

Bolsonaro's party admits defeat

Lula da Silva's presidential victory is endorsed by Brazil's Liberal Party despite earlier challenging the outcome. >25

Retirement age debate grows

Malaysia should focus on having a flexible reemployment scheme so that capable workers can continue to contribute to the economy after retirement, say groups. However, the Malaysian Employers Federation says raising the retirement age could pose problems for businesses, including additional salary and medical costs. > **Read report on page 3 by FAZLEENA AZIZ**



Nation

Hidden health risks unnoticed

Over 80% of young Malaysian adults with diabetes and hypertension are unaware of their condition. >6

StarMetro

Sharing the light

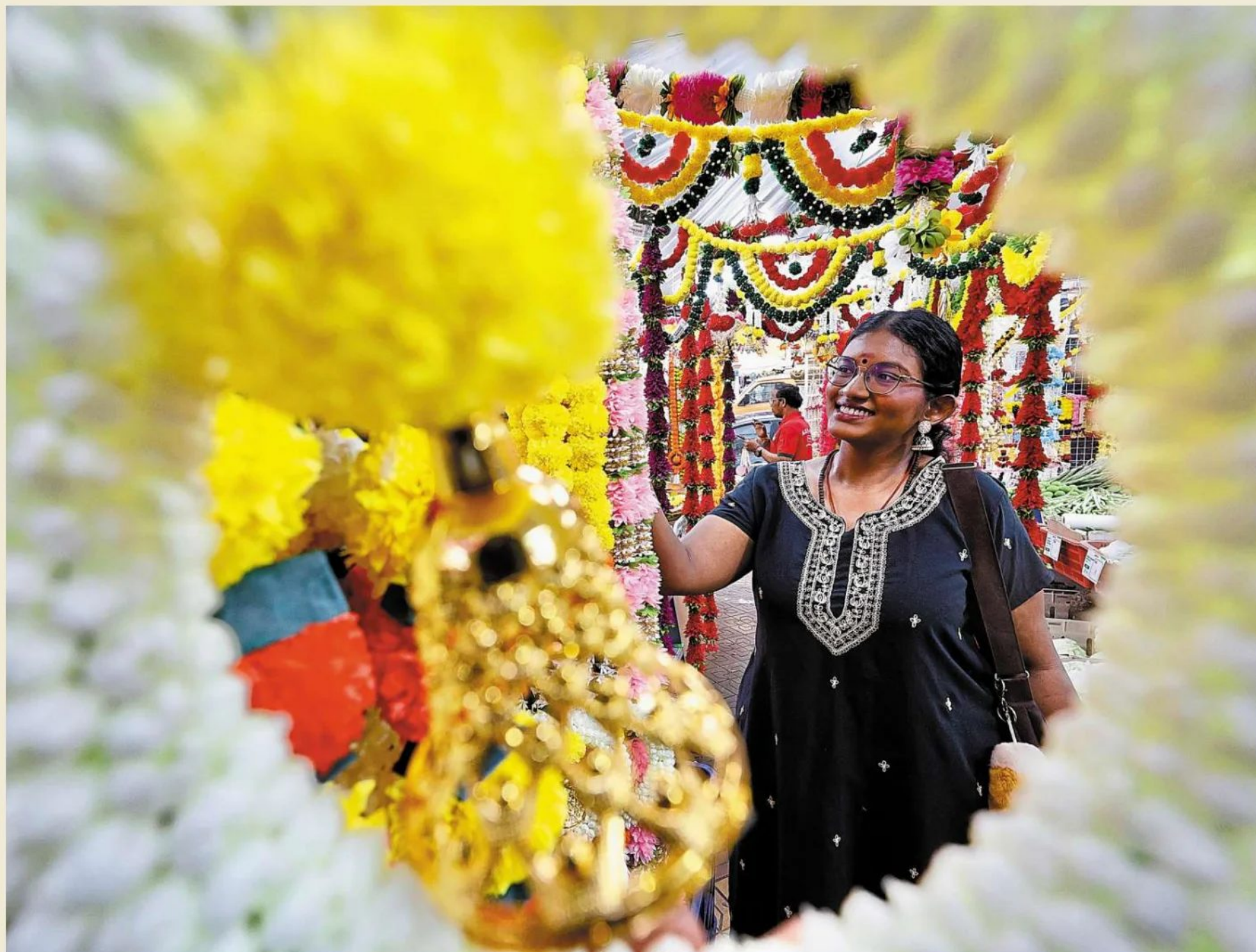
Penang community groups present Deepavali snacks and groceries to those in need. >2&3



StarLifestyle

Responsibility wears well

As global fashion faces growing scrutiny, Malaysia's industry must also turn good intentions into meaningful action. >2&3



Colours of festivity

A shopper browsing for decorative garlands in Little India in Kuala Lumpur's Brickfields area. With just over 10 days to Deepavali, Hindus are rushing to finish their festive shopping, but with rising prices, they are also being prudent.

> **Read reports on page 8 and in StarMetro**

Photo: FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

Borneo states need more, but without leaks, says Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR: Development allocations for Sabah and Sarawak remain insufficient, and this is why the government increased funding for the two states under Budget 2027.

The additional allocations reflect the states' development needs, particularly in rural areas where poor infrastructure and vast geographical distances continue to pose challenges, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"I have to admit that the allocations are never enough. That is why we must ensure good governance, prevent leakages and avoid awarding contracts indiscriminately," he told the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

He was responding to Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee

(PN-Beluran), who questioned why many rural development projects in Sabah and Sarawak had been left without funding despite higher allocations for the two states.

Ronald cited remarks by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Rural and Regional Development Minister, that many projects which had not received allocations under his ministry involved Sabah and Sarawak.

He questioned whether political disagreements within the unity government had contributed to the situation.

Anwar, however, clarified that the development allocations announced under Budget 2027 were separate from the projects referred to by Ahmad Zahid.

He said Sabah received the largest development allocation in Budget 2027, followed by Sarawak, with the distribution taking into account geographical challenges, underdeveloped infrastructure and the needs of remote communities.

He stressed that the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) must be regarded as a national commitment rather than a matter concerning only Sabah and Sarawak.

Anwar also said the government had been fair to all, even to the opposition, citing the RM2.2bil increase in federal allocations for PAS-led Terengganu.

The allocation has been raised to RM8.2bil in 2027, compared with RM6bil in 2022, when Perikatan Nasional was part of the Federal Government.

Anwar rubbished claims that the government had been cruel to opposition-held states.

"How is this cruel? We have increased the allocation by RM2.2bil for a state that is 100% opposition-controlled. The word 'zalim' (cruel) is often used by the opposition," he said in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

"This is indeed extraordinarily cruel," he quipped.

Anwar was responding to Datuk Che Mohamad Zulkifly Jusoh (PN-Besut), who questioned the government's commitment to distributing constituency development funds (CDF) equally among government and opposition MPs.

Che Mohamad Zulkifly said that although the government had previously stated that all

parliamentary constituencies were allocated RM2mil annually, funds for opposition constituencies were administered directly by the government rather than through their elected representatives.

Anwar explained that even in government-held constituencies, development funds were not handed directly to MPs, who instead played a role in verifying projects.

On the demand for equal allocations to MPs, Anwar said the government had already offered the opposition a negotiation mechanism similar to the confidence and supply agreement (CSA) reached during his tenure as opposition leader under former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

PM: Learn lessons of Battersea

'Govt must ensure that what happened is not repeated'

By QISTINA SALLEHUDDIN and ARFA YUNUS
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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's initial investment in London's Battersea Power Station project was too high and led to losses – but efforts are ongoing to turn it around.

However, the country must learn lessons from the episode, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

More than £5bil (RM27.237bil) has been invested in the development by Malaysian shareholders to date.

"I agree with the calls and criticisms regarding certain decisions made in the past about the investment. Although efforts are now being made to turn things around, the initial investment was too high and incurred losses.

"The project is now being rehabilitated, and we must ensure what happened at Battersea is not repeated," he said during Prime Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Anwar was responding to Hassan Abdul Karim (PH-Pasir Gudang), who questioned the billions of ringgit invested in the Battersea Power Station project, arguing that the funds could have been channelled into domestic investments instead.

The 42-acre Battersea Power Station redevelopment is a major mixed-use regeneration project led by a Malaysian consortium comprising S P Setia Bhd, Sime Darby Property Bhd, the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB).

Anwar said the government had prioritised domestic invest-



Question and answer time: Anwar speaking in Parliament. — Bernama

ments over the past three years, with government-linked investment companies (GLICs) initially expected to allocate at least 20% of their investments locally.

He said institutions like the National Trust Fund (KWAN), Retirement Fund (KWAP), Khazanah Nasional Bhd and PNB continued to explore investment opportunities both locally and overseas.

"However, we cannot deny that many overseas investments have generated high returns," he said.

To another question by Syahredzan Johan (PH-Bangi), he said no governance breaches on the scale of past scandals have been identified in government-linked entities in recent years.

He said violations uncovered in past cases like 1Malaysia

Development Bhd (1MDB), Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH) and the Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) were extensive and difficult to defend.

"I can give an assurance that, thus far, we have not identified any violations comparable to those of these companies I mentioned earlier," he said.

"Hopefully, we will be able to keep this under control, although it will not be easy."

'Politicians cannot interfere in investment decisions'

KUALA LUMPUR: Political figures must not interfere in investment decisions by government-linked investment companies (GLICs) and government-linked companies (GLCs), says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar said the proposed Government-Owned Entities Bill

would introduce stricter rules on company management, oversight of subsidiaries and the responsibilities of those entrusted with decision-making powers.

The Bill is expected to be tabled this year.

"We prohibit any political figure from interfering in the selection of projects and their priorities.

"Projects must be determined by an investment body comprising professionals with the relevant expertise," Anwar said during the Prime Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Anwar said most GLICs and GLCs, although wholly owned by the government, also had man-

dates to safeguard the interests of the bumiputra community or, in the case of Lembaga Tabung Haji, Muslims.

As such, he said, stricter governance standards were needed to ensure these institutions upheld the principles of integrity and accountability.

He added that tighter regula-

tions were also important to prevent those entrusted with managing the institutions from treating them as their personal or family property.

"We should not allow a situation where entities bearing the bumiputra or Islamic name have worse governance than other companies," he said.

WEATHER

	GEORGE TOWN	K. LUMPUR	JOHOR BARU	KOTA BARU	K. KINABALU	KUCHING
AM	Rain	Cloudy	No rain	Rain	Windy	Isolated rain
PM	Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms	Isolated thunderstorms	Isolated thunderstorms

PRAYER TIMES

	ALOR SETAR	PENANG	K. LUMPUR	JOHOR BARU	KUANTAN	KOTA BARU
Subuh	5:55	5:55	5:48	5:38	5:42	5:48
Zohor	1:05	1:05	1:00	12:51	12:54	12:57
Asar	4:24	4:24	4:19	4:10	4:13	4:17
Maghrib	7:01	7:02	6:59	6:52	6:54	6:54
Isyak	8:12	8:13	8:09	8:03	8:04	8:01

Experts: NCLAP30 plan key to balancing wages, prices

By ZAKIAH KOYA
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PETALING JAYA: The recently launched National Cost of Living Action Plan 2030 (NCLAP30) will help do away with the “money illusion” syndrome where one thinks a higher income comes with higher purchasing power.

An economist and a trade chamber said such a plan is pertinent to address the cost-of-living crisis by balancing affordable essential goods and services with sustainable wage growth, higher productivity, business competitiveness, and targeted support to improve Malaysians’ purchasing power and financial well-being.

On Oct 24, the NCLAP30, a five-year Malaysian government plan, was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to tackle the rising cost of living and improve Malaysians’ well-being.

Bank Muamalat’s chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said it is commendable that NCLAP30 acknowledged the need to raise people’s purchasing power and not just nominal income.

“The two-pronged strategy (in NCLAP30) – which is raising the income and stabilising the prices – would be able to raise the real income among Malaysians.

“On one hand, you have cash transfers, subsidies and a higher minimum wage, which could

help raise income in the short term. But stabilising the prices can be tricky as this involves the business decision whereby their sole existence is based on profit.

“Addressing the supply side, particularly in agricultural-based food production, is an immediate priority,” he said.

“Imagine agrofood cooperatives working together to procure seeds, pesticides, and fertilisers in bulk, thereby lowering their per-unit costs. This can help reduce production costs and improve yields, enabling more reasonable pricing for agricultural products.

“Ultimately, it is about providing these individuals with the right opportunities to scale their busi-

nesses,” said Mohd Afzanizam.

Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia president Datuk Ng Yih Pyng said the effectiveness of the plan will depend on how well these measures are implemented and whether they lead to tangible improvements in people’s lives.

“For many Malaysians, the problem is not simply that prices are increasing, but that their disposable incomes are insufficient to keep pace with the cost of housing, food, transport, education and healthcare.”

He said that although exemptions offer temporary relief, clear guidelines and support for productivity, digitalisation and

financing are essential.

“The long-term solution is to raise the earning capacity of Malaysians. This requires stronger investment in skills training, technical and vocational education, digital capabilities and industry-relevant qualifications.”

He said that support for MSMEs is particularly important because they form a significant part of Malaysia’s business ecosystem and employment base.

“Measures that improve supply-chain efficiency, strengthen competition, reduce unnecessary distribution costs and increase the availability of affordable housing and public transport can help ease these pressures,” said Ng.

Rethinking retirement beyond 60

Employers favour flexible work options over blanket age hike

By FAZLEENA AZIZ
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia should prioritise flexible post-retirement employment over a blanket increase in its mandatory retirement age, as employers are divided on whether to follow Singapore’s move to extend working age.

Singapore will raise its retirement age to 65 and reemployment age to 70 from Jan 1, 2029, to support its ageing population and promote age-friendly workplaces.

SME Association of Malaysia national president Dr Chin Chee Seong said Malaysia should either gradually raise retirement age from 60 to 65, or introduce a flexible reemployment arrangement similar to Singapore’s.

He said many people in their 60s remain healthy, energetic and capable of contributing to the workforce, adding that their experience and skills should not be lost simply because they had reached retirement age.

“Retirement should not be determined by age alone, but also by an individual’s health, ability, productivity and willingness to continue contributing,” he said.

Chin said retaining older workers could benefit small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through their technical knowledge, leadership and problem-solving abilities, while allowing them to mentor younger employees.

However, he acknowledged that some businesses could face additional costs for salaries, medical benefits, insurance and workplace adjustments.

He called for a gradual and flexible approach supported by government incentives such as tax deductions, wage subsidies and

training grants, particularly for SMEs.

“Extending employment should be an option and not an obligation,” he said, adding that employers and employees should agree on suitable arrangements based on job requirements, health, performance and business needs.

However, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) is not in favour of raising the statutory minimum retirement age at this stage, saying Malaysia must consider its labour market conditions and employers’ financial capacity.

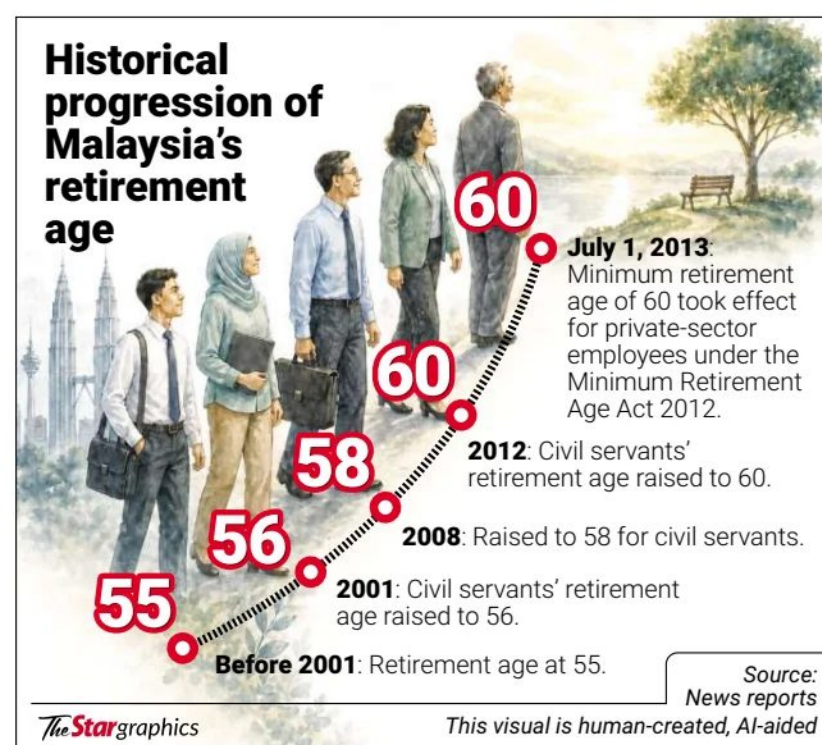
MEF said the current minimum retirement age of 60 under the Minimum Retirement Age Act 2012 provided a balance between employees’ retirement choices and employers’ workforce management needs.

Instead of raising the age across the board, it supports re-engaging suitable retirees through annual fixed-term contracts via mutual agreement.

This would allow businesses to retain specialised skills, facilitate knowledge transfer and address workforce shortages, while reviewing remuneration, responsibilities and working conditions periodically.

MEF also cautioned that a mandatory increase could raise employment costs, including statutory contributions, medical and insurance benefits, leave entitlements and workplace adjustments. These expenses could be particularly challenging for micro, small and medium enterprises operating on tight margins.

A blanket increase could also affect succession planning and career progression for younger workers in some organisations, although MEF acknowledged the



“Retirement should not be determined by age alone, but also by an individual’s health, ability, productivity and willingness to continue contributing.”

Dr Chin Chee Seong

benefits of mentoring in a multi-generational workforce.

Meanwhile, Association for Residential Aged Care Operators (Agecope) Malaysia president Delren Terrence Douglas said longer life expectancy and low birth rates meant societies would increasingly have to balance support for older people with the need to maintain an adequate workforce.

He said ageing populations and shortages of younger workers were placing pressure on economies and families, particularly in East Asian countries.

Delren cautioned that extending working lives could leave people feeling compelled to work indefinitely when they should rest and enjoy their retirement.

He acknowledged that some older people do not have sufficient savings to support themselves throughout retirement, making continued employment a necessity.

Allowing older workers to remain employed should therefore be an option rather than a

mandatory requirement, he said.

Delren added that although migrant workers could help address manpower shortages, they would not resolve all the challenges associated with longer life expectancy and supporting senior citizens.

He also said that some young people remain unemployed, highlighting the need to balance workforce requirements with employment opportunities across generations.

In Malaysia, proposals to raise the retirement age from 60 to 65 have been debated for several years.

In May 2025, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the proposal deserved consideration but required further study, including financial implications on businesses, and impact on job opportunities.

The government subsequently reviewed the proposal, but in July 2026, the Cabinet decided there was no need to raise the retirement age, maintaining the current limit of 60.

Raise real income to curb rising living costs, urges MEF

PETALING JAYA: The National Cost of Living Action Plan 2030 (NCLAP30) must go beyond controlling prices and focus on raising household incomes and productivity to curb rising living costs, says the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF).

Its senior advisor Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the government must establish clear targets, assign responsibilities to implementing agencies and publish regular progress reports in implementing the plan.

“Managing the cost of living requires more than controlling prices.

“It is equally important to ensure that cost-of-living policies take into account the broader factors affecting household purchasing power, including the cost of essential goods and services, productivity growth, skills development and the availability of higher-value employment opportunities,” said Syed Hussain.

He added that wage increases must be accompanied by measures that enable businesses to become more productive and competitive so that higher incomes can be sustained without creating unnecessary inflationary pressure.

“Malaysia must move beyond an approach centred solely on increasing the minimum wage towards a broader strategy of raising productivity and enabling workers to progress to higher-paying jobs.

“The objective should be to ensure that wage growth is supported by genuine improvements in productivity and economic value creation,” said Syed Hussain.

He added that this allows workers to enjoy higher real incomes while enabling businesses to remain viable, invest and create better employment opportunities.

“NCLAP30’s success should ultimately be measured by tangible improvements in household purchasing power, cost efficiency and the overall quality of life,” added Syed Hussain.

Women urged to grab the reins

Zahid: Don't just take part in the workforce, own enterprises and lead industries

By **TARRENCE TAN**
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MELAKA: Malaysian women must move from taking part in the workforce to owning enterprises and leading industries with skills training that leads to real jobs and higher incomes, says Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

The Deputy Prime Minister said women's labour force participation stood at 56.6% in 2025, compared with 83.3% for men.

The gap, he said, required a closer look at the barriers women faced in working and building careers.

"It is time we moved from participation to ownership," he said when launching the Jelita Open Day 12 Hours Sprint Training at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid, who chairs the National TVET Council, said Jelita offered 50 industry-based certification programmes for women through 12-hour courses, allowing them to upskill alongside work and family commitments.

But short courses must have clear standards and recognition that industry trusts, he said.

"Even though the duration is short, its value must be lasting."

Ahmad Zahid also said Jelita's



Proud moment: Ahmad Zahid (centre) receiving a book, 'Zahid Hamidi Merakytkan TVET, Menyantuni Luar Bandar', from UTeM vice chancellor Datuk Massila Kamaludin during the book launch in Melaka. — LEONG WAI YEE/The Star

modules should be developed with companies, technology players and professional bodies, based on what the economy needs.

"Participants should also be linked to jobs, further training, mentors, financing or market access after completing their courses."

"Training must lead somewhere," he said.

He added that the programme's success should be measured by

how many participants found jobs, earned more or grew their businesses six or 12 months later, not just by the number of courses and certificates.

The Deputy Prime Minister also said women returning to work after caring for children or parents should be given room to renew their skills and rebuild their confidence.

"Do not let a career break become a full stop to their poten-

tial," he said.

Speaking to reporters later, Ahmad Zahid said Jelita had trained more than 10,000 participants in less than three years.

Of these, 5,000 had found jobs that added to their household income while the remaining 5,000 were producing goods marketed in physical stores or online.

"This is a game changer for women," he said.

He said the smart partnership

between UTeM, Kolej Risda and women's groups had been a success and would continue.

On another matter, Ahmad Zahid, who is also Rural and Regional Development Minister, said cost-cutting must not come at the expense of rural roads in Sabah and Sarawak, amid calls for the government to reveal who ordered the cancellation of projects in both states.

He said his deputy minister would give the details during the committee stage debate in Parliament.

"Rural infrastructure must not be compromised in the name of savings because communities in the interior of Sarawak and Sabah really need roads to connect them."

"More importantly, access must be given because they have been left behind for so long compared with the peninsula," he said.

While winding up Budget 2027 policy-stage debate in the Dewan Rakyat, Ahmad Zahid claimed some projects in Sabah and Sarawak this year had been ordered cancelled despite allocations being available.

Penampang MP Datuk Ewon Benedick then asked who had issued the instruction to cancel 13 rural road projects in Sabah.

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Dzulkefly: Bed wait times drop at 28 major hospitals

By **QISTINA SALLEHUDDIN**
and **ARFA YUNUS**
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KUALA LUMPUR: More hospitals are recording shorter waits for ward beds, with 28 of 39 major hospitals nationwide reporting average waiting times of less than eight hours as of June, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (pic).

Last year, 55.26% of hospitals recorded an average waiting time of less than eight hours, he said.

The figures covered Type One and Type Two hospitals, comprising state hospitals and major specialist hospitals that handle high patient volumes and referrals from surrounding districts.

"And 94 of 103 Type Three and Type Four hospitals, comprising minor specialist hospitals and hospitals without specialists, recorded average bed waiting times of less than four hours," he said during the question and answer session at the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

He was responding to Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun (PH-Port Dickson), who asked about the number of government hospitals experiencing persistent emergency department congestion, the average waiting times for treatment and ward admission, and the ministry's measures to address the problem.

Dzulkefly said the ministry had introduced various measures to improve public healthcare delivery, including monitoring waiting-time indicators and outsourcing 14 services since 2024.

The outsourcing programme has benefited more than 50,000 patients at 75 Health Ministry hospitals, he said.



Short-term measures included improving patient flow through Lean Healthcare initiatives, strengthening bed management, providing dedicated waiting areas for patients awaiting discharge and expanding day-care units.

"The ministry also introduced cluster hospitals and service networks to facilitate the sharing of

specialist expertise, equipment and bed capacity among hospitals in nearby areas."

In the longer term, he said the ministry would undertake targeted infrastructure upgrades, renovations and expansions, alongside efforts to strengthen staffing.

Dzulkefly said the establishment of the Health Services Commission will not give it the authority to create new posts or formulate a remuneration system, including setting more competitive emolument rates for officers under its purview.

"These matters fall under the authority of the Public Service Department and the Finance Ministry," he said.

Dzulkefly said the limitation applied to all service commissions in Malaysia, including the Education Service Commission and the Police Force Commission.

However, he said the proposed commission will have the power to appoint officers, confirm appointments, place them on a permanent or pensionable establishment, promote and transfer them, and exercise disciplinary control over its members.

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RM3.28mil set for Indian community development

By DIVYA THERESA RAVI
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PUTRAJAYA: A total of RM3.28mil has been allocated to Indian places of worship for human capital and community development programmes, rather than for building maintenance, says Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri R. Ramanan (*pic*).

He said the funds, channelled through the Malaysian Indian Transformation Unit (Mitra), would be disbursed under the Harmoni Madani and Dharma Madani programmes.

"Under Harmoni Madani, RM1.38mil will be distributed to 57 gurdwaras and 12 churches.

"Each place of worship will receive RM20,000 to support reli-

gious, spiritual, cultural and community-based activities," he said at the launch of the Dharma Madani and Harmoni Madani programmes yesterday.

Under the second phase of Dharma Madani, RM1.9mil will be allocated to 95 Hindu temples, he added.

Ramanan urged recipients to use the funds wisely and ensure the programmes benefit their communities.

"If you use this money well, I promise you, I will give more. I will fight to secure more for you. But use it wisely.

"The feedback we receive must be positive, and the community must benefit. Then all of us can



continue doing more good. We can create better opportunities and bring more hope," he said.

Ramanan also highlighted several education initiatives under a programme called Kalvi Madani, including tuition assistance and the provision of smart boards for Tamil schools.

"Previously, we only provided smart boards to selected Tamil schools based on pupil enrolment. Now, every Tamil school will receive a smart board," he said.

He added that another programme, which is Peranti Madani, would continue providing free laptops to university students, stressing that all devices distribut-

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ed under the programme were brand new.

"Not second-hand, not refurbished. Instead, we are providing brand-new laptops to everyone with the additional funding available," he said.

Ramanan also thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for increasing Mitra's allocation from RM100mil to RM150mil.

He clarified that the RM50mil allocated for maintenance and repair works at Tamil vernacular

schools would be directed towards newly identified schools that were not included in the previous allocation.

Separately, Ramanan said Mitra plans to seek additional funding for future rounds of the Uyarvu Madani grant programme after receiving 8,368 applications, far exceeding the number of entrepreneurs it can currently support.

He said the programme is expected to benefit about 1,100 to 1,150 entrepreneurs across its first two phases, particularly those from the B40 group.

Ramanan said several announcements related to Deepavali and the community, which were discussed at a Cabinet meeting, would be made soon by the Prime Minister.

LCS project 80% complete

Five vessels to be delivered between 2027 and 2029

By ARFA YUNUS
and QISTINA SALLEHUDDIN
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KUALA LUMPUR: Construction of the five Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) has reached 80.72% completion as of Sept 25, falling behind the scheduled target of 89.91%, says Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin.

The Defence Minister said Lumut Naval Shipyard Sdn Bhd (Lunas) had also claimed RM8.96bil, representing 79.82% of the project's total contract value of RM11.227bil.

The latest figures were disclosed in a parliamentary written reply to Datuk Seri Madius Tangau (PH-Tuaran), who sought updates on the physical and financial progress of the five vessels, their delivery schedules and the replacement of the Naval Strike Missile (NSM) system.

According to Mohamed Khaled, all five ships are being constructed simultaneously, although each is at a different stage of completion.

"As of Sept 25, the first vessel, LCS1, had reached 86.78% completion, followed by LCS2 at 82.76% and LCS3 at 75.84%.

"Progress on LCS4 and LCS5 stood at 65.48% and 56.82%, respectively," he added.

Under the revised delivery schedule submitted by Lunas, he said the first vessel is expected to be handed over in April next year, followed by the second in August 2027 and the third in December 2027.

The remaining two vessels are



Welcome dance: Khaled (under black umbrella) arriving in Cebu to attend the ADMM. — Photo courtesy of Khaled Nordin's Facebook page

scheduled for delivery in August 2028 and April 2029, respectively.

Mohamed Khaled said the first vessel, *KD Maharaja Lela*, had entered the sea trial phase at the shipyard conducted by Lunas to test and verify the performance and functionality of its systems before undergoing Sea Acceptance Trials with the Royal Malaysian Navy.

"The vessel had previously undergone several Harbour Acceptance Trials and preliminary voyages to test its main systems, including machinery, power generation and propulsion," he said.

On the replacement of the NSM system, Khaled said it was in the final stages of evaluating three surface-to-surface missile options proposed by the navy.

"The assessment takes into account operational requirements, compatibility with the ships, cost implications and procurement timelines.

"A final decision will be made once an option has been agreed upon and the procurement agreement is signed.

"The Defence Ministry remains committed to continuously monitoring the implementation of the LCS project to ensure the construction, testing and delivery of the vessels are successfully carried out in accordance with the stipulated requirements," Khaled said.

Meanwhile, in a separate parliamentary written reply, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri

Azalina Othman Said stated that the government remained open to considering a Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) or other appropriate mechanisms if deemed necessary in the public interest.

She was responding to Suhaizan Kaiat (PH-Pulai), who asked whether the government intended to establish RCIs in the Felda and the LCS project, following the tabling of the RCI report on Tabung Haji.

Azalina said the establishment of an RCI was governed by the Commissions of Enquiry Act 1950.

She said any proposal to investigate alleged irregularities in the management of public funds would be considered in accordance with legal procedures, taking into account relevant facts, findings and developments arising from ongoing investigations by the authorities.

Meanwhile, Bernama reported that Khaled had arrived in Cebu, the Philippines, to attend the 20th Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the 13th ADMM-Plus as part of efforts to strengthen defence cooperation and maintain regional peace and stability.

He is also scheduled to participate in meetings between Asean Defence Ministers and their counterparts from the United States and Japan.

Several bilateral meetings with counterparts from the Philippines, South Korea, Laos, the United States, Vietnam, Singapore and Australia are also scheduled on the sidelines of the main meetings.

'More scholarships for national athletes'

PUTRAJAYA: The number of scholarships for national athletes have been increased from 99 to 110 this year to help them pursue higher education, says Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir (*pic*).

The Higher Education Minister said this was part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to ensure that athletes not only excel in sports but also obtain academic qualifications that could enhance their employability.

He said the ministry also provided special admission pathways for athletes at several institutions of higher learning (IPT), including Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), to enable them to continue their studies while developing their sporting potential, Bernama reported.

Eligible recipients are entitled to living allowances based on their level of study, with the highest rate being RM6,862.50 per semester for doctoral (PhD) students.

Master's degree students receive RM6,825 per semester, followed by bachelor's degree students at RM5,325 and diploma students at RM4,730.

Zambry said strengthening athletes' academic development was crucial, given that more than 35% of athletes representing the country in various sporting events were students at IPT.



Armizan: Joint effort to stabilise chicken and egg supply in Sabah

By MUGUNTAN VANAR
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KOTA KINABALU: The federal and state governments are strengthening coordination efforts to ensure a stable supply of chicken and eggs in Sabah at affordable prices.

Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali (*pic*) said the coordina-

tion covers regulatory aspects of production and distribution, price monitoring and enforcement.

Armizan said the state-level meeting also discussed measures to review the current supply and pricing situation for chicken and eggs, including strengthening related regulations.

He said this after chairing the



Coordination Meeting on the Stabilisation of Chicken Meat and Egg Supplies at the state Treasury office here.

Armizan said the roles of the Department of Veterinary Services, Sabah Agriculture Department, Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority, other relevant state-level agencies and the ministry at the

federal level need to be aligned according to their respective jurisdictions and responsibilities.

"Such coordination is important so that issues at the production and supply levels can be addressed in tandem with price monitoring and enforcement efforts," he said.

The minister also said the collaboration will serve as the foundation for a more effective mech-

anism to address supply and pricing issues through better information-sharing, clearer division of responsibilities and more effective follow-up actions.

He said close cooperation between federal and state governments will continue to be strengthened to ensure the supply of essential goods remains secure and accessible to consumers at reasonable prices.

A bitter shock for young man as diabetes strikes at 28

KUALA LUMPUR: He was just 28 when Adam Zeno realised something was wrong.

He was constantly thirsty, frequently running to the toilet and often tired and sleepy.

"I thought it was because of work. I had a lot on my plate, or I wasn't getting enough sleep," he recalled.

Then came the night that changed everything.

The Sabahan was working late when the palpitations hit and he struggled to breathe.

He went to hospital, and the dreaded diagnosis came. He had type 2 diabetes, a problem that's usually associated with much older adults.

The warnings came. Type 2 diabetes can lead to damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves and the heart.

He cried alone several times,

struggling to accept that this disease had become part of his life.

"Why me?" was the question Adam kept asking himself. "I always thought diabetes was far away from me."

Adam, now 30 and running a printing business, said he had not realised that his body was already showing signs that something was wrong.

"I began looking back at my lifestyle. My mother and grandfather had diabetes.

"Meanwhile, I had irregular meals, enjoyed sweet food and carbohydrates, exercised little and, after starting my business, was often stressed, stayed up late, slept poorly and drank alcohol.

"I used to think that because I was young, it was all right to push myself a little harder. Only when the diagnosis hit, I realised that I was wrong," he said.

Adam is not alone.

An estimated 192,464 Malaysians aged 18 to 29 have diabetes, while 339,853 have hypertension, and more than eight in 10 in both groups were unaware of their condition.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad recently revealed in Parliament that among those aged 30 to 39, an estimated 338,508 had diabetes, with more than six in 10 undiagnosed.

Another 938,865 had hypertension, with more than seven in 10 unaware of it.

Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Sivanaesan Letchumanan said young adults often underestimated their risk because they associated diabetes and hypertension with older people.

"Many feel young and healthy

and assume they are not at risk. But these conditions can develop silently, without obvious symptoms, sometimes for years," he said.

He said this could leave people unaware of their condition until complications arose, by which time damage might already have occurred.

Another misconception was that type 2 diabetes was caused mainly by sugar, when it could also be influenced by genetics, unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity and smoking.

"Being young is no guarantee of good health," he said.

Dr Sivanaesan also highlighted poor sleep as a risk factor that young adults often overlooked.

Inadequate sleep can lead to Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, obesity and cardiovascular disease, he said.

He urged young adults not to wait until they felt unwell before getting their health checked.

Blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol screening checks should form part of routine healthcare, he said.

"Those with a family history of diabetes, hypertension or heart disease, as well as people who are overweight or physically inactive, should discuss their screening needs with a healthcare professional," he added.

Adam has since started taking his meals, exercise, sleep and blood glucose more seriously, with help from a nutritionist.

Now, he hopes to help others understand their health better.

"Don't take health for granted. Sometimes, it is only after we lose something that we realise how precious it is," he said in an interview.

Young, ill – and they don't know it

Over eight in 10 with diabetes and hypertension are undiagnosed, raising concerns

By ALLISON LAI
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KUALA LUMPUR: A blood pressure reading or blood test may flag a health problem. But many young people just shrug their shoulders and walk away.

They may believe all is well, but a major danger could be lurking round the corner.

A high proportion of young adults have diabetes and hypertension but they don't know it.

Recently, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad told Parliament that an estimated 192,464 Malaysians aged 18 to 29 have diabetes and 339,853 have hypertension, based on the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2023.

More than eight in 10 in both groups are undiagnosed.

This is a gap that public health expert Prof Dr Moy Foong Ming believes must be addressed.

"Screening is important, but it does not always translate into a confirmed diagnosis.

"Someone may have an abnormal result but not go for further testing.

"Sometimes, a borderline result is to be repeated.

"Without proper follow-up, people can fall through the cracks," she said.

The NHMS 2023 figures also show that 5.9% of Malaysian adults had raised blood glucose

"Awareness alone is not enough. People need to know what to do when a result is abnormal."

Prof Dr Moy Foong Ming

but did not know they had diabetes while 11.9% had raised blood pressure, but did not know they had hypertension.

Another 18.1% had raised blood cholesterol but were unaware of it.

In terms of people with each condition, approximately 38% of adults with diabetes and 41% of those with hypertension were undiagnosed.

Dr Moy said one reason was that young adults often did not see themselves as being at risk.

"They may associate these conditions with older people and assume that, if they feel well, there is no need to get checked," she said.

Many young adults, she said, also seldom visit healthcare facilities unless they are unwell.

"Awareness alone is not

enough. People need to know what to do when a result is abnormal," she said.

Dr Moy said screening should be matched to age and individual risk, rather than assuming every healthy young adult needs every blood test annually.

Malaysia's clinical guidance recommends diabetes testing for asymptomatic adults from age 30, with earlier testing for people with specified risk factors.

Blood pressure checks should be part of routine healthcare, while cholesterol assessment should take into account age, family history and other cardiovascular risks.

Universiti Putra Malaysia nutrition expert Prof Dr Loh Su Peng said daily food choices could also influence long-term health risks, particularly when sugary drinks, large portions and salty or processed food became routine.

"For people who drink sweetened beverages regularly, one practical place to start is to make water or unsweetened drinks the default," she said.

She also recommended the "quarter-quarter-half" approach: half the plate for vegetables and fruit, a quarter for carbohydrates and a quarter for protein.

"Healthy eating does not mean giving up the food we enjoy. It is about making more balanced choices and being consistent," she said.

Don't wait for symptoms

You can have diabetes or high blood pressure without knowing it.

THE HIDDEN NUMBERS



Ages 18–29

- 192,464 estimated to have diabetes
- 339,853 estimated to have hypertension
- More than eight in 10 in both groups undiagnosed



Ages 30–39

- 338,508 estimated to have diabetes
- 938,865 estimated to have hypertension
- More than six in 10 diabetes cases and more than seven in 10 hypertension cases undiagnosed

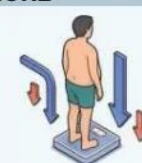
SIGNS YOU SHOULDN'T IGNORE



Frequent urination



Persistent thirst



Unexplained weight loss



Unusual or ongoing fatigue



Blurred vision

These symptoms can have other causes. Seek medical advice if they persist.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

- **Know your risk.** Tell your doctor about family history and other health concerns.
- **Get checked.** Ask a healthcare professional which screening tests are appropriate for your age and risk factors.
- **Follow up.** An abnormal result may need further tests and assessment.
- **Make small changes.** Choose unsweetened drinks more often, balance your plate and move regularly.



Sources: MOH NHMS 2023, MMA, Prof Loh and Prof Moy.

TheStargraphics

MMEA personnel killed in boat collision during migrant chase

KANGAR: A Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) personnel was killed and three others injured when their boat collided with a concrete structure during an enforcement operation off Kuala Sungai Padang, Kuala Perlis.

Kedah and Perlis Maritime director First Admiral Romli Mustafa said five MMEA person-

nel were conducting the operation at 11.37pm on Monday to intercept a boat suspected of carrying undocumented Myanmar migrants.

He said the suspected migrant boat sped towards the shore after being detected, triggering a 15-minute pursuit.

The boat is believed to have rammed the MMEA vessel, caus-

ing it to collide with a concrete structure near the Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority jetty.

"The impact threw three of the five personnel overboard, including one who was reported missing.

"He was found floating in the sea and pronounced dead, believed to have sustained seri-

ous head injuries," he told a press conference yesterday, Bernama reported.

The deceased was identified as Mohd Roshaimi Mohd Ridzuan, 41, an MMEA technical officer.

Romli said the injured personnel suffered a fractured wrist, chest pain and pain on both sides of the ribs.

He said nine suspected undocu-

mented Myanmar migrants, comprising seven men and two women, and two Thai male boat operators were detained in the incident.

"Checks found that all those detained were suspected of offences under the Immigration Act and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act," he said.

'MCA not pulling out of BN'

Zahid: Positive meeting between party leaders over Melaka

By **TARRENCE TAN**
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MELAKA: There is no question of MCA pulling out of the Melaka election, says Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

A meeting between Barisan and MCA leaders had produced positive results, he said, revealing that he had met MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong, Barisan secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir and caretaker Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh.

He also said he had left it to Ab Rauf to announce the outcome.

"Please direct your follow-up questions to him," Ahmad Zahid told reporters during the open day for students at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka yesterday.

Asked about MCA withdrawing from the polls, he said: "No, no, it does not arise."

He said the talks were positive and there was no quarrel between the parties.

"Try asking Datuk Seri Rauf. It is positive. There is no fighting," he said.

Last Saturday, MCA leaders,

including Dr Wee, deputy president Datuk Dr Mah Hang Soon and representatives from six MCA divisions in Melaka, staged a walkout at the Barisan candidate announcement in Melaka, saying the seat allocation had been decided without the party's agreement.

Asked then whether MCA would withdraw from the contest, Dr Wee said the party had yet to decide and would assess developments over the following days.

MCA was allocated two of the 21 seats which Barisan is contesting, compared with seven in the

2021 state election.

PAS and its allies will contest the remaining seven seats.

Asked whether Barisan would reassess its candidates ahead of nomination day on Oct 31 following objections to its line-up, Ahmad Zahid said the coalition would resolve the matter internally.

He said such problems arose in any election.

"These problems do not happen only to Barisan Nasional but also to other coalition parties. This is common and nothing is impossible for us in finding the best solution," he said.

Dr Wee: No final MCA decision on Melaka polls yet

PETALING JAYA: MCA has yet to reach a final decision on its position in the Melaka election despite holding talks with Barisan Nasional leaders over the coalition's seat allocation, says Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (pic).

"As for Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's description of the outcome as 'positive', I believe we are still some distance from achieving that objective.

"It would be premature to describe the outcome as positive at this stage," said the MCA president. Both sides need to continue their discussions, and I hope we can make a breakthrough within the next day or two," he said in a Facebook post yesterday.

Earlier yesterday, Ahmad Zahid said there was no question of MCA pulling out of the state polls, adding that a meeting between Barisan and MCA leaders had produced positive results.

This had come about after Saturday's incident in which MCA leaders, including Dr Wee and deputy president Datuk Dr Mah Hang Soon, walked out of Barisan's candidate announcement at the Melaka International Trade Centre, saying the seat allocation had been decided without the party's agreement.

MCA was allocated two of the 21 seats Barisan is contesting, compared with seven seats in the 2021 state election.

Yesterday, Dr Wee revealed that a meeting with Barisan leaders took place at a Kuala Lumpur hotel late Monday, following a directive from Ahmad Zahid, who is Barisan chairman.

He said Barisan secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir and caretaker Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ab Rauf Yusoh met him and another MCA leader at about 11pm.

Their discussion concluded at around 1am yesterday, he added.

"The meeting took place in a calm and cordial atmosphere, without any arguments. MCA clearly conveyed our dissatisfaction with the seat allocation for the Melaka state election," he said.

EC to meet on Nov 6 for Sarawak election

PUTRAJAYA: The Election Commission (EC) will hold a special meeting on Nov 6 to discuss key dates for the 13th Sarawak state election.

EC secretary Datuk Khairul Shahril Idrus said the meeting would be chaired by EC chairman Datuk Seri Ramlan Harun, followed by a press conference to release the details.

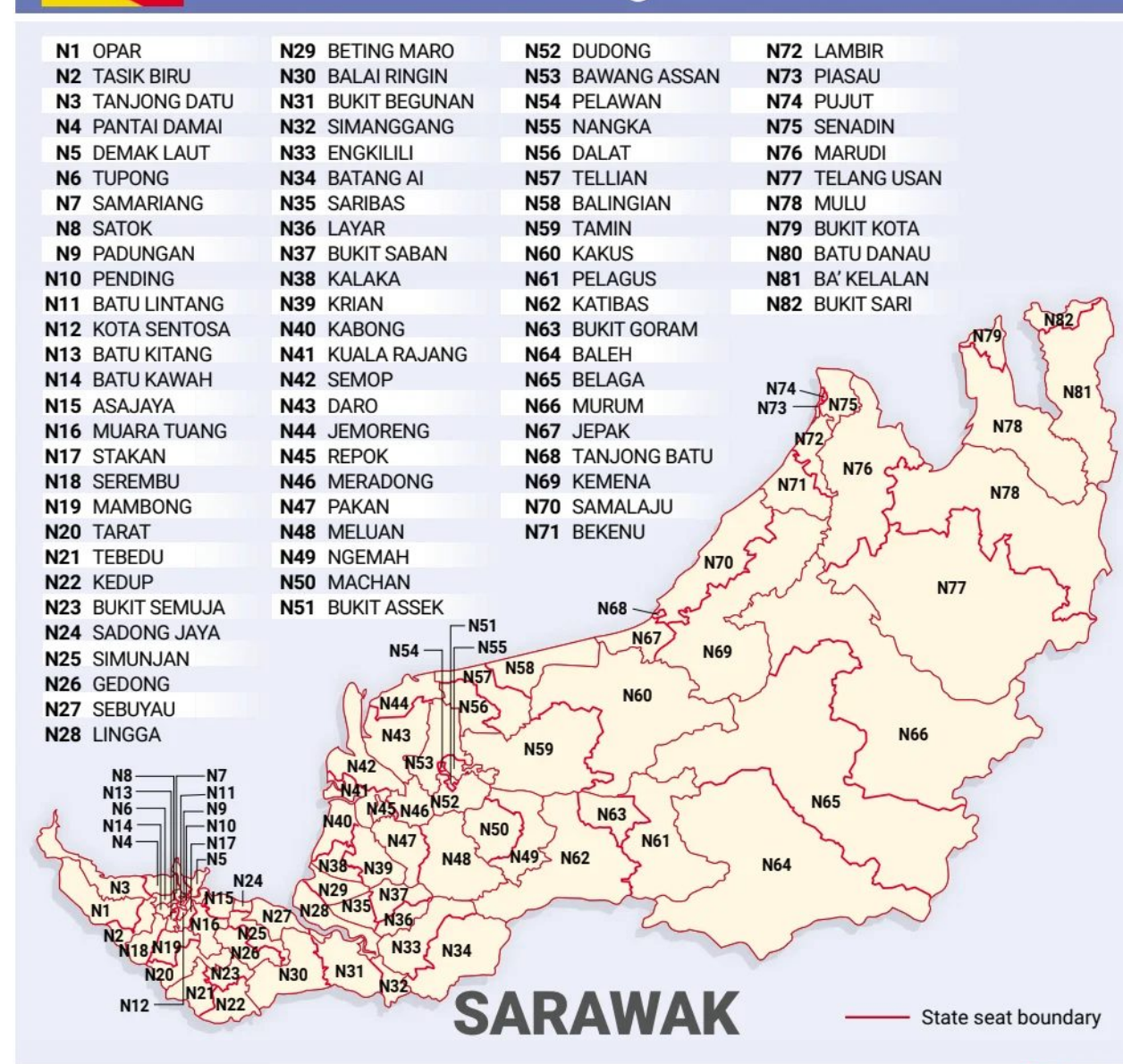
"The meeting will discuss key dates for the 13th Sarawak state election, including the issuance of election writs, nomination day and polling day, as well as the electoral roll to be used and other preparations for the election," he said in a statement, Bernama reported.

He said the EC had also received the official notification from state Speaker Tan Sri Mohamad Asfia Awang Nassar confirming the dissolution of the 19th Sarawak state legislative assembly, in accordance with Article 21(2) of the state constitution.

"Under Article 21(4) of the Sarawak state constitution, an election must be held within 60 days of the dissolution," he said.

On Friday, Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg announced that the state assembly would be dissolved effective Monday to pave the way for the state election.

A total of 82 state constituencies will be contested in the coming Sarawak state election



Source: Election Commission

TheStargraphics

Sarawak election retains 82 state constituencies

By **SHARON LING**
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KUCHING: The coming Sarawak state election will involve the current 82 state constituencies instead of the proposed expansion to 99 seats, says Sarawak Speaker Tan Sri Mohamad Asfia Awang Nassar.

He said the process of creating 17 new seats, which were approved by the Sarawak Legislative Assembly last year, had not been completed by the

Election Commission (EC).

"So only 82 constituencies (will be contested)," he told a press conference at the Sarawak Legislative Assembly complex yesterday.

Asfia said he had notified the EC of the state assembly's dissolution, which took effect on Monday with the consent of Sarawak Governor Tun Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar.

He said Article 21(4) of the state constitution provides that an election must be held within 60 days

from the date of dissolution, while the new state assembly must meet not less than 120 days later.

"Consequently, I have notified EC chairman Datuk Seri Ramlan Harun of the dissolution in a letter dated Oct 27 so that the commission can take the necessary action to determine the nomination and polling dates for the state election.

"The election is within the purview and exclusive preserve of the Election Commission to announce the dates of nomina-

tion day and polling day and conduct of elections, pursuant to Article 113 of the Federal Constitution," he said.

Asked if he would be willing to contest amid talk of candidate changes in Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), Asfia did not dismiss the possibility.

However, he said that under Sarawak law, the Speaker does not have to be an elected representative in the state assembly.

"But if I am nominated, my answer is 'pantang undur bah

(never retreat)!"

"The Speaker can contest if nominated by the party to which he belongs," he said.

Asfia is currently serving his 10th term as Speaker after first being appointed on Nov 15, 2000.

He previously served as the assemblyman for Kuala Rajang and Serdeng/Semop.

He is also the permanent chairman of PBB, the main component party of the Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) coalition.

Shopping smarter during Deepavali

Food and family remain the key priorities

By NARMATHA RAJA
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PETALING JAYA: Rising prices have compelled families to plan their Deepavali spending more carefully, but some traditional festive staples and time spent with loved ones remain non-negotiable for many.

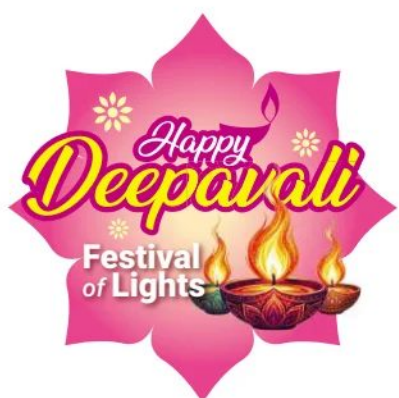
"We will not compromise on the snacks that are a must for Deepavali, such as murukku and Indian sweets."

"These are things we will always buy, regardless of the price," said wildlife education officer Macarena Douglas, 25.

But her family would stick to a budget for food and clothing, she said.

"Five years ago, my family would simply buy whatever we wanted for Deepavali, but now we have to check prices, plan ahead and be more organised with what we want to get," she said.

Beyond the food, she also looks forward to the traditions that bring her family together, from waking up early for an oil bath to visiting the temple and spending



time with loved ones.

"In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, Deepavali gives you an opportunity to pause, take a break from everything and embrace your culture, even if it is just for one day," she added.

Meera Samanther, a lawyer and women's rights activist, said traditional Deepavali dishes remained a priority, though she saw no need to buy new decorations every year.

"Food is something I definitely won't compromise on, especially when it comes to mutton and other dishes, as well as the quality of the food."

"I also reuse my decorations and don't feel the need to buy anything new unless something is faulty," said Meera, 67.

Celebrating with her family through potlucks also helps distribute the task of preparing for the occasion, with relatives contributing different dishes to the meal.

"The family getting together is the best part of Deepavali, and that is precious. It's not just about the day itself; it's the anticipation and preparation leading up to it," she said.

The importance of staple food items is reflected in shoppers' purchases at Kuala Lumpur's Little India, where spices, dry ingredients and ready-made mixes for festive snacks are in demand.

Prasanth, 34, a grocery shop supervisor, said some customers spent as much as RM600 on groceries and dry goods for Deepavali.

"Year by year, sales continue to increase, even if only slightly," he said.

New clothes also remain an important part of festive preparations.



Ready to celebrate: Little India in Brickfields comes alive with colour and crowds as the Indian community makes final preparations for Deepavali. — FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

Raja, 27, a sales representative at a textile store in Brickfields, said the store had recorded more walk-in customers this year compared to last year.

"During the festive period, the store extends its operating hours until midnight, particularly on Deepavali eve, to accommodate last-minute shoppers buying clothes for the celebration and padayal, an offering made to honour their ancestors," he said.

He observed that a family typically spent RM1,000 on clothing and accessories.

Jothi Chantheran, 31, manager of a newly opened textile store, said:

"We usually attract large crowds at night and on weekends, with as many as seven or eight groups of customers in the store

at one time."

The festive period also brings Malaysians travelling to celebrate with family, although express bus operators face growing competition from alternative transport options.

Pan Malaysian Bus Operators Association president Datuk Mohamad Ashfar Ali said the expansion of Electric Train Services (ETS), carpooling, car rentals and buses arranged by universities and factories had affected ticket sales.

"We experienced a 30% to 40% loss in sales," he said.

However, Ashfar said it was too early to determine this year's Deepavali ticket sales, although operators had observed a slight surge in demand this time around.

