I accept his admission at the last City Council's full-board meeting, but I cannot accept his excuse that his failure was solely because the people could not be disciplined and refrained from throwing rubbish indiscriminately.

Does this mean that he and his successors are going to just accept the situation as "whatever will be, will be" and blame it all on the attitude of the residents? Dato' Roshidi's failure is largely due to the City Council's lack of determination to restore the city's lost image as one of the cleanest in the country.

The City Council needs to lead by example. If it failed in carrying out its responsibilities, then it can expect the residents to also adopt a "tidak-apa" attitude and discard their wastes indiscriminately and readily blame the City Council for its poor services.

After all, preventing wastes from being indiscriminately discarded is only part of the overall efforts needed to keep the city clean. Clogged drains need clearing, rubbish collected efficiently, grass cut regularly, care of plants and shrubs along streets and roads, and proper maintenance of public parks and attractions. Every household in the city too must be directed to place all their domestic wastes in rubbish bins, not in plastic bags hanging on fences and trees, only to be scattered by dogs, cats and cattle. These are among the ingredients of a clean city.

Are all these not the responsibilities of the City Council? If so, would not the poor service we are experiencing now reflect on the efficiency of the City Council? Then why just put the blame on the people?

How is it that over two decades ago Ipoh was clean when it was just a municipality, but not now? The argument often put forward is that the city limit had increased in size, but let's not forget that as the city grew, so did its manpower and budget.

Of course, the residents too are to be blamed for the thousands of illegal rubbish dumps scattered around the city. Their lack of cooperation is frustrating the City Council's effort to clear the illegal dumps. The moment an illegal dump is cleared, a new dump begins.

One of the main culprits is the operators of small lorries for hire. They are the ones who cart the wastes and dump them at the nearest place convenient to them. Therefore, the City Council should consider taking stern action, including sending plainclothes enforcement officers to catch those responsible for throwing wastes indiscriminately. The City Council has the power to enforce the various enactments pertaining to health



and cleanliness in the city.

It should not allow any "political constraints" to affect its efforts to keep the city clean. Those irresponsible residents will have to be prosecuted since attempts to discipline them into restraining from littering and illegal dumping of wastes had failed.

The City Council must bring those guilty of illegal dumping to court to show that it means business.

Ipoh Echo had in 2010 launched a "dirt vigilante" campaign calling on residents to report, with photographs, areas found to be filthy. Following this, the City Council had moved in to clear hundreds of illegal dumps, particularly in the Gunung Rapat area.

Of late, the City Council seems to be taking it easy. Not only the city is getting dirtier, cattle and buffaloes are reappearing in the city. They are endangering motorists at night and damaging plants in the housing estates.

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Published by Ipoh Echo Sdn Bhd, A-G-1, No. 1 Persiaran Greentown 2, Greentown Business Centre, 30450 Ipoh Perak Darul Ridzuan and printed by Konway Industries Sdn Bhd, Plot 78, Lebuhraya Kampong Jawa, 11900 Bayan Baru, Pulau Pinang.