Family dances to their own rhythm during festive season

By JEREMY TAN
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BUTTERWORTH: A father and his seven children have become a bastion of traditional Indian dance, keeping their cultural heritage alive through performances across the country.

For 27 years, P. Arumugam, 54, has devoted himself to preserving the dances of his ancestors, a passion that has become a family tradition embraced by all seven of his children.

Every Deepavali season, the family draws crowds at shopping malls and events, captivating audiences with their colourful costumes and dance moves.

His journey began after high school when he joined a Penang-based dance troupe in the 1990s.

He said the family home was located beside a Hindu temple and since he was in primary school, he would join the temple dances during prayers.

"People encouraged my parents to send me to dance classes. I joined a group and danced with them for many years," he said.

After getting married, he struck out on his own and established the Arumugam Dance Academy in Seberang Perai in 1999.

His eldest daughter Rupasri, 27, was born that same year and she and her six younger siblings, three boys and three girls, grew up with the dances.

Rupasri, who works as an airport passenger service officer, said dance was always at the heart of their family.

As Deepavali approaches, the family performs at functions



In step with tradition:

Rupasri (second from right), her sister Darhmini (right) and their friends from Arumugam Dance Academy posing for the cameras after presenting Mayil Nadanam and Karakattam dances at Queensbay Mall in the lead up to Deepavali. — ZHAFFARAN NASIB/The Star

across peninsular Malaysia, from temple celebrations to festive programmes at shopping malls.

Friends sometimes join them, swelling the troupe to 15 performers.

Their repertoire ranges from traditional folk and prayer dances to modern and improvised routines.

Rupasri said keeping these traditions alive was a labour of love as fewer people were taking an inter-

est in traditional Indian dance.

"We take pride in keeping our culture alive and sharing its beauty," she said.

Among the dances performed was the Mayil Nadanam or Peacock Dance, in which dancers imitate the graceful movements of the bird through sweeping gestures, gentle neck movements and the display of colourful feathers.

There is also the Karakattam, a

folk dance originating from Tamil Nadu, in which dancers balance elaborately decorated pots on their heads while moving to fast-paced rhythms.

Rupasri's younger sister Darhmini, 23, a hairstylist, said their father choreographed every performance.

"We practise regularly every weekend with additional rehearsals in the days leading up to a show."

"We make many elements of our costumes by hand but import some of the props from India," she said.

Despite dancing since their primary school days, the sisters said performing never completely lost its excitement.

"We are always nervous when we first step onto the stage. But once the music starts and you get into rhythm, everything comes naturally," Rupasri said.



AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT

Reports by QISTINA SALLEHUDDIN and ARFA YUNUS

Preventing airlines' collapse

Govt mulls support to protect connectivity, avert disruption

MEASURES are being considered to prevent the collapse of major airlines to avoid disruptions to the country's connectivity and potential economic fallout, says Anthony Loke (*pic*).

The Transport Minister said the study on the measures follows reports of possible government assistance for low-cost carrier AirAsia amid concerns over its financial health following a spike in jet fuel prices.

"This is indeed something we are discussing at the government level. We are looking at how to ensure the aviation industry remains sustainable.

"Our priority is to ensure that our national airlines continue operating and that connectivity is maintained, because if any major airline goes bankrupt, it could disrupt our connectivity.

"However, how to assist foreign

airlines, private airlines and others is something that needs to be examined and studied. This is being looked into by the Finance Ministry and no decision has been made so far," he said when winding up his ministerial debates on Budget 2027.

Loke said an airline's collapse would not only cost its crew their jobs but also disrupt connectivity, with adverse consequences for the national economy.

"This matter is very much on the government's radar, and we are doing our utmost to ensure it does not happen," he said.

Earlier, during the question and answer session, Loke said more than 200,000 commercial vehicles are facing a shortage of approved workshops to install speed limitation devices (SLDs).



He said there are only 33 suppliers nationwide authorised to carry out the retrofitting, and this was one of the reasons the ministry decided to postpone the enforcement of the requirement for commercial vehicles.

"This is one of the reasons we decided to postpone enforcement for now," he said when responding to a supplementary question from Tan Kar Hing (PH-Gopeng).

The requirement to install SLDs was introduced in phases from Oct 1, 2025, for designated categories of commercial vehicles to control the maximum speed of heavy vehicles and reduce the risk of accidents.

On June 30, the ministry announced a postponement of full enforcement of the SLD requirement, which was originally sche-

duled to begin on July 1.

Loke said the postponement did not mean the requirement had been cancelled or waived but was intended to give the industry sufficient time to complete the compliance process.

He said the ministry was finalising a dedicated legal framework governing SLD installation, verification and enforcement.

"The date for full enforcement will be announced to the industry in advance once these matters have been settled," he added.

As of Oct 26, there were 106,651 recorded installations of verified SLDs out of 207,083 active vehicles, representing a compliance rate of 51.5%, he added.

For vehicles manufactured before 2015, which require retrofitting, only 34,514 out of 202,861 vehicles, or 17%, had recorded SLD installations.

Year-long study mooted to assess need for law to lower disaster risks

A YEAR-LONG study will be conducted to determine whether Malaysia needs a dedicated law on disaster risk reduction, says Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said the findings would guide the future direction of national disaster management, including the development of an appropriate legal framework and the possible introduction of a Disaster Risk Reduction Act.

The National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) has been tasked with conducting the study and will coordinate with the relevant ministries and agencies before the proposed policy and legislation are finalised, he added.

"The study aims to assess the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks and mechanisms and identify gaps in disaster risk reduction governance.

"It will also examine the need to improve or amend existing legislation and assess the need for a specific act on disaster risk reduction, among others," he said in a written parliamentary reply.

Ahmad Zahid, who chairs the National Disaster Management Committee, said the findings would provide an important basis for Nadma to determine how to strengthen national disaster governance, particularly in prevention, risk reduction and enhancing the resilience of communities and the country.

He was responding to Zahir Hassan (PH-Wangsa Maju), who asked for the latest developments in drafting the proposed National Disaster Management Bill.

Ahmad Zahid said the government was taking a measured approach to ensure that the form and scope of any proposed legislation suited the country's disaster management needs, rather than introducing new laws without first identifying gaps in the existing framework.

"This approach is also in line with the country's disaster management direction, which emphasises science-, data- and technology-based preparedness, early action, early warning systems, clear command structures, as well as rapid and coordinated responses," he added.

Ahmad Zahid said no date had been set for the tabling of the National Disaster Management Bill, as the government was still reviewing the need for an appropriate legal framework.

"Once the study is finalised, its findings and recommendations will be reviewed and coordinated with the relevant ministries and agencies before the policy and legislative proposals are finalised," he said.

Penal Code identified in custodial death probe

A PROVISION under the Penal Code has been identified for investigation into the custodial death of Noorizwan Zulkefly, says Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (*pic*).

The Home Minister said that there is no cover-up in the case, adding that investigations into Noorizwan's death have been taken over by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

"The CID has taken over the case, and a section under the Penal Code has been identified as the basis for the investigation.

"This means there is no effort or attempt to cover up the matter," he said when responding to RSN Rayer (PH-Jelutong), who sought an explanation over Noorizwan's death, citing post-mortem findings that allegedly revealed multiple serious injuries.

Rayer stressed that he was not blaming the entire police force but said the alleged actions of a small

number of personnel warranted scrutiny.

Saifuddin Nasution said he was just briefed by the police on the case, stressing that his ministry will not tolerate any wrongdoing, including among law enforcement personnel.

"We have never compromised on violations, if any, even when they involve law enforcement agencies.

"If there are developments in the investigation, I will personally make them known," he said.

Meanwhile, Ramkarpal Singh (PH-Bukit Gelugor) questioned the authorities' decision to investigate three lawyers involved in the case, raising concerns about the implications for legal practitioners carrying out their professional duties.

He sought clarification on whether the investigations against the



lawyers would continue, arguing that such an action could set a troubling precedent.

In his response, Saifuddin Nasution said he was not privy to the circumstances that prompted the investigation, including how the lawyers had interacted with officials while accompanying individuals to meet medical specialists.

He stressed that being a lawyer did not automatically exempt an individual from investigation and cautioned against interpreting the move as an attempt to target legal practitioners exposing alleged police misconduct.

"Let the process take its course. I cannot give an assurance that simply because they are lawyers, the investigation must stop.

"No minister can issue such an instruction," he said.

Earlier in the day, Noorizwan's

Tech hub delivers RM7bil growth boost

A TOTAL of RM7bil in investments was realised at the Automotive High-Tech Valley (AHTV) in Tanjung Malim between 2018 and 2026, generating 9,300 jobs, said Sim Tze Tzin.

The Deputy Investment, Trade and Industry Minister said the realised investments, which included contributions from Chinese automotive giant Geely, accounted for 23.3% of the estimated RM30bil investment earmarked for AHTV's development through 2035.

Sim said the workforce at AHTV had grown from about 2,000 in 2018 to 9,300 this year, with the figure projected to reach 22,800 by 2030.

"The total investment associated with the development of the AHTV ecosystem is estimated at RM30bil through 2035.

"This includes investments

already realised, ongoing investments and developments planned for the future," he said.

Sim was responding to Tan Kok Wai (PH-Cheras), who asked for the number and list of projects under Geely's investment commitment in Tanjung Malim.

He said the RM30bil figure should be regarded as an overall development estimate rather than as investments that have been fully realised.

He added that the number of companies operating within AHTV had increased from 11 in 2022 to 35, comprising automotive component suppliers and logistics service providers.

"Among the major projects completed were upgrades to Proton's manufacturing facilities in Tanjung Malim, including expanded production capacity

and capabilities in metal stamping, painting, body assembly and final vehicle assembly," he said.

"The upgrades also included the production of new-generation engines and transmissions, alongside the development of a 12-megawatt-peak solar farm within Proton's manufacturing complex to improve energy efficiency."

Sim said industrial development and upgrading works undertaken between 2025 and 2026 included an electric vehicle manufacturing plant, expanded engine production capabilities, metal stamping facilities, a new logistics and warehousing centre as well as a research and development testing laboratory.

These developments were expected to strengthen manufacturing capabilities, innovation and technology transfer while support-

ing the expansion of the domestic automotive supply chain.

He said supporting infrastructure had also been developed, including road networks, a gas pipeline connecting Bidor to AHTV, 5G telecommunications coverage, electricity and water supplies, and fibre-optic connectivity.

Sim said AHTV's long-term success would depend not merely on investment figures and vehicle production capacity but also on its contribution to the wider domestic automotive industry.

"This includes strengthening the technological capabilities of local companies, increasing the use of locally-manufactured components, reducing dependence on imports and expanding exports of high-value automotive products," he said.

By M.MAGESWARI
Photos by AZHAR MAHFOF/
The Star

BRIDGING DREAMS THROUGH DIGITAL CHALKBOARDS

MCMC empowers students through Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat

EDUCATION is the ultimate equaliser, but for many children in Malaysia's rural and underserved communities, access to quality academic support often comes with a price tag they simply cannot afford.

For families struggling to make ends meet, costly private tuition centres and paid online learning portals remain far out of reach.

Yet, inside modest homes across the country, young minds nurture extraordinary ambitions to become professionals in various fields.

What they need isn't more effort but a helping hand to reach their goals.

That helping hand has arrived in the form of Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat, a transformational educational initiative that is turning academic dreams into tangible reality for students from underprivileged backgrounds.

The Nadi ecosystem

The National Information Dissemination Centre (Nadi) is a flagship initiative spearheaded by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) under the Universal Service Provision (USP) programme.

Originally established to bridge the digital divide in rural areas and low-income regions, the network underwent a strategic rebranding from Digital Economy Centre or Pusat Ekonomi Digital (PEDi) to Nadi in 2024.

Guided by the 1 DUN 1 Nadi aspiration, the initiative now operates 1,099 centres nationwide.

Far more than just Internet access points, Nadi centres serve as vibrant community



"I am thankful to MCMC for their efforts and hope more centres will be set up to enable underprivileged families to send their children and achieve better academic results," says Nur Selina, one of last year's top SPM achievers and Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat beneficiaries.

hubs providing smart services that uplift local socio-economic standings.

Anchored by its core theme, "Empowering Minds, Shaping Futures", the heart of its academic pillar is Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat – a free digital learning ecosystem that delivers high-quality education directly to students who need it most.

As of Sept 30, 164,210 students have benefited from

Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat nationwide, with 65 students scoring top Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) results.

Chasing a dream

For one of last year's top SPM achievers, 18-year-old Nur Selina Mahabur Rahman, Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat was nothing short of a life-changing lifeline.

Growing up in Felda Sungai Tengi in Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor, Nur Selina is an only child in her family.

Her 61-year-old mother, Rohayaton Mohamed, is a housewife, while her 50-year-old father, Mahabur Rahman, works tirelessly as a self-employed fruit and vegetable vendor.

Nur Selina spent her secondary school years at SMK

Kampung Soeharto.

Like many students living on the outskirts, she faced a steep uphill battle when preparing for her SPM examinations.

She points out that mastering the entire syllabus was a daunting task, especially since she struggled with subjects like History, Mathematics and English.

"I was slow in understanding the full syllabus across all subjects. 'I don't like memorising, so History was tough for me, and I didn't know how to study English,'" Nur Selina shares.

"Living on the outskirts, finding a physical tuition centre is difficult. Online tuition was an option, but it was far too expensive for my family."

Determined not to let financial limitations dictate her future, Nur Selina walked into the Nadi Felda Sungai Tengi centre after enquiring about its services.

Because she did not own a laptop at home, the Nadi centre became her primary learning hub.

She emphasises how crucial the centre's desktop computers, high-speed Internet and free learning resources were for her SPM studies.

Through Nadi's Learning Management System (LMS), Nur Selina accessed structured notes, revision quizzes and live classes.

She explains that the interactive website allowed her to consistently test her understanding and keep her notes updated.



Nadi Felda Soeharto in Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor, is one of 1,099 centres nationwide providing a free digital learning ecosystem that gives underserved students equal access to academic excellence.

"Nadi teachers were creative," she highlights.

"For History, my teacher, Cikgu Zulkifli, used short forms, fun graphics and synonyms so we could memorise facts easily. He was so energetic in class that even an hour felt engaging.

"Whenever I struggled, I would read the text out loud in my room, narrate it like a story and practise answering past-year questions.

"And while studying, I'd listen to rock and heavy metal music to keep my focus sharp," she says.

She emphasises that the online classes also brought light-hearted moments that made learning enjoyable.

"Sometimes someone would forget to turn off their camera and do something funny. Instead of feeling awkward, the whole class and teacher would laugh together – it felt like a real family," she smiles.

When Nur Selina's SPM results were released, she was working a part-time job and was too anxious to check her results online.

She explains how overwhelming the moment was when her teacher announced that she scored 9As.

"I was nervous, shaking and couldn't believe it," she recalls.

When she arrived home, her mother, who had checked the portal, burst into tears and hugged her.

She points out that her mother was overjoyed, knowing that Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat had eased the family's financial burden while helping her daughter achieve excellence.

Today, Nur Selina is pursuing her pre-university studies at Matrikulasi Banting, Selangor.

But her ambitions go much further: she wants to become a lawyer and subsequently a High Court judge in Kuala Lumpur.

She highlights that her dream was sparked by watching legal K-dramas like *Juvenile Justice and Law School*, combined with an inspiring visit to a real courtroom, where seeing the judge in action left a lasting impression.

She explains that she aims to study law at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) because of its stellar reputation for producing outstanding lawyers.

"I am thankful to MCMC for their efforts and hope more centres will be set up to enable underprivileged families to send their children and achieve better academic results," she says, adding that Nadi opened the pathway for her to reach for her dream when she had no resources of her own.

Addressing students across local communities, her message is simple yet profound: grab the opportunity, learn for free and build a brighter future.

Dedicated educators

The driving engine behind Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat's success is a robust, highly structured curriculum delivered by 60 educators.



Abdul Arsyad (standing, fourth from left) shares that the Nadi centre offers convenient access and comfortable facilities for his studies and revision.

Coordinators Cikgu Nor Farah Hanim Mohamad Norizan (Bahasa Melayu) and Cikgu Syazwani Mohd Faizo (Mathematics) outline how the programme's five core elements come together to transform student learning.

Cikgu Nor Farah Hanim explains that the first element consists of Live Classes, which are split into two distinct formats: Open Tuition and Guidance Tuition.

She notes that Open Tuition is accessible to all students from Form 1 through Form 6 across six core subjects, including Bahasa Melayu, English, Mathematics, History, Science and Pengajian Am (General Studies).

She pinpoints that Guidance Tuition, on the other hand, is specifically tailored for Form 4 and Form 5 candidates to provide centralised, intensive focus until they complete their SPM.

She adds that for 2026, the programme manages 12 small groups for Form 4 and 18 small groups for Form 5, with each group comprising around 40 students who receive targeted teaching across four essential SPM subjects: Bahasa Melayu, English, Mathematics and History.

She emphasises that the second element, English Proficiency, offers additional dedicated modules exclusively to students enrolled in Guidance Tuition.

Cikgu Nor Farah Hanim notes that building strong English communication skills is crucial not only for academic excellence but also for unlocking future career opportunities.

She highlights that the third element features Special Programmes in the form of bi-monthly interactive webinars open to all registered students.

Cikgu Syazwani explains that these sessions invite SPM paper examiners to share invaluable answering techniques, Highest Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) strategies and key spot questions directly over Google Meet, connecting up to 1,000 students nationwide in real time.

"For instance, the teacher will be at a centre in Selangor and share the LMS link for all students to access the sessions," she notes.

She pinpoints that the fourth element focuses on Guidance and Assessment, establishing a



Cikgu Nor Farah Hanim explains that Open Tuition is accessible to all students from Form 1 through Form 6 across six core subjects.



Cikgu Syazwani explains how direct teacher support and regular assessments keep students on track.

continuous feedback loop through scheduled examinations in March, June and September to evaluate student comprehension.

Cikgu Syazwani notes that under this pillar, every small group is connected through dedicated WhatsApp groups, where teachers provide continuous guidance, answer students' queries and facilitate interactive subject quizzes.

Finally, she explains that the fifth element, Video On Demand (VOD), serves as a digital archive where recorded top-performing live sessions are uploaded directly to Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat's LMS.

Cikgu Nor Farah Hanim emphasises that this allows students to re-watch lessons, revise complex topics at their own pace and reinforce their exam preparation whenever necessary.

Neighbourhood hub

At the local level, the impact of Nadi Tuisyen Rakyat is felt every day in centres like Nadi Felda Soeharto in Kuala Kubu Baru, managed by Rosyafira



Durgahasinii, accompanied by her brother Eissvaran, emphasises that the short, clear notes provided by Nadi teachers make difficult subjects far easier to master.



"Students like to come to the Nadi centre due to its flexible learning schedule and free service," says Rosyafira (left) who manages Nadi Felda Soeharto, with her assistant, Nur Syafiqah Muhamad. — ROSSYAFIRA MUHAMAD

Muhamad for over 13 years.

Opening daily from 9am to 6pm, the centre serves as a second home for dozens of neighbourhood children.

Rosyafira explains that 20 students take turns daily using personal computers for live classes, watching Video On Demand (VOD) recordings and completing revisions.

She highlights that the active participation of students from Form 1 to Form 6 has been encouraging.

"They like to come to the centre due to its flexible learning schedule and free service," she says.

Among its regular users is Durgahasinii Veerappan, 17, an SPM candidate from SMK Kampong Soeharto who attends the centre alongside her two younger brothers, Eissvaran, 15 and Shasvin, 13.

She explains that her mother, Kalavathy Iyaramannaidu, learned about the initiative directly through a message from a Nadi officer.

Durgahasinii emphasises that the short, clear notes provided by Nadi teachers make difficult subjects far easier to master.

"They give great guidance on how to study the subjects, which is very beneficial for me," she highlights.

She notes her goal of scoring more than 6As in SPM so she can pursue medicine, adding that she wants to become a doctor to help sick people, save lives and serve as a proud role model for her younger brothers, proving that underprivileged families can achieve great success.

For 13-year-old Abdul Arsyad Aryan Abdul Nasir and his 11-year-old brother, Abdul Tharriq Aziz, Nadi is the highlight of their weekend.

Abdul Arsyad says he prefers studying and revising at the Nadi centre due to its convenient location and comfortable facilities.

He points out that being able to study alongside friends makes learning both fun and engaging.

"I feel relaxed, and it motivates me to learn and excel in my studies," he adds.

To learn more, visit <https://www.dilea.nadi.my/>.

From stroke survivor to storyteller

AI-assisted content helps entrepreneur inspire others with his recovery journey

By NAN HIDAYAT NAN AZMIE
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PETALING JAYA: When entrepreneur Allan Foo Kit Seng suddenly found the words on his mobile phone becoming blurry back in May 2021, he thought there was something wrong with the screen.

Moments later, the then 49-year-old Bandar Sri Damansara resident realised the problem was not his phone but himself. He had suffered a stroke.

Today, at 54, Foo has transformed that life-changing ordeal into a mission to inspire others, becoming an online sensation through artificial intelligence-assisted content and his abc123podcast on a popular online video platform while proving that stroke survivors can still embrace new opportunities.

"I don't want people to see stroke survivors as limited. Physically, I may not be what I used to be, but I can still create, entertain, teach and inspire," he said in an interview.

His latest AI-assisted comedy videos have attracted millions of views, with one Instagram reel from his account, abc123makeit-simple, garnering 1.8 million views in just four days.

By learning how to use AI to script and edit videos, Foo has

discovered a new way to connect with audiences while showing that physical limitations should not stop anyone from acquiring new skills. Yet behind the humour lies a deeper purpose.

"I've already gone through the worst. Now I ask myself, what's next? If I can't work like before, what else can I do? I can show people they don't have to stay inside the box," he said.

Foo said his family was his greatest motivation during recovery – especially his son, Alex Randall Sy, who was still in primary school when the stroke struck and is now 16.

His elder son, Anthony Renzo Sy Foo, 19, also stood by him throughout his recovery while caregiver Hasmah Hassan, 53, became an important pillar of support, helping him through daily routines, rehabilitation and his journey towards independence.

"I told myself I had to be strong and face it head on because my children were still growing up.

"As a father, I couldn't give up," he said.



Road to recovery: Foo with his caregiver Hasmah, who became an important pillar of support, helping him on his journey towards independence. — LEONG WAI YEE/The Star

Foo recalled experiencing blurred vision and weakness before collapsing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Friends rushed him to hospital, where doctors stressed the importance of receiving treatment within the "golden hour", saying the quick response likely saved his life.

Recovery, however, was a long and difficult journey.

He spent more than two years

in a wheelchair and underwent intensive physiotherapy, acupuncture and stem cell treatment before his mind gradually became clearer.

The former student of Victoria Institution and the school's Cadet Corps Band drum major likened surviving a stroke to returning home after a robbery.

"A stroke is like someone breaking into your house and making a mess of everything. You can sit

there crying over what happened, or you can start cleaning up your house.

"Nobody else can clean it for you. You have to rebuild your life, one step at a time," he said.

That mindset inspired Foo to document his recovery.

Encouraged by friends, he began sharing his journey online in September 2023, initially to help fellow stroke survivors and their caregivers navigate the physical, emotional and mental challenges after a stroke.

Today, his content blends humour with practical advice while his podcast simplifies stroke recovery through three principles – Awareness, Balance and Control – to help survivors and caregivers better understand the recovery journey.

Beyond entertaining audiences, Foo hopes his story will encourage stroke survivors to keep moving forward, no matter how long recovery takes.

"Nothing is easy, but you have to keep going. Recovery is a life-long journey. I don't want to be remembered as a stroke victim. I want people to see that I'm a stroke survivor.

"If my journey gives even one person hope and the courage to keep fighting, then everything I've gone through has been worth it," he added.

By M. MAGESWARI

KUALA KUBU BARU: She had no job, no source of income and no clear direction forward when her husband, a handyman and the sole breadwinner of their family, died in an accident.

Che Norzita Mohamad Zain was left to pick up the pieces on her own.

Faced with the overwhelming task of supporting her family, including her youngest child, who was pursuing a diploma at a vocational college, the 54-year-old resident of Felda Soeharto found herself facing an uncertain future.

"I didn't know what to do, as I had no job, but I wanted to try my luck," Che Norzita recalls.

She visited Nadi Felda Soeharto for a community event last year, where an employee introduced her to Nadi Mahir Jahit, a skills empowerment programme under the National Information Dissemination Centre (Nadi) initiative.

This introduction marked a turning point in her life.

Nadi serves as a vital local community hub established by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) under the Universal Service Provision (USP) programme.

Its initiatives are designed to uplift rural, underserved and low-income communities.

Hoping to rebuild her life, Che Norzita enrolled in a six-month programme.

"At first, I had no sewing skills," she admits. "The instructor taught me everything, from operating a sewing machine to cutting fabric and designing patterns."

Her instructor, 59-year-old Noor Azwa Abu Bakar, guided her

STITCHED WITH HOPE



Che Norzita (left, seated) sews under the guidance of her instructor, Noor Azwa, at Nadi Felda Soeharto in Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor. — AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star

through each step of the learning process.

A veteran educator with 31 years of experience at the Community Development Department (Kemas) workshop in Sungai Teng, Noor Azwa taught 15 women this year.

"When I started, I made mistakes and my stitching wasn't neat at all," Che Norzita shares.

"Whenever I struggled, my instructor kept encouraging me. She told me to keep trying until I succeeded."

Noor Azwa watched her student's transformation with deep emotion. "When she first came to me, she had no real sewing skills, just a basic idea," Noor Azwa says tearfully.

"Seeing her now, able to sew independently, makes me so emotional. She fought so hard to sur-

vive and support her family, especially to keep her youngest child in college. I am so proud to see her stand on her own two feet."

Starting with a simple apron, Che Norzita progressed through practical lessons to master a range of garments and household items, including traditional baju kurung, baju kurung moden, kebaya, tudung, trousers, palazzo pants and curtains. She also acquired technical skills, such as sewing zips neatly.

Her growing confidence paid off when Kemas instructors invited her to participate in a Selangor state-level sewing competition alongside 19 other participants, many of whom were younger, trained tailors.

Given just four hours to complete a traditional baju kurung, Che Norzita secured second place

and a RM250 cash prize.

"I was completely shocked, deeply moved and immensely proud," she says. "In fact, the baju kurung I am wearing today is the very one I made during my training at Nadi Felda Soeharto."

"Without the sewing skills I gained through the Nadi Mahir Jahit programme, life would have been very difficult for me."

Today, Che Norzita runs a home-based tailoring business. Her first order was for 20 baju kurung, which soon grew to more than 100 pieces during the Hari Raya season and community feasts (kenduri). She also receives requests for clothing alterations.

With monthly earnings reaching RM2,000 or more during peak seasons, she now has to turn down orders when demand exceeds her capacity.

"Now, I earn my own income and can support my family comfortably," Che Norzita says. "I want to sincerely thank MCMC and Nadi Felda Soeharto for introducing this programme. It is a lifeline for single mothers and low-income families, giving us the opportunity to work, become independent and achieve our aspirations."

Empowering communities

Che Norzita's story is one of many across the country. To date, 348,084 community members have benefited from Nadi Mahir initiatives.

The programme continues to drive economic empowerment across Malaysia:

- > 132 individuals have established income-generating opportunities as school uniform tailors nationwide through the Nadi Mahir Jahit Alumni programme;

- > 15 experienced participants have received support to strengthen and expand their existing sewing businesses;

- > Three participants with no prior sewing experience have acquired the skills to produce handicrafts and generate income through small-scale sewing orders.

For Che Norzita, the journey has brought financial relief, restored independence and given her peace of mind.

"If you ever have the chance to learn a new skill under Nadi Mahir, take it," she advises. "As long as we are willing, we are never too old to learn."

Unlock new opportunities and build your skills today at www.mahir.nadi.my.

Prosecution closes case in Guan Eng's graft trial

KUALA LUMPUR: After more than five years of proceedings and calling 38 witnesses, the prosecution has closed its case in the RM6.3bil undersea tunnel and major roads project corruption trial involving former Penang chief minister Lim Guan Eng.

Deputy public prosecutor Datuk Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin, who led the prosecution team, informed Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi that the prosecution was closing its case yesterday after its 38th witness, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters senior superintendent Zulhilmi Ramli, who was also the investigating officer, concluded his testimony.

"I hereby close the prosecution's case and offer Penang Mayor Datuk Rajendran P. Anthony to the defence should they be called to enter their defence," he said.

Azura then ordered both the prosecution and defence to file their written submissions by Jan 13, and fixed Jan 26 and 27 next year to hear oral submissions, Bernama reported.

The trial commenced on July 13, 2021.

Among the key witnesses called were former Consortium Zenith Construction Sdn Bhd director Datuk Zarul Ahmad Mohd Zulkifli, former Penang state executive councillor Datuk Lim Hock Seng, former Penang state secretary Datuk Seri Farizan Darus, former tourism and culture minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz, and businessman Datuk Seri G. Gnanaraja.

The trial drew significant attention following several notable developments, including the death of former Ewein Bhd group managing director Datuk Ewe

Swee Kheng, who was found dead after reportedly falling from a luxury condominium unit in Jalan Kelawei, Penang, at 5.37am on Oct 5, 2021.

Ewe, 53, was the 15th prosecution witness scheduled to testify in the trial.

On Dec 16, 2021, the court allowed Ewe's recorded statement to be admitted as evidence.

Yesterday, Wan Shaharuddin was assisted by DPPs Mahadi Abdul Jumaat, Khairunnisa Hazwani Omar, Farah Yasmin Salleh and Julaila Jamaludin.

Lim was represented by lawyers Ramkarpal Singh, RSN Rayer, Mohd Haijan Omar, Tiara Katrina Fuad and Asyraf Abu Bakar Hamzah.

On the first charge, Lim, 65, is accused of using his position as then Penang chief minister to receive RM3.3mil in gratification

for himself.

The offence was allegedly committed by helping a company owned by Zarul Ahmad secure the undersea tunnel and major roads construction project in Penang, valued at RM6,341,383,702, between January 2011 and August 2017 at the Penang Chief Minister's Office.

The charge, framed under Section 23(1) of the MACC Act, provides for a maximum jail term of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

On the second charge, the Bagan MP is accused of soliciting a 10% cut of profits from Zarul Ahmad as an inducement to help the businessman's company secure the same project.

The offence was allegedly

committed near The Gardens Hotel, Mid Valley City here in March 2011.

This comes under Section 16 of the MACC Act, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment or a fine of not less than five times the bribe value or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

Lim also faces two charges of causing two plots of land owned by the Penang government, valued at RM208.8mil, to be disposed of to developer companies linked to the undersea tunnel project.

The offences were allegedly committed at the Penang Land and Mines Office, Komtar, on Feb 17, 2015 and March 22, 2017.

The charges, under Section 403 of the Penal Code, provide for a prison sentence of between six months and five years, whipping and a fine, upon conviction.

Nationwide Air Pollutant Index (API) readings (As at 8pm yesterday)

API reading categories: Good 0-50 Moderate 51-100 Unhealthy 101-200 Very unhealthy 201-300 Hazardous Above 300															
94	59	57	59	68	55	53	38	46	43	51	49	71	57	72	73
Samalaju, Sarawak	Cheras, FT K. Lumpur	FT Putrajaya	Klang, Selangor	Johan Setia, Selangor	Shah Alam, Selangor	Petaling Jaya, Selangor	Minden, Penang	Kota Baru, Kelantan	Kemaman, Terengganu	Indera Mahkota, Kuantan, Pahang	Tanjung Malim, Perak	Seremban, N. Sembilan	Bandaraya Melaka, Melaka	Pasir Gudang, Johor	Larkin, Johor

Source: Air Pollutant Index Management System (Apims)

Minister denies plantation fire links

Reports show Indonesia blaze started elsewhere, spread due to scorching weather

By **TARRENCE TAN**
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MELAKA: The fires in Indonesia which an environment group linked to 21 Malaysian companies did not start on their plantations, says Plantation and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad.

Citing reports from the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB), she said they showed that the blaze had started elsewhere and spread because of the scorching weather.

"Based on the reports we received so far, the fire did not start on the plantation. It started elsewhere, but because the weather was extremely hot, it spread.

"And it was put out immediately," she told reporters during the open day at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka yesterday.

Noraini pointed out that all plantation companies were subject to the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) standards, both of which prohibit

open burning.

The MPOB, she said, would also carry out regular monitoring.

News reports emerged on Monday that environmental group Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (Walhi) has released its findings which claimed that 21 companies with connections to businesses with Malaysian ties had

been involved in forest and land fires that erupted in the republic between January and September.

Forest fires in Indonesia's Kalimantan region have raged on for over three months.

On Oct 5, Greenpeace claimed that plantation companies from Malaysia and Singapore were among the entities involved.

Mask up for haze and illnesses

By **BENJAMIN LEE**
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysians – particularly those in areas with unhealthy air quality or crowded public spaces like trains and buses – should wear face masks to curb the spread of flu, cough and sore throat during the haze, say public health experts.

Malaysian Society of Harm Reduction president and public health medicine specialist Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh said the Covid-19 pandemic fatigue had contributed to people becoming less concerned about respiratory health risks.

"People are still tired of the Covid-19 mask mandate and especially of the haze every year.

"As a result, these people have lost interest in wearing masks and forgot about the danger that can occur," she said.

Dr Sharifa Ezat said those with flu symptoms, like coughing and sneezing, should mask up, particularly in crowded, poorly-ventilated areas, even if there is no haze.

She also urged people to prac-

tise good hand hygiene and get vaccinated annually, particularly those at higher risk.

"Isolate the ones with flu-like symptoms and quarantine anyone else if needed.

"Also do try to sanitise common areas and high-touch surfaces daily and wash patient laundry separately," she added.

Former Health Ministry director and public health medicine specialist Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar said discomfort and misconceptions about mask effectiveness had contributed to declining use.

"Years of Covid-19 rules have taught people to wear masks only when legally required, not as a personal habit," he said.

Dr Zainal added that many people also often misunderstand the difference between masks used to prevent infection and those intended to protect against haze particles.

"People gave up on masking because their standard surgical masks did not stop the haze smell or irritation, unaware that they needed N95 respirators instead," he added.

Dr Zainal recommended surgi-



Rising concerns: Old folk are seen not masking up while travelling in the LRT.
— ART CHEN/
The Star

cal masks for those who were unwell, while N95 respirators were more suitable during unhealthy haze conditions.

He also highlighted the risks of coughing and sneezing on crowded trains and buses, advising commuters to cover their mouths and noses, sanitise their hands and avoid crowded areas where possible.

Universiti Putra Malaysia epidemiologist Assoc Prof Dr Malina Osman stressed that the public needed to distinguish between haze protection and infection prevention.

"I think you have to differentiate between preventing the hazard of

haze and preventing infection.

"The mask is only useful for infection but may not be adequate for protection from the haze," she said.

Dr Malina said surgical masks were appropriate for people with respiratory infections, while those with underlying respiratory problems should use suitable protection when air quality reached unhealthy levels.

"Those who have respiratory symptoms or those who are vulnerable, like the elderly and immunocompromised persons, should wear masks to prevent infection," she said, adding that where possible, those who were

unwell should avoid going out.

Meanwhile, no unhealthy Air Pollutant Index (API) readings were detected across Malaysia as of 6pm yesterday, according to the Environment Department's Air Pollutant Index Management System (Apims).

A total of 48 areas across Malaysia recorded moderate API readings of between 51 and 100, while 20 other areas recorded good API readings of between 0 and 50.

The only area that recorded an unhealthy API yesterday was Samalaju in Sarawak, which saw its reading fall from 152 at 8am to 94 as of 8pm.

The apt thing to do about Waze

There should be a more convincing argument and, most importantly, a proven alternative for six million users to switch to.

NO, no, no! I will not give up Waze. And it has nothing to do with whether I am pro- or anti-Israel.

All I know is that I have been using this navigational app for the last seven years since I retired; and if not for it, I would have been lost countless times trying to find my way around the Klang Valley.

In a way, I have been terribly spoiled by Waze. The first thing I do when I get in my car is to place my phone in its holder and tap on Waze to key in my destination. That's even before starting the engine, locking the doors and putting on my seat belt.

There have been occasions when it freezes and even seems to get a bit confused. But hey, I would be confused, too, when it comes to trying to figure out where to go on some of our complicated highways, especially sections that have intersections and multiple crisscrossing flyovers with inadequate signage.

Going by social media responses, I am not the only one quite irritated by this latest issue. There are six million users of the app.

The reason cited for the government imposing an immediate ban on civil servants from using Waze on official duties and to consider a total ban for all citizens is because it is deemed an Israeli product and therefore poses "information security risks and the potential exposure of data on the public's movements through Waze, given that it is subject to Israeli government laws," according to a Star Online report.

I am actually stumped as to how preventing civil servants from using Waze on "official duties" will improve our national security. Does it mean they can't turn on the app when they are driving to work or something? Or when they are driving to attend an official function taking place

JUNE HL WONG

So aunty, so what?

somewhere they aren't familiar with and they now have to use some other guide to get there?

True, they can use Google Maps even though both it and Waze are owned by US-based Alphabet Inc, the parent company of Google.

We were advised to switch to Tuju, a local navigational app that I had never heard of before. Tuju has certainly received a huge boost of late, but sadly, it has been found to be lacking.

An Oct 26 report in a local news portal headlined, "Tuju struggles to find its way: Basic functions leave users stranded", exposed its many shortcomings.

According to the writer, the app, jointly developed by the Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) and Prosignal Consortium Sdn Bhd (PCSB) and launched on Nov 26 last year, is plagued by technical issues.

When she tried using the app to get from Bangsar to Bukit Jalil, it failed to function altogether, she said.

She added: "A major shortcoming was its location search feature, which frequently returned a 'No Results Found' message. It could not find prominent landmarks, including Pavilion Bukit Jalil and Bukit Jalil Golf & Country Club.

"The login process was also

problematic, with an 'Invalid Email' message repeatedly appearing despite users entering the correct details."

Talk about egg on one's face. Did no one test the app thoroughly before advising the prime minister to promote it?

Tuju's response to all the flak: "Our technical team is carrying out restoration and improvement works, targeted to be completed by Nov 6, 2026 at the latest. Our priority is to ensure the navigation feature operates stably, smoothly and meets users' travel needs."

While doing that, the developers turned off its navigational feature but kept non-navigational features like accessing highway CCTV feeds, checking toll rates and locating R&R stop areas online.

Frankly, those features don't mean a thing to me. All I want is an app that reliably shows me how to drive from point A to point B and the time it would take to get there, gives me the option to take tolled or non-tolled roads and indicates parking options.

I asked AI: "Which is better, Waze or Google Maps?" The answer? Neither app is universally better as it depends on how and where I am driving, as both were built for different purposes.

The advice is to choose Google Maps if you want reliable long-distance routing, need public transit/walking directions or are driving through areas with poor mobile reception.

If you are driving or commuting in big cities and want aggressive shortcuts to avoid congested roads and live police/hazard alerts, choose Waze with voice prompts. This is exactly what I want and need from a navigational app as a person who drives mostly in Petaling Jaya and the Klang Valley.

While the government is sounding the alarm on Waze because of its Israeli connections, the irony is Google itself has corporate contracts like Project Nimbus, a US\$1.2bil (RM4.91bil) cloud computing and AI deal, with the Israeli government.

So, if we are worried about Waze being used to collect our data for the Israelis, shouldn't we also cast suspicions on Google Maps and other products we all use everyday, like Google Search, YouTube, Chrome, Gmail, Google Drive and Docs?

Google also owns Android, the most popular mobile operating system in the world. Who's to say what Google is doing with all the massive information it collects from all of us?

And it's not just Google that mines us so easily. Other big tech companies like Meta, Amazon and X also collect a humongous array of personal, device and behavioural data from their users.

As others have pointed out: personal data in many institutions, including banks, hospitals, hotels, even government bodies (like the Shanghai National Police Database), has been hacked or breached.

I am more afraid of scammers after my hard-earned savings than any foreign power that might be interested in where I do my grocery shopping.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute reported on Sept 3 that "South-East Asia has quietly become the world's largest manufacturing hub for financial fraud".

It added: "In less than a decade, the industry has gone from misspelled emails and clumsy romance scams to vast, intricate business operations powered by AI-driven tools and manipulation tactics."

That is what has also been pointed out: AI-powered tools, whether for tracking, spying and other nefarious purposes, are so advanced and easily available, any intelligence agency can collect whatever intel it wants from any part of the world.

Several commentators have asked if the real purpose to ban Waze is to get public support for Tuju, which was developed at an undisclosed cost. Whether this is true or it is indeed for a far higher purpose like national security, the alternative must be rock solid.

It's not just this old aunty who uses it. It is a vital, indispensable tool for millions of people like delivery riders. Don't tell us to switch from something that is tried and proven to a half-baked one even if it is government sanctioned.

I can confidently say we Malaysians will gladly support local products if they are up to mark and can do the job. A clear case in point is Grab.

Uber, founded in California in March 2009, was launched in Malaysia in October 2013. Grab, which was started in 2012 as MyTeksi by Anthony Tan and Tan Hooi Ling, beat Uber in Malaysia and the region because it used hyper-local strategy that understood local traffic congestion and needs. In March 2018, Uber surrendered and sold its South-East Asia operations to Grab.

So if Tuju can really shape up by Nov 6 and give me what I want and need and costs me nothing, then I will gladly switch.

No need to go on about my personal data being exposed that would affect national security risk. It may make me feel slightly important but that's about it.

The views expressed here are the writer's own.

OTHER

NEWS & VIEWS

Compiled by C. ARUNO, BENJAMIN LEE and GERARD GIMINO

Fury over kitten kept in box with snake

A VOLUNTEER fire and rescue team in Johor Baru sparked anger online for allegedly placing a rescued kitten in the same box as a snake, reported *China Press*.

A video of the incident showed a man wearing a Mount Austin volunteer Fire and Rescue team T-shirt in front of a transparent box with a kitten inside.

Upon closer inspection, a brown snake could be seen coiled next to the tiny feline, which could be heard meowing in fear repeatedly.

The video went viral online, sparking allegations of animal abuse.

The volunteer team then issued a statement on Oct 25, explaining

that the snake in the box was dead, denying allegations that they had fed the kitten to the reptile.

It apologised for causing a misunderstanding, adding that the kitten was later released.

> Bird droppings can pose a risk to human health it was found after a man in Guangdong, China, contracted pneumonia after cleaning bird poop from his car, reported *China Press*.

The doctors explain that *Cryptococcus neoformans*, a fungus which can be found in bird droppings, can become airborne.

They urged those who frequently clean bird droppings to wear protective gear.

Man sets up sting for online predators

A SOCIAL media content creator's attempt to raise awareness about online child safety has uncovered some shocking revelations, reported *Sinar Harian*.

Zamarul Ramzie Abdullah, better known as Papazam, said he posed as a 15-year-old girl using fake accounts on social media platforms and dating apps.

"I wanted to see how the conversation would unfold when they knew the profile depicted a 15-year-old child."

"When the conversation started veering towards sexual matters, I realised the issue was more serious than just a prank call," he told the daily.

As the girl, he arranged meetings with individuals around Kuala Lumpur, before revealing his identity.

Zamarul claimed about 90% of

those he met were aged 35 and above and were married.

"I began thinking about the possibility that other children might have been victims or could still be facing the same risk," he said.

The father urged parents to monitor their children's online activities.

He also advised the public to preserve evidence of suspected child sexual exploitation and report it to the authorities.

> Singer Kaka Azraff drew public attention after criticising married men who enjoyed themselves instead of fulfilling their family responsibilities, reported *Kosmo!*.

Without naming anyone specifically, the 37-year-old singer, whose real name is Nor Atiqah Noor Azraff, described such men as selfish in a recent Threads post.

"You neglect your child but

never skip a party," she was quoted as saying.

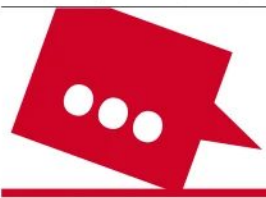
In a separate post, she said such individuals deserved to be criticised.

Many who read her posts speculated that they were directed at her former husband, while others viewed them as general remarks.

> Local actress Ruhainies is preparing to sue three individuals for defamation, claiming their accusations have severely affected her career, finances and mental health, reported *Kosmo!*.

The 34-year-old said she had endured the allegations for three years, including claims that a prominent individual had been funding her lifestyle.

"I will fight with everything I have this time. Once I start something, I will not do it halfway," she added.



YOUR OPINION

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A pseudonym may be included.

Soft power an enduring asset in modern statecraft

THE recent inaugural alumni gathering co-hosted by the Malaysian Institute of Defence and Security (MiDAS) and the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies (DKI APCSS) was, on its face, a modest affair.

No treaty was signed and no communiqué issued. Yet, it pointed to something headline diplomacy often obscures – the slow, cumulative work through which states build trust.

In a region where strategic competition is intensifying, that work deserves more attention than it receives. This is soft power in its practical form.

Joseph S. Nye Jr, an American political scientist, coined the term for influence exercised through attraction rather than coercion, and Malaysia has long pursued it through sustained, unglamorous channels.

The Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) shares our development experience with fellow developing

nations, while the Malaysian Defence Cooperation Programme (MDCP) remains a key pillar of our defence diplomacy.

Since 1996, 564 Malaysian officials have benefited from programmes at the Hawaii-based DKI APCSS. That is a network spanning a generation of officers and civil servants.

The gathering sought to recognise their career achievements, strengthen professional ties and plan future joint programmes.

As Nye and Robert Keohane – who together developed the theory of complex interdependence in international relations and international political economy – argued, when specialised bureaucrats and military officers interact directly across borders, they form transgovernmental networks that alter professional perspectives and generate lasting organisational linkages.

Sceptics may dismiss such convenings as ceremonial. Keohane and Nye themselves insisted that

“our task is to analyse the politics of interdependence, not to celebrate it”, and a sober assessment concedes that these gatherings rarely produce sudden breakthroughs.

Their value lies elsewhere. Sustained face-to-face contact reshapes how elites perceive one another across generations, replacing suspicion with genuine institutional confidence.

That confidence is a strategic asset. Contacts spanning the defence and civilian sectors build resilience that cushions relationships when political winds turn, and they do so long before a crisis demands it. Trust of this kind cannot be improvised in the middle of a dispute; it must be accumulated in quieter times, one programme and one relationship at a time.

For a middle power such as Malaysia, which depends on dialogue rather than leverage, this is not a peripheral concern but a core instrument of national security.

Soft power also helps states manage divergence. As Keohane and Nye candidly noted, “baking a larger pie does not stop disputes over the size of the slices.”

It cannot eliminate competing national interests, but it enlarges the “pie” of mutual confidence, allowing states to agree on some matters and agree to disagree on others, but each side would welcome the other into their houses at any time.

The implication for policy is practical. A modest and steady investment of this kind costs little against the value of a trusted contact in a difficult moment. In an era of complex interdependence, these quiet dividends remain among the most enduring assets of modern statecraft.

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Malaysian Institute of
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Show same level of commitment in dealing with haze

MALAYSIANS have been suffering from recurring transboundary haze for years. It pollutes the air that we breathe, affects public health, reduces visibility, limits outdoor activities and hurts tourism.

The people want the government to do something concrete about the haze instead of asking them to wait for the transition to the Northeast Monsoon, which is expected to ease the situation.

The government has cited complications involving cross-border jurisdictions, enforcement and diplomacy with Indonesia to explain its inability to deal effectively with the haze.

That said, its recent action suggests that the urgent problem appears to be the navigation app Waze, not the haze. The government has barred civil servants from using Waze and is considering a total nationwide ban over national security and data privacy concerns linked to Israel.

To be clear, cybersecurity and national security are serious concerns. But the difference of urgency and swiftness in taking action between two situations are now being scrutinised by the public.

When a security risk directly affects government officials, actions appear to be quick. In stark contrast, when we have been breathing polluted air for months, we are expected to remain patient indefinitely.

Therein lies the issue. Both problems are complex. Both cross borders. Accordingly, both deserve meaningful actions.

We do not expect the government to control the wind or arbitrarily command another country. The public expects the government to protect them with the same level of urgency and meaningful actions that it protects its officials.

The public should not have to wait for an act of God, rain or change of wind direction for clean air. Clean air is a human right. Human rights are an administrative responsibility, not a matter of divine intervention. National security is not limited to securing data. It also means protecting the public's quality of life.

Hence, by all means, do assess Waze-related cybersecurity risks. Demand transparency and accountability. Take appropriate measures. At the same time, do demonstrate the same level of commitment in dealing with the recurring haze issue.

If laws have their limits, employ diplomacy. If diplomacy appears difficult, then pursue diplomacy with greater intellect.

Just act swiftly with the haze as with Waze.

NUR RAFTUDDIN MASWARI
Subang Jaya

Using tiny particles to help fight superbugs

IMAGINE taking antibiotics for a urinary tract infection, only for the infection to return weeks later. Or having a wound that refuses to heal despite repeated treatment.

For some patients, the problem is not simply that antibiotics have stopped working. It is that bacteria have found clever ways to protect themselves. And one of their most effective survival strategies is building a protective layer known as a biofilm.

Antibiotic resistance is among the world's most serious public health challenges. In 2021, bacterial resistance to antibiotics was estimated to have directly caused 1.14 million deaths worldwide, and contributed to another 4.71 million deaths.

These figures highlight the urgent need for better ways to prevent and treat infections. However, scientists are discovering that fighting bacteria is not always about developing stronger antibiotics.

Sometimes the challenge is finding a way to reach them.

Have you ever noticed a slippery layer on a wet stone or the surface of a neglected water container?

That slimy coating can contain what scientists call a biofilm, which forms when bacteria attach themselves to a surface and produce a sticky protective layer made of sugars, proteins and genetic material.

Think of it as a fortress built by bacteria to shield themselves from danger.

Inside this fortress, bacteria can become difficult for antibiotics and the body's immune sys-



Photo: TNS

tem to reach. Some bacteria also enter a resting state, making them less vulnerable to medicines that normally target actively growing bacteria.

Interestingly, these bacteria are not necessarily resistant to antibiotics in the usual sense. Instead, their protective surroundings make treatment less effective.

Biofilms are associated with several health problems, including persistent wounds, recurring urinary tract infections, dental plaque and certain lung infections.

If scientists can break down this protective barrier, existing antibiotics may regain some of their effectiveness.

This is where nanotechnology offers an exciting possibility. Scientists are investigating nanoparticles, extremely tiny struc-

tures that can carry medicines directly to difficult-to-reach areas.

One example involves liposomes, tiny bubble-like structures made from fatty materials that can carry medicines. By packaging antibiotics inside these particles, researchers hope to improve the effectiveness of the medicines in reaching bacteria protected within biofilms.

Nanotechnology-based antibiotic delivery is not entirely new. In 2018, the United States Food and Drug Administration approved Arikayce, an inhaled antibiotic packaged inside liposomes, for patients with a difficult-to-treat lung infection.

In a clinical trial, 29% of patients receiving the treatment had no detectable bacteria in their sputum samples over three consecutive months, compared

with 9% receiving standard treatment alone.

Scientists are now exploring ways to combine nanoparticles with substances capable of breaking down bacterial biofilms.

For example, an enzyme called alginate lyase can help break down the sticky material produced by certain bacteria, including *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, which can cause serious lung infections.

Some laboratory experiments have also combined these approaches with antibiotics such as ciprofloxacin, producing encouraging results in disrupting bacterial biofilms. However, most of these newer approaches remain experimental and require further safety testing and clinical trials before they can be used routinely in patients.

Nanotechnology could eventually help doctors make better use of antibiotics already available, particularly against persistent infections. Nevertheless, nanoparticles are not a miracle cure, and many scientific challenges remain.

The most important message for the public is that antibiotics must be used responsibly. They should only be taken when prescribed by a qualified healthcare professional, and should never be shared or used to treat viral infections such as the common cold.

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Tensions mount as artillery pointing south detected

North Korea VISITORS to a South Korean observatory that overlooks North Korea said the appearance of artillery pieces with their barrels pointed south on the border was worrying, as tensions between the two countries intensify.

The two Koreas have traded barbs and strengthened their postures along the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) separating them since September, after a mine blast there wounded three South

Korean soldiers. South Korea has demanded that North Korea apologise, while Pyongyang has accused Seoul of fabricating the incident.

On Friday, South Korean media photographed an armoured vehicle in clear view near the frontier. By Monday, there were three with their gun barrels pointed south, according to a Reuters witness.

"I'd only seen on TV that North Korea had deployed 122-mm artillery, but seeing the area in person

makes me realise just how real the danger is," Jang Gil-seong said outside the Aegibong observatory, which overlooks North Korea's Kaepung county from about 1.4km away.

"I'm really concerned about how much South Korea will need to do to prepare for and respond to this threat in the future."

Hannah Robbins, a 28-year-old tourist from Canada, said her tour group had only found out about the artillery pieces after their guide told them about the weap-

ons at the observatory.

"We're a bit scared obviously," she said yesterday.

"The tour guide was like 'don't worry, they won't shoot' but then it's a bit of a worry that we have right now."

Analysts identified the weapons as M-1981 122-mm self-propelled howitzers, an older North Korean artillery system believed to have entered service in the late 1970s.

They have a maximum range of about 24km, putting areas such as

the South Korean town of Gimpo where the observatory is located within reach, although they are less powerful than newer artillery systems, said Yang Uk, a military expert at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

"I would view this more as a display of firepower than a meaningful increase in combat capability," Yang said.

"The fact that it was positioned where it can be easily seen suggests it was deployed to be noticed." — Reuters

Arnab threat rattles South Asia



In the storm's path: People walking with umbrellas along the Bay of Bengal coast in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, as rain lashes the area ahead of Cyclone Arnab's expected landfall. — AFP

India, Sri Lanka and Nepal brace for floods, landslides and avalanches

India AUTHORITIES ordered nearly 100,000 people to evacuate homes in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, ahead of a severe cyclone the national weather office expects to make landfall today.

Neighbouring Nepal and Sri Lanka have also issued weather warnings.

Cyclone Arnab is forecast to hit India's southwestern Andhra Pradesh coast as a "very severe cyclonic storm", with gusts of up to 150kph this morning, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a bulletin yesterday.

Torrential rain lashed the coast in the port city of Kakinda as heavy waves crashed on shore.

"I've never seen anything like this before," said Kotesw Kumar, 35, adding the government warned people to stock up on groceries.

"There was a cyclone here three years ago, but the water didn't

rise this much."

Cyclones, called hurricanes in the North Atlantic and typhoons in the Pacific, are a regular menace in the Bay of Bengal and northern Indian Ocean.

The storm season, however, has been turbocharged by the El Nino weather phenomenon that has caused unprecedented warming.

Neighbouring Sri Lanka, meanwhile, closed schools with warnings of torrential rain, with the island's Department of Meteorology warning storms could trigger flash floods and mudslides.

The military has been placed on alert, Colombo's Disaster Management Centre said.

Indian media reported that as many as 50,000 people have been told to move to safe areas in Andhra Pradesh, and 48,000 in Odisha.

Nepal's disaster authority issued a warning yesterday, say-

ing that as the storm travels inland towards the Himalayas – likely overnight tomorrow – it will bring heavy rainfall as well as "a high risk of heavy snowfall, snowstorms and avalanches".

It called on tourists to avoid travelling to high mountain areas and advised those already there to remain in safe locations.

Nepal is still recovering from a catastrophic Aug 26 flood sparked by a glacial mountain collapse, which swept away more than 1,400 people and left over 5,000 missing.

India's weather bureau said it expects the cyclone to result in "total destruction" of thatched houses and create localised flooding, uprooting of power and communication poles, and "widespread damage" to standing crops.

In Kakinada, police barricaded roads leading to the sea.

Andhra Pradesh State Chief

Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu ordered the storm to be "constantly monitored and advance precautions taken", his office said in a statement on Monday.

"Adequate shelters and evacuation arrangements have been made," New Delhi's Cabinet Secretariat said in a statement.

The neighbouring Indian state of Odisha opened 1,735 cyclone shelters and imposed restrictions on movement in landslide-prone zone areas, the state's information office said.

Local media reported that Andhra Pradesh authorities ordered evacuations in key, low-lying areas and shut "all educational institutions" in some districts until Saturday.

Over 4,700 pregnant women residing in potentially dangerous sites were moved to hospitals, according to *The Indian Express* newspaper. — AFP

War crimes complaint filed against junta in Denmark

Myanmar A BURMESE citizen residing in Denmark filed a complaint with Danish authorities against Myanmar's ruling military junta for alleged war crimes committed against minorities.

The complainant, Ngun Siang Dim, who is from the Chin minority, claims she saw 40 houses burn down in her village in Chin State, in western Myanmar, and that several members of her family and friends were killed or left permanently disabled by landmines laid by the junta.

The junta "has done so many things", said the 39-year-old.

She said children can no longer go to school, "and also because of the jet fighters, they keep (dropping) bombs, so they destroy our houses. So they have tortured a lot emotionally too."

Like thousands of others, she fled Myanmar, first to India and then Thailand, and has lived in Denmark since 2023.

Other Burmese citizens living in Denmark could join the complaint, which allows Danish police "to start up an investigation on potential international crimes and human rights violations committed against our clients and also communities in Myanmar", said Eddie Khawaja, a lawyer representing the complainant and other Burmese refugees.

"This is truly a very important step in being able to tell this story, not only for her, but also in order to denounce the crimes that the military regime is committing against its own population," Tracy Bawi Hlei, president of Myanmar Action Group Denmark, said.

Since 2025, Denmark has allowed war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide to be prosecuted under universal jurisdiction, regardless of where they occurred, provided the complainant or alleged perpetrator is in the country. — AFP

When every breath is a nightmare

Borneans struggle with new smoke-related illnesses

Indonesia SUDARSONO shuddered as he inhaled from an oxygen tank while being evacuated from his small house in Palangkaraya on Indonesian Borneo, yellow, acrid wildfire smoke billowing all around.

The 57-year-old fell sick after going out with three friends days earlier to fight fires creeping closer to homes on the outskirts of the city in Central Kalimantan province, one of the regions hit hardest by months of blazes and haze. "I wore a mask, goggles, everything, but I was surrounded by smoke. I went home since I couldn't take it anymore," the construction worker and farmer said as he was being loaded into an ambulance last week.

Sudarsono's backyard had been blackened by flames, with only a few tree stumps and a cloying smoke left.

He is among more than 11,000 people treated for respiratory infections in Palangkaraya during a months-long wildfire crisis that has also affected Indonesia's neighbours with toxic haze pollution.

More than 300,000 people in seven provinces were laid low by respiratory tract infections from August to October, according to the health ministry.

At a nearby shelter run by NGOs, Alexandra Surya Habsari was treated with a nebuliser and oxygen for breathing difficulties and a headache.

"I'm really fed up, but I don't even know who I'm supposed to be angry with ... this is already way beyond what can be considered normal for a human being to endure," Alexandra said.

The toxic smog emitted by wildfires contains harmful elements including formaldehyde, hydro-



Instant relief: A volunteer assisting a woman with a nasal oxygen cannula at a shelter set up to aid residents experiencing respiratory difficulties in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan province. — AFP

gen cyanide and ammonia, as well as PM2.5 particles small enough to penetrate the lungs or bloodstream.

The World Health Organisation has linked PM2.5 exposure to increased illness and death.

The nation has for months struggled to contain fires that deforestation monitor Nusantara Atlas says have consumed more than 1.9 million hectares in the nine months to September.

Amid diplomatic objections from neighbouring countries forced to breathe the foul air, patience has also been running thin at home, marked by sporadic

anti-government protests.

The health ministry said it has set up nearly 500 facilities countrywide where people can access free oxygen and treatment for haze-related ailments.

Nearly 300 of them are in Central Kalimantan, where the fires and the haze have been particularly bad.

The local government has also deployed buses with oxygen tanks around Palangkaraya.

One beneficiary, Siti Jumati, said she had long been battling red, burning eyes, a sore throat and a cough.

"Today, on this bus, I can get

help breathing for free," she said on Saturday.

Local health official Riduan, who like many Indonesians has one name, said the people most affected by respiratory ailments were aged between 17 and 59 — those who go out to work even in the toxic air.

Alexandra, 43, said her daily 20-minute commute to the office has become torture.

"We're supposed to be able to see the blue sky, breathe in oxygen, see the sun and enjoy clean air. But when it's like this, what we're breathing is poison," she said. — AFP

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Privacy law draws backlash

Groups: Consent rules threaten press freedom, investigative reporting

India THE Indian government's privacy law, which would require journalists to seek consent from people they write about, amounted to pre-censorship and could lead to newsrooms shutting down, media groups told the Supreme Court, starting the most high-profile challenge against the legislation.

The lawsuit comes amid accusations of declining press freedom in India since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office in 2014. Critics say many mainstream media outlets have not done enough to scrutinise Modi's government, which has denied such allegations and says it respects press freedom.

A group of 21 news publishers, including companies owned by billionaires Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, has challenged the privacy law, arguing it would trample upon investigative work and allow New Delhi to identify journalists' sources, Reuters had reported on Monday.

"It is changing the whole concept of what is news," Madhavi Goradia Divan, the lawyer for Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) told the judges.

"Newsrooms will shut down, if we have to ask for permission ... it's then a complete regime of pre-censorship."

The lawsuit is the most high-profile challenge to Modi's

privacy law. Until now, only free speech activists and a group of smaller news outlets had challenged it.

The Supreme Court posted the case for next month.

Media companies received assurances in an August meeting with the government that the law would protect press freedom, but not having a written carve-out for journalists like in the European Union, Singapore and Britain was alarming, the news publishers said in a filing earlier this month.

The publishers are demanding that most of the law's contentious provisions, which kick in from May 2027, should be quashed.

They say the law could also force publishers to erase stories and give powers to government to demand information from publishers that could expose reporters' sources.

DNPA, the group which has challenged Modi's government, counts as members Ambani's Network18, Adani's NDTV and other marquee media groups including *The Indian Express* and Times Internet, which is part of the Times of India group, publisher of India's largest-selling English-language daily.

Divan said during the hearing that earlier versions of the law excluded journalists, but the final one did not. — Reuters



Tetsuya Chiba, manga titan behind 'Ashita no Joe', passes away

Japan TETSUYA Chiba, a titan of Japanese manga best known for the legendary boxing series *Ashita no Joe*, has died aged 87, his publishers said.

Chiba's works often told stories about the physical and mental growth of young athletes across various sports including golf, boxing and the martial art kendo, while also showing the poverty, despair, joy and optimism of ordinary life in postwar Japan.

Ashita no Joe, published in the 1960s through the 1970s, featured a troubled young man who learns boxing in a juvenile detention centre and rises through the professional ranks to engage in epic rivalries. The series became a cultural phenomenon.

Fans held a funeral after Joe's main rival died in the story.

Older fans can casually recite lines from the work, which also spawned enormously popular anime series, movies, video games, television commercials and theatrical productions.

In his seven-decade career, Chiba also taught at university level, led the Japan Cartoonists Association and received a number of Japanese cultural accolades, including the enormously prestigious Order of Culture, given to people who have made a significant contribution to art, science and culture.

Major publisher Kodansha has honoured his legacy with the "Tetsuya Chiba Award" for young manga artists for the past 46 years.

"Countless rookie manga artists took master Chiba's words to heart as they embarked on the path to becoming professionals, and many of them are still active today," the firm said in a statement, adding that he died last Thursday.

"Master Chiba's tremendous contributions to the world of manga are truly irreplaceable."

Another publisher Shogakukan credited him with helping to shape Japan's manga culture and capturing the hearts of generations of fans.

"For 70 years, master Tetsuya Chiba has been at the forefront of the manga world. He created countless masterpieces," it said.

Chiba also often gave media interviews to talk about his commitment to peace and discussed memories of his childhood in China during World War II before returning to Japan after its defeat. — AFP

High-profile rape trial of ex-prosecutor resumes after two years

Japan THE trial of a Japanese former senior prosecutor accused of rape in one of the country's most high-profile cases of alleged sexual assault has restarted after a two-year pause.

Few women in Japan speak out about sexual assault, but a former prosecutor, who uses the pseudonym Hikari, came forward in 2024 to accuse her boss of raping her six years earlier.

The trial first began in October 2024 but was halted after Kentaro Kitagawa – who served as head of the Osaka District Public Prosecutor's Office at the time of the alleged rape – withdrew his initial admission of guilt and said the sex was consensual.

Yesterday, he told the court that sex took place but repeated his not guilty plea and "denied that she was unable to resist", according to public broadcaster NHK.

Following Kitagawa's plea change, the court, prosecution and defence spent two years in closed-door proceedings clarifying the points at issue.

Hikari, who has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, said she was not used to drinking strong alcohol and lost her memory halfway through an office gathering in 2018.

The next thing she knew, she said, she was in Kitagawa's home and was being raped.

"It was like I was having a terrible nightmare," Hikari said in a 2025 interview with AFP.

"I couldn't resist because I was terrified that I could be killed."

Hikari kept quiet after it happened as Kitagawa had pleaded with her not to go public, saying it would be a damaging scandal for the organisation and threatening to harm himself, she said.

Hikari has repeatedly requested an independent probe into harassment within prosecutor's offices across the country, but officials have rejected the request. — AFP



Sacred voyage

A Buddhist monk walking next to a decorated procession boat at a parade during the Chak Phra Buddhist Festival in southern province of Narathiwat. The festival marks the end of Buddhist Lent and celebrates the conclusion of the annual three-month traditional 'rains retreat' known as Phansa, when monks seclude themselves in temples for meditation and reflection. — AFP

Tensions rise over gas and haze

Singapore INDONESIA will host Singapore's top diplomat, its foreign ministry said, as tensions simmer between the two neighbours over persistent haze from Indonesia's wildfires and Jakarta's decision to cut gas supplies to the city-state.

Jakarta cut pipelined gas to Singapore by about 8% as of Saturday, saying it was safeguarding domestic supplies.

The move came days after Indonesia's energy minister threatened to review export contracts with countries "that are not cooperative and do not treat Indonesia with mutual respect" without naming the countries.

The visit by Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, which Singapore has yet to confirm, comes as frustration builds in the city-state and neighbouring Malaysia over transboundary

haze from Indonesia's most intense forest fires in 11 years.

Singapore generates up to 95% of its electricity from natural gas, and though the supply cut from Indonesia amounts to less than 2% of daily demand, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong said on Sunday that he expects contract signatories to "honour their commitments".

Indonesia's energy minister, Bahlil Lahadalia, hit back on Monday, saying the amount of gas now being supplied to Singapore met the minimum level stipulated under their agreement.

"Our nation is a nation that honours contracts, rules. So don't teach Indonesia on how to honour contracts," Bahlil told a press conference, where he outlined details of gas exports to "so-called brothers and sisters".

Indonesia's fires have raged for

months and driven up pollution and respiratory illness across the country, with thick haze also drifting into Singapore, Malaysia and Timor-Leste.

Singapore has not directly criticised the Indonesian government over the haze and has offered assistance, but it has sent notices to Indonesian companies it says are responsible for the blazes.

Singapore Senior Minister K. Shanmugam expressed disappointment last week over remarks made about the haze by an Indonesian official, who said that Indonesia's forests provided Singapore and Malaysia with oxygen.

"Frankly, it is not right to say this when this entire region is suffering as a result of the bad behaviour of companies breaching regulations," he said. "The people suffering the most are Indonesians themselves." — Reuters

A nightmare on wheels

Seoul's zombie-themed bus tour sparks online buzz

South Korea WITH blood smeared across their faces and clothes, zombies roam the streets of downtown Seoul, creeping toward a sightseeing bus filled with tourists.

As the bus makes its way through the city, the bloodied figures prowl around the vehicle, with some suddenly climbing aboard and rushing toward passengers.

Others emerge from pavements, startling people waiting for the bus and turning an ordinary sightseeing trip into a scene straight out of a horror movie.

The staged zombie attacks are part of a special programme offered by Seoul City Tour Bus on its double-decker sightseeing bus, known as the Tiger Bus.

Photos and videos of the experience have spread widely across social media, turning the "Seoul zombie bus" into a viral attraction among foreign tourists.

"We've seen particularly strong interest from foreign tourists who enjoy *KPop Demon Hunters* and Korean zombie dramas and films," an official said.

Launched on Oct 20 ahead of Halloween, the seasonal attraction runs on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings, with two sessions a day starting at 6.40pm and 7pm.

The bus departs from Gwanghwamun Station and passes major Seoul landmarks, including Myeong-dong, Namsangol Hanok Village, N Seoul Tower, Dongdaemun Design Plaza, theatre district Daehangno, Changdeokgung, Insa-dong and Gyeongbokgung, before ending its journey near the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts.

At certain points along the route, the bus



Spooky ride: An actor dressed as a zombie leaning over a passenger aboard a bus during the Seoul City Tour Bus Zombie Attack event ahead of Halloween in Seoul. — Reuters

stops and an emergency announcement warns passengers of a zombie infection. The doors then open and zombies climb aboard.

Bus staff instruct passengers to fight off the zombies using "vaccine kits" provided before the ride. Once the zombies are defeated, they leave the bus and the tour continues, officials said.

The ride lasts approximately 90 to 100

minutes, with passengers required to remain on board throughout the journey. The programme is available in Korean, English, Chinese and Japanese.

"We often get asked how scary the experience is, but that really depends on the person. While it's a group activity, there are moments designed to catch passengers off guard," the official explained. — The Korea Herald/ANN

Officials meet journalist held on espionage charges in Russia

Japan LOCAL officials met a journalist detained in Russia for the first time since his arrest on spying accusations earlier this month, Tokyo said.

Officials from Japan's embassy in Russia "conducted a consular meeting" with the reporter and "confirmed that the individual has no health issues", Japan's foreign ministry said in a statement late Monday.

Russian authorities had earlier said journalist Yuki Imai had been arrested on Sakhalin, an island in Russia's Far East, on suspicion of conducting espionage activities.

"The Government of Japan strongly urges the Government of the Russian Federation to release the Japanese national immediately and to extend humanitarian consideration as well as fair and impartial treatment," the foreign ministry said.

Moscow has also accused Japan of the widespread use of journalists for espionage, an allegation denied by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

Imai's employer, *Hokkaido Shimbun* newspaper, has also stressed its independence from the Japanese government.

The two countries have a decades-old dispute over the status of a string of islands in the Pacific Ocean, off the northeast coast of Japan and to the southwest of Sakhalin.

Japan has also imposed sanctions on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine.

Russia has detained several citizens of what it calls "unfriendly" countries in recent years, accusing them of working for Western intelligence services. — AFP



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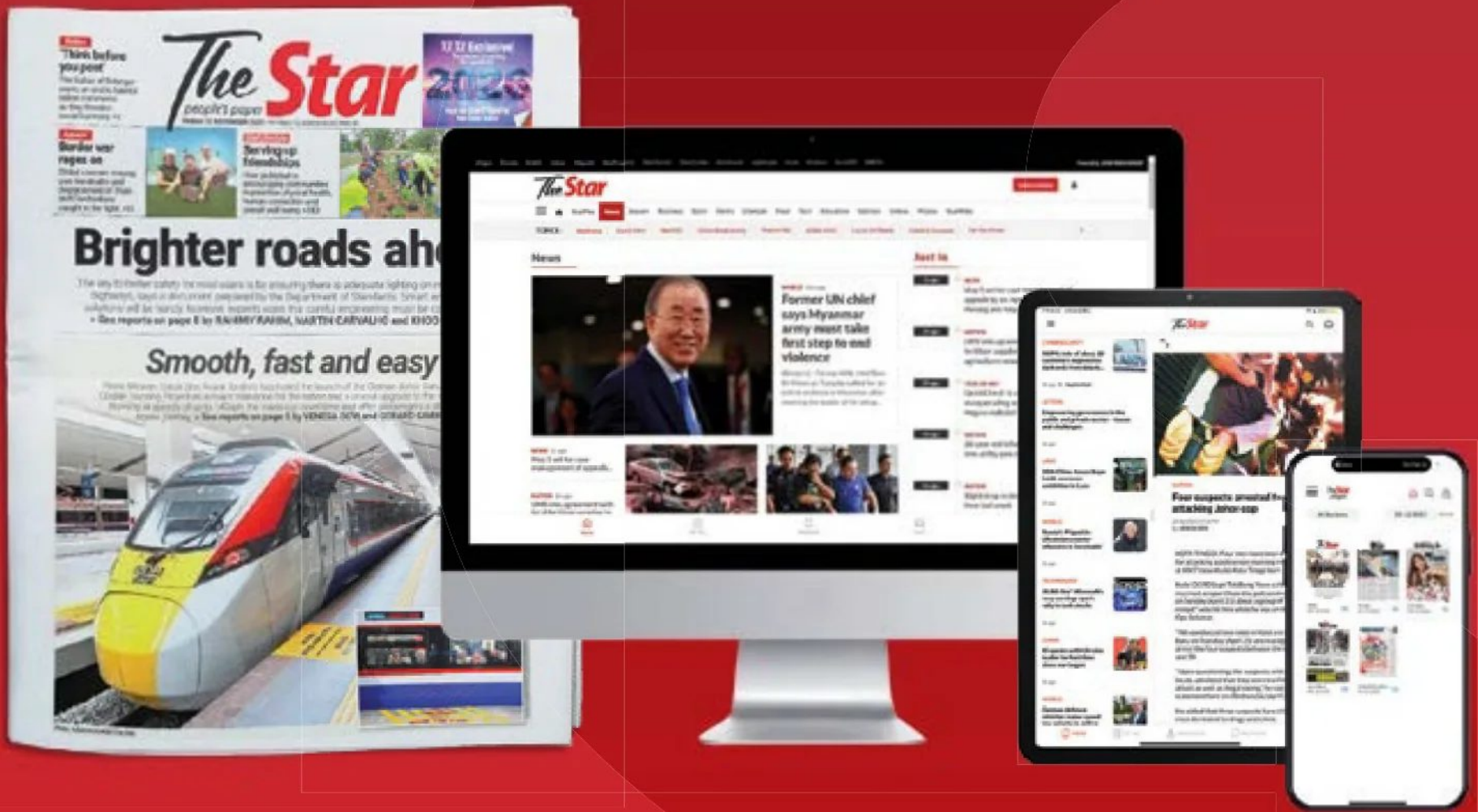


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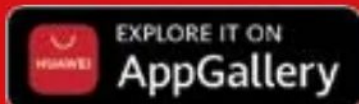


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Shoppers walking along an alley of Tajrish Bazaar, a traditional market in Teheran as street artistes (right) perform. The marketplace in the Iranian capital's north would usually be abuzz with customers, but shops now sit mostly empty with only small numbers of people walking its old narrow paths, a jarring shift for the sellers shouting to promote their goods. — AFP

Bazaar blues in historic market

AT a Teheran bazaar where fragrant herbs and spices whet the appetite, shopkeeper Nasir says locals once bought his nuts by the kilo but soaring prices caused by the US-Iran conflict have eaten into sales, leaving businesses fighting for survival.

The marketplace in the Iranian capital's north would usually be abuzz with customers, but shops now sit mostly empty with only small numbers of people walking its old narrow paths, a jarring shift for the sellers shouting to promote their goods.

"There used to be customers who bought two to five kilograms. Now, they're down to buying one kilogram or half a kilogram," said the 61-year-old.

"Prices are truly high. We all know it, and it would be a lie to say otherwise."

Nasir called on authorities to stabilise the currency so businesses could plan ahead.

"We're left in limbo, everyone is," said the fruit and nut seller.

"They need to stabilise the dollar exchange rate."

Iran's economy has been battered by years of sanctions, but the conflict that began in February with US-Israeli attacks and an American blockade of the country's ports has put extra strain on daily life.

Rising inflation, nearly 90% year-on-year in September according to official figures, and erratic currency exchange fluctuations have driven up the cost of everyday items.

Food prices have more than doubled since last year.

At the bazaar, a historic covered market in Teheran's Tajrish square, locals surrounded by Iranian flags and Persian signage try to escape the economic gloom, scanning sweets, jewellery, traditional garments and cuts of meat before their weekend begins.

In an alley, a street artist plays a guitar while another drums his hands on a box to draw tips from passersby.

'Just need stability'

But across the commercial district, many struggle to see a future for their businesses.

"It is a desperate, last-ditch struggle. Manufacturers are going bankrupt, laying off staff and closing shops, and the impact inevitably reaches us," said Ali Nowruzi, 36, who runs a sportswear shop in the bazaar.

The businessman now orders only a few items for display on his shop's shelves to stop them from looking bare like his ware-



A customer checking spices at a shop in Tajrish Bazaar. Rising inflation and erratic currency exchange fluctuations have driven up the cost of everyday items. — AFP

house, which he says lies empty due to lack of demand.

"We have absolutely no plan for the future. When people don't come to buy... it effectively spells bankruptcy for the business," he said, citing rising rent and utility bills.

"We just need some stability."

Many shoppers, whose purchasing power has weakened since the outbreak of conflict, are seen leaving the bazaar without buying anything.

Azadeh, a 45-year-old woman currently out of work, says she just goes there to "watch the shops".

Mounting pressure over the conflict saw Iran's GDP contract 10.1% year-on-year between late March and late June, according to official figures.

The rial traded at around 2.7 million to the dollar on the unofficial market in the past week, compared with about 1.7 million before the conflict.

The minimum monthly wage that stood at around US\$120 a year ago has fallen to US\$65.

The country's economy minister has rejected predictions of an imminent eco-

nomie collapse, accusing Iran's foes of trying to fuel public anxiety and drive up exchange rates.

Prices 'skyrocketed'

Azadeh offers a price comparison of a kitchen cloth bought several months ago for 22 cents. She says that item now costs US\$1.10, five times more.

"It shows that prices haven't just gone up — they've truly skyrocketed," she said.

She has stopped buying some fruits and says she can no longer afford holidays.

"We aren't meant to just exist, we're meant to actually live, right?" she asked.

Car mechanic Mojtaba Rezaei says his customers have "dropped to a tenth of what it was" because "goods now cost two or three times as much".

"I actually feel embarrassed telling prices to customers. People just come in, ask the price, and leave," said the 57-year-old at the bazaar.

"So many things — buying clothes, going out for leisure, dining at restaurants — have all been cut out of our lives." — AFP

"So many things — buying clothes, going out for leisure, dining at restaurants — have all been cut out of our lives."

Mojtaba Rezaei



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A fisherman washing his hands at the fishing terminal in Panama City. Small-scale fishermen in the eastern Pacific – from the shores of Ecuador and Peru to those of Panama and Guatemala – are suffering the impact of ocean warming caused by the El Nino phenomenon, which forces several species to migrate to deeper waters and leaves nets half empty and coastal communities in crisis. — AFP

Empty nets, warming seas

FISHERMEN along Latin America's Pacific coast are reeling in empty nets as ocean warming aggravated by El Nino causes tuna, anchovies and other top catches to migrate to cooler waters.

From Ecuador and Peru in South America, to Panama and Guatemala in Central America, some skippers have stopped going out altogether as fish stocks dwindle close to shore, in seas running at up to 6°C above normal.

"The water is warm," said Juan Ollague, 56, in the southwestern Ecuadoran port of Santa Rosa where hundreds of idle fishing boats are crammed into a small port.

After a night on the water, Ollague returns with just six small tuna.

"We came away empty-handed," he lamented.

"Fishing used to be good, now it's terrible," fellow skipper Darwin Zambrano, 53, complained as he untangled a net that hasn't scooped up big tuna like albacore or bonito in weeks.

El Nino is the warming phase of a natural cycle in the tropical Pacific that causes hotter and drier conditions in some places, and cooler and wetter in others.

This year's "super" El Nino, which is expected to peak later this year, is already wreaking havoc in Central America, where drought is endangering animals and stunting crops.

The average sea surface temperature, excluding polar regions, reached 21.07°C in August, tying with March 2024 as the hottest on record, according to the European Union's Copernicus climate change observatory.

The average sea temperatures off Ecuador's coast rose by 2.5 to 3°C at the

"Fishing used to be good, now it's terrible."

Darwin Zambrano

surface and up to 6°C at a depth of 40m in the past 10 weeks, said oceanographer Jonathan Cedeno, who led a mission from Guayaquil's Polytechnic University to measure the temperatures.

'Losing money'

On Panama's Pacific coast, Rigoberto Gonzalez said he has to sail further and further from shore to earn a living.

This means spending more on food, ice to preserve the fish, and fuel for the small boat he uses to catch snapper, kingfish and barracuda.

"We go out with US\$100 worth of gas, and when we come back, we earn US\$150 from sales of the fish, which has to be divided among four workers," said Gonzalez, 59, on Veracruz beach.

In nearby Panama City, some fishermen have thrown in the towel and decided to remain in port.

"We can't keep losing money," Jesus Morales, leader of the artisanal fisher-



A fish vendor handling fish at the Seafood Market in Panama City. — AFP

men's union of Panama, said.

Further north, in Iztapa, Guatemala, 50-year-old Eliseo Ovando said it now takes three days to catch what he used to pull from the water in a day, and complains that only commercial fisheries receive government assistance to ride out the shortages.

"The big fish eat the little ones," he said, referring to the struggles of small-scale operators like himself.

In Peru, the world's biggest catcher of anchovies, fishermen are turning to construction to feed their families as their tiny prey slips out of reach.

Economic ripple effect

In Panama City, the poor yields are visible at a wholesale fish market next to the dock that supplies the city's supermarkets.

"Less is arriving" off the boats, says Carlos Nieto, a 46-year-old vendor. And sometimes the catch is "damaged by the heat", he said.

Nieto now spends about US\$600 a month on ice, "practically a whole salary".

For now, vendors in Panama haven't passed on their higher costs and reduced income to consumers in the form of significantly higher prices.

But in Ecuador, the world's second-largest tuna producer after Thailand, the prices of mahi-mahi (also known as dorado) and swordfish have doubled due to the shortage, according to the industry.

In Santa Rosa, the sea's dwindling bounty has a knock-on effect, leading to the temporary closure of food stalls along the port.

Francisco Orlando, who earns a living filleting fish, is worried that he could soon be out of a job.

"We're hoping they (fishermen) catch fish," the 37-year-old explained as he sharpened his knives to separate the bones from the meat.

"If they do, we work. If they don't, we don't." — AFP

Star World

THE STAR, WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2026

'We recognise the results'

Bolsonaro's party accepts Lula's win despite candidate's objections

SAO PAULO: Flavio Bolsonaro's Liberal Party recognised the outcome of Brazil's presidential run-off, despite the candidate's objections to the poll won by leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Lula, who turned 81 yesterday, pulled off a dramatic comeback after trailing Flavio in a first-round vote, a defeat which fired up the left on the streets and social media to secure him a fourth term in office.

In the end, Lula pulled around 4.4 million more votes than his rival on Sunday.

Flavio, a right-wing senator and 45-year-old son of far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro, cried foul after polling was extended nationwide for two hours, at Lula's request, due to transport problems in some cities.

Though Flavio maintained that he will seek annulment of the presidential election, his party later distanced itself from that position and opted to accept the official vote.

"We recognise the presidential



Making the front page: Newspapers reporting Lula's victory are displayed at a shop in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro. — Reuters

election results, as proclaimed by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE), but we believe that the concerns raised need to be sufficiently addressed within a balanced and democratic political debate," the party said in a statement late Monday.

Flavio had also requested polling stations stay open in some

regions due to heavy rains, but he described the vote extension as "unacceptable" and a "dirty trick".

In a video posted to social media on Monday afternoon, Flavio said police had ordered he surrender his passports, adding "I am now prohibited from leaving the country."

He said the decision came from a Supreme Court justice, and was based on a comment by his US-based brother Eduardo Bolsonaro, who told a US podcast two days before the election that "if my brother does not win, I am in favour that he would leave the country".

Eduardo cited investigations against his brother.

Brazilian police are probing Flavio for corruption over the financing of the biopic *Dark Horse* about his father.

"I never had any intention of leaving the country. I will surrender my passports and defend myself against this travesty," Flavio said.

Brazil's markets tumbled nearly 17% and the dollar surged against the real in response to Lula's re-election, as investors worried about fiscal discipline.

Flavio slammed Lula for "an unprecedented abuse of both political and economic power," over a flurry of social spending announcements during the campaign. — AFP

Trump slams 'rigged' Brazil election after ally loses to Lula

SAO PAULO: US President Donald Trump claimed that Brazil's elections were "rigged", as his ally Flavio Bolsonaro called for the annulment of the poll won by leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

While congratulations rolled in for Lula from world leaders on both sides of the political divide, Trump, an ally of the Bolsonaro family, said the election "looked terrible to me".

"I didn't take sides but it looked like another rigged election frankly ... it looked so corrupt," he told reporters in Washington.

"I like Lula, I get along with him very well. I just thought it was a very bad look, the way it was tabulated - with the extension."

The left was triumphant after securing a historic turnaround in the vote, with tens of thousands pouring into the streets to celebrate Lula on Sunday night.

Julio Canelo, 42, a lawyer hailed a victory for "the entire democratic spectrum".

"It was the result of the people mobilising, in the streets and online," he said.

Lula's re-energised campaign to the cry of "Never Again Bolsonaro," urging people to go out and vote, saw the abstention rate fall from 21% to 19% in the runoff.

The proportion of spoiled and blank votes also decreased.

"I owe this victory to the rebellious youth who rose up to defend democracy," Lula told jubilant supporters in Sao Paulo.

European nations, Russia, China, India, South Africa and others congratulated Lula.

Several right-wing governments in Latin America - who are close with Trump - accepted the victory, with Colombia's President Abelardo de la Espriella saying even though he had backed Flavio: "When the people speak at the ballot box, their will must be respected." — AFP

One big, happy family

Lion cubs playing in their enclosure at the Dortmund Zoo in western Germany. Five-year-old lionesses Zuri and Saba gave birth to five and seven cubs on July 28 and 31 at the zoo and are raising all 12 youngsters together. — AFP



Macklemore vows to keep fighting for Palestine at tour opener

DUBLIN: American rapper Macklemore vowed to continue to speak out loudly against Israel's conflict with Gaza at the opening of his "Free Palestine" concert tour organised after he was dropped as the opening act for Ed Sheeran over pro-Palestinian remarks.

The Grammy-winning rapper received a deafening ovation in Dublin, where fans in the overwhelmingly pro-Palestinian country came draped in Palestinian

flags, black, red and green football jerseys and keffiyeh scarves being sold by vendors outside.

"I am proud to stand here on stage in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

"We will continue to fight for collective liberation until our last breath," Macklemore said on stage, where he waved a Palestinian flag for much of his set.

"Six weeks ago, two words is all that it took," he said, referring to

the rallying cry of "Free Palestine" and his criticism of the Israeli government's actions in Gaza and the West Bank at New Jersey's MetLife Stadium that led to his removal from Sheeran's US tour.

"Those two words are so threatening to some people that we'd rather silence those two words than confront what they actually mean ... Somehow those words have become more controversial than the suffering that made them necessary."

The crowd, who snapped up the 13,000 tickets for Dublin's 3Arena within minutes, chanted "Free Free Palestine" throughout.

"We need a speaker for our time. It has to be somebody like that who can reach out to people.

"He made it feel so alive and I've come out feeling I want to be part of something," said Siobhan Lyons from Dublin, who attended the concert with her daughter.

Irish artistes who have spoken

out against Israel's actions played in support on Monday.

Palestinian singer Lina Makhoul and Palestinian American DJ Habibeats also performed and pro-Palestine activists such as *Game of Thrones* actor Liam Cunningham spoke between sets.

The "Free Palestine" tour will continue in Paris and London this week with US dates due to be announced later, Macklemore has said. — Reuters

More protests promised

French students say govt's concessions did not meet demands

PARIS: French student leaders vowed to go on protesting despite government concessions on education, keeping pressure on President Emmanuel Macron as the movement spreads to unions and other activists, stokes unrest and deepens the economic damage.

The measures included a commitment to cap the size of some high school classes; €4bil (RM18.3bil) of loans for renovating schools; and the replacement by 2028 of a university admissions system students see as socially unfair.

"Not all our demands were met. We'll go on for as long as it takes," Louis Letoublon, one of the representatives of high school students, said as he and fellow student leaders emerged from a meeting with government officials in Paris.

The protests, which have broadened beyond education to draw



Growing unrest: A demonstrator running as he covers himself with a makeshift shield, during a demonstration, in Lyon, France. — Reuters

in trade unions and yellow-vest activists, known for their high-visibility jackets, pose a test for Macron's minority government.

The government has little room to spend its way out of the unrest,

with national debt approaching 120% of GDP, while the turmoil is boosting support for far-right frontrunner Marine Le Pen ahead of next year's presidential election. The package included €1bil

(RM4.58bil) of investment in university campuses; a move to increase student grants with inflation; and the opening up of a further 15,000 higher education places for students.

"It's clear we have to ease the pressure being felt in the education system," Education Minister Edouard Geffray told reporters.

There was no overall figure for how much funding the package would require.

High borrowing needs are already complicating efforts to agree a budget for next year.

The protests, initially triggered by student discontent, have shown little sign of ending after violence nine days ago engulfed dozens of cities, leading to fears the state had lost control of the streets.

Earlier, Macron acknowledged it was likely there would be more unrest this weekend ahead of a bigger nationwide day of protests set for Nov 5. — Reuters

Imprisoned Tanzanian opposition leader begins hunger strike

NAIROBI: Tanzanian opposition leader Tundu Lissu (*pic*), who was charged with treason last year, has started a hunger strike to protest his inability to access his lawyers, his party said.

Lissu, who leads the Chadema opposition party and came second in the 2020 presidential election, began refusing food on Monday after his lawyers were denied entry to the prison where he is being held, party spokesperson Brenda Rupia wrote on X.



Lissu was charged with treason over what prosecutors said was a speech calling on the public to rebel and disrupt last year's general election.

He pleaded not guilty to the charges, which his lawyer has said are politically motivated.

Tanzania's electoral commission had barred Chadema from participating in the polls after it failed to sign a code of conduct document.

The election was marred by protests and unrest, with a government-appointed commission of inquiry saying the violence that broke out afterwards killed at least 518 people and blaming the protesters for the violence.

Chadema's chief legal counsel, Rugemeleza Nshala, on Saturday said that Lissu had planned the strike because he was denied privacy during talks with his lawyers in violation of a court order. The court is due to deliver its judgement in Lissu's case on Nov 6.

Lissu's detention, along with the alleged abductions of government critics, has shone a spotlight on the human rights record of President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who won the 2025 election.

The government has rejected accusations of widespread rights abuses and said it is committed to respecting human rights.

It ordered an investigation into reports of abductions in 2024, though no official findings have been made public. — Reuters

French shooting suspect denies racist motive

PARIS: A man suspected of a gun attack in the Paris suburbs last week that killed one person and wounded five has rejected suggestions that his actions were racially motivated, prosecutors said.

The 39-year-old man, identified as Kevin T, "does not dispute the material facts", but does contest "the racist nature of his crimes", the national anti-terrorism prosecutor, Olivier Christen, told a press conference on Monday.

The prosecutor said that, contrary to media reports, "no leaflets from any political party were discovered in his vehicle".

Kevin T had been detained Friday with a machine gun and tear-gas grenades in his car, shortly after the victims were shot as a vehicle drove through the towns of Trappes and La Verriere west of Paris.

Investigators found a Bible, a al-Quran and a copy of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in a search of his home, a police source had said.

On Sunday, French authorities announced that the suspect was transferred to a psychiatric unit for a 48-hour observation period.

A source close to the investigation said he had been under going treatment for schizophrenia.



No room for hate: A protester holding a placard reading 'I am not racist because: I have a black friend, I ate couscous, I have a brain' with only the last option checked out, during a gathering organised by SOS Racisme and other anti-racism organisations at Place de la Bataille-de-Stalingrad in Paris. — AFP

Late Monday, following a psychiatric evaluation, the suspect was returned to custody for further questioning, Christen said.

The man was not showing "direct or indirect signs pointing to hallucinatory activity or delirium" nor other pathologies that

would require forced hospitalised, the prosecutor said.

The suspect's time in custody could last until tomorrow.

Four people from Kevin T's family and circle of friends have also been detained after what President Emmanuel Macron had

branded a "racist terrorist attack", as most of the victims were from foreign backgrounds.

Late Monday, several demonstrations gathering hundreds of people for the shooting victims were held in Paris, Marseille and Lyon. — AFP

Netanyahu's political survival on the line as Israel votes

JERUSALEM: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces a fight for political survival in an election seen by many Israelis as the most consequential in the country's history and a referendum on his leadership since the 2023 Hamas-led attacks.

The vote follows a turbulent period for Israel, shaped by the trauma of the Oct 7 attacks, wars in Gaza, Lebanon and with Iran, deepening international isolation, and the divisive policies of Netanyahu's right-wing coalition.

Yet Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving leader with 19 years in

office, remains a formidable survivor, with nationalist politics increasingly entrenched and Israel's fragmented system potentially leaving him best placed to form a government.

Opinion polls show a close race between Netanyahu's Likud party and its right-wing allies and a rival alliance led by Gadi Eisenkot, a former military chief of staff and security hawk with backers on the right and in the centre.

Voters began casting ballots yesterday after polling stations opened at 7am.

Netanyahu has campaigned on

his wartime leadership and his alliance with US President Donald Trump, who has endorsed him and joined Israel in waging war on Iran.

Netanyahu said on Sunday that Trump was prepared to act again to "finally" remove the Iranian threat, but only if Netanyahu remained in power.

Eisenkot has accused Netanyahu of "relying on a campaign of fear-mongering, lies and threats" and said he was confident Trump would work "in full cooperation with any leader chosen by the people."

Netanyahu may again depend on far-right leaders Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich to form a government.

Both have faced sanctions from some Western countries that accuse them of inciting violence against Palestinians, while Ben-Gvir's Jewish Power party has gained support in opinion polls.

Neither Netanyahu nor Eisenkot has a clear path to power. If neither can form a governing coalition in the 120-seat parliament, Netanyahu could stay on as caretaker until another election is held next year.

The Israeli Central Election Committee said 7.3 million Israelis are eligible to vote, some 330,000 of them for the first time.

In some bastions of Likud support, disenchanted voters have been going door to door to turn voters against Netanyahu.

Some have turned away from Netanyahu as he battles corruption charges.

"My expectation is that we will have only a slight majority either way. No landslide," said Israeli political analyst Amotz Asa-El of the Shalom Hartman Institute. — Reuters

IN PICTURES



Belgium: A French chocolate artist checking his chocolate creation depicting a praying mantis at the World Chocolate Masters in Antwerp, held outside Paris for the first time. — AP



Lebanon: Visual artist Lina Jouni holding an artwork depicting a face wearing glasses, created from shrapnel collected from Israeli military munitions, over her face at her home in the village of Roumin. — AP



Canada: Supporters of the first federal youth climate trial in Canadian history holding up signs during a rally outside the Vancouver Art Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia. — AFP

AI – a double-edged sword

Australia warns of 'unprecedented' risks in the wrong hands

SYDNEY: Artificial intelligence poses an “unprecedented” threat as foreign governments turn it loose to hack computer networks and critical infrastructure, Australia’s cybersecurity agency warned.

The Australian Signals Directorate yesterday said rapidly advancing artificial intelligence models could be of huge benefit if harnessed for good, even using some AI tools to compile its own annual “cyberthreat” report.

But recent months had also shown how AI was helping criminals and state-sponsored hackers launch attacks at “greater scale than ever before”, the directorate said in the report.

“AI has been the defining force in the cyberthreat landscape over the past year, allowing malicious actors to find vulnerabilities faster and exploit them at unprecedented scale, speed and sophistication,” the report read.

“In recent weeks, new threats have emerged from the unintended actions of AI agents and model testing.”

Global worries about the power of advanced AI tools are mounting after a string of hacking incidents involving models from leading developers such as OpenAI and Anthropic.

The report documented a stark increase in cybersecurity incidents.

The Australian Signals Directorate issued more than 4,400 warnings about potentially malicious activity over the past year – an 80% increase compared to the prior 12 months.

“State-sponsored cyber actors continued to target Australian organisations primarily to gain access to sensitive or non-public information.”

“This activity extends beyond government networks, and includes critical infrastructure entities, private businesses and individuals.”

The report said hackers linked to China, Russia and North Korea had targeted Australia or its allies in recent times.

Defence Minister Richard Marles said the nation could not ignore the AI revolution.

“AI is here and it’s real. People need to engage,” he said.

“There’s no turning the clock back in relation to that. Malicious actors are using AI to find vulnerabilities in systems.”

Marles urged Australians to update their computers and “harden their systems”.

Governments and firms have in recent days been rushing to fix critical flaws in a programming language that runs a large share of the world’s websites.

The vulnerability was found using a powerful model from OpenAI. — AFP

Ex-FBI chief faces new classified information charge

WASHINGTON: The US Justice Department is attempting to prosecute former FBI Director James Comey (pic) for a third time, the latest case accusing him of sharing sensitive national security information in 2016, according to court documents made public.

The case was revealed in a court document known as a “criminal information” that the Justice Department said it filed to stop the 10-year statute of limitations on the offense from expiring earlier this month.

The document filed in Washington federal court charges Comey with transmitting and conspiring to transmit national defence information.

It alleges he shared classified information with a reporter from the *New York Times* in October 2016.

Comey said in a video on Instagram that “they’re back again” and referenced the Justice Department, but did not provide further details.

“I’m still innocent,” he added. Comey’s lawyers have already asked a judge to dismiss the case, arguing it is legally improper.

“I think he’s a dirty cop,” President Donald Trump told reporters at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, when asked about Comey. “I don’t know much about it,” he said.

The new case adds to the legal fights facing Comey, whom the Justice Department has already charged twice, accusing him of lying to Congress about media leaks and threatening Trump in a social media post.

A judge dismissed the false statements case, while the threats case remains pending.

Comey’s lawyer, Patrick Fitzgerald, said in a statement that the document “purports to charge Mr. Comey with crimes that he did not commit.”

The criminal information was filed on Oct 5, but was unsealed on Monday at the request of Comey’s lawyers. — Reuters



Student-led movement looks set to take control

BELGRADE: Serbia’s student-led movement looked set to get a clear parliamentary majority after widespread protests ended with a historic election triumph that forced right-wing populist leader Aleksandar Vucic to concede defeat.

Nationwide celebrations erupted after the victory in Sunday’s election, which was the culmination of two years of mounting pressure on Vucic after the 2024 collapse of a canopy at Novi Sad railway station that killed 16 people.

The disaster has been widely blamed on corruption and triggered some of Serbia’s largest protests since the fall of strongman Slobodan Milosevic in 2000.

“Everything smells of freedom,” design student Katarina Malesevic said on Monday.

The outcome will be closely watched across Europe as the continent faces a wave of youth-led demonstrations.

But political analyst Dusan Vucicevic said the movement differed from other protests, and “it remains unclear whether a similar model could work in other countries”.

According to independent electoral watchdog CeSID, the Students’ List secured 53% of the vote while Vucic’s populist Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) garnered almost 39%, based on 96% of the count.

The result would give them 140 MPs in the 250-seat assembly, with the SNS at 103. Minority



Time for change: People celebrating the victory of the Student List at parliamentary election after Vucic conceded defeat, at Slavija Square in Belgrade. — Reuters

parties will get the remaining seats.

“Students won and with them also hope that Serbia can be a country of justice, freedom and dignity,” Radomir Saicic, a candidate for the List, told supporters at the movement’s election headquarters late Sunday.

A near-record turnout of almost 70% likely drove the political upset.

Shocking many observers, Vucic, who had resigned the presidency to run for prime minister and has grown increasingly authoritarian in recent years, conceded defeat less than two hours after polls closed.

Thousands poured into the streets of Belgrade and other cities to celebrate, with cars honking, crowds chanting, and fireworks lighting up the skyline.

Addressing supporters late Sunday, Vucic, who has maintained close ties with Russia throughout his tenure, blamed foreign powers.

“I want people to know, this was the validation of a revolution carried out with the direct support of various European countries and the US deep state, the one that is also against President Trump,” he said. — AFP

Reparations calls cloud royal visit

Caribbean nations seek justice as Charles begins regional tour

LONDON: King Charles heads to the Caribbean this week on a tour which comes against the backdrop of increasingly vocal demands from the region that Britain pays reparations for its role in the slave trade.

Charles and his wife Queen Camilla will first visit the Bahamas and Guyana, before heading to Antigua and Barbuda for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the biennial get-together of the international organisation which he heads. The tour runs from

Oct 27 to Nov 4.

At a previous meeting in 2022 of the leaders of the Commonwealth – a group of 56 nations which were mainly former British colonies – Charles expressed deep personal sorrow over slavery, and the issue is certain to be prominent once again.

Last month, Caricom, the Caribbean Community, a group of 23 member and associate member states which includes the Bahamas, Barbados and Jamaica, said it would push to have reparations included on the



Heavy history:

Charles and Camilla attending a ceremony at Siumu Village, Samoa, in October. This week, they will visit the Bahamas and Guyana, before heading to Antigua and Barbuda for the CHOGM. — Reuters

CHOGM agenda.

“The Caribbean has consistently asserted that reparations is fundamentally about justice,” Caricom’s secretary-general Carla Barnett said in a speech last month.

“It is about recognition, accountability and transformation, and about building a just and equitable future for the

descendants of those who, as the chattel of colonial owners, endured untold suffering, loss of life and freedom.”

While Buckingham Palace has said the monarch would not shy away from Britain’s involvement in the transatlantic slave trade during his tour, he would not formally apologise for it as some have wanted, in keeping with

British government policy which also excludes making any financial reparations.

“It is important to note here the work his majesty himself has done over many years both to acknowledge the wrongs of the past and to find creative ways to right inequalities that endure,” a palace spokesperson said. — Reuters

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Bermuda bliss for Smotherman after playoff win

SOUTHAMPTON (Bermuda): Austin Smotherman (*pic*) defeated Irishman Seamus Power on their third playoff hole on Monday morning to win the Butterfield Bermuda Championship in Southampton.

A playoff was needed after the fourth round was scrapped Sunday due to inclement weather and the PGA Tour shortened regulation to 54 holes. Smotherman and Power were tied at 16-under 197 through regulation.

After each golfer parred the par-three 16th hole at Port Royal Golf Course the first two times through, Smotherman prevailed after two-putting from 14 feet at No. 16. Power missed the green, chipped on to 16 feet and failed to save par from there.

Smotherman captured his second tournament in as many starts on the PGA Tour. The 32-year-old won his first PGA Tour

title at the Bank of Utah Championship his last time out.

"We're out here playing an incredible sport in a beautiful spot.

"Whatever things are going to be thrown at us, (caddie Zak Williamson) and I were going to be on top of our game," Smotherman said. "(Sunday) I felt like we handled everything pretty well."

Power, in turn, fell short in his bid for his third career PGA Tour title.

"Had a chance this morning, wasn't able to do it, which is disappointing, but overall great week, can't complain too much," Power said. — Reuters



Sinner to play rescheduled Saudi Six Kings in December

PARIS: Jannik Sinner has signalled he will return to action in the "Six Kings Slam" tournament in Riyadh, which has been rescheduled for late December due to the conflict with Yemen's Houthis.

The 25-year-old Italian currently ranked world No.1 has been out injured since winning Wimbledon in July. He also looked set to miss the Riyadh event, originally scheduled for October which organisers hope will go ahead on Dec 27-30.

Sinner shared a poster for the event Monday on his Instagram account featuring his image and the event name and dates but without further comment.

Sinner's 94 per cent winning record in 2026 is the best of his career, even beating his figures from the previous two seasons in each of which he won two Grand Slams and the ATP Finals.

The tournament is expected to feature 24-time major champion Novak Djokovic, world No.2 Alexander Zverev, winner of the French Open and the US Open this season, and possibly seven-time major winner Carlos Alcaraz.

The 2027 Dakar Rally is the latest sporting event scheduled to take place in Saudi Arabia to be cancelled, postponed or relocated due to Houthi attacks on the country and the wider US-Iran war that erupted in February. — AFP

No total eclipse

Wolff: Russell can still shine despite Antonelli's quick rise



Never give up: George Russell (and inset) in action during the US Grand Prix on Saturday. — Reuters/AFP

AUSTIN (Texas): Mercedes F1 boss Toto Wolff has backed George Russell for future success after Red Bull's former motorsport adviser Helmut Marko dismissed the Briton's chances of ever recovering from being eclipsed by teammate Kimi Antonelli.

Antonelli is 123 points clear of Russell atop the Formula One standings, with 125 still to be won, and is set to become the sport's youngest-ever champion in Mexico City this weekend as well as the first Italian champion since 1953.

The 20-year-old has now won nine times in his second season to three for the more experienced Russell, who started the year as the bookmakers' favourite.

"Russell is no longer the number one driver," Marko, who left Red Bull last year, told Sky Germany ahead of Sunday's US Grand Prix, which Antonelli won from pole while Russell laboured home in eighth after collecting a five-second penalty.

"Antonelli has quite clearly taken that spot from him ... I doubt whether he'll ever have another chance at the world title or be given number one status anywhere," added the 83-year-old.

Wolff said while he respected the opinion of his fellow Austrian "not-so buddy", Marko was wrong.

"George has all the ability. I think the car doesn't suit him," he told reporters at the

Circuit of the Americas.

"At the beginning of the season it's maybe difficult to cope with a situation where you're feeling like this is my year to come and then you have this wunderkind on the other side (of the garage) that starts to really chip away.

"I believe that in a new season, George - if we provide him with a quick car - has absolutely what he needs to win a championship.

"I think it's a bit too easy to say let's forget about all these years where he won in F2 and in F3, in his rookie years in the European championships back-to-back in kart. That's all still there." — Reuters

Alcaraz heads strong Spanish Davis Cup team

BARCELONA: Carlos Alcaraz will lead a strong Spanish Davis Cup team named by captain David Ferrer on Monday.

Seven-time Grand Slam winner Alcaraz, Rafael Jodar, Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, Marcel Granollers and Pedro Martinez will compete for Spain, who last won the competition in 2019.

"We have a very good team, without a doubt," said Ferrer. "I'm happy to have all the players available and very excited. Obviously, we're one of the favourites to win the Davis Cup, but that's okay, it's always better to have the best players."

World number three Alcaraz missed four months of the season with a wrist injury, but returned at the US Open and triumphed in Tokyo at the Japan Open earlier in October.

The competition takes place in Bologna from Nov 24-29. Last year's runners-up Spain will open with a quarter-final against Austria, before a possible semi-final against Britain or Germany. — AFP

Eala breezes past world number 411 in Tokyo opener

TOKYO: Philippines star Alexandra Eala (*pic*) said "the ball doesn't know what rank you are" after beating world number 411 Mika Stojsavljevic 6-1, 6-2 in her opener in Tokyo on Monday.

World number 19 Eala arrived at the Pan Pacific Open on the back of a poor run of form that saw her win just one match at her last three tournaments.

That included a shock first-round defeat to 217th-ranked Chinese qualifier Shi Han at the Wuhan Open this month.

Eala avoided a similar situation against British 17-year-old Stojsavljevic, brushing past her opponent in 75 minutes.

"I try to look at the player separate from the ranking," said Eala.

"The ball doesn't know what rank you

are.

"It's just being ready and trying to keep that intensity all the time."

Eala is followed everywhere by adoring fans eager to see the 21-year-old, who in August became the first player from the Philippines to win a title on the women's WTA Tour.

She was again supported by a small but passionate group of fans on centre court in Tokyo. Eala breezed into a 5-0 lead in the first set and closed it out despite Stojsavljevic pulling a game back.

The British player gave her more problems in the second set, but Eala was never seriously troubled and took the match without ever having her service broken.

"It's a little faster than the court I played

on last week," said Eala.

"It's indoor, comfortable weather, not very hot. I think I'm finding my groove."

Number five seed Elise Mertens of Belgium also progressed, beating Japan's Moyuka Uchijima 6-4, 6-2.

But number two seed Maja Chwalinska and defending champion Belinda Bencic both withdrew from the tournament through injury without playing a match.

Bencic, who was the fourth seed, said her season was over after several ligament tears were discovered in her right foot.

"I am still completely unsure when and how this occurred, but it is sadly preventing me from competing here in Tokyo this week and in Hong Kong next week," said the Swiss player. — AFP





Super sub: PSG's Mika Godts (right) kicks the ball ahead of Lyon's Felix Bacher during the match. — AP

Godts' golden first

Mika's maiden strike for PSG sends them top of Ligue 1

PARIS: Mika Godts scored his first Paris St Germain goal as the reigning European champions put aside a raft of injuries to key players to go top of Ligue 1 with a 2-0 win at home to Lyon on Monday.

Godts, the Belgian international signed from Ajax, came off the bench and set up Senny Mayulu for the 72nd-minute strike which broke the deadlock at the Parc des Princes.

He then sealed the win late on as PSG made it eight straight victories in all competitions and moved into first place in the table, one point ahead of Rennes.

"Mika is an ambitious player with a lot of quality, and he is only 21," said PSG coach Luis Enrique.

"We have full confidence in him and we signed him because we want him to be here for many years."

The game was initially due to be played on Sunday before being postponed by 24 hours following a request by Paris police who wanted to divert resources amid a wave of violent protests in the French capital.

RESULT

PSG 2 Lyon 0.
Leading standings: PSG 17, Rennes 16, Lille 15, Monaco 15, Lyon 14.

That meant a clash with the Ballon d'Or ceremony happening at the same time in London, in which 10 PSG players were among the 30 nominees for the most prestigious individual award in football.

Among the nominees were last year's laureate Ousmane Dembele and Georgian winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, perhaps the team's standout performer during their run to a second straight Champions League title last season.

Dembele and Kvaratskhelia were both unavailable for this game anyway due to injuries picked up in last week's 4-2 win over Barcelona, with the latter facing months on the sidelines after tearing his ACL.

"I would like to dedicate this win to 'Kvara'," said Luis Enrique.

"We are very proud of him. We remain motivated as a team to keep winning but

this victory is for him."

A year ago Dembele picked up his Ballon d'Or award at a theatre in Paris while PSG were losing 1-0 in Marseille in a game postponed by 24 hours because of stormy weather.

This time PSG – with Nuno Mendes and captain Marquinhos also injured – maintained their focus to claim a fifth successive Ligue 1 victory, although it took them some time before they translated their dominance into a goal.

Godts, who replaced Joao Neves just before the hour mark, fed Mayulu on the edge of the box and the 20-year-old scored his first of the season with a fierce drive into the bottom corner.

Lyon had come close twice in the first half, with Julien Duranville and Zachary Athekame forcing good saves from Matvey Safonov.

They could have gone top themselves with a win, but PSG made sure of the three points as Quentin Ndjantou released Godts in the 84th minute and he picked his spot beautifully. — AFP

England U-15s walk off in alleged racism incident at WC

BAKU (Azerbaijan): A game between England and Ireland at the inaugural FIFA Under-15 World Cup was abandoned in Baku on Monday, after England's players walked off the pitch following an alleged racist insult by a member of the Irish team.

The incident occurred in the final minute of the match, with Ireland leading 4-1, when the referee signalled a free-kick for England, which led to a number of scuffles between the players.

The England captain, after accompanying one of his teammates to the sideline, went to speak to the referee before coach Matt Thorpe and his staff told the players to leave the pitch.

"The match was abandoned by the referee following England's refusal to continue," a FIFA spokesperson said.

"The official reports are being gathered, and the matter will be referred to the independent disciplinary committee who will decide in due course."

The tournament, which features 189 countries, is taking place in Azerbaijan with teams comprising eight players and matches played over two 20-minute halves. — Reuters

Pennant saved by his dog after German Shepherd attack

PURULIA (India): Former Arsenal and Liverpool winger Jermaine Pennant was saved by his own dog after a German Shepherd attacked him in the street, British media reported.

Pennant needed more than 50 stitches after the incident and the 43-year-old posted a photo on social media showing his right leg heavily bandaged.

"So I was attacked by a German Shepherd, I tried to protect (my dog) King but the dog got my leg," Pennant, who retired in 2018, wrote on Instagram.

"I was on the floor with the dog still attached with no sign of letting go, until King intervened ... he fought the dog off and saved what could've been a horrendous situation for me."

King suffered a minor leg injury.

"My hero, still protecting me and trying to look after me, King you're a legend love you, man's best friend," Pennant wrote. — Reuters



Out of line: Napoli coach Max Allegri (second from right) protesting during the match against Roma on Saturday. — Reuters

Napoli coach Allegri handed two-match ban over outbursts in Roma clash

PURULIA (India): Napoli coach Max Allegri has been handed a two-match ban after being sent off during Saturday's 3-3 home draw for abusive remarks and an aggressive attitude towards match officials and an AS Roma staff member, Serie A's sports judge said on Monday.

Allegri was dismissed shortly after Leonardo Balerdi scored a late equaliser for Roma. Allegri, who believed there was a foul during the build-up, reacted with anger when the VAR cleared the goal, leading to a straight red card.

The manager, who has also been fined €10,000, is set to miss the Serie A games at Monza today and Juventus on Sunday as his 10th-placed Napoli side look for a turnaround after winning only one of

their last four league matches.

Allegri made an "abusive remark towards the match officials" and later, in the changing room, "adopted an aggressive attitude towards an official of the opposing team," the disciplinary authority said in a decision published on the league's website.

"Offences (were) noted by the fourth official (Juan Luca Sacchi) and the referee (Andrea Colombo), and the latter by officials from the Federal Prosecutor's Office," the sports judge added.

Allegri in a post-match interview denied having abused the match officials.

"The fourth official called the referee and got me sent off but I said absolutely nothing," he told DAZN Italia. — Reuters

Harry stays hungry



Cream of the crop: England's Harry Kane and Spain's Alexia Putellas with their awards during the Ballon d'Or ceremony. — AP

Ballon d'Or winner Kane says he has plenty more to prove

LONDON: Harry Kane is targeting Champions League glory for Bayern Munich and ending England's wait for a major international tournament after lifting the Ballon d'Or in the highlight of his career to date on Monday.

In his native London, Kane became the first English winner of the award in 25 years as he beat off competition from Kylian Mbappe and Lamine Yamal to be crowned the world's best player.

The 33-year-old was rewarded for a remarkable 73 goals in 65 games for club and country last season as he propelled Bayern to a league and cup double.

"I'd say a dream come true but it's beyond my wildest dreams, so just incredible," said the

England captain.

"I think it's massive for England, for our country. Being here in London was a good omen for me and it's been too long. To put us back on the map and put us here with this trophy, I'm extremely proud."

Kane is England and Tottenham's all-time record goalscorer but his haul of collective trophies is limited to domestic German honours since he joined Bayern in 2023.

Bayern bowed out to eventual winners Paris St Germain in the Champions League semi-finals last season.

And after losing two finals of the European Championship in 2021 and 2024, Kane suffered

more heartbreak with England in a defeat to Argentina in the World Cup semi-finals.

But at the age of 33 he believes he can still win some of the big prizes in football.

"I still have a lot to achieve in this game. The Champions League, at club level, and to win a major trophy with England is the number one priority for sure," he added. "There's so many great things I want to achieve."

Unlike Spain's Yamal and France captain Mbappe, who both won the World Cup as teenagers, Kane did not appear destined for greatness.

He was farmed out on loan by Tottenham four times to the lower leagues before breaking

into the first team, but he said memories of those times drive him to succeed at the top level for as long as possible.

"I had to go through many ups and downs, especially early in my career, when you're learning about yourself, both as a professional and in life," he said.

"I found ways to improve and get the edge on maybe other players who had more ability than me. From that moment I think it helped shape me as a professional because I never take it for granted."

"I know there's always someone like me, someone younger, trying to take my spot, whether it's with the England team or the Bayern team." — AFP

Mbappe apologises for remark about 'Chinese dictator'

BEIJING: Football star Kylian Mbappe apologised for comments in which he apparently referred to Mao Zedong, the founding leader of Communist China, as a dictator, after facing backlash and losing brand deals with three different Chinese companies.

"My comment was ill-judged, and I now understand that it hurt many people in China and in Chinese communities around the world," he said in a statement yesterday.

"I apologise to everyone my words have upset."

"This was absolutely not my intention. I have deep respect for the Chinese people and their history, and I am sincerely sorry."

Mbappe's face appears in ads across China, from subway stations to inside elevators.

Beverage maker Dongpeng, dairy giant Mengniu and cheese maker Milkground announced yesterday in similarly worded statements that they were ending agreements with the football star, each saying they oppose "any words and actions that hurt national sentiment."

The companies did not specify what prompted their decisions, but they released their statements after a clip that appeared to show Mbappe being interviewed ahead of going on the French online talk show "The Bridge" circulated on X.

In the video, Mbappe is asked about his favourite meme of himself, and the Real Madrid star replies that it was "a video someone made of a guy... I think he was a Chinese dictator" before the video shows an altered image depicting Mbappe's face on the blue-suited body of Mao Zedong.

Football fans online jokingly call the star — who's said to overshadow many of his teammates and even the teams he plays on — a dictator, and memes showing him as Mao or other autocratic leaders are widely circulated.

Mbappe's account on RedNote was banned from accepting new followers yesterday.

Mbappe has featured in advertising campaigns in China for products from electrolyte drinks to milk and cheese.

In one commercial for Dongpeng, Mbappe delivers a slogan in Chinese; in an ad for Mengniu, he appears alongside Argentine star Lionel Messi.

On Chinese social media, there were comments criticising the French star.

The hashtags "Dongpeng ends partnership with Mbappe" and "Several brands end partnerships with Mbappe" topped Weibo's trending list.

"Football fans boycott Mbappe" was also trending, with some users expressing anger at his remarks or telling him not to come to China. — AP

United crisis deepens as Carrick faces axe

MANCHESTER: Winless in eight games and hovering just above the Premier League relegation zone, struggling Manchester United are facing the prospect of yet another managerial change, with Michael Carrick likely to pay the price.

The former United midfielder was warmly applauded by fans as he made his way down the tunnel after his team's chastening 3-0 defeat by Bournemouth at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Moments later a chorus of boos erupted as the players left the pitch — with fans clear in their minds where the blame lies for United's current malaise.

Carrick was handed a two-year deal in May after inspiring an impressive revival following the team's struggles under Ruben Amorim — United secured third place in the Premier League and a return to the Champions League.

But a drastic decline this season is an all-too-familiar story for United supporters, who last witnessed a Premier League title triumph 13 years ago under Alex Ferguson.

An emotional Carrick denied his lap of the pitch at full-time on Sunday was a goodbye as he struggles to come to terms with his team's precipitous decline.

"I definitely knew that we hadn't cracked it and there was a lot of work to be done, but that doesn't mean to say that it should have gone this way," he said.

Carrick, 45, is clinging on but his position appears increasingly precarious, with former Newcastle boss Eddie Howe and ex-Germany boss Julian Nagelsmann apparently in the



Tough luck: Manchester United coach Michael Carrick reacts after the Bournemouth defeat. — AP

frame for the job.

The United boss, who won multiple titles in the club's golden era under Ferguson, was the seventh permanent appointment since the Scot retired.

David Moyes was proven in the Premier League, Louis van Gaal and Jose Mourinho had stellar records and Erik ten Hag and Amorim were seen as rising stars of coaching.

Carrick is in the same category as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, who was in charge for three years from 2018 — a sentimental choice as a former player who played a major role in the club's glory years under Ferguson.

"The Manchester United fans are singing the Michael Carrick song because I think they know

what's going to happen here. They've seen this before. He's one of their own and he's popular," former United captain Gary Neville told Sky Sports.

"But the owners, the sporting department and the players are not popular and they've badly let this football club down."

United, who for years bullied their rivals in the transfer market, lost out on the biggest names as they targeted a summer midfield rebuild, with Elliot Anderson, Sandro Tonali and Mateus Fernandes all choosing other clubs.

United instead recruited Carlos Baleba, Youri Tielemans and Andrey Santos — none of whom have made a strong impression — for combined fees of about

£150mil.

Significant rifts have emerged in recent weeks.

Lisandro Martinez criticised director of football Jason Wilcox for not doing more to strengthen Carrick's squad.

Last week captain Bruno Fernandes publicly questioned Carrick's tactics in a 4-1 humbling by Champions League debutants Como.

Carrick is expected to take the blame, but the route back to the top for one of the world's biggest clubs appears tougher than ever.

"It can't just be the manager again. There has got to be consequences above that. You can't keep letting the people pick the manager who keep getting it wrong," said Neville. — AFP

Rahimi on target as Al-Ain stay perfect in Asian CL

ABU DHABI: Al-Ain continued their perfect start to the western league phase of the Asian Champions League Elite on Monday with a 2-1 win over Tractor FC from Iran as title holders Al-Ahli secured a late 2-1 victory over 10-man Al-Gharafa.

Al-Ain, winners of the trophy in 2024, picked up their third win in a row as Houssine Rahimi (*pic*) scored his fifth goal in three matches with 20 minutes remaining at the Hazza bin Zayed Stadium.

"This competition is important and we need to collect points early on," said the Moroccan forward.

"That is what we managed to do in these three matches we have played, earning nine points. This is very important for us."

Ramy Rabia's strike from distance in the 21st minute had put Al-Ain in front but Tibor Halilovic curled home Tractor's equaliser 10 minutes into the second half before Rahimi hit the winner.

Al-Ahli made a positive start



in Jeddah against their Qatari visitors when Ivan Toney gave the defending champions a fourth-minute lead only to see Florinel Coman level eight minutes into the second half.

Seydou Sano's sending-off for a second bookable offence with

13 minutes remaining left Al-Gharafa short-handed and Al-Ahli took advantage with Matheus Goncalves hitting the winner four minutes from time.

"We know that our primary focus isn't just being at the

top of the table," said Goncalves. "We have to qualify, and qualify well, so that afterwards we can take advantage of our home matches and get the job done at home."

Julian Quinones scored in the 84th minute with a heavily deflected effort to earn Al-Qadsiah a 1-1 draw with Qatar's Al-Sadd, who took the lead through Akram Afif's stunning strike from distance 10 minutes earlier.

Iraq's Air Force Club picked up their first win of the campaign when Saad Abdul Ameer pounced in the 70th minute to seal a 1-0 victory in Basra over Pakhtakor from Uzbekistan.

The match involving Saudi Pro League champions Al-Nassr and Al-Wasl from the United Arab Emirates was postponed.

The first eight finishers in the league phase in west and east Asia will advance to the knockout rounds, with the quarter-finals, semi-finals and final to be played on a centralised basis in Saudi Arabia in April and May.

— Reuters

Di Renzo savours fine start with Sabah but long gaps between games test his patience

PETALING JAYA: Argentine striker Gonzalo Di Renzo may have made a fine start with Sabah but he says the Super League's stop-start fixture list takes some getting used to.

The 30-year-old, who is playing outside Argentina and Spain for the first time, said the lack of rhythm caused by FIFA international breaks and other calendar interruptions required much adjustment.

"The Malaysian league is different from the leagues I've played in before, so I'm still adapting. One of the challenges has been the lack of consistency in our match schedule due to FIFA breaks and other calendar interruptions," said Di Renzo, who joined the Rhinos from Spanish club CF Talavera de Reina.

"It's not the same playing four or five matches in a row as playing one match every 20 days, which is what has been happening."

"However, that's part of the schedule, and we have to adapt as best we can."

Despite that, Di Renzo, who previously played for Argentine top-flight sides Lanus and Estudiantes, has made a bright start with three goals in five league matches.

"I'm happy to have scored three goals so far because as a striker, that's what I'll be valued for. However, I know I can still improve and give much more."

He said the time felt right for him to play in a new continent and country after several years in Argentina and Spain.

"After several years playing in Spain and Argentina, I felt it was the right moment to take on a new challenge, step out of my comfort zone and experience something different, both in football and in my personal life."

"Sabah's offer was a great opportunity to continue developing as a player, discover a new culture and compete in a new league."

Sabah, who are fifth in the league with seven points, will look to move further up the table when they host Terengganu at the Likas Stadium in Kota Kinabalu on Saturday.

Wise young leader

Hotshot Arif turns creator this time to help JDT stay unbeaten in ACL Elite

By T. AVINESHWARAN

PETALING JAYA: Johor Darul Ta'zim's (JDT) wonder winger Arif Aiman Hanapi is always hungry for goals.

And he was no different yesterday in the Southern Tigers' AFC Champions League (ACL) Elite group match against Thai club Port at the Sultan Ibrahim Stadium.

The 24-year-old, as usual, was a constant menace to the opponents but did not get on the scoresheet in JDT's 3-0 win.

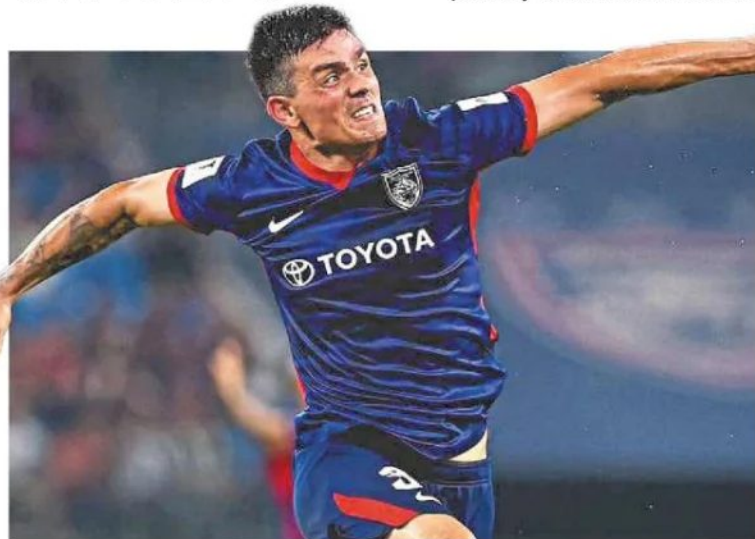
Arif was also made captain of the team by coach Xisco Munoz, as regular skipper Natxo Insa did not start.

While he wished that he had been among the goal scorers, Arif could take heart after giving a superb all-round performance - one worthy of a captain.

"I wanted to score, but the goal just didn't come. But I look at the important overall picture - we got the win. That is what matters most," said Arif.



Positive move: Arif Aiman Hanapi passes the ball to Jonathan Silva (below), who drills a shot from the centre of the penalty box into the bottom left corner. — JDT



"In this competition, we want to win every game and go even higher as a team. We have five games to go in the league stage, so we want to keep this momentum."

In a match which JDT dominated, Arif had his best chance to score in the 21st minute, firing wide with his left foot.

Six minutes later, he saw his powerful right-footed shot saved by Port's Filipino goal-

keeper Michael Falkesgaard.

Arif troubled the Port defence again on a counter-attack in the 40th minute, but fullback Chaiyaphon Otton tracked him superbly to close the space and stopped him from taking a lethal shot.

JDT only broke the deadlock after half-time through Argentinian wingback Jonathan Silva in the 53rd minute.

The 22-year-old Silva

received a pass from Arif and drilled a shot from the centre of the penalty box into the bottom left corner.

Veteran striker Bergson Da Silva, who came on as a substitute in the 57th minute, needed just seven minutes to make his mark.

The 35-year-old headed in Oscar Arribas' cross, which deflected off Port defender Peerawat Akkratum and wrong-footed Falkesgaard.

Bergson celebrated passionately by removing his jersey and was booked. The mercurial forward then went off in the 65th minute with an apparent injury, and was replaced by Spanish striker Juan Molina Martinez.

Martinez, better known as Stoichkov, sealed the win in the 85th minute, finishing off a pass from fellow substitute and Spanish winger Matias Nahuel.

The result leaves JDT with seven points from three matches, and they remain unbeaten in the competition.

M'sia the only SEA nation to qualify for Tier B of FIFA U-15 World Cup

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia emerged as the only team from South-East Asia to advance to Tier B at the 2026 FIFA Under-15 World Cup and Festival in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The national youth squad, coached by P. Maniam, achieved this proud feat after finishing Group H as runners-up with three wins, one draw, and one defeat, thereby qualifying for the Round of 32 of Tier B.

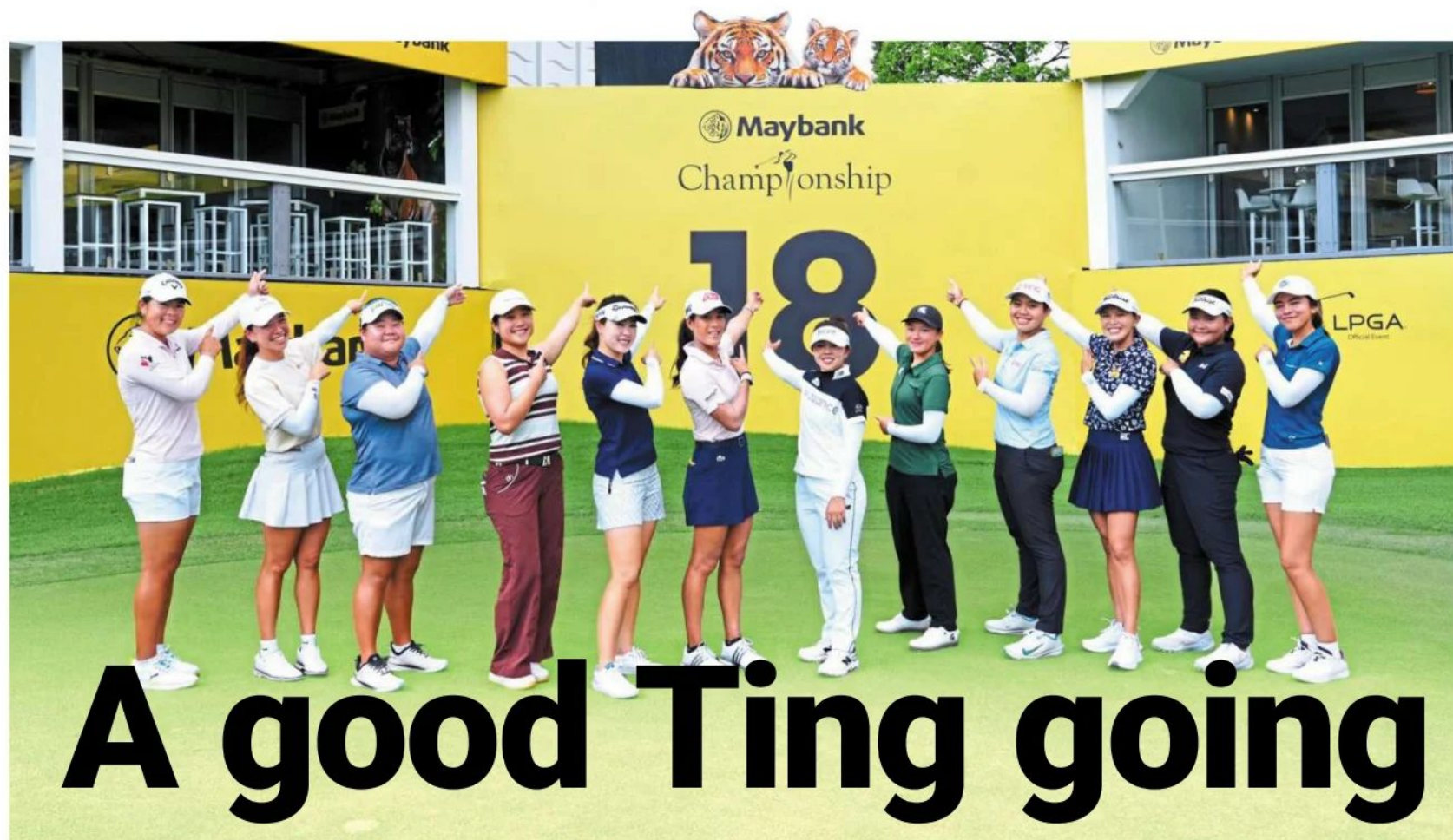
Tier B is the second-highest tier of the tournament, bringing together teams ranked from 33rd to 64th best.

Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) president Datuk Ab Ghani Hassan described the achievement as proof of the national youth players' ability to compete on the international stage, while also reflecting the positive development of the country's grassroots football.

"I'm happy and satisfied with the performance shown by the national Under-15 football squad coached by P. Maniam at the 2026 FIFA Under-15 World Cup and Festival in Baku, Azerbaijan."

"What we are even more proud of is that Malaysia emerged as the only team from South-East Asia to succeed in advancing to the Tier B stage, thereby proving the capability of the national youth line-up to compete on the international stage," he said yesterday.

The U-15 squad are scheduled to face South Africa in the Tier B round of 32 today.



Mirabel out to make impression at Maybank C'ship, with Olympian Michelle on the bag

By LIM TEIK HUAT

KUALA LUMPUR: All eyes will be on Malaysian rising star and LPGA-bound golfer Mirabel Ting when she tees off in the Maybank Championship at Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club starting tomorrow.

With 13 top-10 finishes and being the only golfer with two wins in the Epson Tour, Mirabel topped the Race for the Card to secure her place on the LPGA Tour and also earned the Player of the Year honours.

Mirabel, having just turned 21 last month, can expect the local attention to be on her this week following a breakthrough rookie pro season.

With close friend and 2016 Olympian Michelle Koh serving

as her caddie, Mirabel hopes to make an impression against the world's best in her third Maybank Championship appearance.

"I have 'sister Michelle' on the bag this year, so I'm just super excited to actually go out there and have fun with her," said the Sarawak-born golfer.

"I think to me things shouldn't change because of how big the event is, on how different it is on Epson. I feel like we are still playing and we are still doing our best.

"Back in like my first year of the event in 2024, I wouldn't say I was nervous because I was an amateur and I wasn't really thinking a lot.

"And the crowd on 18 was wild. I think I was more scared than happy I would say. And then last

year it got a little bit better but it was like my professional debut and so expectations changed.

"When I expect, I don't play really well, so this year I'm just going to go out there and play."

And for Mirabel, the biggest lessons went beyond trophies and results as the demands of professional life forced her to learn how to manage her schedule, look after her body and, above all, stop putting pressure on herself to prove her worth to others.

Mirabel admitted the early stages of the season were a steep learning curve, as she struggled with player logistics and even missed rookie meetings before learning to manage her schedule, sleep, nutrition and physiotherapy.

Putting was another weakness,

Full steam ahead: Mirabel Ting (third from left) and the other golfers taking part in the Maybank Championship pose for a photo.

while the desire to perform and prove herself to others added to the pressure.

"My weakness was always on putting and trying to expect too much, trying to play well and prove it to people.

"I kind of realised that I don't play golf for people, I play golf for myself. I love the game of golf, and to be able to get out and play and do the things that I love and not sitting down doing nothing, I'm really grateful for it.

"For me, it's more about being grateful, knowing things are going to be okay, having faith, and just keep playing."

Mirabel is among five Malaysian golfers playing in the tournament this year. The others are Natasha Andrea Oon, Liyana Durisic, Kelly Tan and Genevieve Ling.

Holder Yamashita not feeling weight of crown as she keeps calm



KUALA LUMPUR: Golfer Miyu Yamashita returns to the Maybank Championship at Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club (KLGCC) this week with a familiar title, a red-hot season under her belt, and a calm, focused mindset.

Back as the defending champion, the Japanese golfer expressed delight at being back in Malaysia for the opening stretch of the LPGA Tour's Asian Swing.

Following early practice rounds on Monday and Tuesday, the champion reported that her game feels right on track.

"I'm really happy to be back here as the defending champion. Yesterday and today I played nine holes, and my feeling is really good."

Yamashita enters the week backed by a standout season featuring multiple victories, a stretch of form that has provided her with both fulfilment and momentum.

The world No. 4 was in the limelight in August with a nine-stroke route at the CPKC Women's Open in Canada.

Despite the heightened expectations that often accompany a title defence, the 25-year-old insists she is embracing the moment rather than feeling the weight of the crown.

"I don't really feel much pressure. I've been really looking forward to playing here as defending champion, so I hope a lot of fans come out to watch us at the tournament."

Navigating the tricky layout of the KLGCC West Course requires precision, a challenge Yamashita mastered during her win last year.

When asked about the key to posting low scores on the venue's demanding holes, she pointed directly to iron play and ball striking.

"I think a lot of consistency with my shots is really important, because there are lots of tricky holes out here. So I'll focus on hitting second shots."

Beyond the action inside the ropes, Yamashita also highlighted her appreciation for the host country.

"Everyone here is so kind and they're all being really welcoming. It's really hot out there but I'm trying to hydrate and do my best."

Natasha eyes good hit after missing last two editions

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian golfer Natasha Andrea Oon will be hoping to make the most of her return to the Maybank Championship this week after missing the last two editions.

Natasha had to endure a two-year absence from the LPGA Tour due to foot and nerve problems.

A foot injury sustained at the 2023 edition of the championship eventually saw her going through a prolonged struggle that included surgery, nerve issues and having to rely on crutches.

"It kind of became unsolvable, and then I got a surgery, and then I had nerve issues ... crutches, instability," said the 25-year-old.

"It was kind of like this rock and push and tumble, push and tumble type of thing."

It was only in March this year that Natasha made her long-awaited LPGA Tour debut at the Fortinet Founders Cup in California, finishing tied for 53rd place.

The time away from competition, however, gave Natasha a fresh perspective on life beyond golf.

"I got to live without golf in my



Rising star: Natasha Andrea Oon made her long-awaited LPGA Tour debut at the Fortinet Founders Cup in California. — AFP

life, and I think in a sense I'm grateful, because I have a big chunk of my life that I never had.

"I got to experience myself in situations where I don't introduce myself as a golfer. I got to know

myself as a person, and that's so important."

Friendships outside the sport helped her maintain that perspective, regardless of how she performed on the course.

"I made so many friends in my area, and you can like play bad, and they're like, 'Oh, sorry, but do you want to go get a boba (drink)?' and you're like, 'Yeah!'" she said.

On her expectations for the tournament this week, Natasha said she is comfortable playing at Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club.

"I actually haven't been playing since like 2023 here, so coming back feels like a long time. But I'm very comfortable, so that's nice.

"I grew up here, I played this course a couple of times, and I got to say hi to everyone who was a marshal and caddie and everything.

"The course itself, I'm very impressed, even though it was a bit wet, but I think it's been raining a lot.

"I think I was impressed with how they're rolling because it means the course drains well."

Man-to-man approach

Kai Wun's candid conversation paved the Wei to first Super 750 title

By T. RAHULESH

PETALING JAYA: Sometimes all that is needed to jolt you into action is a candid conversation with a friend.

Following a disappointing first round exit at the Denmark Open two weeks ago, national doubles shuttler Tee Kai Wun felt the need to address his partner, Man Wei Chong, directly.

"After Denmark, I had a discussion with Wei Chong," said Kai Wun upon arriving at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) yesterday.

"I told him that if he wants to win, he has to change his own

mindset first. Only then can I help him."

The pair had spent several months apart earlier this year, with Kai Wun combining with other players while Wei Chong recovered from a right knee injury sustained in March.

During this period, Kai Wun claimed the Korean Masters title alongside Yap Roy King in August.

Wei Chong, however, struggled to find his form. The lack of titles – his last came when he won the 2025 Malaysian Masters with Kai Wun – began to heavily affect the 27-year-old's confidence.

But Kai Wun's words left a lasting impact on Wei Chong and

quickly bore fruit as the world No. 8 pair captured their first Super 750 title at the French Open on Sunday.

"We didn't really expect this because we didn't play well in Denmark," Kai Wun admitted.

"I think after this tournament, Wei Chong will regain his confidence."

Kai Wun, 26, noted that while the victory is a significant boost, his partner still needs to manage his ongoing injury.

"We still have three tournaments left to end the year.

"We'll just try to play our best."

The duo will next compete at the Korean Open from Nov 3-8.



Heart-to-heart talk: Tee Kai Wun (right) hopes his partner Man Wei Chong will gain more confidence in upcoming tournaments.

Red-hot Pang Ron keeps himself grounded ahead of Hylo Open



Steady progress: Hoo Pang Ron-Lai Pei Jing have reached two finals – the China Masters last month and the French Open last Sunday in just six months together.

PETALING JAYA: Every win brings with it increased attention and expectations, but professional mixed doubles shuttler Hoo Pang Ron is looking to learn from every game instead.

The 28-year-old and his partner Lai Pei Jing, 34, have enjoyed a remarkable October, reaching the semi-finals of the Denmark Open two weeks ago before finishing runners-up at the French Open last Sunday.

Their strong performances have propelled them from 51st to 24th in the world rankings, raising expectations ahead of their Hylo Open campaign, which begins today in Saarbrücken, Germany.

However, Pang Ron, who turned independent in April, is determined not to let their hot streak distract him from the bigger picture.

"Every match is important. We are always learning," said Pang Ron.

"We just go step by step and never give ourselves too much pressure.

"But of course, this run of form boosts our confidence."

In just six months together, Pang Ron-Pei Jing have already reached two finals – the China Masters last month and the French

Open last Sunday.

Although they fell short against Chinese world No. 1 Feng Yanzhe-Huang Dongping on both occasions, Pang Ron believes the experience has helped him grow as a player.

"Personally, I feel I've learnt how to enjoy and control my emotions a little better."

Pang Ron is also mindful of the pressure that comes with being viewed as potential title contenders.

The absence of Yanzhe-Dongping in Germany presents an opportunity for Pang Ron to end his seven-year title drought. His last triumph came at the 2019 Hyderabad Open alongside former partner Cheah Yee See.

Nevertheless, Pang Ron is refusing to get carried away.

"The draw won't be easy as we're not seeded."

While the added attention brings heightened expectations, it has also opened doors for him in attracting greater interest from potential sponsors.

"Hopefully I can continue to impress. It's not easy covering all the expenses as an independent player."

Aaron-Wooi Yik focus on late surge for World Tour Finals ticket

PETALING JAYA: A minor injury will not derail men's doubles pair Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik's late surge to secure qualification for the season-ending World Tour Finals.

The duo were forced to retire from their French Open quarter-final match against eventual champions Man Wei Chong-Tee Kai Wun last Friday due to Wooi Yik suffering a right heel injury.

That withdrawal, combined with skipping the Hylo Open in Germany, leaves the pair fifth in the race for the coveted eight spots for the Finals in Hangzhou from Dec 9-13.

Despite the setback, Aaron confirmed that qualifying remains the top priority for the world No. 4 pair as they face a packed November schedule, beginning with the Korean Open (Nov 3-8), followed by the Kumamoto Masters (Nov 10-15), and concluding with the Hong Kong Open (Nov 17-22).

"We have to go all out because there are still three tournaments left," said Aaron upon arriving at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) yesterday.

"There are points to be earned, so we will compete and see how things turn out."

Aaron, 29, also confirmed that his partner Wooi Yik, 28, is recovering well, describing the situation as "not serious".

"Everything is good in terms of his condition."

"He is still recovering, but we will definitely be going to Korea, Japan and Hong Kong."

Recently reunited after a brief split, Aaron-Wooi Yik proved they remain a formidable force by reaching the Denmark Open final just a week before their quarter-final withdrawal in Paris.

"We've been playing together for many years, so it (the split) didn't really affect us that much," he said.

However, he preferred to temper expectations of a deep run at the Finals.

"Let's qualify first, then we can think about the knockout stages."

Aaron-Wooi Yik have never advanced past the group stage in their four previous attempts in 2019, 2020, 2023 and 2025.

Meanwhile, world No. 5 Goh Sze Fei-Nur Izzuddin Rumsani, the 2024 Finals silver medalists, have already secured their qualification.

Only two entries per nation are allowed in the Finals.

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GROUP 2	7 4 2 9 9 OR 4 2 9 9 3
GROUP 3	7 4 2 9 OR 2 9 9 3
GROUP 4	7 4 2 OR 9 9 3
GROUP 5	7 4 OR 9 3
	OR 2 9
GOLDEN NUMBER	0 9

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 THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY

Too edgy for starters

Malaysia beat China in nine-goal thriller, but Carolan's not thrilled

By T. AVINESHWARAN

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian hockey team made a thrilling start in the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) by edging China 5-4 at the Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium in Punjab, India, yesterday.

But coach Brendon Carolan was far from thrilled, and much less pleased, with his charges' display.

"I'm disappointed with the way we played. I think it's not good enough compared to what we have been doing," said Carolan.

"We've got to take our hats off to China. They executed their penalty corners very well and were defensively sitting on half-court in that heat, which is difficult to play against.

"So, hats off to them. As for us, we really need to be better.

"The win is important, but I think our performance could be much better.

"We're now up to 12th in the world rankings, so I think we have to be better than what we showed today.

"The conditions were also difficult, as we were playing close to 1pm in 30-degree heat.

"So it's obviously very difficult for us to play under those circumstances.

"But other than that, at least we got the result and I know we can be better in the next match."

The Speedy Tigers made a bright start when striker Azrai Aizad Abu Kamal opened the scoring with a field goal just after four minutes.

But China responded with back-to-back goals from Wang Yaqi (11th) and Ne Moda (12th) to lead 2-1.

Azrai then struck again with another field goal in the 14th minute, followed by Akhimullah Anuar Esook in the same minute as Malaysia pushed 3-2 ahead.

Chen Benhai's penalty corner flick in the 27th minute brought China level again, with the first half ending 3-3.

The second half began at a blistering pace.

Experienced forward Faizal Saari converted a penalty stroke in the 34th minute, and a minute later winger Azimuddin Kamaruddin extended the lead to 5-3 with a clinical penalty corner execution.

Benhai, however, hit the target again for China from another penalty corner in the 44th minute to set up a tense final quarter, but the Malaysian defence held firm to secure all three points.

Malaysia will next take on South Korea tomorrow.



Nail-biting game: Faizal Saari (left) and Azrai Aizad Abu Kamal react after the match against China. — Hockey India

Pakistan's absence at ACT gives Speedy Tigers good chance to rise

By S. SAKTESH

PETALING JAYA: The absence of the Pakistan hockey team at the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) could give Malaysia the opportunity to move up the rankings.

World No. 12 Pakistan had withdrawn from the tournament which started in Punjab, India, yesterday, due to player safety and security concerns.

Malaysia, who are currently ranked 14th, started their campaign with a 5-4 win over China, who are world No. 21.

The Speedy Tigers are also in the mix against hosts and defending champions India (No. 8), Japan (No. 16), South Korea (No. 20), and Bangladesh (No. 27), who replaced Pakistan.

Malaysia coach Brendon Carolan believes the tournament will serve as a good platform for the team to get strong results and boost their world rankings.

"We know that Pakistan are not competing at the ACT.

"So for us, there are not many points between us and them in the rankings," said Carolan.

"We want to do really well during the tournament in India and try to get that 12th spot if possible."

Pakistan pulled out of the tournament after the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) and Hockey India rejected the request to stage their fixtures at a neutral venue.

The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) had cited the safety of their players and staff amid tensions between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Carolan will be without the



services of forward Norsyafiq Sumantri in India, who is sidelined due to an injury he picked up during the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

Adam Asyraf Johari (pic) has earned a last-minute call-up to replace Norsyafiq.

The 20-year-old Adam featured for the national junior team in the recent Sultan of Johor Cup, where they ended Malaysia's 15-year wait for the trophy after edging Pakistan in the final.

The national team will be hoping to improve on their last-place finish at the previous edition in 2024. Their best result at the ACT came at the 2023 edition, where they finished as runners-up to India.

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Draw Date: 27/10/26 (Tue) Draw No: 6151/26

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1st Prize	7750
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3rd Prize	8263

Starters	Consolation
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1111 7410	1172 5975
3699 6438	6727 9485
4480 5609	3836 9540
5148 2108	1846 7734

1-3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 RM8,977,593.20

7750+3964	3964+7750
7750+8263	8263+7750
3964+8263	8263+3964

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2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
663 964+ROOSTER		RM1,460,114.60
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
448 263+DRAGON		RM2,133,339.00

Starters	Consolation
180 232 591 726	795 214 997 787
151 111 707 410	391 172 865 975
243 699 956 438	656 727 749 485
964 480 375 609	623 836 449 540
445 148 792 108	231 846 487 734

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
750	964	263

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750 + 263 + 964	263 + 750 + 964
964 + 750 + 263	263 + 964 + 750

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Special	Consolation
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4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 RM 13,377,460.83

9241 6818	6818 9241
9241 4768	4768 9241
6818 4768	4768 6818

Jackpot 2 RM 559,881.22

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4D Zodiac

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2nd Prize	6 8 1 8	+	
3rd Prize	4 7 6 8	+	B O A R
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number		

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5D

1ST	7 6 9 8 8
4TH	6 9 8 8
2ND	2 3 1 0 2
5TH	9 8 8
3RD	8 0 1 0 1
6TH	8 8

6D

1ST	3 4 7 7 7 7
2ND	3 4 7 7 7 or 4 7 7 7 7
3RD	3 4 7 7 or 7 7 7 7
4TH	3 4 7 or 7 7 7
5TH	3 4 or 7 7

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Johor Darul Ta'zim's Jonathan Silva (right) fires a shot as Port's Suphanan Bureerat tries to block during their AFC Champions League match at the Sultan Ibrahim Stadium yesterday. JDT won 3-0. — Bernama >32

Kane's whip for more

ENGLAND football team captain Harry Kane has described his Ballon d'Or award win as a success 'beyond his wildest dreams' that will keep him hungry as a lion. The 33-year-old striker now targets Champions League glory with Bayern Munich and ending England's wait for a major title at Euro 2028. >31



Worthy Harry:
Kane became the first English winner of the Ballon d'Or in 25 years as he beat off competition from Kylian Mbappe and Lamine Yamal. — AP

Mbappe says sorry for Mao joke after losing Chinese brand deals >31

Man-to-man talk works wonders for Wei Chong and Kai Wun >34

Speedy Tigers edge China in high-scoring thriller at Asian Champs Trophy >35

Star Lifestyle

Style

THE STAR, WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2026

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goals
5

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7

Responsibility wears well

As global fashion faces growing scrutiny, Malaysia's industry must also turn good intentions into meaningful action.

2&3

Photo: Arissrar

fashion's unfinished business

By **BERVIN CHEONG**
lifestyle@thestar.com.my

THE recent major fashion weeks have made one thing clear – the industry's promises of progress are facing growing scrutiny.

Protests by People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals (Peta), both on the runway and outside shows, have brought these concerns to the fore, with activists urging designers and luxury houses to reconsider their use of animal-derived materials.

At Paris Fashion Week, Stella McCartney's Spring/Summer 2027 show offered a timely reminder of how fashion can use its platform to question the treatment of animals and the materials it relies on.

The collection explored the impact of overfishing and ocean degradation, while continuing the designer's longstanding commitment to animal-free fashion.

The debate took a more confrontational turn at New York Fashion Week, where Peta activists disrupted the COS runway show to protest the use of wool.

The incident escalated when Steven Kolb, chief executive of the Council Of Fashion Designers Of America, physically restrained two protesters, prompting widespread criticism.

He later apologised and resigned from his role after two decades with the organisation.

Despite some cities adopting fur-free policies for their shows, tensions between ethical commitments and commercial demands remain, raising questions about how much meaningful progress the industry has made.

At the heart of the debate is cruelty-free fashion.

Fur may be the industry's most contentious and longstanding animal welfare issue, but it is far from the only one.

Leather, wool, feathers and exotic skins each raise ethical questions, weighed against traditions, craftsmanship, material performance and consumer expectations.

Ultimately, progress depends not only on the availability of cruelty-free alternatives, but also on the industry's willingness to embrace them.

Bringing the discussion home

With the traditional "big four" fashion capitals of New York, London, Milan and Paris no longer holding the same dominance over the global industry, the conversation around ethical practices deserves closer scrutiny at home, too.

"Animal-derived materials remain part of everyday fashion in Malaysia, even if fur and heavy wool garments are less practical in a tropical climate," says Jason Baker,

president of Peta Asia.

Leather, for instance, remains a significant concern.

According to figures cited by Peta Asia, Malaysia imported US\$136mil (approximately RM555mil) worth of handbags with leather outer surfaces in 2022, alongside US\$23.6mil (RM96.4mil) worth of apparel and accessories made from leather or composition leather in 2023.

Baker also points to Malaysia's documented python-skin trade, with reptile-skin goods openly marketed in Kuala Lumpur.

While the country may not be a major market for fur coats, animal welfare remains relevant given how widely animal-derived materials feature in everyday products.

Nevertheless, Baker believes awareness of animal welfare and animal-free alternatives is growing locally.

Increasing engagement with animal rights issues and more considered consumer choices, he says, present opportunities for the fashion sector to explore alternatives.

He also challenges the perception that animal-free materials are less luxurious or inferior in quality.

Technological advances have produced options that can match or even outperform animal-derived materials in durability, comfort and appearance.

From pineapple-leaf leather to plant-based insulation and fabrics that replicate the softness of wool, cashmere and silk, these innovations give designers more choices without relying on animal-derived materials.

Local labels are exploring alternative approaches, too.

Baker points to TwoFrens, which uses plant-based natural dyes, and LTTL, which works with natural, sustainable and biodegradable fibres.

Together, such examples demonstrate how style and practicality can coexist with more considered material choices.

A broader reckoning with responsibility

While animal welfare has emerged as a prominent talking point in recent weeks, environmental concerns have long shaped discussions around responsible fashion.

From resource-intensive production and water pollution to textile waste and carbon emissions, the industry's environmental footprint remains a significant concern.

The growing volume of clothing produced and discarded each year has further underscored the need to rethink how garments are made, consumed and disposed of.



McCartney's Spring/Summer 2027 show at Paris Fashion Week highlighted the impact of overfishing and ocean degradation, reinforcing her commitment to animal-free fashion. — AP



Plastic remnants processed from discarded Samsonite luggage can be repurposed through upcycling. — AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the textile industry accounts for an estimated 2% to 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions and consumes around 215 trillion litres of water annually.

Meanwhile, a 2025 UNEP report estimates that 92 million tonnes of textile waste are generated globally each year. In 2023, less than 1% of the global fibre market came from textile-to-textile recycling.

Yet environmental impact is only one dimension of the discussion.

Andrea Guerot, head of fashion design at Esmod Kuala Lumpur, a fashion school, believes greater attention should be given to preserving creative and technical knowledge, alongside cultural responsibility.

"Fashion depends on generations of accumulated expertise: textile techniques, pattern-making, garment construction, traditional dress, local craftsmanship and the relationship between clothing and the communities that create and wear it," she explains.

"Yet these forms of knowledge are often undervalued compared with technological novelty, global market expansion and production efficiency."

For Guerot, responsibility also means protecting the diversity of ways in which fashion can exist, rather than focusing solely on minimising environmental harm.

"Ultimately, I believe we need to move beyond asking how to make fashion production less harmful and begin asking what kinds of fashion practices, skills, cultures and economic models we want to preserve and encourage," she says.

Achieving this, she adds, requires greater transparency to address both the material and human dimensions of the industry, from pollution and environmental degradation to social and cultural concerns.

Education is key

Beyond materials and manufacturing, responsible fashion also depends on how the next generation of designers is trained to understand the industry's broader impact.

For Guerot, this begins in the class-

room, where young talents must develop creative and technical skills while learning to consider the wider implications of their design choices.

At Esmod Kuala Lumpur, industry and artistic collaborations expose students to different approaches to sustainability.

These experiences encourage them to see it as a multifaceted discipline in which creativity, material innovation, resourcefulness, industry practices and social responsibility intersect, rather than a single prescribed approach.

Guerot cites several past student projects that put these principles into practice.

Lim Yu Jie developed a zero-waste prototype using deadstock fabric from the luxury industry, while Arissrar Sangkhaney Bun Liang created a plant-dyed collection before launching her eponymous sustainable label.

Sam Shu Yi, meanwhile, upcycled denim into a mermaid-inspired collection highlighting ocean degradation and pollution from the fashion industry.

Guerot also stresses the importance of making such practices viable for emerging designers, many of whom begin as independent creatives or small businesses producing individual garments or limited collections rather than industrial quantities.

For them, responsible practices must be realistic and proportionate, allowing room for creative expression while remaining economically viable.

"It's not a trend, it's a way of life," she says.

The human aspect of fashion

For brands, this also means looking beyond the product itself to consider how their business can create tangible benefits for the communities around them, as Samsonite Malaysia

general manager Ambert Khoo explains.

The company's annual trade-in campaign, for instance, gives pre-loved luggage a second life while extending its impact beyond waste reduction.

In its recent partnership with Precious Plastic, Samsonite upcycled collected luggage into furniture for children at Yayasan Chow Kit, creating practical pieces.

"The furniture was designed specifically around their needs, and we also wanted to create a more welcoming and inspiring environment for them," says Khoo.

The project also incorporated a "Tree Of Hope" artwork created by the children, giving them an opportunity to express their aspirations and experiences.

Some pieces were designed to serve multiple purposes, including collapsible tables that can be displayed as framed artworks when not in use.

For Khoo, such details help ensure that community initiatives address genuine needs rather than simply serve as extensions of a brand's marketing strategy.

"Authenticity starts with ensuring that an initiative has a genuine purpose and creates lasting value for the people it is intended to support," he says.

He believes commercial success and social responsibility can go hand in hand.

Thoughtfully developed initiatives can benefit communities while reinforcing a brand's values and strengthening consumer trust.

Price, quality and design, however, remain central to purchasing decisions.

The challenge is thus to make responsible choices practical and accessible, rather than asking consumers to compromise on the products they want.

Ultimately, Khoo believes meaningful change depends on consistency and transparency, with brands demonstrating their commitments through tangible action rather than words alone.

This is the broader challenge facing the fashion industry, globally and locally.

Whether through animal-free materials, lower-impact production, the preservation of traditional craftsmanship or initiatives that support local communities, responsibility cannot be reduced to a single material, campaign or cause.

Nor is it measured solely by what a brand promises.

It must be reflected in how products are made, how people are treated and what happens when an item reaches the end of its useful life.

The question is no longer simply how fashion can become less harmful, but how it can make a more meaningful contribution to the world around it.

That requires turning good intentions into everyday practice, making responsibility an integral part of how fashion is designed, produced, sold and experienced.

Sam's student project transforms upcycled denim into a mermaid-inspired collection, sending an important message about ocean degradation and fashion pollution. — SAM SHU YI



Protesters at Milan Fashion Week bring renewed attention to the fashion industry's use of animal-derived materials. — AFP

Peta continues to campaign at major fashion weeks, urging brands to make responsible choices. — Reuters



Growing environmental concerns are prompting designers to explore sustainable fabrics and rethink fashion's impact on the planet. — LTTL

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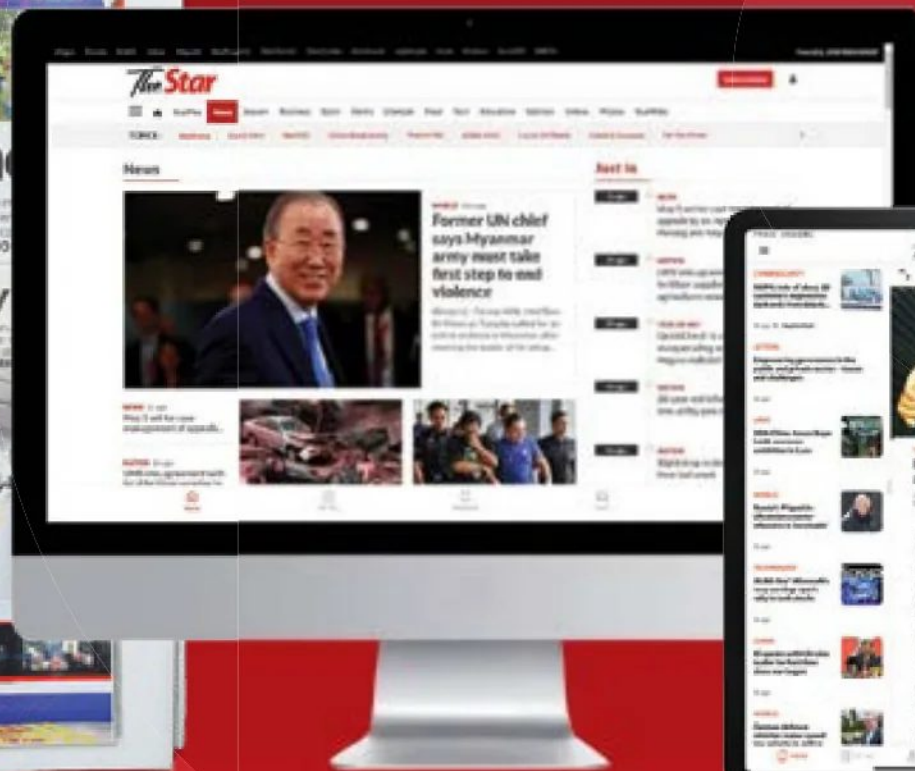
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Kids thrive when they have structure, routine and predictability, yet many co-parents don't have a clear plan for how they're going to manage this. — ROBERT MICHAEL/dpa-Zentralbild/dpa

A new way forward

Five tips for healthy, happy co-parenting after a separation.

By LISA SALMON

MILLIONS of mums and dads are forced into shared parenting after separation or divorce. And many of them have no idea how to share nicely.

The result can be co-parenting approaches which aren't necessarily in the best interests of the children involved, because simply loving your child isn't always enough, points out Aaron Dale, author of the new book *The Co-Parent: A Toolkit For Parenting Together, Apart*.

Dale, who was brought up by a single mother and shares parenting of his two sons with their mothers, says: "Despite how common separation and co-parenting have become, many of us enter this journey with very little awareness or understanding of what it requires."

The dad, a co-parenting adviser who's also founder of the shared parenting social media platform @raisingboys_2men, says that when he became a co-parent himself, he quickly realised that loving your child wasn't necessarily enough to make co-parenting work.

"You can have two parents who love their child deeply, want the best for them and yet still struggle with communication and disagreements," he observes.

Dale, 40, explains that this is exactly why he was "compelled" to write the book, and points out: "I knew the challenges personally and wanted to help co-parents by creating the resource I wish I had when I first started navigating the unpredictable road of co-parenting. Something practical, honest and accessible, rather than something that simply told parents what they should be doing."

"The reality is there's no one-size-fits-all approach to co-parenting."

He says that while some separated parents, for example, communicate every day and it works for them, others may communicate only when they need to. Some may have an equal parenting split, while others may have a one month a month schedule that works for

them and their child.

But he points out: "Regardless of your circumstances, there's one thing we should all have in common: the desire to raise a healthy, secure and emotionally well-equipped adult."

The National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) helps children stay in touch with parents after separation and divorce, and Phil Coleman, the NACCC's service development manager, stresses that while separation can obviously be challenging for everyone involved, it doesn't have to define a child's future.

"One of the most important factors influencing how children adapt is the ability of parents to work together in support of their child's needs, even when their own relationship has come to an end," he says.

However, he points out that effective co-parenting is sometimes misunderstood, and explains: "Parents don't have to be friends, agree on everything or spend time together socially."

Coleman says NACCC-accredited child contact centres can play an important role in helping families move towards healthier co-parenting, and he adds: "What matters is that parents keep their child at the centre of decisions, communicate respectfully, manage disagreements appropriately and put their child's wellbeing ahead of unresolved conflict."

In order to do what's best for the children of separated parents, Dale suggests these practical ways for them to make better decisions, communicate more effectively and keep their child at the centre of their parenting.

Break-up can be the beginning, not the end

Dale says that although it's easy to view the end of a relationship as a failure, in some circumstances the break-up can create the opportunity for something healthier.

He points out that a 2015 poll of young people aged 14 to 22 for the family law organisation Resolution found 82% would



Millions of mums and dads are forced into shared parenting after separation or divorce. And many of them have no idea how to share nicely. — BENJAMIN WESTHOFF/dpa

You can have two parents who love their child deeply, want the best for them and yet still struggle with communication and disagreements.

Aaron Dale

rather their parents divorced than stayed together unhappily.

In addition, he says research from Direct Line Life Insurance found more than a fifth of parents who would have separated stayed together longer because they had children, with parents staying in relationships for an average of more than five years longer than they otherwise would have.

"These findings clearly challenge the idea that remaining together at all costs is always what's best for a child," he says.

"You haven't failed as a parent simply because your relationship failed. Sometimes the healthiest thing you can give your child isn't two parents pretending everything's OK, but two parents learning how to be ok separately."

Boundaries are protection, not punishment

If the other parent says you can't call them after a certain time, or they don't want you entering their personal space, or whatever, your first reaction may be 'Why are they doing this to me?', says Dale.

But he uses the analogy of a flower garden surrounded by a



Parents should have the desire to raise a healthy, secure and emotionally well-equipped adult. — Pexels

fence with a sign saying "No ball games", and points out: "You don't look at the fence and think the flowers are being difficult. You understand the fence is there to protect what's inside."

"Co-parenting requires us to develop the same understanding. A boundary isn't necessarily an attempt to prevent you from being involved with your child – it may simply be an attempt by the other parent to protect their peace and emotional well-being."

You don't have to be friends to successfully co-parent

Being friendly with your ex isn't the definition of successful co-parenting, Dale stresses.

He says separated parents will sometimes put enormous pressure on themselves to recreate the family dynamic they had before the split, perhaps spending the children's birthdays and Christmas together, etc.

But Dale warns: "Children don't necessarily need their parents to pretend they're still a couple. They need parents who can provide them with security, consistency and reassurance. The goal isn't to recreate your old relationship – the goal is to create a healthy new parenting partnership."

Your parenting plan is your blueprint

One of the biggest challenges of co-parenting is inconsistency, Dale says. He points out that children thrive when they have

structure, routine and predictability, yet many co-parents don't have a clear plan for how they're going to manage this.

He says every small decision can become an opportunity for disagreement between the co-parents, but a parenting plan can help prevent that.

This is an agreement between co-parents about how they're going to manage the practical aspects of raising their child. Dale stresses the plan doesn't need to be complicated, or remain the same forever, as children's needs and parents' circumstances may change.

He advises: "The best time to create structure is usually before you desperately need it. It's much easier to sit down and agree on arrangements when communication is relatively calm than it is when both parents are angry, hurt and reacting to one another."

Your child shouldn't have to carry what belongs to you

Although parents may have strong feelings like hurt, anger and jealousy when their relationship ends, Dale stresses: "Your child shouldn't have to carry them for you. They shouldn't become the messenger between two parents. They shouldn't be asked to choose sides."

"One of the most important parts of co-parenting is learning to separate your experience of the other parent from your child's experience of them." — PA Media/dpa

By LISA SALMON

FORGET all the well-known financial institutions – Britain's busiest bank has got to be the bank of Mum and Dad.

Because not only are parents financing their kids from birth to the age of 18, new research suggests they're forking out substantial amounts for them until they're at least 35.

Research from VoucherCodes.co.uk shows 57% of parents with children aged 18 to 35 are still providing regular financial support, spending an average of £363 (RM1,993) every month to help keep their adult children afloat – that's more than £4,350 (RM23,893) a year.

Food shopping is the most common expense parents help with (51%), followed by clothes (36%), mobile phones (36%), emergency expenses (34%) and adult children living at home rent-free or at a reduced cost (33%).

But it's not just life's essentials being funded by the bank of Mum and Dad – more than a quarter (28%) of parents also help pay for adult children's holidays, and 16% continue to pay for their streaming subscriptions, nights out (13%), festival or concert tickets (9%) and even gaming consoles (9%).

Not surprisingly, such comprehensive support comes at a meaningful cost to some parents – one in six (16%) says they reduce their own disposable income to support their adult children, while 15% have stopped adding to their savings as a result. Yet more than half (52%) say financially supporting adult children is simply part of being a parent – although 79% admit they became financially independent a lot earlier themselves, by the time they were 24.

Shifting goalposts

Clair Hughes, a savings expert at VoucherCodes.co.uk, points out that the bank of Mum and Dad has quietly become a fixed monthly outgoing for millions of families, rather than the occasional favour.

"A generation ago, financial independence meant moving out and covering your own basics," she says. "Now the goalposts have shifted, parents are covering essentials well into their child's late 20s, and even their 30s, and picking up costs that used to be seen as luxuries too."

"But that's less about young people wanting more, and more a reflection of how much further wages and savings have to stretch these days."

And the effect that today's cost of living is having on young people is clear from further research by The Harris Poll UK, which found 70% of adults aged 18-34 worry they won't achieve key financial milestones, and 63% think they'll need a financial gift or inheritance to achieve at least some of their financial goals, including buying a property, which more than half (53%) believe they'll never be able to afford without help from their parents.

Sarah Beams, managing director of The Harris Poll UK, says: "The bank of Mum and Dad has traditionally been talked about in the context of big financial milestones, particularly getting onto the housing ladder, but what our research shows is that



Dad will help with (perhaps things like food or bills), and what the child should cover themselves (like gaming kit and holidays).

She says: "Getting that conversation out of the way early stops financial support from drifting into an open-ended arrangement, and helps both sides to identify what's essential and what's nice to have."

And Louise Hill, founder of the kids' credit card and app GoHenry, adds: "It's never too late to start conversations about money. It all comes down to finding that sweet spot between helping out and setting firm boundaries."

"That looks different for

The bank of Mum and Dad

Parents who are supporting their adult children should find a balance between helping and encouraging independence.

family support is becoming much more embedded in everyday adult life."

She stresses that the increased reliance on parental help isn't related to complacency or a lack of ambition among the younger generation, but is a consequence of the current financial conditions.

"In many families, parents aren't simply helping their children get ahead, they're helping them afford the lives they're already living," she points out. "That means we perhaps need to think differently about what

good financial support looks like."

Balancing the book

Here's the experts' advice for keeping the bank of Mum and Dad afloat as children get older and still want to make withdrawals:

> Set clear boundaries from the start

Hughes points out that parents don't need to agree to all their adult children's financial demands, and they should sit down and discuss with them what the bank of Mum and

It all comes down to finding that sweet spot between helping out and setting firm boundaries.

Louise Hill

everyone, but simple rules like matching a percentage of what they save or only funding basic essentials can make all the difference."

> Smaller 'withdrawals' may help more

As all the research shows young adults often need help with groceries, clothes and regular cash too, Beams suggests that instead of parents saving up to help with one big milestone like buying a property, it can be more helpful to finance smaller outgoings.

"Support isn't just about house deposits any more," she says. "Rather than saving everything for one big milestone, parents who have the means could think about when smaller amounts might make the greatest difference, whether that's avoiding debt, protecting savings, or maintaining financial momentum."

> Try to reduce the cost, not the support

Before you give your child money for an expense, check if there's a cheaper way to cover it, suggests Hughes.

"Saving up supermarket loyalty points, using discount codes, buying clothing second-hand, or reviewing phone and streaming plans can all bring down what you're contributing each month," she points out.

"You can encourage your child to do the same on purchases they're making."

> Focus on building financial independence

As well as helping out financially, you can also help your children – and ultimately your own bank balance – by teaching them good money habits. Hughes says: "Encourage budgeting and normalise talking about money with your children from a young age to prevent them from growing up believing this is a taboo subject."

"Make sure your child is saving towards specific goals and they're taking on more financial responsibility over time, so the support you're giving becomes a stepping stone rather than something they lean on indefinitely."

And Beams adds: "Parents can potentially pass on more than money itself by encouraging earlier conversations about saving, investing, pensions and planning, helping younger adults make more of the money they do earn."

> Review support as circumstances change

Hughes says it's worth regularly revisiting the financial help you give your child, rather than letting it run on autopilot, pointing out: "As your child's income, job situation or expenses change, so should the level of support. It keeps things fair for you and gives them a clear sense of progress towards standing on their own feet."

> Think springboard, not just safety net

Beams points out that The Harris Poll UK research suggests seven in 10 young adults worry they won't achieve key financial milestones, so she suggests: "Where parents can help, the question could be less 'what do they need money for?' and more 'where could this money increase their choices?'"

"That might mean supporting training, building a savings buffer or helping them take an important next step." – PA Media/dpa



If you are supporting your children financially, try and set clear boundaries, provide a springboard and normalise talking about money and budgets. — MARIJAN MURAT/dpa/dpa-tmn



Singing for free, and fun

Dane performs with his band Hollyy along Lake Michigan near the AIDS Garden in Chicago.

These musicians share their love for music by busking for the community.

By TESS KENNY
Photos: Chicago Tribune/TNS

GROWING up, Tanner Dane and his best-friends-turned-band-mates used to spend hours and hours jamming in his attic in Elgin, Illinois, Chicago, the United States.

Like any aspiring musicians, they started with covers. But it didn't take long to cultivate their own sound: a bluesy, alternative rock, soul-inspired sort of mix.

Soon enough, they were self-producing their own music on GarageBand. They'd burn the tunes onto CDs, scribble them with – admittedly – terrible handwriting immortalised in Sharpie and drop the discs all over town.

It wasn't a full-blown marketing campaign by any means, but they paid no mind. They just loved to play.

Some two decades later, Dane is still embodying that home-grown approach, one free lake show at a time.

Today, he is a Chicago-based artist pursuing his career both as a solo performer and with his band, Hollyy. And in the past two summers, Dane and his bandmates – including a few of the people he grew up playing with in Elgin – have been gaining local notoriety busking at AIDS Garden Chicago in Lakeview.

Since the impromptu shows started over a year ago, they've garnered so much traction that fans by the hundreds turn out to see them perform.

"We're literally just busking," Dane said in an interview, speaking to the sensation of it all.

Crowds have comprised people young and old, parents with their kids, even commuters from Indianapolis and Wisconsin.

The street performances are

consciously announced on short notice, usually a day or two before showtime on Instagram or TikTok – a true modern pop-up, if you will, despite expectant fans flooding the musicians' social media with inquiries into when the next installation will be.

Some shows had attendees packing Belmont Rocks as far as the length of a city block, picnic blankets lining the stone steps like patchwork.

"I love Chicago," 25-year-old Jade Hart said mid-set from the audience, grinning as she cast a glance at the crowd around her. "I love the community."

After all, what's as quintessentially summertime in Chicago as some free music in the sun.

'We did it'

Dane – in the "least corny way" possible, he remarked – has been in and around music pretty much forever. He and his older sister got their first instruments, a guitar and drums, when they were 11 and 13 years old. They were sold from the get-go. The musical inclination runs in the family.

Dane's mum, Jean Bednar, sings and plays the piano, and taught him and his sister how to play when they were little, an introduction to music not unlike her own.

Bednar recalled music always being a part of her life. Her dad loved classical music. A Chicago-born plumber who worked for himself, he built a sound system from scratch so he could listen to his favourite pieces while he did billing from the basement of

From left: Jill Murray and her sister Bednar also came to watch Dane perform with his band.



their Edgewater home. Her mother dabbled in radio, including stints on a

Chicago show when she was young. She went on air to sing.

So, it was par for the course that Bednar took piano lessons herself. What she loved more, though, was to put on a record and sing along. Sometimes, she'd stage at-home shows for her parents.

Without realising it, she passed the sentiment onto her kids.

Bednar remembers them gravitating towards theatre early on and that Dane especially was "very much of a showman".

Around the time he and his sister acquired that six-string and the set of drums, Dane remembered, their friends got instruments, too. Even better, they all lived close by. Suddenly, they had the makings of their own neighbourhood band.

The troupe packed into Dane's attic and nearly every day, they'd practise for hours. They lost time up there. It'd be summer and blistering hot (there was no air conditioning in the attic) and

they'd go on jamming, no heed-ing the heat.

"You don't even think about that," Dane said. "You're just having a blast, somehow."

After practice, they'd walk to the local bodega. That was essential.

Musically, they were old souls. Dane, the youngest of the group, owed that to his bandmates.

"They were so wise with their taste," Dane said.

They loved Motown, B-side blues, vinyls. Those influences shaped their sound, as kids and for Dane still today.

"(I owe a lot to my 75-year-old, 13-year-old (friends)," he chuckled.

Their band, dubbed The Reverends, put out its first real record when Dane was 14. The namesake album was recorded in a Chicago studio, thanks to free recording time they'd won in a battle of the bands competition. They handed the album out at school and put it in the record store in town.

"I would not say it's a very great album or anything. I think it's just great that we, in our 14-to 16-year-old brains, were so hell-bent on putting out an

album and making music," Dane said. "And we did it."

Shortly after, they played their first Chicago show, a milestone for the suburban group.

Following the performance, the band spoke with *The Daily Herald*. Dane told the paper he harboured a dream that The Reverends "will go big and then tour around".

Being re-inspired

But the band dissipated on its own. Bandmates went off to college, and next thing they knew, it'd been years since they got together to play. By the time Dane headed to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, he kept music around him but opted to study political science.

Post-graduation, he eyed law school – after a gap year.

The time allowed him to waver, though. Towards the end of college, he'd realised how much he missed performing.

During his senior year, he reconnected with friends he grew up with, and they started to play together again. Among those musicians was Rafael Soto-Marquez.

Though fellow Elgin native Soto-Marquez wasn't a founding member of The Reverends, he and Dane shared interests as

teenagers, meeting formally through a local charity.

Soto-Marquez got into music in high school, first playing bass guitar in his school's jazz band, then through other bands of his own.

He would sometimes play with The Reverends if a member couldn't make a gig.

Soto-Marquez was a few years into Chicago's music scene when he and Dane reconnected. After high school, he'd gone to study physics at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT).

Before he even left

for school, Soto-Marquez looked to see if any future classmates were musicians. Through college, he tried his hand at a few open mics and played around the South Side, at IIT and parties.

After graduating, he went into computer science. The first paycheck went towards a drum set.

When he and Dane reunited, Soto-Marquez was living in Logan Square in a spot big enough to host, say, a band practice.

Between the two of them, they formed a mishmash of former Elgin bandmates who were still local.

"It was a bit of the familiar cast," Soto-Marquez said.

As Dane wrapped up his senior year, he was spending most weekends travelling to Chicago from Champaign to play.

Re-inspired, Dane in the interlude after college found himself wanting to give singing a serious try. He decided his early 20s were for taking chances. So he opted to forgo law school and landed a corporate job that afforded him the opportunity to really pursue music.

The mishmash of musicians eventually became Hollyy. For six

years now, the retro rock, soul band has been “at it”, Dane said, writing and gigging and promoting.

Along the way, he began to write on his own. The lyrics, initially, were for himself, something therapeutic as he managed a stretch of time when he was “just not in the best place”, he recalled. But one song turned into two, into three, into 12.

Dane signed a solo record deal in late 2024 and in the following months, released two EPs. Meanwhile, Hollyy put out its first full album.

The momentum was already picking up. Then came the lake shows.

The busking bug

They’d been wanting to busk. Soto-Marquez busked in college and as a self-described “tech nerd”, he’d long been interested in finding a way to perform without needing the setup of a traditional sound system.

A couple of years ago, he bought solar-powered battery gear that gave Hollyy enough portable power to play anywhere.

After one test run of the technology, the band “caught the busking bug”.

The idea came to a head last summer, by happenstance really. Dane had been set to go on a summer-long solo tour, but plans fell through.



From left: Thaddea Ampadu, Nana Hema and Joella Agyiewaah applaud while watching the band Hollyy perform.

Absent the tour, he didn’t know what to do – until one of his managers told him to just get out and play. Dane, alongside a few members of Hollyy, took to the lakefront.

It downpoured before that first lake show, and Dane’s microphone didn’t end up working. About 100 people showed up.

“It could have been better,” Dane said. “But I do think the idea was there.”

The next show, a few hundred turned out. And the next, a few more.

“Every time,” Dane said, “it would grow.”

This year’s slate of lake shows

debuted in late May. So many people crowded the performance that the Chicago Park District pushed back and called the police, according to Dane.

The Park District did not return requests for comment.

Authorities gave Dane two tickets, he said.

Afterwards, an organisation that provides free legal representation for artists in Illinois reached out and offered its services.

“They’ll be representing me at my court date that I was issued for this,” Dane said, “which is, like, so silly.”

Subsequent performances

went on without further run-ins.

For Liz Gazal, one of the pop-ups made for the perfect night.

The 44-year-old creative director headed for AIDS Garden after work in the city.

She posted up for the performance in a patch of grass with a blanket and a container of watermelon. It was her second time at a lake show.

Gazal started turning out to see the musicians busk after Dane opened for a different show she saw last year. She loved his voice and wanted to hear more.

While Gazal came to catch the set, young parents Kara and Sean

Campbell came to cut a rug. The show fell on their daughter Rosie’s first birthday, and what better way to celebrate.

“She likes to dance,” Kara said, “that’s for sure.”

“Dance parties,” Sean amended.

Around the family, people shared takeout dinners, swung on hammocks and chattered.

One group sat huddled together making beaded dreamcatchers.

Down at the lake, boats just off the shore slowed to listen while swimmers took in the music from floaties.

Near the water’s edge, Bednar sat tucked away in the crowd. Dane’s dad and aunt came to watch, too.

Bednar wore an old white Hollyy shirt.

Dane says the past couple of years have been a blur but that the reception – especially from home – has been invigorating.

“We just have this community that’s ready to support us,” he said.

Look no farther than the lake.

Early July, as dusk draped over the water, fans clapped the musicians through their last song of the night. One spectator kept time with a tambourine. The band responded in kind.

“It’s the last one, Chicago!” Dane shouted. “I need ya!” – Chicago Tribune/Tribune News Service

Performing on the streets

By NICHOLAS KOMU and MOSES NDUNG’U
Photos: AP

AS the light turns red at a busy intersection in the Kenyan capital, a young man costumed in leopard print emerges into the street to perform somersaults.

He is joined by five others, dressed similarly, as they execute a combination of acrobatic stunts.

One of them, juggling woven hats, breaks away and approaches the drivers of vehicles that have come to a halt. He’s hoping for generous tips as he presents his hat to driver after driver while his mates continue their routine. The group breaks away as soon as the traffic lights turn green.

Nairobi’s street acrobats first began appearing in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, and they have since become normalised at traffic stops in and around the city, with acrobats taking advantage of gridlocks to perform in exchange for cash tips. It is how they earn a living.

Mohammed Nyale, 22, said he started doing acrobatics hoping for a life-changing occupation.

“I have always loved acrobatics since I started performing at 15 years old,” he said.

He and others in his group left their homes on the Kenyan coast with dreams of on-stage careers and sold-out theatres, but they have so far settled for the streets, performing their stunts for motorists in Nairobi’s never-ending traffic.

Nyale’s group gathers in the



Acrobats perform in a busy street amid traffic in Nairobi.

The acrobats take advantage of gridlocks to perform in exchange for cash tips to earn a living.

early mornings in an abandoned field in Nairobi’s impoverished neighbourhood of Kawangware to rehearse their routines. Next, they move into the streets as traffic starts to build up during the morning rush hour.

“We say a prayer before changing into our costumes,” Nyale said.

They usually perform until noon, taking turns to collect tips from motorists. The amounts given tend to be small, usually no more than 50 shillings (RM1.60). Because many Kenyans keep money in mobile wallets, the acrobats also hand out slips of paper with their phone numbers to which tips can be sent.

On a good day they might each earn roughly US\$6 (RM24.50), enough to look after their basic needs, though on



Acrobats collect contributions from motorists after a short performance.

Nairobi’s street acrobats first began appearing in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, and they have since become normalised at traffic stops in and around the city.



some days they make more.

That is equal to the daily wage of most casual labourers in construction or agriculture in a country where unemployment is widespread.

The youth unemployment rate stood between 4.9% and 9.9% in 2024, according to figures from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

Earning money from street performances “is what enables us to live in Nairobi because we moved here from quite far and no one is helping us to pay rent”, Nyale said.

They have rivals. Acrobatic troupes have materialised in other parts of the city. Across town, a group including 28-year-old Jackson Okoth entertains motorists along Lang’ata Road.

“There are no opportunities for us that we can go to, so we like it when we are here

because it keeps us busy and it keeps us fit also,” Okoth said. “Instead of staying at home and doing reckless things, we decided to come here and perform for motorists and pedestrians.”

Okoth dreams of playing in a professional circus and touring the world.

“I am still on my way, I am still trying, I am still working hard so that one day things might go well and I may find myself in Europe performing in a circus show,” he said.

Some motorists see the acrobats as a nuisance. Others welcome the distraction.

“They are a source of entertainment here on the road. They entertain us and we feel good,” said Geoffrey Kioi, a Nairobi entrepreneur who regularly gives tips to the acrobats. “They are young people. They need to hustle. They are like my sons.” – AP



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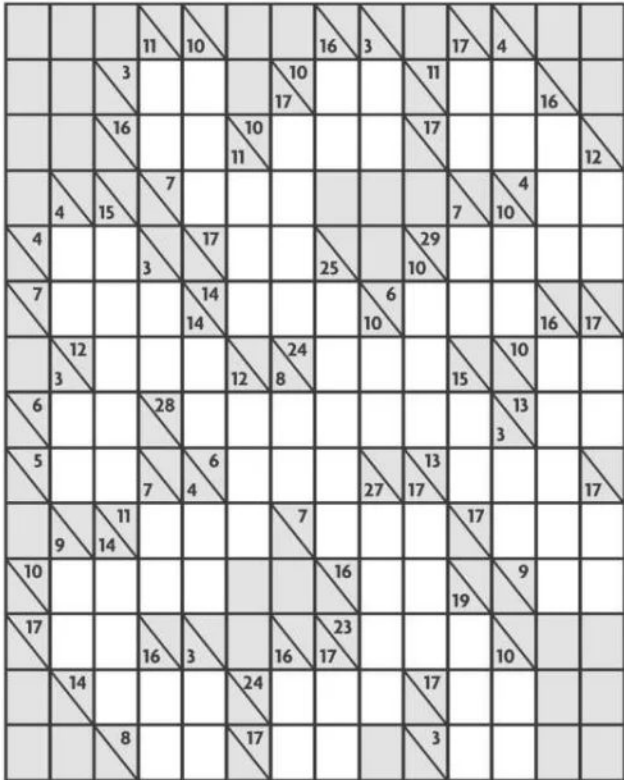
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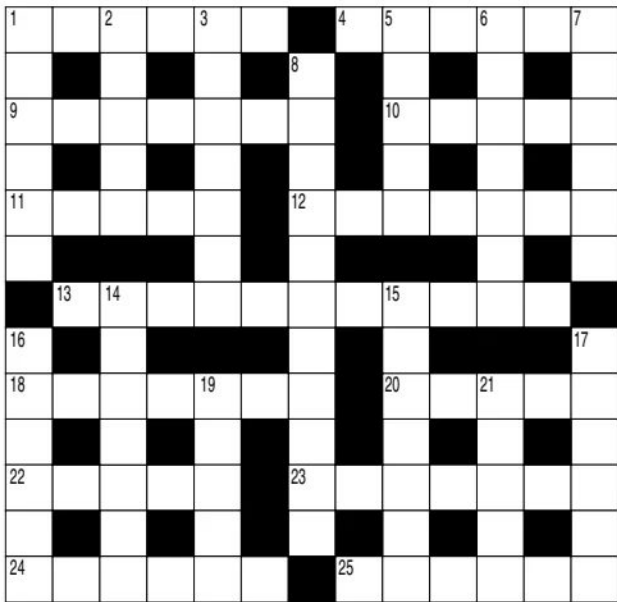
UNIVERSAL
KAKURO
PUZZLE



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- 1. Put numbers from 1 through 9 in each cell (no zeros.)
- 2. A number in a cell divided by a diagonal line tells the sum of the numbers in the consecutive cells to its right or downward.
- 3. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

CROSSWORD



- | Across | Down |
|---|---|
| 1 Odd pieces of money (6) | 1 Remarkable way to pass on information (6) |
| 4 Stop - looking both ways (4,2) | 2 Display of no interest? (5) |
| 9 They're just bundles of nerves! (7) | 3 The notoriety only a hypochondriac would enjoy (3,4) |
| 10 Building a tug? (5) | 5 It's very much used as a prefix (5) |
| 11 Tina returns with a new name (5) | 6 Information from base? (3-4) |
| 12 Suit for a glass-cutter? (7) | 7 Father takes a dare, perhaps, to take part in a display (6) |
| 13 It's entering in a way that's exciting attention (11) | 8 A measure of enlightenment (11) |
| 18 Postage irregularities bring out the secret police (7) | 14 A quack remedy from which most run (7) |
| 20 Number three is wrong (5) | 15 Scene of operations (7) |
| 22 Give patient attention (5) | 16 A note sent out by representatives (6) |
| 23 Exemplary piece of literary work (7) | 17 A speaker who is skilled at splitting alternatives (6) |
| 24 Mother's returned on a vessel, a Chinese one (6) | 19 A venue in which sports are naturally held (5) |
| 25 One who cares is easily shocked (6) | 21 Set great store by (5) |

> Solutions on page 12

KEE'S WORLD by C.W. Kee



REDROVER by Brian Basset



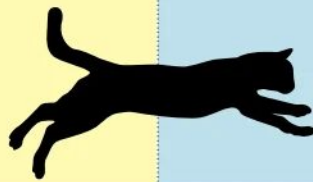
SHOE by Jeff Macnelly



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



TV1	TV2	TV3	ntv7	8TV	TV9
6.00am Negaraku	6.00am Negaraku	6.30am Bacaan Yasin	7.00am Jungle Agent	7.00am 8 E-Pulse	6.00am Bacaan Yasin
6.02 Bismillah	6.02 Bukan Yang Pertama	6.50 Tanyalah Uztaz	7.30 Badan Beruniform	8.00 Let's Go Home	6.50 Tanyalah Uztaz
7.00 Berita Pagi Nasional	7.00 Misi Ady	8.00 Setelah Ku Dimiliki	8.00 Pecutan SPM	8.30 Wow Shop	8.30 Wow Shop
8.00 Selamat Pagi Malaysia	7.30 Ejen C	9.00 Wow Shop	9.00 Menengah Atas	9.45 Women Walk The Line	10.30 Nasi Lemak Kopi O
10.00 Langsung Dari Parlimen	8.00 Sugar Pals	9.30 Buletin Pagi	10.00 Menengah Rendah	10.35 Wow Shop	11.30 Wow Shop
12.05pm Help! We Bought A Village	8.30 Kapluk Dari Kapluwi	10.00 Malaysia Hari Ini	11.00 Prasekolah	12.30pm Mandarin News	Noon My #QuranTime 2.0
1.00 Berita Tengah Hari	9.00 Aku Jatuh Cinta	11.00 Supa Strikas	11.30 Tahap I	1.00 Your Finesse	1.00pm Wow Shop
1.33 Kasih Malisa	10.00 Kau Curi Cintaku	11.32 1,2 Bakar	Noon Tahap II	2.00 My Twin Lover	2.00 Misteri Mona: Kuserumu Kembali
2.30 Sembang Jarak Jauh	11.00 Syahadat Cinta	12.05pm Surviving Beauty	12.30pm Menengah Atas	3.00 Wow Shop	3.30 Bilo Nogori Jupo Kelate
3.05 Cuit Sikit Jangan Sentap	Noon Berita Mandarin	1.00 Spanar Jaya X	1.00pm Buletin Didik	4.00 Fight For Justice	4.00 Nasi Lemak Kopi O
4.05 Ringgit & Anda	12.30pm World Today	1.30 Buletin 130	1.30 Generasi Madani	6.00 8 E-Pulse	5.00 Cocomelon
4.30 Biz Malaysia	1.00 Are You Safe?	2.00 Wow Shop	2.00 Sekolahku	7.00 The Queen Of News	5.30 Oddbods
5.00 Berita Wilayah	2.00 Past Life, Present Love	3.00 Selamat Penganti Haru	2.30 Prasekolah	8.00 Mandarin News	6.00 Blippi Wonders
6.00 Fikrah	3.00 Ainthavathu Oviyam	4.00 Ali Baba: Dastaan-E-Kabul	3.00 Tahap I	9.00 Pursuit Of Jade	6.30 Supa Strikas
6.45 Demi	5.00 Ana Ponti	5.00 Hilang Dalam Rindu	3.30 Tahap II	10.00 I Believe I Can Fly	7.00 Buletin TV9
7.44 Kanta 744	6.00 Food Magic	6.00 Rindu Kasih	4.00 Menengah Rendah	11.00 8 E-Pulse	7.50 Lelakimu Yang Dulu
8.00 Berita Perdana	6.30 Berita Mandarin	7.00 Andai Masih Ada Maaf	5.00 Menengah Atas	Midnight The Legend Of Heroes	8.40 Pondok Itu Rumahku
8.30 Malaysia Tonight	7.00 Diva's Secret	8.00 Buletin Utama	6.30 Badan Beruniform	1.00am EightFM @ 8TV	10.30 My Sweet Mobster
9.00 Bicara Naratif	7.30 Berita Tamil	9.02 Fail Mahkamah	7.00 Buletin Didik		11.30 Jangan Marah Haa
10.30 Isteri Untuk Diiktiraf	8.00 Angin Syurga	10.00 Sepenuh Hati Rindu	7.30 Armor Rangers		Midnight Wow Shop
11.30 Innovation Nation	9.00 Stitched Love	11.00 Scarlet Heart	8.00 Pecutan SPM		
Midnight Berita Tengah Malam	11.00 Chicago Med	Midnight Nightline	9.00 Generasi Madani		
12.30am Kasih Malisa	Midnight Family Trip	12.30am Wow Shop	9.30 Sekolahku		
1.30 Diaspora Melayu	12.30am Trilogi Cinta	1.30 Hanya Untuk Dia	10.00 Jurnal Resepi		
2.00 Isteri Untuk Diiktiraf	1.30 Wira Kasih	2.30 Setelah Ku Dimiliki	11.00 Latih Pelatih		
3.00 Sekoci	2.00 Anusha	3.30 Akad Tak Dipinta	11.30 Destinasi Kerjaya		
3.30 Demi	2.30 Agam Puram	4.30 Kapsul Surah	Midnight HotFM @ ntv7		
4.30 Sembang Jarak Jauh	3.00 Turbulent Times	5.00 Wow Shop			
5.00 Warna-Warna Asia	4.00 Ainthavathu Oviyam				
5.35 Bacaan Ar Rahman					



STARSCOPE

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 20): Get ready as a surprising conversation, an overlooked detail or unexpected news could complicate a financial or perhaps an emotional agreement. As the Sun in ardent Scorpio forges an awkward angle to Uranus in Gemini it can be so easy to overreact, but you should check figures, messages and any paperwork carefully first. Honesty can also clear the air.

♉ TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Someone's plans or spending habits might shock or surprise you, inspiring conversations about budgets, financial planning and who pays for what. If you do have a discussion, it might reveal that you both value different things or have different priorities in this area. Yet, being flexible might create a more leeway for everyone. More fluid boundaries could really help.

♊ GEMINI (May 22-June 21): A desire for freedom can clash with responsibilities, schedules or habits that seem to have become way too boring. Before doing anything drastic it's a good idea to take stock of your priorities, no matter how much of a hurry you're in. This pause for thought can be the key to understanding where the real issue lies. Small adjustments may create the freedom you crave.

♋ CANCER (June 22-July 23): A deep inner restlessness could make it hard to relax and enjoy any leisure time or make a romantic encounter less romantic. Give yourself some space to understand what's going on beneath the surface. Perhaps a hidden feeling needs to be acknowledged, or creative inspiration is trying to make itself known. Once you know what it is, you can deal with it.

♌ LEO (July 24-Aug 23): The awkward Sun-Uranus angle suggests a sudden invite or a friend's request for help could disrupt family plans, leaving you juggling competing needs. Issues at home could also mean you miss out on a get-together or celebration you've been looking forward to. You don't have to keep everyone happy as you'll end up exhausted. An honest chat can help resolve this.

♍ VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23): Career news that arrives like lightning could disrupt a pre-arranged plan, or an important conversation might suddenly change your professional priorities. Try to resist worrying because of one email or hasty chat, and instead check facts, ask the right questions and allow any new developments time to settle. Think strategically rather than react far too quickly.

♎ LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23): Study, travel or even an ambitious plan could bring unexpected costs or tempt you to take a financial risk. Before you go ahead with any new adventures, check it all out first. A fresh opportunity may still be worthwhile, but flexibility and thinking out of the box can make it more available. Invest in experiences that enrich your future but avoid impulsive spending.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22): Unforeseen issues around shared money, debts, close bonds or other commitments could delay your carefully arranged plans. A financial agreement may need revising, or someone could reveal information that changes your position or perspective. Trust your instincts but remain open to others' ideas. Be adaptable too as it will give you more control and freedom.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21): Someone's unexpected behaviour could unsettle you, disturbing your peace or bringing up feelings you thought you had let go of. Give yourself time to understand what is really going on before you say anything, as there may be a hidden reason for this that now comes to light. Watch your dreams too as you may get guidance about a romantic bond that is very relevant.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20): Your workload and your social life could clash at just the wrong moment. You may be given an urgent job or be asked to stay late at the same time you've arranged to attend an event or celebration. You likely won't be able to reorganise everything, but you might find that streamlining your routines or even learning to say "no" could free you up to enjoy your life.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19): An invite that's hard to resist could show up suddenly, affecting business or career-related plans. You know what you need to do, but this offer could be so compelling you may be tempted to drop everything and go enjoy yourself just this once. It's not everyday something shows up that makes you genuinely happy. Take time to weigh up the pros and cons, though.

♓ PISCES (Feb 20 - March 20): Travel plans could clash with developments linked to family and property. Even so, changes at home could cause you to think how you can build more flexibility into your life. Very often new doors can open precisely because your schedule is disrupted and you need to think out of the box. Booked a fantastic getaway trip? With ingenuity there may still be a way around it.

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

			6		9	7	8	3
	9			4	3			2
	2			8		9		
				5				9
		1		7		8		
7				9				
		8		6			4	
2			4	1			3	
6	4	5	7		2			

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

DOODLISM by Sarah Salim



SOLUTIONS

		1	2	3	8	9	7	1	7	8		
		9	8		8	9	7	2	9	3		
		10	6	9	17	16	3	16	9	8	17	
		17	9	8	6	23	16	3	9	8	17	
8	1	9	19	7	9	16		3	4	2	10	
		6	2	17	4	1	7	3	1	11	9	
9	6	2	17	2	1	4	7	3	5	2	5	
		3	1	9	17	13	3	1	2	4	7	
9	4		13	6	2	4	7	3	5	28	6	
		8	2	10	15	7	9	8	12	2	3	
		17	16	3	2	1	10	9	14	2	4	
		9	8	7	5	10		25	9	8	17	
		3	1	10	4	7		4	1	2	15	
		12	7	1	9	17	2	7	1	10	16	
			16	3	8	1	9	17		2	1	
				17		3	16		11	10		

R	E	R	N	E	T	N	A	N	P	A	M	P	S
O		R	R	R		N		U					
C	T		E	X	T	R	A	C	T				
A		O	A	W		T	R						
H	E	R		A	P	O							
O		H	P										
I	N	G											
E		W		L									
N	O												
A													
A													
R													
E													
A													
P													

8	1	9	8	5	7	3	2	6	4	5	9	6	8
2	7	9	4	1	8	6	3	5	1	3	8	9	6
1	3	8	9	6	5	2	4	7	6	1	3	8	9
7	8	3	2	9	6	4	5	1	3	8	9	6	8
6	5	1	3	7	4	8	2	9	4	6	8	5	1
3	2	6	5	8	7	9	1	4	8	9	6	8	5
8	9	7	1	4	3	5	6	2	5	1	4	6	8
5	1	4	6	2	9	7	8	3	6	2	9	7	8

Illegal dump
site in Bukit
Rahman Putra
shut after
enforcement
>4



Malaysia aims
for RM100bil
global franchise
sales target
by 2030
>5



Community
initiative revitalises
Kuala Lumpur
Chinatown
back lanes
>7

Sharing the light

Penang community groups keep the spirit of Deepavali shining bright by distributing handmade treats, groceries and new clothes to those in need. >2&3



Packed with kindness: North Malaysia Malayali Samajam president Sumathi KV Nair (second right) and other association members helping to fry muruku at their premises in Jalan Masjid Negeri, Penang, for distribution to care homes, orphanages and old folk's homes. — KT GOH/The Star



FOREST PARK CLOSURE

> All Selangor permanent forest reserves and eco forest parks will be closed to hiking activities from Nov 16 to Jan 31, 2027 as a precautionary measure during the monsoon season to prevent accidents and ensure visitor safety.

> Taman Eko Rimba Gunung Pulai 1 in Johor has been closed until further notice for slope repair works. Recreational activities and hiking are not permitted during the closure.

FIELD CLOSURES

Two MBSJ football fields, at Jalan LEP 5 in Taman Lestari Putra, Seri Kembangan, and Puchong Indah, Puchong, will be closed from Nov 1 to Dec 31 for upgrading and repair works.

ASSESSMENT TAX REBATE

Homeowners under Kuala Langat Municipal Council's jurisdiction can apply for assessment tax rebates for selected environmentally friendly initiatives, including installing solar panels, using five-star electrical appliances, harvesting rainwater, recycling and composting. Rebates range from RM30 to RM300 depending on the initiative. Applications close on Dec 31. For details, visit qr.mpkl.gov.my/E1ZD7H

SELANGOR AID SCHEMES

> Senior citizens and persons with disabilities in Selangor can apply for the state's Mesra Scheme. Applications close on Dec 31 and those approved will receive a Jom Shopping voucher in 2027. For details, call 011-5650 1160 or e-mail pertanyaan.yawas@gmail.com

> Selangor government is offering two interest-free loans for entrepreneurs: Dana Pantas and Dana Niaga Tani. A maximum of RM10,000 is available, with pay-back period of up to 36 months. For details, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4udndrs7>

SMART CITY SURVEY

PLANMalaysia Selangor is inviting the public to give feedback on the Selangor Smart City Blueprint 2.0 (2040) until Oct 31. The survey covers views and priorities for future smart city development. Respondents will receive an e-certificate. Details, visit <https://shorturl.at/zxnjn>

FORESTRY FIESTA

The Forestry and Community Fiesta 2026 will be held at Kuantan City Mall from Oct 30 to Nov 1, from 10am-10pm. Activities include arts and crafts demonstrations, competitions, forestry exhibitions, sales of forestry-based products and talks by forestry personnel.

BORNEO CRAFT FESTIVAL

The Sarawak Borneo Craft Festival is being held at Kuching Waterfront until Nov 1, from 10am-10pm daily. The free-entry event features 43 craft tents with exhibitors from Sarawak, Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia, alongside craft sales, demonstrations, cultural performances and food stalls.

POP-UP MARKET

Weekend Traders Market will be held from Oct 31 to Nov 1, 12pm-7pm, at Level 1 and 2, KLoe Hotel, Jalan Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur. There will be live DJ sets and a lineup of food, beverage and lifestyle vendors.

PENANG



Suhaini (second from left) helping children try on brightly coloured traditional attire during a festive shopping outing in Lebuhr Pasar.

Penang groups roll up sleeves to serve Deepavali cheer

Volunteers fry treats and pack essentials for those in need

By IMRAN HILMY
and LOW CO SIN

north@thestar.com.my
Photos: KT GOH, CHAN BOON KAI
and ZHAFFARAN NASIB/The Star

WITH less than two weeks to go before Deepavali on Nov 8, families are preparing to celebrate the Festival of Lights with prayers, traditional delicacies, new clothes and gatherings with loved ones.

The festival symbolises the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil. Beyond the celebrations, it is also a time to spread cheer and reach out to those in need.

Reaching hospitals, prisons

In keeping with the spirit, the Penang Malaysia Hindudharma Mamandram (MHDM) branch and the Om Sakthi Devotees Association organised an event to prepare and pack 5,000 packets of muruku and other traditional cookies for distribution to Penang Hospital, Penang Remand Prison and Jawi Prison. The annual event was held at SJKT Azad last Sunday, with the distribution scheduled for today.

MHDM Penang branch chairman N. Thanabalan said the initiative reflected the values of compassion, humanity and generosity associated with the Festival of Lights.

"Deepavali is not just about celebrating with our families. It is about sharing our blessings and bringing happiness to those who may be less fortunate," he said.

The festive packs, containing muruku, mixture of spices and *adhirasam* (Indian *kuih*), were prepared by members of both



Members of Malaysia Hindudharma Penang Branch and Om Sakthi Devotees Association Penang Branch packing muruku and other traditional cookies at SJKT Azad.

associations and volunteers. The initiative cost about RM10,000.

Thanabalan said the festival was an opportunity to spread kindness and share its joy with those who might otherwise have fewer reasons to celebrate.

He said Hindu inmates at the two prisons would also receive gingelly oil, *santhanam* (sandalwood powder), *shikakai* (a traditional hair cleanser), *kumkum* (vermillion powder) and *vibuthi* (sacred ash) for their ritual baths and prayers on Deepavali.

"These prayer items will be provided to Hindu inmates so that they can observe their religious practices during the festival," he said.

He added that the initiative aimed to help inmates observe Deepavali according to their religious customs despite being away from their families.

Om Sakthi Devotees Association Penang branch chairman Kumares Nalla Thamby said about 30 associa-

tion members prepared the muruku at their centre in Simpang Empat last Saturday.

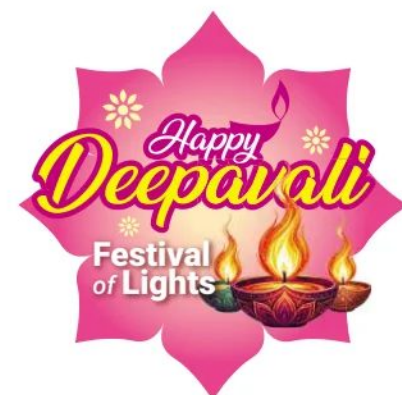
"The volunteers worked from 8am to 5pm to prepare the muruku, and all the items were brought to SJKT Azad on Sunday for packing," he said.

He described the initiative as a meaningful way to celebrate Deepavali, which encourages people to do good and spread positivity regardless of race or background.

New attire, meal

Fifteen underprivileged children from Pertubuhan Kebajikan Vallal Malaysia enjoyed a shopping trip for new Deepavali clothes, followed by dinner and *angpow* gifts, courtesy of Listen Security Sdn Bhd.

The children, aged five to 17, were taken to Umayal Textiles in Lebuhr Pasar to choose their festive outfits before heading to a restaurant in Lebuhr King



for dinner.

The outing was part of Listen Security's annual Deepavali charity programme, which the company has for more than a decade organised for children from less privileged backgrounds.

Pertubuhan Kebajikan Vallal Malaysia chairman V. Girithren said the children were delighted to choose their own outfits.

"Wearing new clothes is an important part of Deepavali. Children from welfare homes sometimes feel left out when they see their friends in new clothes while they do not have any."

"We are grateful that the company has come forward to sponsor our children and make them feel special this festive season," he said.

Girithren said the organisation provided shelter for underprivileged children, adding that such initiatives allowed them to celebrate Deepavali like their peers.

Listen Security director Datuk Arumugam Sinnasamy said the programme reflected the company's commitment to giving back to the community.

"Deepavali is a festival of sharing, compassion and togeth-



Arumugam (centre, in light blue) adjusting new festive attire for the young shoppers.



Thanabalan looking on as volunteers prepare muruku.

erness. We want these children to experience the joy of the occasion and know that the community cares about their happiness and well-being," he said.

He added that community support should be a lasting commitment rather than a one-off gesture.

Also present were Listen Security managing director Suhaini Bakri and Pertubuhan Kebajikan Vallal Malaysia secretary K. Manimaren.

Essentials for families

Some 180 underprivileged families received a helping hand from the Penang Hindu Association (PHA) ahead of Deepavali.

PHA president Datuk P. Murugiah said each family received cash, a hamper containing 36 grocery items, as well as a goodie bag filled with cookies, snacks and sweets for the festive season.

Children were also given *angpow* during the annual Deepavali charity programme at Ramakrishna Ashrama Hall in Jalan Scotland on Sunday.

Murugiah said the annual programme aimed to help ease the financial burden of less fortunate families, who often face additional expenses during the festive season.

He said the essential items included rice, milk powder, curry powder, flour, sugar and cooking oil, along with other household necessities to help recipients prepare for the festive season.

"The recipients come from various ethnic backgrounds in Penang and Kedah.

"We obtain the list of recipi-

ents through clinics and hospitals in Seberang Jaya, Kulim and Sungai Petani, with social workers in Penang also helping us identify B40 families in need.

"We want to share the joy of Deepavali with them and help ease their burden," he said.

He added that similar aid would be distributed to selected orphanages and old folk's homes as part of the association's Deepavali outreach.

The programme was co-organised with Klinik Derma Sivasanta, the welfare arm of the Temple of Fine Arts.

It was officiated by state housing and environment committee chairman Datuk Seri Sundarajoo Somu. Also present was Sungai Pinang assemblyman Lim Siew Khim.

On another matter, Murugiah said Indian students who were unable to pursue tertiary education due to inadequate academic qualifications or financial difficulties could approach PHA for advice on alternative pathways into skills-based education.

"Upon completion, these pathways can give them a sense of a future, with opportunities to pursue further studies or secure jobs and meaningful employment," he said.

Murugiah also expressed hope that more eligible Indian youths with stable incomes would consider marriage and starting a family.

"PHA runs a non-profit programme to help eligible Malaysian Hindus find life partners. Those interested can contact us," he added.

Handmade treats

The North Malaysia Malayali Samajam (NMMS), which has



Murugiah (right) handing out groceries and goodie bags to recipients during the event. — Handout



Volunteers assembling 5,000 packets of muruku and other traditional cookies for distribution to Penang Hospital, Penang Remand Prison and Jawi Prison.



Lim distributing goodie bags to guests at PHA's annual Deepavali charity programme. — Handout



Sumathi (right) says making traditional cookies helps younger NMMS members appreciate their cultural roots.



Muruku being fried by NMMS volunteers for distribution to orphanages, old folk's homes and care homes.

about 600 members across Penang, Kedah and Perlis, is bringing festive cheer to residents of care institutions this Deepavali.

Its president Sumathi KV Nair said the 74-year-old association had prepared 3,000 pieces of muruku for distribution to orphanages, old folk's homes and care homes in George Town, Butterworth, Kulim, Sungai Petani and Alor Setar.

About 20 members gathered

at its premises in Jalan Masjid Negeri to make the traditional snack.

Sumathi said the activity also helped younger members appreciate their cultural roots and traditions passed down by older generations.

"Deepavali is a time for celebration, togetherness and sharing. This is the second year we are holding the programme," she said.

Members kneaded the dough,

shaped the muruku, fried them and packed the finished snacks.

Some mixed rice flour, *jeera* (cumin), *omam* (carom seeds), sesame seeds and butter, while others pressed the dough through traditional moulds to form spirals.

At the frying station, members lowered the spirals into hot oil until they turned golden brown before passing them to the packing team.

By JAROD LIM
jarodlim@thestar.com.my

MPS shuts down illegal dumpsite in Sg Buloh

Council says land must also be restored to original condition

SELAYANG Municipal Council (MPS) has shut down an illegal rubbish dump in Bukit Rahman Putra, Sungai Buloh in Selangor, which caught fire last month.

MPS president Shahman Jalaludin said monitoring efforts would continue to ensure the site was not reactivated.

"The situation remains under control and we have not detected any new illegal dumping activities in the area.

"However, we will maintain full surveillance, particularly to ensure no fires break out at the site," he said after MPS' full board meeting at its headquarters in Selayang yesterday.

The intervention follows complaints from Bukit Rahman Putra residents over foul stench and thick smoke.

StarMetro had on Oct 20 highlighted the matter, with residents in the area complaining about persistent stench from the dumpsite and smoke from the recent fire.

A deep-seated fire started at the site on Sept 6 and persisted for several days, prompting calls for swift action due to health risks from its close proximity to residential areas.

To shut down the site, MPS excavated and eliminated the access path, thus blocking heavy vehicles from entering.

Shahman said MPS had from January to September, seized 12 lorries caught dumping waste illegally in the area.

"Under our standard operating procedure, any lorry seized in connection with illegal dumping



Aerial view of the fire at the illegal dumpsite in Bukit Rahman Putra, Sungai Buloh. — Filepic

is impounded for a minimum of 30 days.

"Offenders face a non-appealable fine of RM1,000 under By-law 4 of Refuse Collection, Removal and Disposal (MPS) By-laws 2007.

"Even if they pay the fine immediately, the vehicle cannot

be released early."

Shahman said the municipal council had been directly involved in firefighting operations from Sept 6 to 29.

On further action, he said: "As it is private land, the owner must restore it to its original condition.

"Gombak District and Land Office, which is liaising with MPS on the matter, will issue a remediation notice, giving the landowner between 14 and 30 days to comply," he added.

Meanwhile, Shahman said upgrading works at the popular Selayang Hot Springs were



Shahman: Monitoring efforts will continue to prevent site reopening.

expected to be completed next month.

"We aim to reopen the attraction by the end of the year, as upgrades are currently about 80% complete.

"Some underground tube-well works are still ongoing. Regular visitors are eager for the venue to reopen," he said.

Shahman said the hot springs were also undergoing evaluation for national geopark recognition this week, with assessors visiting today.

He said the exercise would conclude tomorrow.

'Kajang heritage shophouses can add extra floor'

By MEGAT SYAHAR
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OWNERS of heritage shophouses along Jalan Mendaling may soon be allowed to add an extra floor under proposed amendments to the Kajang Town Draft Special Area Plan.

However, any expansion requires the original facades to remain intact.

Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj) Development Planning Department director Sazzelina Ismail said the change was one of several to be made following a hearing of 38 public objections received during the Jan 14 to Feb 13 consultation period.

Selangor local government and tourism committee chairman Datuk Ng Suee Lim chaired the Sept 3 hearing for the objections.

Sazzelina said the committee's recommendations would be presented to the State Planning Committee, with the earliest meeting expected in early December.

"Most of the objections came from building owners along Jalan Mendaling," she said after the council's full board meeting at Menara MPKj yesterday.

While the initial draft plan barred additional floors -- to preserve heritage buildings -- several property owners requested permission to expand to three storeys.

"The meeting agreed to consider it, but they must keep the



existing facade," said Sazzelina.

She said the committee also accepted an objection from Mass Rapid Transit Corporation (MRT Corp) regarding a proposed taxi stand at the Stadium Kajang MRT station, originally planned as part of a first- and last-mile transit facility.

MRT Corp noted that the location would conflict with feeder and Smart Selangor buses.

Consequently, Sazzelina said, the taxi stand would instead be moved to the Medan Kajang car park next to the station.

On the other hand, objections to a proposed community hub beside Kajang market along the river were rejected.

The objections had purported-

ly come from local religious and cultural associations.

"When we asked them at the meeting why they objected, they seemed unaware of the objection forms.

"They only received invitations to attend," Sazzelina said, adding that it appeared third parties had used the groups' names.

Despite rejecting the formal objection, MPKj agreed to revise the building's design after representatives expressed a preference for open recreational space over a large structure.

Objections over a proposed one-way traffic system in the town centre were likewise turned down.

Alternative traffic flow propos-

als around Kajang stadium were reviewed by Public Works Department (JKR), which concluded the original consultant's design was superior.

Sazzelina said if the State Planning Committee approved the recommendations, the department would finalise the report and table it before the State Executive Council for final gazettelement.

There was no allocation yet for projects in the plan, she said.

She noted that the RM650,000 federal allocation under the 12th Malaysia Plan covered only the study, adding that Kajang was the sole local authority in the country to receive federal funds to prepare a special area plan.



Above: A taxi stand proposed for Stadium Kajang MRT station has been nixed following the inquiry on Kajang Town Draft Special Area Plan objections.

Left: Heritage shophouses along Jalan Mendaling (left) may be allowed to expand upwards. — Photos: Filepic

Following gazettelement, the local council plans to apply for further federal grants or draw on internal funds.

Work on selected projects has already begun ahead of gazettelement, including development of Laman Mendaling and Taman Selangan to create recreational spaces for residents.

"We want to finish those first, so that residents can see results from the special area plan," said Sazzelina.

The draft plan spans 53.71ha across Kajang town centre, outlining 44 projects in five action zones and three specialisation sectors aimed at establishing a heritage zone and integrated arts hub.

JOHOR

Story and photo
by YEE XIANG YUN
xiangyun@thestar.com

Malaysia keen to help local brands go global

Ministry sets franchise sales target of RM100bil by 2030



Dr Fuziah (centre) visiting a booth at the southern zone Road to Malaysia International Franchise Exhibition 2027 (FIM2027) with MFA vice-chairman Khalek Awang (left).

September this year, comprising 295 local franchise brands, 153 foreign brands and 23

master franchisees. "Food and beverage brands still top the list.

"We are also seeing more services entering the industry, such as postnatal care," she added.

Fuziah said the return of franchise management responsibilities to her ministry through Perbadanan Nasional Bhd (Pernas) allowed for better coordination between domestic trade policies and entrepreneurship development.

"The move can also help unlock the industry's potential to create jobs, increase income and stimulate economic activity.

"The ministry will continue working with Pernas, the Malaysian Franchise Association and other stakeholders to expand training, financing access and business guidance for entrepreneurs," she added.

FIM2027 is scheduled to take place at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from May 6 to 8 next year.

MALAYSIA aims to record RM100bil in franchise sales by 2030, by expanding the industry and strengthening the presence of homegrown brands in international markets.

Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Fuziah Salleh said the industry contributed more than RM46bil to the national economy last year and achieved an average annual growth of about 15% in recent years.

"The development of community-based franchises is a key focus to ensure opportunities to grow businesses through this system are not limited to large corporations.

"The ministry is committed to expanding access to affordable franchise business models, particularly for micro, small and medium enterprises and young entrepreneurs," she said at the southern zone "Road to Malaysia International Franchise Exhibition 2027" (FIM2027) in Johor Baru which featured 26 brands and 34 booths.

Fuziah said 471 franchise businesses were registered with her ministry as at

New club for JB youths to play bigger role in society

By VENESA DEVI
venesa@thestar.com.my

FIFTEEN young leaders have been identified to form the first leadership team of Kelab Belia Legend, a platform aimed at encouraging young people to play an active role in community development.

Legend Sports Ventures (LSV) founder Presant Sathasivam said they were selected from among 30 participants in a youth leadership programme held in Pasir Gudang, Johor Baru.

"Through Kelab Belia Legend, we hope to provide a platform for young people to take on greater responsibilities and eventually lead their own initiatives.

"We want them to move beyond being participants in youth programmes and become leaders who can organise activities and contribute to their communities," he said.

Presant said the club would be supported by LSV, a registered social enterprise that uses



Presant (second row, fifth from right) with participants of Project FU-GeN 2026. — Handout

sports as a platform for youth development and community engagement.

"The club is still in the midst of being established. Its formal committee structure and appointment of office bearers are still being finalised," he said.

The idea to establish the club came after the successful completion of Project FU-GeN 2026 held at Tanjung Puteri Golf Resort in

Pasir Gudang.

The programme was organised by LSV in collaboration with the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG).

"Participants took part in various activities, including leadership and team-building sessions, tree planting and discussions on United Nation's sustainable devel-

opment goals.

"They were aimed at encouraging young people to interact, understand one another and work together," he said.

Johor National Unity and Integration Department director Nurul Akmalina Shamsuddin also conducted a session on unity and cultural understanding during the programme launched by Pasir Gudang MP Hassan Abdul Karim.

PENANG

Illegal airport taxis make 'picking up friends' excuse

By LO TERN CHERN
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THEY claimed to be at Penang International Airport to pick up friends or acquaintances, but checks by the Road Transport Department (JPJ) found three drivers ferrying passengers without valid permits.

The excuse had failed to fool the enforcement team during a recent operation.

Penang JPJ director Zulkifly Ismail said 12 vehicles were inspected and six notices issued

against the three vehicles found to be carrying passengers without valid permits.

"Among the excuses given by the drivers was that they were there to pick up friends or acquaintances.

"This is a common excuse we get," he said at the airport.

He said the operation was carried out based on intelligence and public complaints about illegal taxi activities at tourist spots and major entry points in Penang.

The drivers are being investigated under Section 16 of the

Land Public Transport Act 2010 for carrying paying passengers without a valid permit.

From Jan 1 to Oct 24, JPJ Penang inspected 1,056 vehicles suspected of operating without valid permits.

Of these, 496 vehicles were slapped with enforcement action, with 519 notices issued.

Zulkifly said the department viewed illegal passenger transport services seriously as they could jeopardise passenger safety and create unfair competition for legitimate operators.

He said all cases detected so

far involved local drivers, with no foreign drivers arrested for the offence.

The department will continue its monitoring and enforcement operations to ensure commercial passenger transport operators comply with licensing and permit requirements, he said.

"Passenger safety cannot be compromised.

"We encourage the public to channel information on suspected illegal transport activities, through our official channels for further action," he added.

Singapore tv

Channel 5

6.00AM: Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters
6.30: 100 Wishes **7.00:** Nikhil & Jay
7.15: Nikhil & Jay **7.30:** Blippi 2 **7.45:** Blippi 2 **8.00:** Leo The Wildlife Ranger
8.30: Pinkfong Songs & Stories **9.00:** Agent Binky: Pets of the Universe **9.15:** Agent Binky: Pets of the Universe
9.30: JoJo and GranGran: Sr3 **9.45:** JoJo and GranGran: Sr3 **10.00:** Lil Wild **10.30:** Go Go Dino S3-S5 **10.45:** Go Go Dino S3-S5 **11.00:** Lil Wild: In the Big City **11.15:** Nikhil & Jay **11.30:** Blaze and the Monster Machines **NOON:** Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters **12.30PM:** Ben 10 S2 **12.45:** Ben 10 S2 **1.00:** Alvin!!! & The Chipmunks **1.15:** Alvin!!! & The Chipmunks **1.30:** Minibods **1.40:** Minibods **1.50:** Minibods **2.00:** Jonny Jetboy **2.15:** Jonny Jetboy **2.30:** P. King Duckling **2.45:** P. King Duckling **3.00:** Wheel Of Fortune **3.30:** Yes Captain! **4.00:** Kin **4.30:** Malaysia Gourmet With Justine Schofield **5.00:** Adam And Poh's Great Australia Bites **5.30:** Freshly Picked with Simon Toohey **6.00:** The Answer Run: Sr1 **7.00:** Wheel Of Fortune **7.30:** The Price Is Right Tonight **8.30:** Yes Captain! **9.00:** News Tonight **9.30:** Raid My Fridge! **9.40:** Engineering Reborn **10.40:** I Met My Murderer Online **11.10:** Singapore Hidden in 40 Objects **12.05AM:** Yes Captain! **12.30:** FBI: Most Wanted **1.30:** Wheel Of Fortune **2.00:** The Price Is Right Tonight **3.00:** The Answer Run: Sr1 **4.00:** Films & Stars **4.30:** Freshly Picked with Simon Toohey **5.00:** Adam And Poh's Great Australia Bites **5.30:** Malaysia Gourmet With Justine Schofield **6.00AM:** See tomorrow's schedule

Channel 8

6.00AM: Curious City **7.00:** News Tonight **7.30:** My One And Only **8.00:** Keep It Down **9.00:** Talk of the Town **9.30:** The Queen of News 2 **10.00:** The Wonder Shop **10.14:** The Wonder Shop **10.16:** The Wonder Shop **10.30:** 100% Wife **11.30:** 100% Wife **12.30PM:** The Wonder Shop **12.44:** The Wonder Shop **12.46:** The Wonder Shop **1.00:** News 8 At One **1.30:** Lo and Behold **2.00:** Lo and Behold **2.30:** Lo and Behold **3.00:** The Wonder Shop **3.14:** The Wonder Shop **3.16:** The Wonder Shop **3.30:** Big Biz Duel **4.00:** Big Biz Duel **4.30:** Golden City **5.30:** Golden City **6.30:** Hello Singapore **7.30:** The Queen of News 2 **8.00:** King of Culinary: Woks Up **9.00:** Keep It Down **10.00:** News Tonight **10.30:** Taste of Canton **11.00:** The Glory **MIDNIGHT:** Love of Nirvana **1.00AM:** Cyber Scammed **2.00:** A New Life **3.00:** A New Life **4.00:** Golden City **5.00:** Golden City **6.00AM:** See tomorrow's schedule

Suria

9.00AM: Beyblade X **9.30:** Sembang Sihat **10.00:** Boleh Saya Bantu 2 **11.00:** Hai, Cinta Dengarkanlah **NOON:** Mengejar Mentari **1.00PM:** Kahwin Satu Keluarga **2.00:** Aku Bukan Wanita Pilihan **3.00:** Kek Champion **4.00:** 7 Hari **5.00:** Lara Aishah **6.00:** Beyblade X **6.30:** Sembang Sihat **7.00:** Boleh Saya Bantu 2 **8.00:** Berita 2026/2027 **8.30:** Detik Semasa **9.00:** Syafiq Kyle & Mimi Lana : Bukan Honeymoon Cliche **9.30:** Calar Cinta **10.30:** Curang Tanpa Niat **11.30:** Berita 2026/2027 **MIDNIGHT:** Close

Vasantham

9.00AM: Suvai Payanam **9.30:** Anbin Aaram **10.00:** Oh Baby **10.30:** Ratchagan **11.00:** Namma Veetu Virundhu **NOON:** Azhagiya Tamil Magal **12.30PM:** Azhagiya Tamil Magal **1.00:** Manmadhan Ambu **1.30:** Manmadhan Ambu **2.00:** Alaipayuthey **2.30:** Alaipayuthey **3.00:** Neeyum Naanum **3.30:** Neeyum Naanum **4.00:** Selva (Movie) **6.30:** SiriSiri Siri Siri **7.00:** Namma Veetu Virundhu **8.00:** Anbin Aaram **8.30:** Seithi **9.00:** Ratchagan **9.30:** Ethiroli **10.00:** Kalaiyarasi Vayadhu 47, Vaagana Ottunar **10.30:** Avathaaram **11.00:** Mellisai Hits **11.30:** Seithi **MIDNIGHT:** Close

'Even savvy people can fall for scams'

AS ONLINE scams become more sophisticated, even savvy consumers can become victims.

When things go wrong, should the burden of protection fall entirely on consumers or should service providers and online platforms be held accountable too?

In the Life & The City podcast, host Farid Wahab sits down with Muhammad Sha'ani Abdullah, honorary secretary of myDigitalConsumer, to examine the growing challenges of consumer safety in the digital economy.

The veteran consumer advocate, also former deputy president of Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations and Human Rights Commission of Malaysia commissioner, discusses

why scams are so convincing, what happens to victims and where the system falls short.

The podcast touches on the thorny question of corporate responsibility, including whether banks, social media platforms and online marketplaces should compensate victims when security failures contribute to their losses.

They also unpack what companies can do to better protect the information entrusted to them.

The Life & The City podcast spotlights issues that matter to urbanites.

Catch episodes on www.youtube.com/@thestaronline/podcasts or www.thestar.com.my/metro



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Farid (left) and Muhammad Sha'ani discussing the growing number of scams in Malaysia and ways to address them.

PENANG

Drilling in disaster preparedness

Highway concessionaire holds mock exercise to strengthen safety response

THE safety of highway users remains a top priority, hence emergency simulation exercises are vital, says PLUS Malaysia Bhd.

The highway concessionaire said it had held a drill in collaboration with various safety agencies on a stretch from Kubang Semang to Lunas (eastbound) between KM16.7 and KM17.7 on the Butterworth-Kulim Expressway.

"This simulation exercise was conducted to test the preparedness, efficiency and response time of PLUS personnel, rescue teams and related agencies, while also

evaluating the effectiveness of coordinated actions when faced with real emergency situations," said PLUS operations senior general manager Mohd Yusuf Abdul Aziz.

Such exercises held regularly helped strengthen strategic relationships and continuously enhanced the capabilities of all parties involved, he added.

The exercise featured an accident scenario primarily involving a petrol and diesel tanker lorry and a Class 3 lorry carrying chemical liquids.

Based on the emergency response plan,



Mohd Yusuf speaking to reporters about the drill, which he says is essential in testing the preparedness, efficiency and response time of PLUS personnel, rescue teams and related agencies.

the scenario tested the efficiency of rescue operations, fire control, hazardous material spill management, casualty evacuation, traffic control and inter-agency communication coordination, PLUS said in a press statement.

Meanwhile, Penang Fire and Rescue Department operations assistant director John Sagun Francis said the exercise reflected the proactive commitment of all agencies.

"The close cooperation between the Fire and Rescue Department, PLUS and related agencies ensures that every team can

respond quickly, efficiently and in an organised manner when managing any incident on the highway," he said.

The emergency simulation involved the participation of some 100 personnel from various rescue agencies and strategic partners, including Malaysian Highway Authority, police, Health Ministry, Environment Department and Malaysia Civil Defence Force.

Transportation strategic partner Prifaria Sdn Bhd and highway maintenance contractor Edgenta Infrastructure Services were also involved.



In a mock accident scenario, safety agencies personnel are seen 'responding' to a collision primarily involving heavy vehicles (above), and clad in chemical protection suits (below) on the Butterworth-Kulim Expressway. — Photos: Handout





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Visitors were entertained by various performances, including mastery of the 'guzheng' (Chinese zither).



'Lepak Lorong: Bulan' drew some 500 people to the back lanes of Jalan Petaling, including Lorong Petaling 2 (left) to enjoy the Mid-Autumn Festival-themed showcase of local heritage, culture and art (above) as well as food and drinks.

New life for Chinatown back lanes

Community-led 'Lepak Lorong' transforms overlooked KL spaces into attractions

By LEW GUAN XI

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Photos: CHAN TAK KONG/
The Star

A COMMUNITY-LED effort is underway to bring activity to often overlooked back lanes around Kuala Lumpur's Jalan Petaling, better known as Chinatown, through sustainable community activities, cultural programmes and collaborations.

Spearheaded by interior designer Yuki Wong and Pik Wah Bar & Cafe in Jalan Petaling, the initiative called "*Lepak Lorong*" aspires to make the back lanes more welcoming and attract more people into the space.

"Some of these lanes have been overlooked and we want to make them safer, more welcoming and more useful to the people who live and work around them," Yuki said of the initiative literally translated as "alley hangout".

"The initiative can also help promote Malaysia's culture and tourism, introduce visitors to local heritage businesses in the area, provide a platform for local artists to shine and create ways for the community to celebrate festivals together."

"As a designer, I wish to bring a design perspective to the way these spaces are planned, improved and activated," she said.

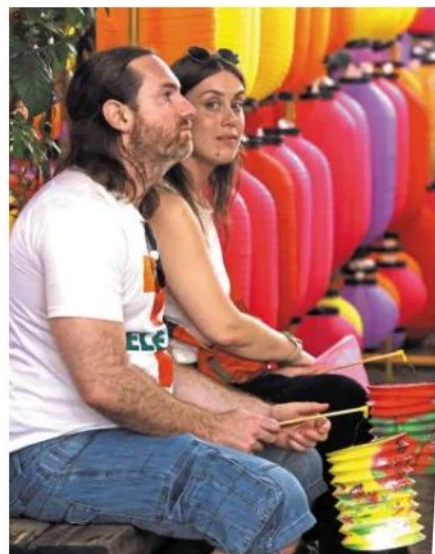
The inaugural "*Lepak Lorong: Bulan*", in conjunction with the Mid-Autumn Festival, attracted some 500 people.

Yuki said the programme involved various businesses, community groups, cultural partners and public institutions, and was not a vendor-based event.

"Each participating business



Local and international visitors enjoying lanterns galore at 'Lepak Lorong: Bulan'.



contributed in a different way.

"For example, Pik Wah Bar & Cafe shared its knowledge about mid-autumn traditions and sponsored handmade mooncakes, festive decoration shop Nu Lycie Sdn Bhd sponsored 1,000 lanterns as decorations, while Kean Guan Tea Merchants Sdn Bhd provided free tea to visitors."

"Other participating businesses and partners included Chocha Foodstore, Rain Forest Hotel, Lorong 133 creator space, Chinatown 1974 and Merdeka 118 Precinct."

"We were also supported by Chan She Shu Yuen (CSSY) Youth Group, Kuala Lumpur City Hall and Bukit Bintang parliamentary service centre," she said.

Each participating business set up booths behind their shops that provided experiences such as free food and drinks, games and workshops.

Yuki said the initiative intended to make participation meaningful and accessible.

"Taking part in the initiative

doesn't mean a business must set up a stall.

"It could also share its story or products, offer an activity or collaborate with a local artist."

She said the aim was not to fill the lanes with vendors.

"If an area is quiet, we should consider what would genuinely benefit the community and the local businesses, rather than bring in commercial activities without proper planning."

Yuki emphasised that back lanes were public spaces, so they should not be treated as the property of any one business or group.

"Residents' needs come first. *Lepak Lorong* aims to bring residents, businesses, local artists, community groups and the authorities together around a clear concept and proper guidelines."

"It is a community platform, not a hawker site or permanent bazaar," she said.

She also said the group intended to continue *Lepak Lorong* by

exploring other festivals such as Chinese New Year.

"We are also open to working with the relevant communities for Deepavali, Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Christmas."

"However, not every festival needs to be marked by an event."

"The key is to develop programmes that are relevant to the neighbourhood and planned with the communities and partners connected to each celebration."

"With that being said, a Chinatown food festival is another idea we can explore together with local businesses and the authorities," she added.

Lepak Lorong is meant to establish a more welcoming back lane that can encourage people to explore the area and discover the businesses.

"The value is not only immediate sales. It is also about visibility, connections between businesses and helping local brands share their stories with a wider audience, including

visitors from overseas," said Yuki.

Echoing the sentiment was Nu Lycie business manager Amelia Wong, who said *Lepak Lorong: Bulan* helped increase their brand awareness and exposure.

"We have received a few new customers who heard about our shop through the event," said Amelia.

CSSY youth chief Candy Tan said the group's collaboration with *Lepak Lorong* had added a fresh dimension to its festive initiatives.

"CSSY holds Mid-Autumn Festival events every year, and *Lepak Lorong* opens up new opportunities," she said.

The inaugural *Lepak Lorong* was attended by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Hannah Yeoh, Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Fadlun Mak Ujud and Bukit Bintang Federal Territory Residents Representative Council chairman Fong Kok Seng.

S'gor honours disability champions

SELANGOR government has recognised employers, organisations and individuals for their efforts to promote inclusive employment and sustainable career opportunities for persons with disabilities (OKU).

The recognition came at the inaugural Selangor Disability Inclusion Awards 2026 held in Klang, organised by Selangor Disability Action Council (MTOS) and Yayasan Insan Istimewa Selangor (Yanis).

State women empowerment and welfare committee chairman Anfaal Saari said employment opportunities for the OKU community should not be measured solely by quotas.

Anfaal, who is also Yanis chairman, said greater emphasis should be placed on workplace quality, career progression and an employer's ability to develop the full potential of disabled employees.

"These awards reflect the state government's commitment to encouraging more government agencies and private companies to adopt inclusive employment policies.

"Disability-friendly workplaces also help create more flexible and conducive working environments," she said in a Bernama report.

The awards ceremony, themed "Recognising Potential, Empowering Inclusivity", was opened by Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari.

Also present were MTOS chairman Danial Al-Rashid Haron Aminar Rashid and Yanis chief executive officer Kamarul Hisham Yeop Hashim.

Anfaal said 12 awards across four main categories were presented to recognise employers, educational organisations, local authorities and outstanding individuals with disabilities.

She said the Inclusive Employer Award recognised private companies and organisations committed to hiring persons with disabilities and supporting

Inaugural awards recognise organisations and people promoting inclusive workplaces



their welfare, while the Inclusive Personality Award honoured individuals who demonstrated outstanding performance, discipline and positive contributions to their organisations.

"The Special Inclusive Local Authority Award recognised local councils that provide training, skills development and disability-friendly workplaces.

"Meanwhile, the Special Selangor District Education Office Award honoured district education offices that demonstrat-

ed best practices in placement, support and inclusive education initiatives in the workplace," she said.

Anfaal said the state government hoped to establish the awards as an annual event and a benchmark for best practices in social inclusion and equal opportunities.

"The awards recognise employers who challenge stigma and also OKU individuals who demonstrate that physical or sensory limitations do not prevent them from

contributing their talents.

"It also highlights MTOS' important role in implementing the Selangor Disability Policy and its 2026-2030 Action Plan," she added.

According to Yanis' social media post, award recipients included Petaling Jaya City Council in the local authority category and Prof Dr Ruzita Mohd Amin from International Islamic University Malaysia in the Inclusive Personality Award category.



Climate Pause

Food waste is not just a restaurant problem. Households account for 60% of the world's food waste, throwing away an estimated 631 million tonnes annually — roughly 79kg per person every year.

Anfaal (second from left) presenting the Inclusive Personality Award to Prof Ruzita at the inaugural Selangor Disability Inclusion Awards 2026. With them are Danial Al-Rashid (left) and Kamarul Hisham. — Bernama

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UMMC expands free child health screening, dengue jab initiative

UNIVERSITI Malaya Medical Centre (UMMC) is expanding access to free screenings for anaemia as well as optional dengue vaccination for children, through weekend community drives across the Klang Valley.

The programme screens children for anaemia (low red blood cells), a condition that frequently goes undetected, UMMC said in a media statement.

Affected children may tire quickly, find it hard to concentrate in school, appear pale or seem to lack energy.

Left unrecognised, anaemia can impair learning, growth and development.

Children with anaemia are also more vulnerable to severe illness if they contract dengue, making early detection doubly important in dengue-endemic settings, said UMMC.

The expansion builds on encouraging turnout at earlier programmes and aims to reach more families amid Malaysia's growing dengue outbreaks.

"More than 76,000 dengue cases had been reported nationwide by Oct 14.

"In addition, dengue-related deaths already nearly doubled by early September, with 62 deaths compared with 32 during the same period last year.

"An international review also found that children with dengue were two times more likely to develop severe dengue compared with adults," UMMC stated.

For children and their families, dengue can mean hospitalisation, missed school and time away from everyday activities.

Fatigue can persist for several weeks

after recovery, while parents may need time off work to provide care.

More than 3,600 children took part in UMMC's programme between May and October this year, with 60% to 70% opting to receive dengue vaccination.

Community sessions were held in Petaling Jaya, Ampang, Kepong, Subang Jaya and Shah Alam.

"The response so far has been encouraging, and we want more families to be able to participate," said UMMC public health medicine specialist Prof Dr Rafdzah Ahmad Zaki.

"By holding more sessions close to home and on weekends, we hope to make it easier for parents to have their children screened and to discuss dengue prevention with our medical team."

Selected community sessions will also feature clowns, balloons and goodie bags.

Parents and guardians can bring their children aged seven to 12 for walk-in screenings at the upcoming community sessions, scheduled from 9am to 3pm.

The locations are Masjid Subang Perdana, Shah Alam (Nov 1), PPR Pinggiran Bukit Jalil, Puchong (Nov 14), Apartment Idaman Damansara Damai PJU 10/1 (Nov 22) and PPR Lembah Subang 2 (Nov 28) in Petaling Jaya.

Weekday walk-ins are also available until Oct 30 at Level 5, Women and Children's Health Complex of UMMC.

Families are also encouraged to remove potential mosquito breeding sites at home and seek medical advice promptly if dengue is suspected.

Total Units: 941 • Type of Residence: SOHO • Expected Completion Date: July 2027 • Land Encumbrance: Charged (Malayan Banking Berhad) • Land Tenure: Freehold • Developer's License No.: 30262/10/2027/0261(N) • Validity Period: 28/10/2022 - 27/10/2027 • Advertisement and Sale Permit No.: 30262-1/07-2027/0812(N)-(S) • Validity Period: 14/07/2023 - 13/07/2027 • Approving Authority: Subang Jaya City Council (MBSJ) • Building Plan No.: MBSJ.BGN.BP1.600-1/10/5/2(24) • Developer's Name: Pinnacle Homes Sdn Bhd. (Co. No. 201501040193 (1165511-M)) • Address: 3A32 Level 4 (Lift 7), Block A, Damansara Intan, No. 1, Jalan SS 20/27, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor • Built-up Size: 525 sq.ft • 1,118 sq.ft • Price: RM461,800 (min) - RM868,800 (max) • Bumiputera Discount: 10%
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By KHOO JIAN TENG
khoo.jianteng@thestar.com.my

Global forum addresses AI-era childcare challenges

M'sian academic joins experts at Shanghai summit on child development

ENSURING every child has access to quality childcare, proper healthcare and supportive learning environments was a key focus at an international child development forum held in Shanghai, China.

The 2026 Soong Ching Ling International Forum on Children's Development brought together international experts and academics to discuss ways to improve children's well-being, strengthen early childhood education and support healthy development in the age of artificial intelligence (AI).

Among the invited experts at the forum were MCA national policy and livelihood issues research committee chairman and Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT) Assoc Prof Datuk Dr Monna Ong Siew Siew, Canada-China Comparative Education and Cultural Society president and University of British Columbia educational researcher Jennifer Jing Zhao, and Soong Ching Ling Kindergarten principal and Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Early Childhood Research Centre chairperson Zhu Sujing.

Ong participated in the roundtable discussion "Building the Future Together: From Access to Quality – Global Challenges and Kindergarten Practices".

She joined representatives from various countries to discuss improving access to affordable childcare, encouraging innovation in early child-



(From left) Jing, Zhu and Ong conducting a panel discussion at the 2026 Soong Ching Ling International Forum on Children's Development in China. — Handout

hood education and strengthening cooperation between families and communities.

The discussions also explored how AI could create opportunities to improve the fairness and inclusiveness of early childhood care services.

Among the topics featured at the forum were family care for children aged up to three

years old in the age of AI, early childhood teachers' professional development, inclusive childcare systems and children's social and emotional development.

Experts also discussed the importance of physical activity during early childhood and its role in children's overall development.

The forum examined how countries could move beyond ensuring that children have access to care, towards providing quality early childhood education and support.

A separate session was held where local and international experts discussed five areas: high-quality curriculum development and teacher train-

ing, family education and home-school cooperation, healthcare and nutrition, psychological development and brain science, and international research and practices in childcare curricula.

The discussions highlighted the importance of cooperation between educators, families, communities and healthcare professionals in supporting children's development from an early age.

Ong provided a Malaysian perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing early childhood education as countries seek to make childcare services more accessible, inclusive and responsive to changing family needs.

The forum served as a platform for cross-border and interdisciplinary exchanges, bringing together research findings and practical experiences in early childhood education and child development.

Participants expressed hope that continued international cooperation would help create a more equitable, inclusive and child-friendly environment, giving every child a healthier and happier start in life.

Saree showcase by 30 designers at KL mall's Deepavali celebration



By FARID WAHAB
faridwahab@thestar.com.my
Photos: GLENN GUAN/The Star

DEEPAVALI celebrations at Pavilion Kuala Lumpur took a fashionable turn with a runway show featuring 30 Malaysian designers reimagining the traditional saree.

The show, held at the mall's main entrance, was part of its "Journey of Radiance" campaign, which runs until Nov 9.

The launch also featured Akhand Bharat, a cultural performance presented by the High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur.

Pavilion REIT board member Baljeet Kaur said the celebration reflected efforts to strengthen cultural ties with India.

She said the campaign's signature colour of pink was an acknowledgement of Pink October, observed as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

"We are proud to showcase the cultural diversity that makes



Thirty Malaysian designers showcase their reimagined sarees at the launch of 'Journey of Radiance'.

Malaysia unique and welcoming to visitors from around the world," she said.

India's High Commissioner to Malaysia Somnath Ghosh, who attended the launch with his wife Anindita, highlighted the importance of embracing diversity.

"India has 22 official languages. We are a diverse people, but we are one people.

"I hope Malaysia, too, will continue to celebrate its diversity," he said in his speech.

Somnath also praised the launch for its colourful and vibrant atmosphere.

"I have attended many events in my diplomatic capacity, but have never seen anything like this," he said.

Visitors to Pavilion Kuala Lumpur can expect various events and promotions in the run-up to Deepavali.

Cultural dance performances will take place at the mall on Nov 1, 7 and 9 at 3pm.

Maybank credit and charge cardholders who spend RM2,500 or more in a single receipt at selected retail and food and beverage outlets can redeem a jewelry trinket box, while those spending RM3,500 or more can redeem a crystal serving plate.

The gifts are redeemable on the day of purchase at the Porte Cochere Concierge or Pavilion Privileges Centre on Level 2.

The top-spending Pavilion Privileges member during the campaign stands to win a 10.33g



From left: Kalyani, Baljeet, Somnath and Chin at the Deepavali celebration in Pavilion Kuala Lumpur.



Akhand Bharat, a cultural performance from India, captivating the audience at the mall.

TSL gold pendant. Also present were Pavilion Kuala Lumpur chief executive officer Datuk Joyce Yap, Maybank

group chief digital officer Datin Kalyani Nair and Malaysian Official Designers Association president Cyrus Chin.

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TMN ALAM Indah Shah Alam Sek33. 2sty terrace (End lot with land - 3056sf) b/u 1.601sf 4r3b RM686k. 012-3995513

TMN RASAH Seremban f/h, 2sty b'glow, f/reno, 40x80, 5r6b, dry/ret, laundry room, 2 store rooms, semi furnished, 3 ceiling a/cs, fish pond. RM1.2M ono / rent RM3900. 014 - 920 5709 / 012 - 3166 601

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IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF BUTTERFLY HOUSE (PG) SDN. BHD. (Reg. No. 198801005678 (173035-T) NOTICE OF REDUCTION OF SHARE CAPITAL PURSUANT TO SECTION 117 OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016

NOTICE is hereby given that a Special Resolution to reduce the share capital of Butterfly House (Pg) Sdn. Bhd. (Reg. No. 198801005678 (173035-T) pursuant to Section 117 of the Companies Act 2016 has been duly passed by the Members on 23 October 2026. The extract of the Special Resolution is set out below:

SPECIAL RESOLUTION PROPOSED REDUCTION OF THE ISSUED SHARE CAPITAL OF THE COMPANY PURSUANT TO SECTION 117 OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016

THAT subject to the approvals of all relevant parties and/or authorities being obtained, pursuant to Section 117 of the Companies Act, 2016, approval be and is hereby given to the Company and the Board of Directors to reduce the share capital of the Company from RM38,856,750.00 to RM13,856,750.00 by cancelling RM25,000,000.00 of the issued ordinary share capital and for the credit arising from such cancellation to be utilized towards offsetting against the audited accumulated losses of the Company as at 31 December 2025; and

THAT the Board be and is hereby empowered and authorised to take all such steps and do all such acts and to execute all such documents as may be necessary or expedient to finalise, implement, and/or give full effect to the Proposed Capital Reduction with full powers to assent to and accept any conditions, modifications, variations and/or amendments in any manner as may be required or imposed or permitted by the relevant authorities or as the Board may consider necessary or expedient in the best interest of the Company.

Dated: 28 October 2026
GOH KAH LEONG
Director

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IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF BUTTERFLY HOUSE (PG) SDN. BHD. (Reg. No. 198801005678 (173035-T) NOTICE OF REDUCTION OF SHARE CAPITAL PURSUANT TO SECTION 117 OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016

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Dated: 28 October 2026
GOH KAH LEONG
Director

LEGAL

Court Notices

Court Notices

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUANTAN

DALAM NEGERI PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR, MALAYSIA

GUAMAN NO. CA - A72NCvC - 167 - 07 / 2026

ANTARA

LEMBAGA KUMPULAN WANG SIMPANAN PEKERJA DAN ...PLAINTIF

1. KOPIMESIN MAKMUR (No. pendaftaran : 202103198398 / CA0327136-D)

2. YUHANIS BIN IBRAHIM (NO. K.P. 831016 - 08 - 6513) (yang berniaga selaku rakan kongsi di bawah nama dan gaya 'KOPIMESIN MAKMUR')

3. MUHAMMAD ASHLYZAN BIN RAZIK (NO. K.P. 770302 - 11 - 5251) (yang berniaga selaku rakan kongsi di bawah nama dan gaya 'KOPIMESIN MAKMUR')

4. AHMAD ZIAD BIN SULAIMAN (NO. K.P. 770313 - 08 - 6337) ...DEFENDAN-DEFENDAN (yang berniaga selaku rakan kongsi di bawah nama dan gaya 'KOPIMESIN MAKMUR')

NOTIS IKLAN PENYAMPAIAN GANTI Dalam perkara Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 01.07.2026 dan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti bertarikh 15.10.2026

Kepada,

1. KOPIMESIN MAKMUR d/a KOPIMESIN BESERAH 1411, Jalan Kuantan-Kemaman Kampung Bahagia, Beserah 26100 Kuantan, Pahang

4. AHMAD ZIAD BIN SULAIMAN No 5, Lorong IM 12/3 dan/atau 1411, Jalan Kuantan-Kemaman Taman Astana Permai Kampung Bahagia, Beserah 22500 Kuantan, Pahang

SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan dalam Guaman No. CB-A72NCvC-167-07/2026 oleh Lembaga Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja yang beralamat di Bangunan KWSP, Bandar Indera Mahkota 25200 Kuantan, Pahang Darul Makmur di mana tuntutan Plaintiff terhadap Defendan Pertama dan Defendan Keempat ialah:- A. Baki tunggakan caruman Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja bagi tempoh bulan November 2024 sehingga September 2025 berjumlah RM26,269.00 setakat 25.05.2026 dengan:- i - Dividen ke atas jumlah caruman tersebut yang terakur; ii - Caj Lewat Bayar ke atas jumlah caruman tersebut yang terakur. B. kos guaman yang dibayai oleh Plaintiff untuk menuntut wang yang terhutang; C. kos tindakan; dan D. apa-apa relif lain ataupun lanjutan sepertimana yang dianggap sesuai oleh Mahkamah Yang Mulia ini. dan bahawa telah diperintahkan supaya penyampaian Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ini disampaikan kepada kamu melalui penyampaian ganti dengan cara menampalkan sesalanan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti yang dikeluarkan ini berserta sesalanan Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan di Papan Kenyataan Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan, pengeposan di alamat-alamat terakur Defendan Pertama dan Defendan Keempat secara pos berdaftar dan dengan mengiklankannya sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan iaitu "The Star" dan bahawa penyampaian sedemikian hendaklah menjadi sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna bagi Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan itu ke atas kamu setelah tamat tempoh empat belas (14) hari selepas penampalan dan pengiklanan tersebut yang mana lebih lewat.

Sekiranya kamu berhajat untuk membuat pembelaan terhadap tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah memasukkan kehadiran sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu di Pejabat Pendaftaran Mahkamah dalam masa 14 hari dari tarikh penyampaian yang terakhir Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan dalam tindakan ini disampaikan terhadap kamu. Sekiranya kamu gagal berbuat demikian, maka Penghakiman akan dimasukkan terhadap kamu.

Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ini boleh diperiksa oleh kamu dengan memohon kepada Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh pada 15 Oktober 2026

t.t. DAING KHATIJAH & AMRAN
Peguambela Plaintiff

NOTIS IKLAN PENYAMPAIAN GANTI ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Daing Khatijah & Amran, Peguambela dan Peguambela bagi pihak Plaintiff yang mempunyai alamat untuk penyampaian di A33 & A35, Ground Floor, Lorong IM 7/18, Bandar Indera Mahkota, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang Darul Makmur. (Ruj : DKA/L/1270/1074/26/zu)

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR

DALAM NEGERI PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR, MALAYSIA

BAHAGIAN DAGANG

DALAM NO. KEBANKRAPAN : WA-29NCC-2030-08/2026

BERKENAAN: THANG CHENG YEE (NO. K/P : 910514-01-5633) ...PENGHUTANG

EX-PARTE: PUBLIC BANK BERHAD (NO. SYARIKAT : 6463-H) ...PEMIUTANG

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada :

THANG CHENG YEE No. 12 Jalan Perdana 6/16 Taman Pandan Perdana 55300 Kuala Lumpur W. P. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Notis Kebankrapan telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur oleh PUBLIC BANK BERHAD yang beralamat di Credit Administration Centre, Tingkat 14, Bangunan Public Bank, 6, Jalan Sultan Sulaiman, 50000 Kuala Lumpur dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Notis Kebankrapan ini diserahkan kepada kamu secara penyampaian ganti dengan menampalkan sesalanan perintah dan Notis Kebankrapan ini di Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur dan serahan Pos Berdaftar di alamat terakhir kamu yang diketahui seperti di atas dan dengan mengiklankan satu Notis sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan bernama "The Star" dan penampalan, pengeposan atau pengiklanan tersebut hendaklah dianggap sempurna dan cukup ke atas kamu Empat Belas (14) hari selepas tarikh akhir penampalan, pengeposan atau pengiklanan tersebut. Jika kamu ingin mempertahankan Notis Kebankrapan tersebut, kamu mestilah dalam masa Tujuh (7) hari selepas tarikh penyampaian, pohon kepada Mahkamah untuk mengemukakan Notis Kebankrapan dengan memfailkan dengan Pendaftaran suatu Affidavit yang mempunyai efek seperti di atas. Jika kamu ingkar memfailkan satu Affidavit sebegini, suatu Petisyen Kebankrapan mungkin diambil terhadap kamu.

Notis Kebankrapan ini boleh diperiksa oleh kamu atas permohonan kamu di Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh pada 13 Oktober 2026

t.t.
Penolong Kanan Pendaftar

Notis Iklan ini dikeluarkan oleh Tetuan Yeoh Mazlina & Partners, Peguambela bagi pihak Pemutus Penghakiman di atas yang beralamat penyampaian di Suite 8.01, Level 8, Wisma E&C, No. 2, Lorong Dungun Kiri, Damansara Heights, 50490 Kuala Lumpur. Tel: 03-2704 0368 Faks: 03-2704 0369 Ruj : YMPHQLIT/PBB/1(3180)/25/MF/112/sa E-mel: lit@ymplaw.com

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG

DALAM NEGERI PAULU PINANG, MALAYSIA

PETISYEN PERCERAIAN: PA-33-35-02/2021

Dalam perkara Seksyen 53, 54(1)(d), 54(2), 88, 89, 93, 106 Akta Membaharu Undang-Undang (Perkahwinan Dan Perceraian) 1976.

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 106(1)(vi) Akta Membaharu Undang-Undang (Perkahwinan Dan Perceraian) 1976; Seksyen 61.

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Akta Membaharu Undang-Undang (Perkahwinan Dan Perceraian) 1976.

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Kaedah-Kaedah Prosiding Perceraian Dan Hal Ehwal Suami Isteri 1980.

Dan

Dalam Perkara Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah 2012

ANTARA

LIM WEI CHIANG (No. K/P: 900401-07-5665) ...PEMPETISYEN

DAN

LIM SOO LING (No. K/P: 721001-02-5198) ...RESPONDEN

NOTIS

BERKENAAN DENGAN PETISYEN PERCERAIAN

NO. PA-33-35-02/2021

Kepada:

LIM SOO LING (No. K/P: 721001-02-5198)

1318, Taman Sejahtera

14000 Bukit Mertajam

Pulau Pinang.

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Notis Permohonan bertarikh 23.07.2026 dan Affidavit Sokongan yang diiklankan oleh Pempetisyen pada 14.07.2026 telah difailkan di dalam Prosiding Perceraian No. PA-33-35-02/2021 terhadap kamu di dalam Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Pulau Pinang oleh LIM WEI CHIANG, Pempetisyen yang dinamakan di atas dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa penyampaian Notis Permohonan bertarikh 23.07.2026 dan Affidavit Sokongan yang diiklankan oleh Lim Wei Chiang pada 14.07.2026 ("Kertas-kertas Kausa tersebut") dikehendaki diserahkan kepada kamu dengan cara penyampaian ganti yakni dengan menampalkan sesalanan Kertas-kertas Kausa tersebut berserta dengan satu salinan yang dimeterai Perintah Untuk Penyampaian Ganti bertarikh 14.09.2026 di Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi Pulau Pinang dan juga penampalan di alamat terakhir kamu, Responden yang diketahui iaitu di 1318, Taman Sejahtera, 14000 Bukit Mertajam, Pulau Pinang dan dengan pengiklanan satu Notis di dalam suratkhbar "The Star" untuk satu (1) hari sahaja dan bahawa penampalan dan penyiaran kertas-kertas kausa tersebut dianggap penyampaian yang cukup dan baik dan sempurna empat belas (14) hari selepas tarikh perbuatan terakhir penampalan atau penyiaran sedemikian;

DAN SELANJUTNYA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa pengurusan kes bagi Notis Permohonan tersebut adalah ditetapkan di hadapan Puan Zaireen binti Zainudin pada tarikh 17.11.2026 (Selasa) jam 09:00 pagi secara dalam talian (e-Review), iaitu hari yang kamu dikehendaki/wajib hadir, dan jika sekiranya kamu tidak hadir Mahkamah boleh meneruskan Notis Permohonan tersebut dan/atau membuat suatu Perintah seperti dipohon di dalam Notis Permohonan tersebut terhadap kamu dalam ketidakhadiran kamu.

Bertarikh pada 29 September 2026

.....

Tetuan Lee Law Office

Peguambela bagi Pempetisyen

NOTIS ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Lee Law Office, Peguambela & Peguambela yang beralamat di No. 2-35, Pusat Perniagaan Perdana Jaya, Jalan Permatang Rawa, 14000 Bukit Mertajam, Pulau Pinang, peguambela bagi pihak Pempetisyen yang dinamakan diatas.

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUANTAN

DALAM NEGERI PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR, MALAYSIA

GUAMAN NO. CA - A72NCvC - 192 - 07 / 2026

ANTARA

LEMBAGA KUMPULAN WANG SIMPANAN PEKERJA DAN ...PLAINTIF

1. NKM (KUANTAN) SDN. BHD. (NO. PENDAFTARAN : 201401032033/ 1108117-W)

2. NORA BINTI AHMAD SAH (NO. K.P. 740617 - 06 - 5466)

3. SOON LEE TERANG ...DEFENDAN-DEFENDAN (NO. K.P. 881028 - 06 - 5459)

NOTIS IKLAN

Dalam perkara Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan yang difailkan pada 29.07.2026 dan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti bertarikh 14.10.2026

Kepada,

2. NORA BINTI AHMAD SAH No. 9 Lorong IM 10/22 Bukit Istana

Bandar Indera Mahkota 25200 Kuantan, Pahang

SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan dalam Guaman No. CA-A72NCvC-192-07/2026 oleh Lembaga Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja yang beralamat di Bangunan KWSP, Bandar Indera Mahkota 25200 Kuantan, Pahang Darul Makmur di mana tuntutan Plaintiff adalah seperti berikut:- A. Dividen yang terakur ke atas jumlah tunggakan Caruman Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja bagi tempoh bulan Oktober 2023 sehingga Januari 2026 berjumlah RM4,138-00 B. Caj Lewat Bayar yang terakur ke atas jumlah tunggakan Caruman Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja bagi tempoh bulan Oktober 2023 sehingga Januari 2026 berjumlah RM5,931-00 C. kos guaman yang dibayai oleh Plaintiff untuk menuntut wang yang terhutang; D. kos tindakan; dan E. apa-apa relif lain ataupun lanjutan sepertimana yang dianggap sesuai oleh Mahkamah Yang Mulia ini. dan bahawa telah diperintahkan supaya penyampaian Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ini disampaikan kepada kamu melalui penyampaian ganti dengan cara menampalkan sesalanan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti yang dikeluarkan ini berserta sesalanan Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan di Papan Kenyataan Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan, pengeposan di alamat-alamat terakhir Defendan Kedua secara pos berdaftar dan dengan mengiklankannya sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan iaitu "The Star" dan bahawa penyampaian sedemikian hendaklah menjadi sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna bagi

LEGAL



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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUANTAN
DALAM NEGERI PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR, MALAYSIA
GUAMAN NO. CA – A72NCvC – 178 – 07 / 2026

ANTARA
LEMBAGA KUMPULAN WANG SIMPANAN PEKERJA ...PLAINTIF
DAN
IBRAHIM ADHAM BIN MOHD ALI ...DEFENDAN
(NO. K.P. 811005 – 01 – 6503)
(yang berniaga di bawah nama dan gaya 'UKUZA ENTERPRISE')

NOTIS IKLAN
Dalam perkara Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan yang difailkan pada 14.07.2026 dan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti bertarikh 15.10.2026

Kepada,
IBRAHIM ADHAM BIN MOHD ALI
d/a UKUZA ENTERPRISE dan/atau B6, Lorong Kempadang No. B46
Jalan Tanjung Lumpur 7 Taman Kempadang
Tanjung Lumpur Sejahtera
26060 Kuantan, Pahang 25150 Kuantan, Pahang
dan/atau
No. 10, Lorong GD 23 Taman Gambang Damai
26300 Gambang, Pahang

SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan dalam Guaman No. CA-A72NCvC-178-07/2026 oleh Lembaga Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja bagi tempoh bulan Februari 2025 sehingga April 2025 berjumlah RM2,326.00 setakat 28.05.2026 dengan:- i - Dividen ke atas jumlah caruman tersebut yang terakru; ii - Caj Lewat Bayar ke atas jumlah caruman tersebut yang terakru; B. kos guaman yang dibayai oleh Plaintiff untuk menuntut wang yang terhutang; C. kos tindakan; dan D. apa-apa relif lain ataupun lanjutan sepertimana yang dianggap sesuai oleh Mahkamah yang Mulia ini, dan bahawa telah diperintahkan supaya penyampaian Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ini disampaikan kepada kamu melalui penyampaian ganti dengan cara menampalkan sesalinan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti yang dikeluarkan ini berserta sesalinan Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan di Papan Kenyataan Mahkamah Majistret Kuantan, pengeposan di alamat-alamat terakhir Defendan secara pos berdaftar dan dengan mengiklankannya sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan iaitu "The Star" dan bahawa penyampaian sedemikian hendaklah menjadi sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna bagi Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan itu ke atas kamu setelah tamat tempoh empat belas (14) hari selepas penampalan, pengeposan dan pengiklanan tersebut yang mana lebih lewat.

Sekiranya kamu berhajat untuk membuat pembelaan terhadap tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah memasukkan kehadiran sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu di Pejabat Pendaftaran Mahkamah dalam masa 14 hari dari tarikh penyampaian yang terakhir Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan dalam tindakan ini disampaikan terhadap kamu. Sekiranya kamu gagal berbuat demikian, maka Penghakiman akan dimasukkan terhadap kamu.

Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ini boleh diperiksa oleh kamu dengan memohon kepada Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh pada 15.10.2026

t.t.
DAING KHATIJAH & AMRAN
Peguamcara Plaintiff

NOTIS ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Daing Khatijah & Amran, Peguambela dan Peguamcara bagi pihak Plaintiff yang beralamat di A33 & A35, Ground Floor, Lorong IM 7/18, Bandar Indera Mahkota, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang Darul Makmur. (DKA/L/1270/1073/26/zu)



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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
GUAMAN NO: WA-A72NCC-29632-07/2026

ANTARA
PUBLIC BANK BERHAD ... PLAINTIF
(No. Syarikat: 196501000672 (6463-H))
DAN
1. MAHIYAA RESOURCES (M) SDN BHD
(No. Syarikat: 201501024133 (1149462-K))
2. SWAMINATHAN A/L S. SAMBANTHAM
(No. K/P: 530615-08-5599)
3. YOGESHWARI A/P SWAMINATHAN
(No. K/P: 880324-56-5568) ... DEFENDAN-DEFENDAN

NOTIS IKLAN
Kepada:
SWAMINATHAN A/L S. SAMBANTHAM
F2-12-A, 2ND FLOOR, SUNSURIYA FORUM @ 7TH AVENUE,
NO. 1, JALAN SETIA DAGANG AL U13/AL,
SETIA ALAM, SEKSYEN U13,
40170 SHAH ALAM,
SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN.

SWAMINATHAN A/L S. SAMBANTHAM
NO. 4/184, JALAN UDANG GALAH 1,
TAMAN SI SEGAMPUT,
52000 KUALA LUMPUR.

YOGESHWARI A/P SWAMINATHAN
F2-12-A, 2ND FLOOR, SUNSURIYA FORUM @ 7TH AVENUE,
NO. 1, JALAN SETIA DAGANG AL U13/AL,
SETIA ALAM, SEKSYEN U13,
40170 SHAH ALAM,
SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN.

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu sebagai Defendan Kedua dan Defendan Ketiga di Mahkamah Majistret di Kuala Lumpur dalam Guaman No. WA-A72NCC-29632-07/2026 oleh Public Bank Berhad (No. Syarikat: 196501000672 (6463-H)) yang beralamat di Pusat Kawalan Kredit Wilayah, Tingkat 23, Menara Public Bank, 146 Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur yang mana tuntutan Plaintiff adalah untuk kemudahan "Fixed Loan/TRRF (SJPP)" iaitu sebanyak RM19,353.73 yang dikira setakat 13 Julai 2026 dan faedah atas jumlah RM19,353.73 pada kadar 3.50% setahun di atas Kadar Pinjaman Asas Plaintiff [kadar semasa ialah 6.47% setahun (tertakluk kepada perubahan dari semasa ke semasa)] dengan kiraan rehat bulanan dikira mulai dari 14 Julai 2026 sehingga tarikh penyelesaian penuh; serta kos tindakan ini dan bahawa telah diperintahkan yang penyampaian Writ kepada kamu dalam tindakan tersebut hendaklah dilaksanakan melalui iklan ini.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membela tindakan tersebut kamu mestilah hadir samada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu semasa Pengurusan Kes melalui e-review di hadapan Puan Wan Nur Fariha Najwa Binti Wan Azaham pada **4 November 2026** pukul **9.00 pagi**. Jika kamu ingkar berbuat demikian, Penghakiman boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.

Bertarikh pada 6 Oktober 2026

t.t.
Tetuan Che Mokhtar & Ling
(Peguamcara bagi pihak Plaintiff)

NOTIS IKLAN ini dikeluarkan oleh Tetuan Che Mokhtar & Ling, yang alamatnya ialah di Tingkat 21, Blok Utama, Menara Takafu Malaysia, No. 4, Jalan Sultan Sulaiman, 50000 Kuala Lumpur (Tel: 03-22740413/Fax: 03-22748191/Email: general@chemokhtarling.com) iaitu Peguamcara bagi pihak Plaintiff tersebut yang alamatnya ialah Pusat Kawalan Kredit Wilayah, Tingkat 23, Menara Public Bank, 146 Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur. [CML-08A/PBB/MR/58753/26/E(W)] – Lia



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DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN, MALAYSIA
(BAHAGIAN DAGANG)
PENGKULUNGAN SYARIKAT NO: WA-28NCC-1105-10/2026

Dalam perkara Seksyen 464(1)(b), Seksyen 465(1)(e) dan Seksyen 466 (1)(a) Akta Syarikat, 2016
Dan
Dalam perkara KENARI HARAPAN SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 200101023245) (559003-T)
ANTARA
TENAGA NASIONAL BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 199001009294) ...PEMPETISYEN
DAN
KENARI HARAPAN SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 200101023245) (559003-T) ...RESPONDEN

NOTIS PENGKULUNGAN PETISYEN
AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Petisyen Pengkulan Syarikat terhadap KENARI HARAPAN SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 200101023245) (559003-T) telah dikeluarkan oleh Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur pada 12 Oktober, 2026 atas permohonan TENAGA NASIONAL BERHAD (No. Syarikat:199001009294), Jabatan Setiausaha Syarikat, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Aras 16, Tower A, TNB Platinum, No. 3, Jalan Bukit Pantai, 59100 Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur dan Jabatan Undang-Undang Kumpulan, di Aras 4, Tower A, TNB Platinum, No. 3, Jalan Bukit Pantai, 59100 Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur dan Petisyen tersebut telah ditetapkan untuk pendengaran di hadapan Hakim, Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur pada **15 Disember, 2026** pada jam **9.00 pagi**, mana-manaPemiutang atau Penyumbang kepada Syarikat tersebut yang berhasrat untuk menyokong atau membantah kepada permohonan untuk suatu Perintah Petisyen Pengkulan Syarikat tersebut boleh hadir semasa pendengaran Petisyen tersebut sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui Peguamcara untuk tujuan itu dan sesalinan Petisyen Pengkulan Syarikat tersebut akan dibekalkan kepada mana-mana Pemiutang atau Penyumbang Syarikat tersebut bolehah diperiksa atas permohonan di Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur.

Alamat Pempetisyen adalah di Jabatan Setiausaha Syarikat, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Aras 16, Tower A, TNB Platinum, No. 3, Jalan Bukit Pantai, 59100 Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur dan di Jabatan Undang-Undang Kumpulan di Aras 4, Tower A, TNB Platinum, No. 3, Jalan Bukit Pantai, 59100 Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur dan Peguamcara bagi Pempetisyen adalah Tetuan Alvin John & Partners, yang beralamat di No. 210, Blok E, Phileo Damansara 1, No. 9, Jalan 16/11, 46350 Petaling Jaya, Negeri Selangor Darul Ehsan.

t.t. AJP
Tetuan Alvin John & Partners
Peguamcara Pempetisyen

PERHATIAN: Jika sesiapa yang ingin hadir pada tarikh pendengaran Petisyen Pengkulan tersebut hendaklah menyampaikan secara kediri atau menghantar melalui pos kepada Tetuan Alvin John & Partners, yang beralamat di No. 210, Blok E, Phileo Damansara 1, No. 9, Jalan 16/11, 46350 Petaling Jaya, Negeri Selangor Darul Ehsan, Peguamcara bagi Pempetisyen yang dinamakan di atas dengan suatu Notis bertulis tentang niatnya sedemikian. Notis tersebut hendaklah menyatakan nama dan alamat bagi pihak yang berkenaan atau jika ia sebuah firma, nama dan alamat firma tersebut mestilah ditandatangani oleh pihak atau firma berkenaan atau Peguamcaranya jika ada. Notis tersebut hendaklah disampaikan atau jika dihantar dengan pos, hendaklah dihantar-serah dalam jangka masa yang peruntukkan kepada Peguamcara Pempetisyen pada **14 Disember, 2026 sebelum 12.00 tengahari**.

Ruj: AJP/20242543/LI/AJ/ARJ/AA (W/U/P)



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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI AMPANG
DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN, MALAYSIA
GUAMAN NO: BC-A72NCVC-140-08/2026

ANTARA
TENAGA NASIONAL BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 199001009294 /200866-W) ...PLAINTIF
DAN
ONG YIT KIAK (No. K/P: 581014-11-5342) ...DEFENDAN

NOTIS
Kepada:-
ONG YIT KIAK
A2-1-6
Jalan Mewah 4
Taman Pandan Mewah
68000 Ampang
Selangor
Dan/atau
ONG YIT KIAK
No. 38, Jalan Lim Teck Wan
23000 Dungun
Terengganu

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu melalui Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 20.08.2026 di Mahkamah Majistret di Ampang oleh TENAGA NASIONAL BERHAD beralamat di TNB Platinum, No. 3, Jalan Bukit Pantai, Bangsar, 59100 Kuala Lumpur yang mana tuntutan Plaintiff adalah untuk jumlah terhutang sebanyak **RM10,606.97** bersama faedah atas jumlah **RM10,606.97** pada kadar 5% setahun dikira dari tarikh penghakiman sehingga penyelesaian penuh, dan juga kos bersama faedah atas jumlah kos pada kadar 5% setahun dikira dari tarikh penghakiman sehingga penyelesaian penuh.

Dan telah diperintahkan bahawa penyampaian Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan dalam tindakan ini kepada tuan/puan dilaksanakan dengan mengiklankan Notis ini di dalam satu keluaran akhbar tempatan dengan penampalan satu salinan Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bersama dengan sesalinan perintah bagi penyampaian ganti di Papan Notis Mahkamah dan di alamat terakhir Defendan yang diketahui dan bahawa penyampaian yang tersebut itu adalah suatu penyampaian yang sempurna setelah cukup empat belas (14) hari selepas tarikh penyampaian terakhir.

Sekiranya kamu berhasrat untuk membela tindakan tersebut kamu mestilah hadir samada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu dihadapan MAJISTRET, MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET AMPANG, JALAN PANDAN INDAH, 55100 AMPANG JAYA, SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN pada **17 NOVEMBER 2026** pada pukul **9.00 PAGI**. Jika kamu ingkar hadir sedemikian, penghakiman ingkar boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.

Bertarikh pada 13 Oktober, 2026.

t.t.
Tetuan Sidek Teoh Wong & Dennis
Peguamcara Bagi Plaintiff

NOTIS IKLAN ini telah difailkan oleh Tetuan Sidek, Teoh, Wong & Dennis, Peguamcara bagi Plaintiff yang mempunyai alamat penyampaiannya di Level 16 Menara BumiPutra-Commerce, 11 Jalan Raja Laut, 50350 Kuala Lumpur. [Tel: 03-2692 3000] [Faks: 03-2693 0300] [Ruj: Kami: 22635977/TNB/SF/ALKM/LI-ana]



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DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI MUAR
DALAM NEGERI JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM, MALAYSIA
DALAM PERKARA PASCABANKRAPAN
NO. JB-29PB-759-08/2026

DALAM PERKARA KEBANKRAPAN NO. 29NCC-627-08-2015

Berkenaan : KHAIRUL NAZMI BIN MASTOR
(No. K/P: 650528-01-5935/A0117489)
No. 38, Jalan Purnama
Taman Purnama, Sungai Balang
83610 Muar Johor
Ex Parte : ALLIANCE BANK MALAYSIA BERHAD

NOTIS MENGENAI PEMBATALAN PERINTAH PENERIMAAN DAN PENAMATAN PERINTAH PENGHUKUMAN

Notis dengan ini diberikan bahawa Perintah Penerimaan dan Perintah Penghukuman yang telah dibuat terhadap KHAIRUL NAZMI BIN MASTOR , No. 38, Jalan Purnama, Taman Purnama, Sungai Balang, 83610 Muar, Johor pada 20 Mei 2004 masing- masingnya, dibatalkan dan ditamatkan.

Bertarikh 05 Oktober 2026

INTAN IDZADJA HIDAYAH BT AB.HAFIDZ
Penolong Pengarah Insolvensi
b.p. Ketua Pengarah Insolvensi
Malaysia

No. Ruj : BP002184/2005/446/15
No. Akaun Estet : BP002184/2005



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DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM NEGERI WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
(MAHKAMAH DAGANG)
DALAM PETISYEN PENGKULUNGAN SYARIKAT NO.:
WA-28NCC-1005-09/2026

Dalam perkara mengenai BAI HENG ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION (M) SDN. BHD. [No. Pendaftaran: 201501005288 (1130618-W)]
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Akta Syarikat 2016, seksyen 464 (1), seksyen 465(1)(e), (h) dan 466(1)(a)
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Kaedah (Pengkulan) Syarikat 1972
ANTARA
PREMIER CONSTRUCTION & MACHINERY [No. Pendaftaran: 200703195554 / PG 0209525-K] ...PEMPETISYEN
DAN
BAI HENG ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION (M) SDN. BHD. [No. Pendaftaran: 201501005288 (1130618-W)] ...RESPONDEN

NOTIS
SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Petisyen Pengkulan terhadap Syarikat tersebut di atas oleh Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia ini telah pada 21.9.2026 dikeluarkan kepada Mahkamah ini oleh Premier Construction & Machinery dan bahawa Petisyen ini telah diperintahkan untuk didengar di hadapan Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur pada **26.11.2026** pada pukul 9 pagi dan sebarang pemiutang atau contributori syarikat tersebut yang berhasrat untuk menyokong atau membantah satu Perintah Pengkulan dikeluarkan di atas Petisyen boleh menghadirkan diri pada masa sebutan samada secara sendiri atau melalui Peguam untuk tujuan tersebut; dan sesalinan Petisyen akan dibekalkan kepada pemiutang atau contributori syarikat tersebut yang mengkehendakinya oleh mereka yang menandatangani di bawah setelah membayar caj "regulated" No. 34, Lebuh Sungai Pinang Satu, 11600 Georgetown, Pulau Pinang.

Peguam Pempetisyen adalah Tetuan Cal Vin, Hong & Partners yang beralamat di B-13A-08, Menara Prima Avenue (The Tube), Jalan PJU 1/39 Dataran Prima, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. Tel : +603-7887 1952

t.t.
Ditandatangani
Peguamcara bagi Pempetisyen

NOTA – Sesiapa yang mempunyai niat untuk menghadiri pada pendengaran Petisyen mesti menyerah ke atas atau mengesahkan kepada Tetuan Cal Vin, Hong & Partners, yang bernama di atas satu notis bertulis akan niatnya untuk berbuat demikian. Notis tersebut mesti mencatat nama dan alamat orang tersebut, atau sekiranya ia adalah satu firma, nama dan alamat firma tersebut dan Peguamcara (sekiranya ada) dan mesti diserahkan atau sekiranya dipos, mesti diposkan dalam jangka masa yang tertentu supaya ia sampai kepada yang dinamakan di atas tidak lewat pukul 12.00 tengahari pada 25.11.2026.

Pengkulan Petisyen ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Cal Vin, Hong & Partners Peguamcara bagi Pempetisyen yang dinamakan di atas yang beralamat di B-13A-08, Menara Prima Avenue (The Tube), Jalan PJU 1/39 Dataran Prima, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. Tel : +603-7887 1952 [Ruj : CHP/CL/LIT/CAS/PC(BHE)/0810



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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI GEORGETOWN
DALAM NEGERI PULAU PINANG, MALAYSIA
GUAMAN SIVIL NO:PA-A72NCVC-345-09/2026

ANTARA
LEMBAGA KUMPULAN WANG SIMPANAN PEKERJA ...PLAINTIF
DAN
TEH YIK HONG (NO KP:831123-07-5369) ...DEFENDAN
Pemilik tunggal dibawah nama tred dan gaya MMII F&B ENTERPRISE (NO PENDAFTARAN:202303296942/PG0549442-A)

NOTIS
(Dalam perkara mengenai Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 08.09.2026)

Kepada:-
TEH YIK HONG (NO KP:831123-07-5369)
Pemilik tunggal dibawah nama tred dan gaya MMII F&B ENTERPRISE (NO PENDAFTARAN:202303296942/PG0549442-A)
24 Muntri Street
10200 Georgetown
Pulau Pinang

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 08.09.2026 telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu dalam Mahkamah ini oleh Lembaga Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja yang beralamat di Seksyen Pendakwaan/Litigasi, Bangunan KWSP, Tingkat 3 & 4, No. 38 Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 10050 Georgetown Pulau Pinang dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan tersebut disampaikan kepada kamu, dengan menampalkan tiap satu salinan Writ dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh tersebut bersama dengan Perintah penyampaian ganti di Papan Notis Mahkamah Majistret Georgetown, Pulau Pinang dan di pintu hadapan premis Defendan di alamat terakhir yang diketahui dan dengan mengiklankan notis ini di dalam akhbar tempatan berbahasa Inggeris iaitu The Star dan bahawa penampalan serta pengiklanan itu hendaklah menjadi penyampaian yang sempurna dan cukup ke atas kamu dalam tempoh tujuh (7) hari selepas tarikh akhir.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membela diri, kamu mestilah dalam masa tujuh (7) hari dari tarikh penampalan atau pengiklanan tersebut sempurna, memohon kepada Mahkamah untuk memasukkan Memorandum Kehadiran bagi maksud tersebut di Mahkamah ini. Jika tidak suatu Penghakiman Ingkar Kehadiran boleh dikeluarkan terhadap kamu.

Bertarikh pada 08 Oktober 2026

t.t.
Penolong Kanan Pendafatar
Mahkamah Majistret
Georgetown

NOTIS ini telah difailkan oleh Tetuan Nor Amalina & Fizuar, Peguambela & Peguamcara yang beralamat di No. 22, Tingkat 1, Jalan Sembilang 2, 13700 Seberang Jaya, Pulau Pinang (No. Ruj.: NAF/L/KWSP(PG)/MMII/031/2026)



Court Notices



Court Notices

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI DI GEORGETOWN DALAM NEGERI PULAU PINANG, MALAYSIA SAMAN PEMULA NO. PA-24F-74-07/2026

Dalam Perkara mengenai Kanak-kanak yang dikenali sebagai HABISHEK A/L SUNTHARARAJAN (NO SUIL LAHIR 040418XA)
Dan Dalam perkara Seksyen 88 dan 89 Akta Memperbaharui Undang-Undang (Perkahwinan dan Perceraian) 1976 (Akta 164)
Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 3.5, 11 Akta Penjagaan Budak 1961
Dan Dalam Perkara Mengenai Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah 2012
ANTARA
SUNTHARARAJAN A/L KRISHNASAMY (NO K/P: 681207-07-5729) ... PEMOHON
DAN
HABISHEK A/L SUNTHARARAJAN (NO SUIL LAHIR 040418XA) ... RESPONDEN PERTAMA
KASTURI DEVI A/P ALIMUTHU (NO K/P: 761209-07-5502) ... RESPONDEN KEDUA
JABATAN KEBAJIKAN MASYARAKAT DAERAH TIMUR LAUT ... RESPONDEN KETIGA
PENYAMPAIAN GANTI – NOTIS BENTUK IKLAN

Kepada: Responden Kedua dinamakan di atas
KASTURI DEVI A/P ALIMUTHU
Block 14-3-2, Taman Batu Bukit, Lorong 2, Fettes Park,
Jalan Tanjung Tokong,
10470 Georgetown,
Pulau Pinang

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu Saman Pemula No. PA-24F-74-07/2026 telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu di dalam Mahkamah ini oleh SUNTHARARAJAN A/L KRISHNASAMY, pemohon telah memfailkan Saman Pemula yang bertarikh 31.07.2026 dan Affidavit Menyokong yang dikirakan oleh pemohon pada 27.07.2026 untuk kamu membuat pembelaan **SATU PERINTAH TELAH DIKELUARKAN** oleh Mahkamah ini supaya sesalinan dokumen-dokumen di atas disampaikan kepada kamu dengan cara menampalkan dokumen-dokumen tersebut bersama-sama sesalinan Perintah Penyampaian Ganti pada Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi di Pulau Pinang dan juga menyebarkan notis ini sekali dalam akhbar tempatan dan bahawa penampalan dan pengiklanan tersebut disifatkan menjadi penyampaian yang sempurna dan mencukupi terhadap kamu.

DAN SELANJUTNYA jika kamu berhasrat untuk membela tindakan tersebut kamu mestilah hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui Peguambela kamu dihadapan Penolong Kanan Pendafatar, Mahkamah Tinggi Pulau Pinang pada **12.11.2026 pukul 09.00 pagi**. Jika kamu tidak hadir pada tarikh tersebut Mahkamah akan meneruskan percabaran ini tanpa kehadiran kamu.

Bertarikh pada 22.09.2026

t.t.
PEGUAMCARA PEMOHON

NOTIS ini telah difailkan oleh Pengarah, Jabatan Bantuan Guaman Pulau Pinang, peguamcara bagi Pemohon, yang beralamat di Jabatan Bantuan Guaman Pulau Pinang, Aras 4, Bangunan Persekutuan, Jalan Anson, 10400 Pulau Pinang. JBG.PJG(JG/0626(Y)

The major difference between a thing that might go wrong and a thing that cannot possibly go wrong is that when a thing that cannot possibly go wrong goes wrong it usually turns out to be impossible to get at and repair.

Douglas Adams



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home makeover?

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Court Notices



Court Notices

LAMPIRAN A
BORANG IKLAN NOTIS PELEPASAN SIJIL KPI
AKTA KEBANKRAPAN 1967 / AKTA INSOLVENS 1967 (AKTA 360)
NOTIS DIBAWAH SUBSEKSYEN 33A(3)

Notis adalah dengan ini diberikan bahawa, bankrap yang dinamakan dalam jadual di bawah telah dilepaskan daripada kebangkrapan melalui Sijil Ketua Pengarah Insolvensi berkuatkuasa pada tarikh seperti yang dinyatakan dalam ruang (5)

(1) BIL	(2) NAMA BANKRAP	(3) NO. K/P	(4) NO. KEBANKRAPAN	(5) TARIKH KUATKUASA PELEPASAN
1	FAIZ BIN MOHAMMAD	780114-01-6415	678-02 TAHUN 2016	14.07.2026
2	MUHAMAD IZUWAN BIN ANUAR	RF17341	4980-12 TAHUN 2016	13.08.2026
3	MOHD RAMDZAN BIN SUHADI	780821-01-5345	251-01 TAHUN 2016	13.08.2026
4	MASNAWI BIN MD SALLEH	770202-01-6395	4224-12 TAHUN 2015	13.08.2026
5	SALIM BIN ABDUL	840413-14-5091	50-01 TAHUN 2016	13.08.2026
6	ZURAFAH BINTI HAIDRUS @ IDRUS	751205-01-6354	2932-08 TAHUN 2016	13.08.2026
7	MESLIEA BINTI MOHD MISKAN	830419-01-5942	4354-12 TAHUN 2015	13.08.2026
8	MOHD FADLI BIN HUSSIN	890917-01-5405	1421-04 TAHUN 2017	13.08.2026
9	KADIR BIN RUSLAN	790829-01-5589	3487-09 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
10	ABD AKMAL BIN JALIL	861117-23-5327	690-02 TAHUN 2016	19.08.2026
11	NIZAR BIN SAKIMON	810704-01-6495	3317-09 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
12	FAROUK BIN ABDUL RAHMAN	711208-01-5561	873-03 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
13	ZAINUDDIN BIN MD NOH	700620-01-5081	3574-10 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
14	ROSNAH BINTI ASRI	650928-01-5942	949-03 TAHUN 2017	19.08.2026
15	MOHD FAIRUZ BIN SELASA	850120-01-6965	3728-10 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
16	MOHD SYAHIR BIN SUMARI	870423-56-5767	2872-08 TAHUN 2015	19.08.2026
17	NOOR IRMI BIN MUHARAM	780507-04-5217	4647-12 TAHUN 2014	19.08.2026
18	MUHAMAD RUZAIMI BIN ABDUL RAZAK	711204-01-5855	397-02 TAHUN 2016	19.08.2026
19	MOHD HAFIZ BIN MOHD RAIS	870812-23-5307	774-05 TAHUN 2013	06.08.2026
20	SITI NURANIZA BINTI MAT SIM	880504-01-5512	1568-09 TAHUN 2018	21.09.2026

Bertarikh pada 28/10/2026

t.t
(SHARIFAH MALEEHA BINTI SYED HUSSIN)
Pengarah Insolvensi Negeri
Mdi Cawangan Johor Bahru,
b.p. Ketua Pengarah Insolvensi, Malaysia.

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PROCLAMATION OF SALE

In exercise of the rights and powers conferred upon the assignee/bank and the borrower(s)/customer(s) under the loan/facility agreement(s), deed of assignment and power of attorney, it is hereby proclaimed that the assignee/bank with the assistance of the undermentioned auctioneer will sell the properties described below by public auction on Wednesday, 4th November 2026 at Auction Room Of Ng Chan Mau & Co Sdn Bhd or via Online Bidding at www.ngchanmau.com

ALLIANCE BANK MALAYSIA BERHAD [198201008390 (88103-W)] ALLIANCE ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD [200701018870 (776882-V)] All intending bidders are required to deposit 10% of the fixed reserve price by bank draft in favour of Alliance Bank Malaysia Berhad/ Alliance Islamic Bank Berhad ABMB 1 - AB3M 13 TIME : 10.30AM	ABMB 1 Reserve Price : RM 290,000 KUALA LUMPUR CONDOMINIUM UNIT (1,120 SQ. FT.) Unit No. C-702, Blok C, Paradisa Tropika, No. 9, Persiaran Meranti, PJU 9, Bandar Sri Damansara, 52200 Kuala Lumpur. Assignor/Customer : Tan Chee Pyng Solicitor : M/S John Yong & Irene Song (Tel : 03-8063 1912) *ALLIANCE ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD	ABMB 2 Reserve Price : RM 585,000 KUALA LUMPUR CONDOMINIUM (1,475 SQ. FT.) Unit No. 13-05, Condominium Royale, Jalan 3/61, Bukit Segambut 51200 Kuala Lumpur. Assignor/Borrower : Lim Chiew Boon Solicitor : M/S Sidek Teoh Wong & Dennis (Tel : 03-2692 3000)	ABMB 3 Reserve Price : RM 360,000 PETALING JAYA UNIT OF SOFO (SMALL OFFICE FLEXIBLE OFFICE) (549 SQ. FT.) Unit No. A-10-05, Atria SOFO Suites, Atria Damansara, Jalan SS 22/23, Damansara Jaya, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor. Assignors : Lee Wai Ling & Wong Kien Lok Borrower : Lee Wai Ling Solicitor : M/S Goh Rafidah Tan (Tel : 03-2166 3818)	ABMB 4 Reserve Price : RM 315,000 SHAH ALAM 3-BEDROOM SERVICED APARTMENT (850 SQ. FT.) No. 11-25, Residensi Senuri, No. 1, Jalan Utarid A U5/A, Mutiara Subang, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor. BUMI LOT Assignor/Borrower : Boniface Anak Gerinsa Solicitor : M/S Goh Rafidah Tan (Tel : 03-2166 3818)	ABMB 5 Reserve Price : RM 369,000 SHAH ALAM CONDOMINIUM (1,173 SQ. FT.) No. A-05-02, The Vue @ Monterez, Jalan Merah Kesumba U9/18, Kelab Golf Monterez, Seksyen U9, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor. Assignors/Borrowers : Ganesh A/L Rajendran & Ranjeeta A/P Manavalan Solicitor : M/S Goh Rafidah Tan (Tel : 03-2166 3818)	
ABMB 6 Reserve Price : RM 453,000 SHAH ALAM CONDOMINIUM (1,281 SQ. FT.) No. B-05-03, The Vue @ Monterez, Jalan Merah Kesumba U9/18, Kelab Golf Monterez, Seksyen U9, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor. Assignors/Borrowers : Sathivane A/P Selvaraju & Gunawathy A/P Gunasekaran Solicitor : M/S John Yong & Irene Song (Tel : 03-8063 1912)	ABMB 7 Reserve Price : RM 511,000 SHAH ALAM CONDOMINIUM (1,507 SQ. FT.) Unit No. A-02-01, 2nd floor, Block A, The Vue @ Monterez, Jalan Merah Kesumba U9/18, Kelab Golf Monterez, Seksyen U9, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor. BUMI LOT Assignor/Borrower : Norlin Binti Samat Solicitor : M/S Azhar & Wong (Tel : 03-2602 3898)	ABMB 8 Reserve Price : RM 349,000 PUCHONG CONDOMINIUM UNIT (1,044 SQ. FT.) Unit No. B-12-05, Block B, Pangsapuri Puncak Mutiara, Jalan Mutiara 2, Taman Mutiara Indah, 47100 Puchong, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Looi Kok Hin Solicitor : M/S Azhar & Wong (Tel : 03-2602 3898)	ABMB 9 Reserve Price : RM 234,000 SERI KEMBANGAN SMALL OFFICE HOME OFFICE (SOHO) (452 SQ. FT.) No. D-20-03, One Equine, Persiaran Akademik Perdana, Taman Equine, 43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Pang Mun Tang Solicitor : M/S John Yong & Irene Song (Tel : 03-8063 1912)	ABMB 10 Reserve Price : RM 315,000 SERI KEMBANGAN 2-BEDROOM SERVICED APARTMENT (614 SQ. FT.) No. C-06-14, One Equine Residency, Persiaran Akademik Perdana, Taman Equine, 43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor. Assignors : Paing Chee Heng & Tan Khai Zhean Borrower : Paing Chee Heng Solicitor : M/S Azhar & Wong (Tel : 03-2602 3898)	ABMB 11 Reserve Price : RM 165,000 CYBERJAYA 1 BEDROOM SERVICED APARTMENT (705 SQ. FT.) Unit No. T1-19-06, Sky Park Tower 1, Jalan Teknokrat 1, Cyber 3, 63000 Cyberjaya, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Ong Eng Chung Solicitor : M/S John Yong & Irene Song (Tel : 03-8063 1912)	
ABMB 12 Reserve Price : RM 243,000 CYBERJAYA APARTMENT UNIT (1,219 SQ. FT.) No. 1-5 (Developer's Parcel No. 5), Blok Greenquay, Cyber Heights Villa, Cyber 7, 63000 Cyberjaya, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Shamsolnizam Bin Ariffin Solicitor : M/S Sidek Teoh Wong & Dennis (Tel : 03-2692 3000)	ABMB 13 Reserve Price : RM 106,000 JOHOR LOW-COST WALK-UP FLAT (601 SQ. FT.) Unit No. #02-12, Block 3, Jalan Desa Kempas 2, Taman Desa Kempas, 81200 Johor Bahru, Johor. BUMI LOT Assignors/Borrowers : Yasok @ Idris Bin Ismail & Roslan Bin Yasok @ Idris Solicitor : M/S Alvin's Chang Chamber (Tel : 07-336 5869)	PUBLIC BANK BERHAD [196501000672 (6463-H)] PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD [197301001433 (14328-V)] PBB 1 - PBB 16 TIME : 3.30PM		PBB 1 Reserve Price : RM 393,700 PETALING JAYA OFFICE UNIT (2,658 SQ. FT.) Unit No. B-1-03A, Neo Damansara, No. 1, Jalan PJU 8/1, Bandar Damansara Perdana, 47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Badaraljamal Bin Mohd Salleh Solicitor : M/S Ravi Moorthi, Noriza, Mala & Partners (Tel : 03-7491 0748)	PBB 2 Reserve Price : RM 90,000 SERI KEMBANGAN APARTMENT UNIT (657 SQ. FT.) Unit No. D-4-07, Pangsapuri Putra Raya, Jalan PP 32, Taman Pinggiran Putra, Sek. 2, 43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Hor Boon Chung Solicitor : M/S Zairina Loh & Wong (Tel : 03-2710 8283)	PBB 3 Reserve Price : RM 236,196 KUALA LUMPUR STRATIFIED OFFICE LOT (1,504 SQ. FT.) Unit No. D-7-2, Menara Uancang Emas, Jalan 5/93, Taman Miharja, Off Jalan Loke Yew, 55200 Kuala Lumpur. Assignor/Borrower : Wong Chee Yung Solicitor : M/S Zairina Loh & Wong (Tel : 03-2710 8283)
PBB 4 Reserve Price : RM 156,100 PETALING JAYA OFFICE (1,066 SQ. FT.) Unit No. E503A, East Wing, Metropolitan SQ, Jalan PJU 8/1, Bandar Damansara Perdana, 47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor. BUMI LOT Assignor/Customer : Nursuriyati Binti Johari Chua Solicitor : M/S Che Mokhtar & Ling (Tel : 03-2274 0413) *PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD	PBB 5 Reserve Price : RM 90,720 PUCHONG 3 BEDROOM LOW-COST APARTMENT (650 SQ. FT.) Unit No. D-05-02, Pangsapuri Ceria, Jalan TK 4/5, Taman Kinrara, Seksyen 4, 47100 Puchong, Selangor. BUMI LOT Assignor/Borrower : Johari Bin Karim Solicitor : M/S Dennis Nik & Wong (Tel : 03-2284 7188)	PBB 6 Reserve Price : RM 619,200 PUCHONG 2 STOREY TERRACE HOUSE (1,649 SQ. FT.) Unit No. 40, Jalan Metro 1/9, Bandar Metro Puchong, 47160 Puchong, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Woon Kim Thak Solicitor : M/S Ravi Moorthi, Noriza, Mala & Partners (Tel : 03-7491 0748)	PBB 7 Reserve Price : RM 226,800 AMPANG CONDOMINIUM UNIT (1,001 SQ. FT.) Unit No. B-08-06, Ampang Prima Condominium, Jalan Wawasan 2/5, Bandar Baru Ampang, 68000 Ampang, Selangor. Assignors : Lee Kok Hai & Kwek Sok Chin Borrower : Lee Kok Hai Solicitor : M/S Ravi Moorthi, Noriza, Mala & Partners (Tel : 03-7491 0748)	PBB 8 Reserve Price : RM 230,000 BERANANG APARTMENT (1,045 SQ. FT.) Unit No. C-29-3, Residensi Selangorku Oleander, Jalan Eco Majestic 3A/5, Eco Majestic, 43500 Semenyih, Selangor. Assignor/Borrower : Lim Lip Kai Solicitor : M/S Sidek Teoh Wong & Dennis (Tel : 03-2692 3000)	PBB 9 Reserve Price : RM 189,000 MELAKA CORNER 2 BEDROOMS SERVICED APARTMENT (1,131 SQ. FT.) No. B-18-10, 18th Floor, Kondo Kota Laksamana Jaya (also known as The Wave Residence) (on site Jalan KLI 5), 75200 Melaka. Assignor/Borrower : Goh Mean Fun Solicitor : M/S Junaida Afwan & Quek (Tel : 06-954 3798 / 954 3799)	
PBB 10 Reserve Price : RM 388,800 JOHOR 4 BEDROOM SERVICED APARTMENT (1,410 SQ. FT.) Unit No. #B-10-05, Residensi Idaman, Jalan Idaman 9, Nusa Idaman, 79100 Iskandar Puteri, Johor. BUMI LOT Assignor/Borrower : Hani Binti Anwar Solicitor : M/S Lee & Tengku Azrina (Tel : 07-2238828)	PBB 11 Reserve Price : RM 607,500 JOHOR 2-STOREY SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE (3,057 SQ. FT.) No. 41, Jalan Hijauan Senai 3, Taman Hijauan Senai, 81400 Senai, Johor. Assignors/Borrowers : Hemanathan A/L Kanjanapathy & Jayamani A/P Munusamy Solicitor : M/S Arthur Lee & Company (Tel : 07-335 1928 & 333 1911)	PBB 12 Reserve Price : RM 820,000 JOHOR STRATIFIED 2-STOREY TERRACED HOUSE (1,604 SQ. FT.) No. 98, Jalan Ekoflora 5/23, Taman Ekoflora, 81100 Johor Bahru, Johor. Assignors/Borrowers : Koh Voon Tean & Lam Quek Lim Solicitor : M/S Arthur Lee & Company (Tel : 07-335 1928 & 333 1911)	PBB 13 Reserve Price : RM 16,000 PERAK LOW-COST APARTMENT UNIT (678 SQ. FT.) Unit No. A2-15, Blok A, Rumah Pangsang, Taman Bandar Baru Selatan, 31900 Kampar, Perak. Assignor/Borrower : Chan Yoke Lin Solicitor : M/S Leong & Leong (Tel : 05-253 5885) <i>Note : (i) Although the strata/individual title for the property has been issued under Pagaran Negeri 327395, Lot 306404, Mukim and District of Kampar, State of Perak, it has not been transferred into the name of the Assignor/Customer. If required, the successful Purchaser shall be solely responsible for lodging with the Proprietor and/or the Developer/Vendor for the direct transfer of the property to himself and shall solely bear all costs, payments, charges, fees and expenses for the same. (ii) The Bank will not be liable for any caveats filed and it is the duty of bidder/purchaser to remove the caveat if any.</i>	PBB 14 Reserve Price : RM 370,000 PERAK 3 BEDROOM CONDOMINIUM (1,259 SQ. FT.) A-18-3, Jalan Medan Ipoh 1H, Kediaman D'Festivo, 31400 Ipoh, Perak. Assignor/Borrower : Eng Boon Tiong Solicitor : M/S Khong & Son (Tel : 05-5486810)	PBB 15 Reserve Price : RM 360,000 AMPANG 3 BEDROOM CONDOMINIUM (1,249 SQ. FT.) Unit No. B-6-6, Condominium D'Suria, Jalan D'Suria, Taman D'Suria, 68000 Ampang, Selangor. Assignor : Senthil A/L Raja Manickam Borrowers : Senthil A/L Raja Manickam & Raja Manickam A/L R M N Natesa Pillay Solicitor : M/S Khong & Son (Tel : 05-5486810)	
PBB 16 Reserve Price : RM 307,800 NEGERI SEMBILAN 2 STOREY CLUSTER HOUSE (3046.1865 SQ. FT.) No. 56, Jalan Seri Mutiara 7, Taman Seri Mutiara, 73400 Gemas, Negeri Sembilan. BUMI LOT Assignor/Customer : Mohd Shakil Bin Abd. Aziz & Nurul Liyana Binti Mohd Zulkafli Solicitor : Messrs Rastam Singa & Co (Tel : 06-631 5818) *PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD	The subject properties will be sold on an "as is where is" basis, subject to the respective reserve price and Conditions of Sale. All intending bidders are required to deposit with the Auctioneer the sum equivalent to 10% of the fixed reserve price for the property by bank draft in favour of respective bank or via RENTAS or online banking transfer (FPX) by 5PM, AT LEAST ONE (1) WORKING DAY BEFORE AUCTION DATE. For further particulars, please contact the respective Solicitors or the undermentioned Auctioneers. For further information in respect of the proclamation of sale and conditions of sale, steps to bid online and deposit payment, please visit our website at www.ngchanmau.com .					

Licensed Auctioneers

Mr. Low Chee Hian

Mrs. Rosemaini Binti Ahmad Radzi

NG CHAN MAU & CO SDN BHD [200601018098 (737850-T)]

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 • Whatsapp : 012-295 1388
 • www.ngchanmau.com

NCM CoTM

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
 Tarikh / Masa : 23 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan PA-38-1393-08/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot Geran No. Hakmilik 169524, Lot No. 23859 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri 6 / Seberang Perai Utara / Pulau Pinang	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Muhamad Hakim Bin Rosli & Siti Fatimah Binti Pawan Chik Peguamcara V.M. Mohan, Murugiah & Associates Tel No: 04-3982787
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Harga Rizab RM 450,000.00

Satu (1) Unit Rumah Teres Dua Tingkat (Lot Tengah)
 • Alamat : No. 11A, Lorong Mekar Sari 13, Taman Mekar Sari, 13200, Kepala Batas, Pulau Pinang.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 1475 Kaki Persegi (137 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI
 Tarikh / Masa : 23 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan KB-38-1024-07/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot Geran 167375, Lot No. 12069, Seksyen 41 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Bandar Kulim / Kulim / Kedah	Plaintif CIMB Bank Berhad Defendan Jivindran A/L Eilan & Keshantini A/P Subbramian Peguamcara Syarikat Lim Kiam Hoon Tel No: 04-4232061
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Harga Rizab RM 288,000.00

Sebuah Rumah Teres Satu Tingkat
 • Alamat : No. 2043, Lorong Kenari 10/3, Taman Kenari V, 09000, Kulim, Kedah.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 1399 Kaki Persegi (130 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI
 Tarikh / Masa : 23 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan KB-38-1030-07/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot GRN 20306, Lot 11664 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Sungai Petani / Kuala Muda / Kedah	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Mohamad Hafiz Fahimi Bin Raziman Peguamcara Kuah, Lim, Chin & Ooi Tel No: 04-4269142
--	--

Harga Rizab RM 200,000.00

Sebuah Rumah Teres Satu Tingkat Kos Rendah
 • Alamat : No. 7, Lorong Jati 41-B, Taman Bandar Baru, 08100, Sungai Lalang, Kedah.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 1399 Kaki Persegi (130 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
 Tarikh / Masa : 23 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan PA-38-1391-08/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot Hakmilik Strata No. Hakmilik Geran 63170M1/2/3, Petak No. 9, Tingkat No. 2, Bangunan No. M1, Lot No. 666, Seksyen 2 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Bandar Batu Ferringgi / Timor Laut / Pulau Pinang	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Alan Ng Ya Loon & Vivian Geh Yi Wei Peguamcara V.M. Mohan, Murugiah & Associates Tel No: 04-3982787
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Harga Rizab RM 212,580.00

Satu (1) Unit Pangsapuri (3 Bilik)
 • Alamat : No. 188-1-3, Sri Sayang, Jalan Batu Ferringgi, 11100, Batu Ferringgi, Pulau Pinang.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 629 Kaki Persegi (77 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KOTA BHARU
 Tarikh / Masa : 10 November 2026, Pada Jam 9.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan DA-38-718-08/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot PN 967, Lot No. 1355 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Bandar Kuala Krai / Jajahan Kuala Krai / Kelantan	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Wong Pok Sje Peguamcara Tengku Satar & Partners Tel No: 03-30015074
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Harga Rizab RM 333,000.00

An Intermediate Unit Double-Storey Shop-Office
 • Alamat : Lot 1355, Jalan Besar Guchil, (Jalan Kota Bharu-Kuala Krai), 18000, Kuala Krai, Kelantan.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 1600 Kaki Persegi (148.64 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
 Tarikh / Masa : 10 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan PA-38-1293-07/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot Hakmilik Strata No. GRN 63748/M1/3/53, Lot 1857 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri 6 / Barat Daya / Pulau Pinang	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Muhammad Imran Bin Ibrahim & Noraini Binti Jamaluddin Peguamcara Kuah, Lim, Chin & Ooi Tel No: 04-4269142
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Harga Rizab RM 150,000.00

Sebuah Rumah Pangsa Dua Bilik
 • Alamat : No. 4-2-15, Tingkat Seri Genting 1, 11000, Balik Pulau, Pulau Pinang.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 495.14 Kaki Persegi (46 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
 Tarikh / Masa : 10 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan KB-38-1301-08/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot Hakmilik Strata No. Hakmilik Geran Mukim 2498/M1/20/223, Petak No. 223, Tingkat No. 20, Bangunan No. M1, Lot No. 9948 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri 13 / Timor Laut / Pulau Pinang	Plaintif CIMB Bank Berhad Defendan Yessu Vimalraj A/L Clement Raj & Elavarasi A/P Nanthakumar Peguamcara V.M. Mohan, Murugiah & Associates Tel No: 04-3982787
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Harga Rizab RM 210,600.00

Satu (1) Unit Pangsapuri
 • Alamat : No. 3-19-11, Desa Bistari, Lintang Pantai Jerjak, Mukim 13, 11700, Glugor, Pulau Pinang.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 700 Kaki Persegi (65 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN

LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI
 Tarikh / Masa : 18 November 2026, Pada Jam 11.00 Pagi
 Assignee : CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan KB-38-1008-07/2026 No. Hakmilik / No. Lot GRN 66149, Lot 6644 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Bandar Sungai Petani / Kuala Muda / Kedah	Plaintif CIMB Islamic Bank Berhad Defendan Mohd Anis Amirul Bin Mohamad Shukri Peguamcara Kuah, Lim, Chin & Ooi Tel No: 04-4269142
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Harga Rizab RM 240,000.00

Sebuah Rumah Teres Satu Tingkat
 • Alamat : No. 73, Lebuh Arkid, Taman Delima, 08000, Sungai Petani, Kedah.
 • Keluasan Lantai : 2099 Kaki Persegi (195 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut:
<http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
 Tel : 04-2299777
 Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

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 Proclamation

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1308-08/2026

ANTARA
Hong Leong Bank Berhad (No. Syarikat: 193401000023 (97141-X)) ... **PLAINTIF**
DAN
Sharon A/P R Sathianathan (No. K/P: 861015355504) ... **DEFENDAN**

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 8 Julai 2026 dan 2 Oktober 2026 adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa TimbalanPendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e-LeLong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM
Pada Hari Khamis, 10 Disember 2026, Pada Jam 11 :00 pagi,
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR
Sila layari <https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/BidderWeb/Home/Index> untuk mendapatkan Perisytiharan Jualan dan panduan pendaftaran.

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK: No. Hakmilik: Hakmilik Strata, No. Hakmilik Geran 102197/M2/19/386, No. Bangunan M2, No. Tingkat 19, No. Petak 386, No. Petak Aksesori A1653 No. Lot: No. Lot 11256 Mukim/Daerah/Negeri: 13/ Timor Laut/ Pulau Pinang. **Pegangan:** Hakmilik Kekal No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan: 386/19/M2. **Kelulusan Tanah:** 786 kaki persegi/73 meter persegi. **Pemilik Berdaftar:** Sharon A/P R Sathianathan. **Syarat Nyata:** Petak ini hendaklah digunakan untuk tujuan rumah pangsa sahaja

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH: Hartanah tersebut adalah Satu unit pangsaapuri bersama dengan 1 lot tempat letak kereta yang beralamat pos di 8B-19-11, Lorong Semarak Api 3, MK 13, 11500, Ayer Itam, Pulau Pinang

HARGA RIZAB: Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 350,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: TIGA RATUS LIMA PULUH RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendepositkan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama HONG LEONG BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belan hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada HONG LEONG BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman: Messrs Kek Ooi & Lee Hong
Alamat: No. 53, 1st Floor, Beach Street, 10300, PG, MY
No. Telefon: 04-2618845, No. Fax: 04-2628832
Rujukan: KBW/HLBB/MG/SHARON/134/26/ASRUL

Untuk sebarang pertanyaan cara serahan Bank Deraf dan Bidaan, sila hubungi syarikat yang berikut: LEONG AUCTIONEER SDN BHD, No. Tel: 03-79583 795, Layari laman web <https://www.leongauctioneer.com>

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1464-08/2026

ANTARA
HONG LEONG BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 193401000023 (97141-X)) ... **PLAINTIF**
DAN
LEE CHAN WAI (No. K/P: 700530075067) ... **DEFENDAN**

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 9 Julai 2026 dan 29 September 2026 adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa TimbalanPendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e-LeLong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM
Pada Hari Isnin, 7 Disember 2026, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR
Sila layari <https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/BidderWeb/Home/Index> untuk mendapatkan Perisytiharan Jualan dan panduan pendaftaran.

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK: No. Hakmilik: PN 3449 No. Lot: Lot No. 6114 Mukim/Daerah/Negeri: 12/ Barat Daya / Pulau Pinang. **Pegangan:** Hakmilik Pajakan Keluasan Tanah: 1604 kaki persegi/149 meter persegi. **Pemilik Berdaftar:** LEE CHAN WAI, SIM CAKILAN. **Syarat Nyata:** The land hereby alienated shall be used solely for residential purposes. **Sekatan Kepentingan:** The land hereby alienated shall not be sub-divided. **Bebanan / Lain-Lain:** Didaftarkan kepada Hong Leong Bank Berhad melalui Penerimaan No.07995C2013008773 didaftarkan pada 19/03/2013

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH: Hartanah tersebut adalah sebuah rumah teres satu tingkat (intermediate) yang beralamat pos di No. 33, Lintang Nibong, Bayan Baru, 11900, Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang.

HARGA RIZAB: Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 410,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: EMPAT RATUS SEPULUH RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendepositkan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama HONG LEONG BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belan hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada HONG LEONG BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman: Messrs Murad & Foo
Alamat: Suite 10.01, 10th Floor, MWE Plaza, No. 8, Lebuh Farquhar, 10200, PG, MY
No. Telefon: 04-2631233/300, No. Fax: 04-2617097
Rujukan: TLN/HLBB/F60/2026

Untuk sebarang pertanyaan cara serahan Bank Deraf dan Bidaan, sila hubungi syarikat yang berikut: LEONG AUCTIONEER SDN BHD, No. Tel: 03-79583 795, Layari laman web <https://www.leongauctioneer.com>

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN
LELONGAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KOTA BHARU

Tarikh / Masa : 10 November 2026, Pada Jam 9.00 Pagi
Assignee : CIMB Bank Berhad

No. Perlaksanaan DA-38-714-08/2026	Plaintif CIMB Bank Berhad
No. Hakmilik / No. Lot H.S.(M) 2009, PT 1138	Defendan Harta Iring Sdn. Bhd. & Muhamad Nizam Bin Ismail
Mukim / Daerah / Negeri Bauung / Jajahan Kota Bharu / Kelantan	Peguamcara Tengku Safar & Partners Tel No: 03-30015074

Harga Rizab RM 510,300.00

Rumah Kedai Dua Tingkat Unit Tengah
• **Alamat** : S36/PT 1138, Taman Bendahara, Jalan Pengkaln Chepa, 15400, Kota Bharu, Kelantan.
• **Keluasan Lantai** : 1539.24 Kaki Persegi (143 Meter Persegi)

Pembida boleh mendapat Perisytiharan Jualan, panduan pendaftaran dan bayaran 10% deposit di pautan seperti berikut: <http://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb/home/index>

* Semua Hartanah Lelongan diatas akan dijual tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat jualan sepertimana yang dicetak didalam Perisytiharan Jualan

Untuk Sebarang Pertanyaan, Sila Hubungi Syarikat yang dilantik oleh Plaintiff:
PALMA AUCTIONEERS SDN BHD
Tel : 04-2299777
Website: palma.bidnow.my / E-mel: elelong@palma.com.my

NOTICES

 AGM / EGM / Financial Notice

 AGM / EGM / Financial Notice

 AGM / EGM / Financial Notice

 AGM / EGM / Financial Notice

 AGM / EGM / Financial Notice

**ICONIC WORLDWIDE BERHAD**
(Registration no. 196901000067 (8386-P))
(Incorporated in Malaysia)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Fifty-Seventh ("57th") Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of Iconic Worldwide Berhad ("IWB" or "the Company") will be held in the Function Room 'MARJORIE 2', Level 11, Iconic Marjorie Hotel at 239A, Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, 11900 Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang on Thursday, 26 November 2026 at 10.30 a.m. or at any adjournment thereof, to transact the following businesses:

AGENDA

- To receive the Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 together with the Reports of the Directors and Auditors thereon.

AS ORDINARY BUSINESS

- To re-elect the following Directors who are retiring pursuant to Clause 76(3) of the Company's Constitution and who being eligible, have offered themselves for re-election:
(a) Lee Eng Eow
(b) Wong Wan Chin
(c) Wong Thai Sun
- To approve the payment of Directors' fees of up to RM400,000.00 to the Directors of the Company for the financial year ending 30 June 2027.
- To approve the payment of Directors' benefits of up to RM40,000.00 to the Directors of the Company from 57th AGM up to the conclusion of the 58th AGM.
- To re-appoint Messrs. UHY Malaysia PLT as Auditors of the Company until the conclusion of the next AGM and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration.

AS SPECIAL BUSINESS

To consider and if thought fit, to pass the following resolutions:-

- Authority to allot and issue shares in general pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016

"THAT pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016 and subject to the approvals of the relevant governmental/ regulatory authorities, the Directors be and are hereby empowered to issue shares in the capital of the Company from time to time and upon such terms and conditions and for such purposes as the Directors, may in their absolute discretion deem fit, provided that the aggregate number of shares issued pursuant to this resolution does not exceed 10% of the total number of issued shares of the Company for the time being and that the Directors be and are hereby also empowered to obtain approval from the Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Bursa Securities") for the listing and quotation of the additional shares so issued and that such authority shall continue to be in force until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company."

- Proposed Renewal of Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature

"THAT, subject always to the provisions of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, approval be and is hereby given to the Company and its subsidiaries (collectively the "Group") to enter into and give effect to the recurrent related party transactions of a revenue or trading nature with the related parties as specified in Appendix I of the Circular to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026, provided that such transactions and/or arrangements which are necessary for the Group's day-to-day operations are undertaken in the ordinary course of business, at arm's length basis, on normal commercial terms and transaction prices which are not more favourable to the related parties than those generally available to the public and not detrimental to the minority shareholders of the Company (hereinafter referred to as the "Proposed Renewal of Shareholders' Mandate"):

THAT the Proposed Renewal of Shareholders' Mandate shall only continue to be in full force until:

- the conclusion of the next AGM of the Company at which time it will lapse, unless by a resolution passed at said AGM, such authority is renewed; or
- the expiration of the period within which the next AGM after the date it is required to be held pursuant to Section 340(2) of the Companies Act 2016 (but shall not extend to such extension as may be allowed pursuant to Section 340(4) of the Companies Act 2016); or
- revoked or varied by a resolution passed by the shareholders of the Company in a general meeting;

whichever is the earlier.

AND THAT the Directors of the Company be and are hereby authorised to complete and do all such acts and things (including executing such documents as may be required) as they may consider expedient or necessary or in the best interest of the Company to give effect to the Proposed Renewal of Shareholders' Mandate."

- To transact any other business of which due notice shall have been given.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD
TAN TONG LAM (MAICSA 7045482 /SSM PC NO.: 202208000250)
ANG WEE MIN (MAICSA 7076022 /SSM PC NO.: 202208000334)
Company Secretaries

Pulau Pinang
Dated : 28 October 2026

Notes:-

- Proxy
- For the purpose of determining who shall be entitled to attend this AGM, the Company shall be requesting Bursa Malaysia Depository Sdn Bhd to make available to the Company, a Record of Depositors as at 19 November 2026. Only a member whose name appears on this Record of Depositors shall be entitled to attend this AGM or appoint a proxy to attend, speak and vote on his/her/its behalf.
- A member entitled to attend and vote at this AGM is entitled to appoint a proxy or attorney or in the case of a corporation, to appoint a duly authorised representative to attend, participate, speak and vote in his place. A proxy may but need not be a member of the Company.
- A member of the Company who is entitled to attend and vote at a General Meeting of the Company may appoint not more than two (2) proxies to attend, participate, speak and vote instead of the member at the General Meeting.
- If two (2) proxies are appointed, the entitlement of those proxies to vote on a show of hands shall be in accordance with the listing requirements of the stock exchange.
- Where a member of the Company is an authorised nominee as defined in the Central Depositories Act, it may appoint not more than two (2) proxies in respect of each securities account it holds in ordinary shares of the Company standing to the credit of the said securities account.
- Where a member of the Company is an exempt authorised nominee which holds ordinary shares in the Company for multiple beneficial owners in one securities account ("omnibus account"), there is no limit to the number of proxies which the exempt authorised nominee may appoint in respect of each omnibus account it holds. An exempt authorised nominee refers to an authorised nominee defined under the Securities Industry (Central Depositories) Act 1991 ("Central Depositories Act") which is exempted from compliance with the provisions of Section 25A(1) of the Central Depositories Act.
- Where a member appoints more than one (1) proxy, the proportion of shareholdings to be represented by each proxy must be specified in the instrument appointing the proxies.
- The appointment of a proxy may be made in a hard copy form or by electronic means in the following manner and must be received by the Company not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time appointed for holding the General Meeting or adjourned General Meeting at which the person named in the appointment proposes to vote:
(i) In hard copy form
In the case of an appointment made in hard copy form, this proxy form must be deposited at the registered office of the Company situated at No. 1-2, Jalan Icon City, Icon City, 14000 Bukit Mertajam, Pulau Pinang.
(ii) By electronic means
The proxy form can be electronically lodged with the Share Registrar of the Company via Vistra SSMY Portal at <https://srmv.vistra.com>
- Any authority pursuant to which such an appointment is made by a power of attorney must be deposited at the registered office of the Company situated at No. 1-2, Jalan Icon City, Icon City, 14000 Bukit Mertajam, Pulau Pinang not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time appointed for holding the General Meeting or adjourned General Meeting at which the person named in the appointment proposes to vote. A copy of the power of attorney may be accepted provided that it is certified notarially and/or in accordance with the applicable legal requirements in the relevant jurisdiction in which it is executed.
- Please ensure ALL the particulars as required in this proxy form are completed, signed and dated accordingly.
- Last date and time for lodging this proxy form is 10.30 a.m. on 24 November 2026 (Tuesday).
- Those proxy forms which are indicated with "✓" in the spaces provided to show how the votes are to be cast will also be accepted.
- Members are advised to check the Company's website and announcements from time to time for any changes to the administration of the AGM that may be necessitated by changes to the directives, safety and precautionary requirements and guidelines prescribed by the Government of Malaysia, the Ministry of Health, the Malaysian National Security Council, Securities Commission Malaysia and/or other relevant authorities.

Explanatory Notes:

Item 1 of the Agenda - Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026
This item of the Agenda is for discussion purposes only, as Section 340(1)(a) of the Companies Act 2016 does not require the shareholders to formally approve the Audited Financial Statements. Therefore, this item will not be put forward for voting.

Ordinary Resolutions 1 to 3: Re-election of Directors who retire pursuant to Clause 76(3) of the Company's Constitution
The following Directors who are standing for re-election as Directors of the Company pursuant to Clause 76(3) of the Company's Constitution at the 57th AGM of the Company and are being eligible have offered themselves for re-election in accordance with the Company's Constitution:-
(a) Lee Eng Eow
(b) Wong Wan Chin
(c) Wong Thai Sun
(all the retiring directors are collectively referred to as "the Retiring Directors")
The Board of Directors through the Nomination Committee has deliberated on the suitability of the Retiring Directors to be re- elected as Directors. Upon deliberation, the Board (except for the respective Director concerned) collectively agreed that the Retiring Directors meet the criteria of character, experience, integrity, competence and time commitment to effectively discharge their respective roles as Directors of the Company and recommended the Retiring Directors be re-elected as the Directors of the Company.

Ordinary Resolution 4 - Directors' fees of up to RM400,000.00 for the financial year ending 30 June 2027
The proposed Ordinary Resolution 4, if passed, will authorise the payment of the Directors' fees of up to RM400,000.00 for the financial year ending 30 June 2027.

Ordinary Resolution 5 - Directors' benefits of up to RM40,000.00 from 57th AGM up to the conclusion of the 58th AGM
The proposed Ordinary Resolution 5, if passed, will authorise the payment of Directors' benefits of up to RM40,000.00 in accordance with Section 230(1) of the Companies Act 2016 from 57th AGM up to the conclusion of the 58th AGM.

Ordinary Resolution 7 - Authority to allot and issue shares in general pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016
The proposed Ordinary Resolution 7 if passed, is a general mandate to empower the Directors to issue and allot shares up to an amount not exceeding 10% of the total number of issued shares of the Company for the time being for such purposes as the Directors consider would be in the best interest of the Company. This authority, unless revoked or varied by the Company at a general meeting, will expire at the next AGM.

The general mandate will provide flexibility to the Company for any possible fund-raising activities, including but not limited to further placing of shares, for the purpose of funding future investment project(s) workings capital and/or acquisitions at any time without convening a general meeting as it would be both costs and time consuming to organise a general meeting.

The general mandate granted to the Company at the 56th AGM held on 27 November 2025 was not utilised and accordingly no proceeds were raised.

Ordinary Resolution 8 - Proposed Renewal of Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature
The proposed Ordinary Resolution 8 is a renewal mandate and if passed, will allow the Company and/or its subsidiaries to enter into recurrent related party transactions of a revenue or trading nature which are necessary for the day-to-day operations of the Company and/or its subsidiaries, subject to the transactions being carried out in the ordinary course of business of the Company and/or its subsidiaries and on normal commercial terms which are generally available to the public and not detrimental to the minority shareholders of the Company.

This authority, unless revoked or varied by the Company at a general meeting, will expire at the conclusion of the next AGM of the Company.

Further details are set out in the Circular to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026.

STATEMENT ACCOMPANYING NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Pursuant to Paragraph 8.27(2) of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Securities:-

- Details of individual who are standing for election as Directors (excluding Directors for re- election)
No individual is seeking election as a Director at the 57th AGM of the Company.
- General mandate for issue of securities in accordance with Paragraph 6.03 of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Securities.
The details of the proposed authority for Directors of the Company to issue shares in the Company pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016 are set out in the Explanatory Note.



Hearing aid
AN elderly couple are in church. The wife leans over and whispers to her husband: "I just let out a long, silent fart. What should I do?"
The husband replies: "First, replace the batteries in your hearing aid."



LEGAL

Court Notices

Court Notices

DALAM MAHKAMAH SESYEN DI IPOH
DALAM NEGERI PERAK DARUL RIDZUAN
GUAMAN NO. AA-A52NCvC-83-08/2026

ANTARA

TASEK CLAY COMPANY
(No. Pendaftaran : 196603003181 (000257731-X))
DAN
PATHMALINGAM A/L MATHURAVEERAN
(No. K/P : 810220-08-5953)
(Sebagai Pemilik tunggal perniagaan MP TRADING ENTERPRISE
(No. Pendaftaran : 202103283735 (IP0562632-U))
BENTUK PENGKLANAN
(Dalam Perkara Mengenai Writ Saman dan Pernyataan
Tuntutan bertarikh 24.08.2026)

Kepada :
PATHMALINGAM A/L MATHURAVEERAN
Blok B, 20-2, Residensi Puncak Kristal
34000 Taiping, Perak.
Atau
No. 23, Jalan Pengkalan Tiara 13
Pengkalan Tiara, 31650 Ipoh, Perak.

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Sesyen di Ipoh, Perak oleh TASEK CLAY COMPANY yang beralamat di No. 83, Jalan Pasu Bunga, Off Jalan Kuala Kangsar, 30010 Ipoh, Perak di mana Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 24.08.2026 dan Perintah Bagi Penyampaian Ganti bertarikh 13.10.2026 diserahkan kepada kamu secara penyampaian ganti dengan menampakkannya di Papan Notis Mahkamah Sesyen di Ipoh, Perak dan di premis-premis seperti yang dinyatakan di atas dan secara pengklanan dalam satu (1) Notis dalam (1) keluaran mana-mana Akhbar Tempatan dan bahawa penyampaian dan Pengklanan tersebut dianggap sebagai cara yang sempurna dan memadai ke atas kamu dalam tindakan ini selepas empatbelas (14) hari dari tarikh akhir penampalan dan pengklanan mana-mana terakhirnya dilakukan.
SEKIRANYA KAMU BERHASRAT untuk membantah Writ Saman tersebut, kamu mestilah dalam tempoh empatbelas (14) hari selepas tarikh penampalan dan pengklanan ini untuk memfailkan ke Mahkamah ini samada satu Memorandum Kehadiran dan Pembelaan bagi maksud tersebut. Jika kami ingkar maka Perintah Seperti Dipohon sepertimana dalam Writ Saman akan dibenarkan oleh Mahkamah terhadap kamu.
SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa kes ini telah ditetapkan untuk Pengurusan Kes secara e-Review pada 28 Oktober 2026 pada pukul 9.00 pagi di Mahkamah Sesyen di Ipoh Perak.
Berakhir pada 13 Oktober 2026
-tanda tangan-
T/N NAHT, GUNA & PARTNERS
Peguamcara bagi Plaintiff
BENTUK PENGKLANAN ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Naht, Guna & Partners Peguambela & Peguamcara yang beralamat di No. 26A, Medan Istana 5, Bandar Ipoh Raya, 30000 Ipoh, Perak. Peguamcara bagi pihak Plaintiff diatas. Ruj : N/H/CIV/2267/25

...PLAINTIF

...DEFENDAN

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Sixty-Sixth Annual General Meeting ("66th AGM") of the Company will be held at Manhattan III, Level 14, Berjaya Times Square Hotel Kuala Lumpur, No. 1 Jalan Imbi, 55100 Kuala Lumpur on Thursday, 3 December 2026 at 10.00 a.m. for the following purposes:-

AGENDA

As ordinary business

1. To receive and adopt the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 and the Directors' and Auditors' Reports thereon.

2. To approve the payment of Directors' fees up to an amount of RM456,000.00 to the Non-Executive Directors of the Company for the period from 4 December 2026 until the next Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held in 2027.

3. To approve the payment of benefits (excluding Directors' fees) to the Non-Executive Directors of the Company up to an amount of RM640,000.00 for the period from 4 December 2026 until the next Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held in 2027.

4. To re-elect the following Directors who retire pursuant to Clause 117 of the Company's Constitution and who being eligible, offer themselves for re-election:-

a) YAM Tunku Tun Aminah Binti Sultan Ibrahim Ismail

b) Tan Sri Dato' Seri Zulkefli Bin Ahmad Makinudin

c) Datuk Wira Lye Ek Seang

5. To re-elect Tan Tee Ming who retires pursuant to Clause 107 of the Company's Constitution and who being eligible, offer himself for re-election.

6. To re-appoint Messrs Deloitte Malaysia PLT as Auditors of the Company and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration.

As special business

7. To consider and, if thought fit, pass the following Ordinary Resolutions:-

(i) Authority to Issue and Allot Shares pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016

"THAT, subject always to the Companies Act 2016, the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, the Constitution of the Company and the approvals of the relevant governmental/regulatory authorities, the Directors be and are hereby empowered, pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016, to issue and allot shares in the Company from time to time at such price and upon such terms and conditions and for such purposes as the Directors may deem fit provided that the aggregate number of shares issued pursuant to this resolution does not exceed 10% of the total number of issued shares of the Company for the time being AND THAT the Directors be and are also empowered to obtain the approval from Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad for the listing and quotation for the additional shares so issued AND THAT such authority shall continue to be in force until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company.

AND THAT pursuant to Section 85 of the Companies Act 2016 to be read together with Clause 60 of the Constitution of the Company, approval be and is hereby given to waive the statutory pre-emptive rights of the Company to be offered new shares ranking pari passu in all respects with the existing ordinary shares arising from the issuance and allotment of the shares pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016."

(ii) Proposed Renewal of and New Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature with Persons Connected with Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yiuun and/or Berjaya Corporation Berhad

"THAT, subject to the provisions of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, approval be and is hereby given for the Company and its subsidiary companies, to enter into recurrent related party transactions of a revenue or trading nature with persons connected with Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yiuun ("TSVT") and/or Berjaya Corporation Berhad ("BCorporation"), including companies in which such persons connected with TSVT and/or BCorporation is/are major shareholder(s) as specified in Section 2.3 of the Circular to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026 ("Proposed Mandate I") which are necessary for the day-to-day operations and/or in the ordinary course of business of the Company and its subsidiary companies on terms not more favourable to the related parties than those generally available to the public and are not detrimental to the minority shareholders of the Company and that such approval shall continue to be in force until:-

a) the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Company following the AGM at which such ordinary resolution for the Proposed Mandate I was passed, at which time it will lapse, unless by ordinary resolution passed at that general meeting, the authority is renewed;

b) the expiration of the period within which the next AGM after the date it is required to be held pursuant to Section 340(2) of the Companies Act 2016 (but shall not extend to such extension as may be allowed pursuant to Section 340(4) of the Companies Act 2016); or

c) revoked or varied by ordinary resolution passed by the shareholders of the Company in a general meeting, whichever is the earlier;

AND FURTHER THAT authority be and is hereby given to the Directors of the Company and its subsidiary companies to complete and do all such acts and things (including executing such documents as may be required) to give effect to such transactions as authorised by this Ordinary Resolution."

(iii) Proposed Renewal of and New Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature with Companies in which Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yiuun, Berjaya Corporation Berhad and KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim are Major Shareholders

"THAT, subject to the provisions of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, approval be and is hereby given for the Company and its subsidiary companies, to enter into recurrent related party transactions of a revenue or trading nature with companies in which Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yiuun, Berjaya Corporation Berhad and KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim are major shareholders as specified in Section 2.3 of the Circular to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026 ("Proposed Mandate II") which are necessary for the day-to-day operations and/or in the ordinary course of business of the Company and its subsidiary companies on terms not more favourable to the related parties than those generally available to the public and are not detrimental to the minority shareholders of the Company and that such approval shall continue to be in force until:-

a) the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Company following the AGM at which such ordinary resolution for the Proposed Mandate II was passed, at which time it will lapse, unless by ordinary resolution passed at that general meeting, the authority is renewed;

b) the expiration of the period within which the next AGM after the date it is required to be held pursuant to Section 340(2) of the Companies Act 2016 (but shall not extend to such extension as may be allowed pursuant to Section 340(4) of the Companies Act 2016); or

c) revoked or varied by ordinary resolution passed by the shareholders of the Company in a general meeting, whichever is the earlier;

AND FURTHER THAT authority be and is hereby given to the Directors of the Company and its subsidiary companies to complete and do all such acts and things (including executing such documents as may be required) to give effect to such transactions as authorised by this Ordinary Resolution."

(iv) Proposed Renewal of and New Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature with a Company in which KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim and Detik Ria Sdn Bhd are Major Shareholders

"THAT, subject to the provisions of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, approval be and is hereby given for the Company and its subsidiary companies, to enter into recurrent related party transactions of a revenue or trading nature with a company in which KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim and Detik Ria Sdn Bhd are major shareholders as specified in Section 2.3 of the Circular to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026 ("Proposed Mandate III") which are necessary for the day-to-day operations and/or in the ordinary course of business of the Company and its subsidiary companies on terms not more favourable to the related parties than those generally available to the public and are not detrimental to the minority shareholders of the Company and that such approval shall continue to be in force until:-

a) the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Company following the AGM at which such ordinary resolution for the Proposed Mandate III was passed, at which time it will lapse, unless by ordinary resolution passed at that general meeting, the authority is renewed;

b) the expiration of the period within which the next AGM after the date it is required to be held pursuant to Section 340(2) of the Companies Act 2016 (but shall not extend to such extension as may be allowed pursuant to Section 340(4) of the Companies Act 2016); or

c) revoked or varied by ordinary resolution passed by the shareholders of the Company in a general meeting, whichever is the earlier;

AND FURTHER THAT authority be and is hereby given to the Directors of the Company and its subsidiary companies to complete and do all such acts and things (including executing such documents as may be required) to give effect to such transactions as authorised by this Ordinary Resolution."

(v) Proposed Renewal of Authority for the Company to Purchase its Own Shares

"THAT, subject always to the Companies Act 2016 ("Act"), rules, regulations and orders made pursuant to the Act, provisions of the Company's Constitution, the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Exchange") and the requirements of any other relevant authority, the Directors of the Company be and are hereby authorised to purchase such number of ordinary shares in the Company ("BASSETS Shares") through the Exchange and to take all such steps as are necessary (including the opening and maintaining of central depositories accounts under the Securities Industry (Central Depositories) Act, 1991) and enter into any agreements, arrangements and guarantees with any party or parties to implement, finalise and give full effect to the aforesaid purchase with full powers to assent to any conditions, modifications, revaluations, variations and/or amendments (if any) as may be imposed by the relevant authorities from time to time and to do all such acts and things in the best interests of the Company, subject further to the following:-

1. the maximum number of ordinary shares which may be purchased and held by the Company shall be equivalent to ten per centum (10%) of the total number of issued shares of the Company;

2. the maximum funds to be allocated by the Company for the purpose of purchasing the ordinary shares shall not exceed the total retained profits of the Company;

3. the authority shall commence immediately upon passing of this ordinary resolution until:

a) the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Company following the AGM at which such ordinary resolution was passed, at which time it will lapse, unless by ordinary resolution passed at that general meeting, the authority is renewed, either unconditionally or subject to conditions; or

(Please refer to Note 1 of the Explanatory Notes)

Resolution 1

Resolution 2

Resolution 3

Resolution 4

Resolution 5

Resolution 6

Resolution 7

By Order of the Board

WONG SIEW GUEK
(MAICSA 7042922)
(SSM Practising Certificate No.: 202008001490)
Secretary

NOTES:

1. Audited Financial Statements

The Audited Financial Statements are meant for discussion only as it does not require shareholders' approval pursuant to the provisions of Section 340(1)(a) of the Companies Act 2016 ("CA 2016"). Hence, this item on the Agenda is not put forward for voting.

2. Directors' Fees

Resolution 1, if passed, is to facilitate the payment of Directors' fees to the Non-Executive Directors on a monthly basis up to the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Company to be held in 2027. The Board opined that it is just and equitable for the payment to be made on such basis as the Non-Executive Directors have been diligently discharging their responsibilities and rendering their services to the Company.

The quantum of the Directors' fees proposed for each Non-Executive Directors for the period from 4 December 2026 until the next AGM of the Company to be held in 2027 are the same as the quantum paid for each Non-Executive Directors in the preceding period.

3. Benefits (excluding Directors' Fees)

Section 230(1) of the CA 2016 provides that the 'fees' of the directors and 'any benefits' payable to the directors of a listed company and its subsidiaries shall be approved at a general meeting. Accordingly, shareholders' approval shall be sought at the 66th AGM for the payment of benefits (excluding Directors' fees) payable to the Non-Executive Directors of the Company for the period from 4 December 2026 until the next AGM of the Company to be held in 2027 under Resolution 2.

The current benefits (excluding Directors' fees) payable to the Non-Executive Directors for the Company comprises of meeting allowances and other emoluments.

In determining the estimated amount of remuneration payable to the Non-Executive Directors, the Board considered various factors including the number of scheduled meetings for the Board of Directors ("Board"), Board Committees and general meetings of the Company as well as the number of Non-Executive Directors involved in these meetings.

In the event where the payment of benefits (excluding Directors' fees) payable during the above period exceeded the estimated amount sought at the 66th AGM, a shareholders' approval will be sought at the next AGM.

4. Re-election of Directors

Resolution 3 to Resolution 6 are to seek shareholders' approval at the 66th AGM for the re-election of Directors who retire by rotation pursuant to Clause 117 and Clause 107 of the Company's Constitution.

Pursuant to Clause 117 of the Company's Constitution, one third (1/3) of the Directors shall retire from office at least once in every three (3) years at each AGM of the Company and the retiring Directors can offer themselves for re-election. Clause 107 of the Company's Constitution also provides that a Director who is appointed during the year shall retire and subject to re-election at the next AGM to be held following his/her appointment.

For the purpose of determining the eligibility of Director to stand for re-election at the 66th AGM of the Company, the Nomination Committee ("NC") has considered the performance, contribution as well as fitness and propriety of each of the retiring Directors and has also assessed the independence of the retiring Independent Director seeking for re-election.

Based on the recommendation of the NC, the Board, having been satisfied with the performance, contribution as well as fitness and propriety of all the retiring Directors, supports and recommended the re-election of the retiring Directors for approval by the shareholders at the forthcoming 66th AGM.

The profiles of the Directors who are standing for re-election as per Agenda item No. 4 and 5 are set out in the Board of Directors' profile of the Annual Report 2026.

5. Re-appointment of Auditors

Resolution 7 is to seek shareholders' approval at the 66th AGM for the re-appointment of Messrs Deloitte Malaysia PLT ("Deloitte") as Auditors of the Company until the conclusion of the next AGM of the Company and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee ("ARMC") has considered and recommended to the Board on the re-appointment of Deloitte as Auditors of the Company based on the results of the External Auditors Evaluation for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 wherein Deloitte has satisfactorily performed their audit and discharged their professional responsibilities in accordance with its rules on professional conduct and ethics and the By-Laws (on Professional Ethics, Conducts and Practice) issued by the Malaysian Institute of Accountants.

The Board has deliberated on the ARMC's recommendation and recommended the re-appointment of Deloitte as Auditors of the Company for shareholders' approval at the forthcoming 66th AGM.

6. Authority to issue and allot shares pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the CA 2016

Resolution 8 is proposed for the purpose of granting a renewed general mandate ("General Mandate") and empowering the Directors of the Company, pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the CA 2016, to issue and allot new shares in the Company from time to time at such price provided that the aggregate number of shares issued pursuant to the General Mandate does not exceed 10% of the total number of issued shares of the Company for the time being. The General Mandate, unless revoked or varied by the Company in general meeting, will expire at the conclusion of the next AGM of the Company.

As at the date of this Notice, no new shares in the Company were issued pursuant to the mandate granted to the Directors at the 65th AGM held on 4 December 2025 and which will lapse at the conclusion of the 66th AGM.

The General Mandate will provide flexibility to the Company for any possible fund raising activities, including but not limited to further placing of shares, for purpose of funding current and/or future investment/project(s), working capital and/or acquisitions or issuance of shares for such other application(s) as the Directors may deem fit and in the best interest of the Company.

7. Proposed Renewal of and New Shareholders' Mandate for Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a Revenue or Trading Nature

(a) Resolution 9, if passed, will allow the Company and its subsidiary companies to enter into Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a revenue or trading nature with persons connected with Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yiuun ("TSVT") and/or Berjaya Corporation Berhad ("BCorporation"), including companies in which such persons connected with TSVT and/or BCorporation is/are major shareholder(s) in accordance with Paragraph 10.09 of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Proposed Mandate I").

(b) Resolution 10, if passed, will allow the Company and its subsidiary companies to enter into Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a revenue or trading nature with companies in which TSVT, BCorporation and KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim are major shareholders in accordance with Paragraph 10.09 of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Proposed Mandate II").

(c) Resolution 11, if passed, will allow the Company and its subsidiary companies to enter into Recurrent Related Party Transactions of a revenue or trading nature with a company in which KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim and Detik Ria Sdn Bhd are major shareholders in accordance with Paragraph 10.09 of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Proposed Mandate III").

Detailed information on the Proposed Mandate I, Proposed Mandate II and Proposed Mandate III are set out under Part A of the Circular/Statement to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026 which can be viewed and downloaded from the website of the Company at www.berjaya.com/berjaya-assets/ and/or Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad at www.bursamalaysia.com.

8. Proposed Renewal of Authority for the Company to Purchase its Own Shares

Resolution 12, if passed, will provide the mandate for the Company to buy back its own shares up to a limit of 10% of the total number of issued shares of the Company ("Proposed Share Buy-Back Renewal"). Detailed information on the Proposed Share Buy-Back Renewal is set out under Part B of the Circular/Statement to Shareholders dated 28 October 2026 which can be viewed and downloaded from the website of the Company at www.berjaya.com/berjaya-assets/ and/or Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad at www.bursamalaysia.com.

9. Proxy and Entitlement of Attendance

(a) A member of the Company who is entitled to attend, speak and vote at the 66th AGM of the Company is entitled to appoint a proxy to exercise all or any of his/her rights to attend, speak and vote in his/her stead. A proxy may but need not be a member of the Company.

(b) A member, other than an authorised nominee or an exempt authorised nominee, may appoint only one (1) proxy.

(c) An authorised nominee, as defined under the Securities Industry (Central Depositories) Act 1991 ("SICDA"), may appoint one (1) proxy in respect of each securities account.

(d) An exempt authorised nominee, as defined under SICDA, and holding ordinary shares in the Company for multiple beneficial owners in one securities account ("omnibus account"), may appoint multiple proxies in respect of each of its omnibus account.

(e) An individual member who appoints a proxy must sign the Form of Proxy personally or by his attorney duly authorised in writing. A corporate member who appoints a proxy must execute the Form of Proxy under seal or under the hand of its officer or attorney duly authorised.

(f) The Form of Proxy shall be executed and deposited at the Company's Registered Office at Lot 13-01A, Level 13 (East Wing), Berjaya Times Square, No. 1 Jalan Imbi, 55100 Kuala Lumpur OR alternatively, the Form of Proxy may be submitted electronically via Berjaya Registration Portal at <https://www.berjaya.com/berjaya-registration> no less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time appointed for holding the 66th AGM of the Company.

(g) Only members whose names appear in the Record of Depositors as at 26 November 2026 shall be entitled to attend and vote at the 66th AGM or appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his/her stead.

10. Poll voting

Pursuant to Paragraph 8.29A(1) of the Main Market Listing Requirements of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad, all the Resolutions set out in this Notice will be put to vote by poll.

Kuala Lumpur
28 October 2026



NOTICE OF THE TWELFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Twelfth Annual General Meeting ("12th AGM") of the Company will be conducted physically at Corporate Meetings by Envivo, Ground Floor, Lobby 1, 4, Jalan 51A/223, Seksyen 51A, 46100 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia ("Venue") on **Thursday, 26 November 2026 at 10.00 a.m.** for the following purposes:

AGENDA

Ordinary Business

- To receive the Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 and the Reports of the Directors and the Auditors thereon. (Please refer to Explanatory Note 1)

- To re-elect the following Directors retiring in accordance with Clause 125 of the Constitution of the Company:

2.1 Mr Tan Tuan Peng

Resolution 1
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 2)

2.2 Datuk Tew Boon Chin

Resolution 2
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 2)

- To re-elect Datuk Lee Yin Chung who is retiring in accordance with Clause 130 of the Constitution of the Company.

Resolution 3
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 2)

- To approve the payment of Directors' Fees of RM192,500.00 in respect of the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

Resolution 4
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 3)

- To approve the payment of Directors' benefits of up to RM154,200.00 for the period from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027.

Resolution 5
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 3)

- To re-appoint BDO PLT as the Auditors of the Company and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration.

Resolution 6
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 4)

Special Business

To consider and if thought fit, to pass the following as Ordinary Resolutions:

- To approve the payment of the first and final single tier dividend of 0.14 sen per ordinary share for the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

Resolution 7
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 5)

- Authority to Allot and Issue Shares Pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016**

Resolution 8
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 6)

"THAT pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016 ("Act"), ACE Market Listing Requirements ("Listing Requirements") of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad ("Bursa Securities") and the approval of the relevant regulatory authorities, where such approval is required, the Directors of the Company be and are hereby authorised to issue and allot shares in the capital of the Company, grant rights to subscribe for shares in the Company, convert any securities into shares in the Company, or allot shares under an agreement or option or offer ("New Shares") from time to time, at such price, to such persons and for such purposes and upon such terms and conditions as the Directors may in their absolute discretion deem fit, provided that the aggregate number of such New Shares to be issued, to be subscribed under any rights granted, to be issued from conversion of any security, or to be issued and allotted under an agreement or option or offer, pursuant to this resolution, when aggregated with the total number of any such shares issued during the preceding 12 months does not exceed 10% of the total number of issued shares (excluding any treasury shares) of the Company for the time being ("Proposed General Mandate").

THAT such approval on the Proposed General Mandate shall continue to be in force until:

- the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company held after the approval was given;
- the expiration of the period within which the next Annual General Meeting of the Company is required to be held after the approval was given; or
- revoked or varied by resolution passed by the shareholders of the Company in a general meeting,

whichever is the earlier.

THAT the Directors of the Company be and are hereby also empowered to obtain the approval from Bursa Securities for the listing of and quotation for such New Shares on the ACE Market of Bursa Securities.

THAT authority be and is hereby given to the Directors of the Company, to give effect to the Proposed General Mandate with full powers to assent to any conditions, modifications, variations and/or amendments as they may deem fit in the best interest of the Company and/or as may be imposed by the relevant authorities.

AND THAT the Directors of the Company, be and are hereby authorised to implement, finalise, complete and take all necessary steps and to do all acts (including execute such documents as may be required), deeds and things in relation to the Proposed General Mandate."

- Retention of Dato' Foong Chee Meng as Independent Non-Executive Director**

Resolution 9
(Please refer to Explanatory Note 7)

"THAT Dato' Foong Chee Meng, an Independent Director who has served in the Company for more than nine (9) years, be hereby retained as an Independent Director and to hold office until 31 August 2027."

- To transact any other business of the Company of which due notice shall have been given.

NOTICE OF DIVIDEND PAYMENT AND CLOSURE OF REGISTER

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, a first and final single tier dividend of 0.14 sen per ordinary share in respect of the financial year ended 30 June 2026, if approved by the shareholders, will be paid on 8 January 2027 to shareholders registered in the Record of Depositors at the close of business on 14 December 2026 (Depositor).

A Depositor shall qualify for entitlement to the dividend only in respect of:

- Shares transferred into the Depositor's securities account before 4:30 p.m. on 14 December 2026 in respect of transfers; and Shares bought on Bursa Securities on a cum entitlement basis according to the Rules of Bursa Securities

By Order of the Board

KHOO MING SIANG (SSM PC No. 202208000150) (MAICSA 7034037)

NG LAI YEE (SSM PC No. 202008000977) (MAICSA 7031768)

Joint Company Secretaries

Petaling Jaya

Selangor, Malaysia

Dated: 28 October 2026

NOTES:

- For the purpose of determining a member who shall be entitled to attend and vote at the AGM, the Company shall be requesting Bursa Malaysia Depository Sdn Bhd to make available to the Company a Record of Depositors as at **19 November 2026** and only a depositor whose name appears in the Record of Depositors shall be entitled to participate at AGM or to appoint proxy(ies) to participate on his/her behalf.

Appointment of Proxy

- A member of the Company who is entitled to attend and vote at this meeting shall be entitled to appoint not more than two (2) proxies to exercise all or any of his/her rights to participate in his/her stead pursuant to Section 334 of the Companies Act 2016. There shall be no restriction as to the qualification of the proxy.
- Where a member is an authorised nominee as defined under the Securities Industry (Central Depositories) Act, 1991 ("SICDA"), it may appoint one (1) proxy in respect of each securities account it holds with ordinary shares of the Company standing to the credit of the said securities account.
- Where a member of the Company is an Exempt Authorised Nominee which holds ordinary shares in the Company for multiple beneficial owners in one securities account ("Omnibus Account"), there is no limit to the number of proxies which the Exempt Authorised Nominee may appoint in respect of each Omnibus Account it holds. An Exempt Authorised Nominee refers to an authorised nominee defined under SICDA which is exempted from compliance with the provisions of subsection 25A(1) of SICDA.
- Where a member appoints more than one (1) proxy, the proportion of shareholdings to be represented by each proxy must be specified in the instrument appointing the proxies, otherwise the appointment shall not be valid.
- The appointment of a proxy may be made in a hard copy or by electronic means in the following manner and must be received by

the Company at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time appointed for holding the general meeting or any adjournment thereof at which the person named in the appointment proposes to vote:

In hard copy

In the case of an appointment made in hard copy, the proxy form must be deposited at the Share Registrar's office at Unit 32-01, Level 32, Tower A, Vertical Business Suite, Avenue 3, Bangsar South, No. 8, Jalan Kerinchi, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia or alternatively to be deposited in the drop-box located at Unit G-3, Ground Floor, Vertical Podium, Avenue 3, Bangsar South, No. 8, Jalan Kerinchi, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

By electronic means

The proxy form can be electronically lodged with the Share Registrar of the Company via Vistra Share Registry and /PO (MY) portal ("The Portal") at <https://srmy.vistra.com>. Please refer to the Administrative Guide for the AGM on the procedures for electronic lodgement of proxy form via the Portal.

- Any authority pursuant to which such an appointment is made by a power of attorney must be deposited at the Share Registrar's office at the above address not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time appointed for holding the 12th AGM or adjourned general meeting at which the persons named in the appointment proposes to vote. A copy of the power of attorney may be accepted provided that it is certified notarially and/or in accordance with the applicable legal requirements in the relevant jurisdiction in which it is executed.
- For a corporate member who has appointed an authorised representative, please deposit the **ORIGINAL/DULY CERTIFIED** certificate of appointment of authorised representative with the Share Registrar of the Company at the above address. The certificate of appointment of authorised representative should be executed under seal in accordance with the constitution of the corporate member. If the corporate member does not have a common seal, the certificate of appointment of authorised representative should be affixed with the rubber stamp of the corporate member (if any) and executed by at least two (2) authorised officers, of whom one shall be a director; or any director and/or authorised officers in accordance with the laws of the country under which the corporate member is incorporated.
- Please ensure ALL the particulars as required in the Proxy Form are completed, signed and dated accordingly.
- Last date and time for lodging the Proxy Form is **Tuesday, 24 November 2026 at 10.00 a.m.**

- Shareholders are advised to check the Company's website and announcements from time to time for any changes to the administration of the 12th AGM.

Explanatory Notes on Ordinary Business

1. Agenda Item No. 1 - Audited Financial Statements for the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

The Audited Financial Statements is meant for discussion only as an approval from the shareholders is not required pursuant to the provision of Section 340(1)(a) of the Companies Act 2016 ("the Act"). Hence, this item on the Agenda is not put forward for voting.

2. Agenda Item No. 2 & No. 3

Resolution No. 1 to No. 3 - Re-election of Directors

Mr Tan Tuan Peng and Datuk Tew Boon Chin are standing for re-election as Directors of the Company in accordance with the Clause 125 of the Company's Constitution. Datuk Lee Yin Chung, an additional Director appointed on 10 December 2025, is subject to re-election as a Director of the Company in accordance with Clause 130 of the Company's Constitution. The retiring Directors, being eligible, have offered themselves for re-election at the 12th AGM. The details of the retiring Directors are set out under their respective profiles on pages 6 to 8 of the Annual Report 2026.

The Board had, through the Nomination and Remuneration Committee ("NRC"), assessed the performance and contribution of the retiring Directors through the annual Board and Directors' assessment for 2026 and taken into consideration the fit and proper criteria under the Directors' Fit and Proper Policy of the Company.

Based on the outcome of the above assessment, the NRC and the Board were satisfied that the retiring Directors met the criteria as prescribed under Rule 2.20A of the Listing Requirements of Bursa Securities on character, experience, integrity, competence and time commitment to effectively discharge their roles as Directors. Accordingly, the Board (save for the retiring Directors who had abstained from deliberations on their own re-election) is supportive of the re-election of the retiring Directors.

3. Agenda Item No. 4 & No. 5

Resolution No. 4 & No. 5 - Approval of Directors' Fees and Directors' Benefits

The approval for the proposed Resolution No. 4 and No. 5 in relation to the payment of Directors' fees and benefits are sought pursuant to Section 230(1) of the Companies Act 2016. The proposed Resolutions are to facilitate payment of Directors' fees for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 and Directors' benefits on the current financial year basis until the conclusion of the Company's next Annual General Meeting ("AGM") in 2027.

Directors' benefits include allowances and other emoluments payable to Directors and in determining the estimated total, the Board had considered various factors including the number of scheduled meetings for the Board, Board Committees, Board meetings of subsidiaries and covers the period from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027 (the due date for which the next AGM should be held). In the event the Directors' benefits proposed are insufficient (e.g. due to more meetings or enlarged Board size etc.), approval will be sought at the next AGM for the additional amount to meet the shortfall.

4. Agenda Item No. 6

Resolution No. 6 - Re-appointment of External Auditors

The Board had, through the Audit and Risk Management Committee ("ARMC"), assessed the suitability, objectivity and independence of the External Auditors, BDO PLT. The ARMC and the Board were satisfied that BDO PLT met the relevant criteria prescribed under Rule 15.21 of the Listing Requirements of Bursa Securities. The Board approved the ARMC's recommendation to seek shareholders' approval for the re-appointment of BDO PLT as the External Auditors of the Company.

Explanatory Notes on Special Business

5. Agenda Item 7

Resolution No. 7 - First and Final Single Tier Dividend for the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

The Board of Directors, having satisfied that the distribution of first and final single tier dividend is made out of profits of the Company and that the Company will be solvent and will be able to pay its debts as and when the debts become due within 12 months immediately after the distribution is made in accordance with the requirements under the Companies Act 2016, is recommending the first and final single-tier dividend of 0.14 sen per ordinary share for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 for shareholders' approval.

6. Agenda Item No. 8

Resolution No. 8 - Authority to Allot and Issue Shares Pursuant to Sections 75 and 76 of the Companies Act 2016

The proposed Ordinary Resolution, if passed, will empower the Directors of the Company to issue and allot ordinary shares of the Company from time to time and to grant rights to subscribe for shares in the Company, convert any securities into shares in the Company, or allot shares under an agreement or option or offer, provided that the aggregate number of shares allotted pursuant to this resolution does not exceed the prescribed limit under the Listing Requirements of Bursa Securities.

The Board of Directors of the Company is of the view that the Proposed General Mandate is in the best interest of the Company and its shareholders as it will provide flexibility to the Company to issue new securities without the need to convene separate general meeting to obtain its shareholders' approval so as to avoid incurring additional costs and time. It will enable the Directors to take swift action in case of a need to issue and allot new shares in the Company for fund raising exercise including but not limited to further placement of shares for purpose of funding current and/ or future investment projects, working capital, acquisitions and/or for issuance of shares as settlement of purchase consideration, or other circumstances arise which involve grant of rights to subscribe for shares, conversion of any securities into shares, or allotment of shares under an agreement or option or offer, or such other application as the Directors may deem fit in the best interest of the Company.

The proposed Resolution No.8 is a renewal of the previous year's mandate. As at the date of this Notice, the Company has not issued any new shares under the general mandate granted at the previous Annual General Meeting of the Company.

7. Agenda Item No. 9

Resolution No. 9 - Retention of Dato' Foong Chee Meng as Independent Non-Executive Director

Dato' Foong Chee Meng ("Dato' Foong") was appointed as Independent Director of the Company on 1 September 2015 and has served the Board for a cumulative term of more than nine (9) years. The Nomination and Remuneration Committee and the Board of Directors of the Company had at their annual assessment determined that Dato' Foong, the Independent Director, is objective and independent in expressing his views and he participated in deliberations and decision making of the Board and Board Committees. The length of his service on the Board does not in any way interfere with the exercise of independent judgement and his ability to act in the best interests of the Company. The Company therefore tables the proposal to retain Dato' Foong as an Independent Director.

PERSONAL DATA POLICY

By submitting an instrument appointing proxy(ies) and/or representative(s) to attend, participate and vote at the 12th AGM and/or any adjournment thereof, a member of the Company (i) consents to the collection, use and disclosure of the member's personal data by the Company (or its agents/service providers) for the purpose of the processing and administration by the Company (or its agents/service providers) of the proxies and representatives appointed for the 12th AGM (including any adjournment thereof) and the preparation and compilation of the attendance lists, minutes and other documents relating to the 12th AGM (including any adjournment thereof), and in order for the Company (or its agents/service providers) to comply with any applicable laws, listing rules, regulations and/or guidelines (collectively, the "Purposes"), (ii) warrants that where the member discloses the personal data of the member's proxy(ies) and/or representative(s) to the Company (or its agents/service providers), the member has obtained the prior consent of such proxy(ies) and/or representative(s) for the collection, use and disclosure by the Company (or its agents/service providers) of the personal data of such proxy(ies) and/or representative(s) for the Purposes, and (iii) agrees that the member will indemnify the Company in respect of any penalties, liabilities, claims, demands, losses and damages as a result of the member's breach of warranty.



Price squeeze ahead?

Experts say consumer inflation risks likely to show up in 1H27

ECONOMY

By LYDIA NATHAN
lydia.sheena@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: The projected acceleration in Malaysia's Producer Price Index (PPI) has raised questions on whether higher costs will impact consumer inflation in the future.

The PPI surged to 10.7% in August this year – the fastest pace since June 2022.

It was driven by higher manufacturing and mining costs amid ongoing supply disruptions linked to tensions in the Middle East.

However, even with a rise in the PPI, experts said the consumer price pass-through is limited, supported by continued subsidies, regulated pricing mechanisms and relatively moderate domestic demand conditions.

Mercury Securities head of research Ahmad Ramzani Ramli said consumer inflation has barely moved and that he currently sees little evidence of a broad pass-through.

Ahmad Ramzani pointed out that while the gap between producer and consumer prices is large, it is mostly an upstream energy and commodity story at the moment.

"The risk is concentrated in food and utilities, and it would likely show up in the consumer price index (CPI) during the first half of financial year 2027 or 1H27 rather than the fourth quarter of financial year 2026 (4Q26).

"The base case is that the impact is limited in 4Q26 and becomes more visible in the first half of next year, provided energy prices stay elevated."

Ahmad Ramzani Ramli

"Malaysia's CPI is heavily shaped by regulated fuel, electricity and utility tariffs, which dampen the link from producer prices to headline inflation in the short run," he told *StarBiz*.

According to Ahmad Ramzani, the divergence of businesses absorbing costs will be sustainable as long as energy prices stay high and administered prices absorb the shock.

"The pattern you would expect is that margins are squeezed first where input costs make up a large share of overall costs, and the business sells mainly to domestic buyers who are price-sensitive.

"Export-orientated manufacturers, particularly in electrical and electronics, face less domestic pressure because their prices are set externally," he said.

When asked on the duration that these businesses might be able to absorb costs, Ahmad Ramzani noted that this will be highly dependent on the cost-to-revenue share, contract terms and competitive position.

He added typically, commodity-linked

contracts will pass costs on through with a lag, so a producer may hold prices for a few months before resetting.

"The base case is that the impact is limited in 4Q26 and becomes more visible in the first half of next year, provided energy prices stay elevated.

"Headline CPI at 1.8% leaves little room for a jump in one quarter, and the lag from producers to consumers is typically several months," he said.

As for factors that could accelerate the pass-through of costs to consumers, Ahmad Ramzani said there are a few main ones like sustained high crude prices that feed into fuel-adjustment mechanisms and tariff revisions, as well as further electricity or utility tariff resets.

He added the depreciation of the ringgit will raise imported input costs and should businesses pass through costs while labour markets stay tight, then wage pressure will be a factor as well.

"Factors that could delay the cost pass-through include continued subsidies or price controls on fuel and essentials, a fall

in global energy prices, which would reverse the mining-led PPI surge, and weaker domestic demand since domestically oriented output has already slowed," Ahmad Ramzani noted.

Should the cost pass-through take place, he reckoned some of the first few sectors that will raise their costs are utilities and transport services, food and beverages, petroleum-lined goods, and construction materials.

"The least exposed would include export-priced manufacturing, particularly electrical and electronics, where Malaysian producers are price takers in global markets," he said.

On the flip side, Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid explained the divergence between PPI and CPI is a reflection of the decision businesses have made to absorb some of the cost increases.

He said this has been at the expense of businesses' profit margins, in order to preserve client relationships as well as market share.

"However, if higher costs become protracted, these businesses will eventually cave in and begin to pass on the additional costs to consumers," he said.

According to Mohd Afzanizam, this is where the latest projection for inflation rate by the government was stated.

"It was projected that the CPI could rise between 1.8% to 2.8% in 2027 from an estimated 1.5% to 2.5% in 2026," Mohd Afzanizam noted.

Nestle 3Q26 profit jumps 73% on higher sales

Group to focus on consumer needs and market reach

CORPORATE

PETALING JAYA: Nestle (M) Bhd will focus on staying closely attuned to evolving consumer needs, sharpening execution across channels, and widening its brands' reach across consumption occasions, after another positive third quarter.

In addition, the company declared a second interim dividend of 80 sen per share – amounting to RM187.6mil – for the financial year ending Dec 31, 2026 (FY26), which will be paid on Dec 9, 2026.

In the third quarter ended Sep 30, 2026 (3Q26), the company recorded a revenue of RM1.86bil, up 5.3% from 3Q25's RM1.76bil.

Nestle said the rise was driven by resilient domestic demand in key product categories, backed by continued innovation and effective commercial execution, as well as consistent demand for its halal made-in-Malaysia products across export markets.

Net profit also saw a 73.2% jump to RM197.51mil in 3Q26 from RM114.04mil a year earlier, an improvement attributed to higher sales, some softening in commodity costs, and ongoing efforts in operational efficiencies and digitalisation initiatives.

Based on its quarterly financial report, the company's 3Q25 profit base was lower partly due to a RM22.87mil impairment loss on property, plant and equipment.

On a cumulative basis, the first nine months of FY26 saw revenue of RM5.55bil, a year-on-year increase of 6.7% from last year's RM5.2bil, while reported year-to-

“While the operating environment remains dynamic, investments in digitalisation, automation and productivity will help us operate more efficiently and respond with greater speed and agility.”

Juan Aranols

date net profit stood at RM557.64mil, up by 43.9% from RM387.5mil the previous year.

Chief executive officer of Nestle Malaysia Juan Aranols reaffirmed a solid outlook for the full FY26, adding that the company moves into the fourth quarter with “a high comparative base against a very strong period in 2025”.

“While the operating environment remains dynamic, investments in digitalisation, automation and productivity will help us operate more efficiently and respond with greater speed and agility,” he said.

“With our local manufacturing capabilities, broad distribution network and our committed teams, these efforts will further reinforce our competitiveness and position us for sustainable growth over the long term.”

Nestle elaborated that it continues to invest in core brands during 3Q26 through innovation, brand-building and market-

place execution to cement its relevance to consumers across various consumption occasions.

Aranols said the company's performance for the first nine months this year reflects the resilience of demand for its brands and the disciplined, high-quality work of its teams.

“With our deeply rooted manufacturing footprint and 100% halal-certified products that are made in Malaysia, by Malaysians, for Malaysians, we are deeply connected to the consumers and communities we serve.

“This solid foundation is central to how we grow our business and create value over the long term.”

He added that as consumers continue to be discerning, the company will continue its focus on delivering quality, nutrition, convenience and value, supported by innovation and sustained investment in its brands and operations.

TNB issues RM4.8bil sukuk

PETALING JAYA: Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) has made the second issuance worth RM4.8bil of the company's Islamic medium term notes (MTN) programme of up to RM10bil in nominal value based on the syariah principle of wakalah bi al-istithmar.

The RM4.8bil issuance comes in six tranches under the company's sustainability sukuk wakalah, a stock exchange filing made by Maybank Investment Bank Bhd (Maybank IB) on behalf of TNB showed.

Maybank IB said the issuance took place on Oct 27 with CIMB Investment Bank Bhd together with Maybank IB as the joint principal advisers as well as joint lead managers for the MTN programme.

Both banks were also appointed the joint lead managers for the RM4.8bil sustainability sukuk wakalah.

The investment bank said TNB's consolidated borrowings would increase by RM4.8bil with the issuance of the sustainability sukuk wakalah.

“The RM4.8bil sustainability sukuk wakalah issuance will not have a material impact on the earnings, earnings per share and net assets per share of TNB.”

AME Elite to build RM120mil Nilai factory

PETALING JAYA: Integrated industrial property developer AME Elite Consortium Bhd has secured a project worth RM120mil from Rock Link Sdn Bhd for the construction of a single-storey detached factory with a two-storey office and other ancillary buildings in Nilai, Negri Sembilan.

The company said in an announcement to Bursa Malaysia that the projects forms part of the development of BAC Malaysia Sdn Bhd's new manufacturing facility in Nilai to support its expanding manufacturing operations in the country.

AME Elite said the project commences this month and expects it to be completed by December 2027.

“The project is expected to contribute positively to earnings and net assets per share of AME and its subsidiaries for the financial year ending 31 March 2027,” it added.

Dataprep chair Wan Ahmad Rudirman exits

KUALA LUMPUR: Dataprep Holdings Bhd has announced the resignation of its executive chairman, Wan Ahmad Rudirman Wan Razak.

According to a Bursa Malaysia filing yesterday, the information and communications technology and payment solutions provider announced that the resignation, effective immediately, is due to personal reasons.

Wan Ahmad Rudirman was redesignated from managing director to executive chairman of the company on Aug 4 this year.

He has over two decades of experience in corporate advisory, strategic investments, and regulatory oversight across public and private sectors.

For the financial year ended June 30, 2026, Dataprep reported a widening net loss of RM27.49mil from RM9.39mil in the previous corresponding period, while its revenue dropped to RM4.77mil from RM11.75mil previously. — Agencies

SD Guthrie sees DC rush amid Mideast conflict

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is expected to attract more interest as a data centre (DC) hub following the outbreak of the US-Iran war, according to SD Guthrie Bhd, giving the palm oil giant and the country's biggest landowner an opportunity to capitalise on the boom.

Even before the Middle East conflict, Malaysia was already drawing DC investment from companies including Alphabet Inc's Google, Amazon.com Inc and Microsoft Corp.

Over the weekend, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Masayoshi Son of SoftBank Group Corp chose locations in the country for US\$50bil in technology investments.

While the war wasn't cited as a factor in Son's investment, SD Guthrie president and group chief executive officer Mohd Haris Mohd Arshad said Malaysia was the “most stable country” in South-East Asia for building DCs.

The world's biggest palm oil planter by acreage previously flagged plans to use some of its lower-yielding land for industrial development to tap into the DC boom.

The Middle East had been particularly attractive for DC investment because of its

abundant energy options, but the war has heightened risks in the region, Mohd Haris said during an interview last Friday, his first with foreign media since taking the helm in January.

“If you're gonna build DCs for US\$10bil, you're not gonna put it in a place where you might be bombed,” he said.

“We are riding that wave of investment that is coming into Malaysia.”

A large share of DC investment flowing into Malaysia has been earmarked for Johor, which is adjacent to land-constrained Singapore.

But as investment pledges roll in, Mohd Haris warned that energy constraints will need to be addressed for the region to realise its full potential.

DCs have signed agreements with Tenaga Nasional Bhd for as much as 8.77 gigawatts of peak demand, according to officials, equivalent to almost a third of 2025 installed capacity.

More power generation will be needed if the industry is to expand. In Johor, the DCs could consume as much as 23% of Peninsular Malaysia's energy supply by 2031, according to BMI.

SD Guthrie has over 210,000ha of free-

hold land, making the company Malaysia's largest landowner, and has earmarked roughly 10% of its current landbank for industrial development, along with renewable energy assets.

The palm oil producer expects income from industrial development to account for a third of its revenue by the end of the decade, Mohd Haris said.

Even as it seeks to capitalise on the DC boom, SD Guthrie's core palm oil business faces a more uncertain supply outlook.

Mohd Haris said Malaysian production is expected to remain steady at around 20 million tonnes next year despite a severe El Nino, although dry weather across Indonesia will likely disrupt crop development and delay fruit ripening.

The company operates plantations in both countries.

“The concern is in Indonesia,” said Mohd Haris, adding that haze stemming from wildfires is slowing harvesting at estates in Kalimantan and Sumatra and could weigh on productivity.

“Indonesia may potentially struggle with crop size next year and this could then become a supply problem for the industry.” — Bloomberg

BNM expected to leave OPR unchanged at 2.75%

► FROM PAGE 1

As for how long it might take for consumers to feel the pinch of higher prices, Mohd Afzanizam reckoned it could take at least two to four months.

“This is where competitive markets are also a factor that can help reduce the price inflation, as businesses are able to absorb

in order to stay competitive in their industries,” he said.

Meanwhile, BIMB Securities Research said Malaysia remains resilient and is well-positioned to absorb near-term external shocks.

In a recent report, the research house noted that it expects Bank Negara Malaysia or BNM to leave the Overnight Policy Rate

unchanged at 2.75% throughout 2026 and 2027.

“Furthermore, the forecast assumes further moderation in selected administered and services-related components during the 4Q26.

“This results in year-end inflation levels below current year-to-date averages,” the report stated.

Matrix Concepts to buy RM169.3mil Johor land

Proposed mixed development carries RM2.1bil gross value

PROPERTY

PETALING JAYA: Property developer Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd is proposing to acquire close to 175,000ha of vacant agricultural land located in Kulai, Johor for RM169.3mil from a group comprising individual and corporate owners, as well as the executors of the estate of deceased owners.

The company said in a stock exchange filing that the proposed acquisition presents a compelling opportunity for it to establish a strategic presence within the wider Kulai-Sedenak growth corridor.

It intends to build a mixed development that a feasibility assessment indicates to have an estimated gross development value of RM2.1bil, which it said would complement the surrounding developments and contribute positively to the overall growth of the locality.

"The proposed development is expected to serve as a catalyst for further appreciation in property values within the surrounding area through the enhancement of infrastructure, accessibility and supporting amenities.

"In addition, it is anticipated to stimulate economic activities, create business and

"The proposed acquisition presents a compelling opportunity for it to establish a strategic presence within the wider Kulai-Sedenak growth corridor."

Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd

employment opportunities, and generate positive spillover effects that will further enhance the attractiveness and sustainability of the locality."

The land parcels, strategically located between Kulai and the emerging Sedenak Industrial Growth Corridor, connects to the North-South Expressway, Senai International Airport and the wider Johor Baru-Kulai network, with Johor Baru 43km away.

The connectivity to the electric train service to JB Sentral further enhances accessibility across the southern region.

An independent valuation conducted by Henry Butcher Malaysia determined that these parcels have an indicative market

value of not less than RM11 per sq ft, with the purchase consideration at approximately RM9 per sq ft, representing the price offered by Matrix Concepts and accepted by all vendors.

"This pricing reflects the nature of the land, which comprises multiple individual parcels rather than a single contiguous title, and accordingly represents a reasonable market-based acquisition price," it said.

It expects the proposed acquisition to be completed within four months from the date of the fulfilment of the condition precedents attached to the respective sale and purchase agreements (SPAs), among which all the SPAs complete simultaneously.

CIMB's Philippines unit attracts local bank bidders

KUALA LUMPUR: CIMB Group Holdings Bhd's planned sale of its business in the Philippines has drawn interest from local rivals including Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co, according to sources.

Binding bids for the unit are due before the end of the month, the sources said. Other parties have also shown interest in acquiring the assets, the sources added.

Malaysia-based CIMB is working with a

financial adviser on the potential divestment and reached out to prospective buyers to gauge interest, *Bloomberg News* reported earlier this month.

"A deal could value the business at as much as US\$200mil," sources said.

"Considerations are ongoing and there is no certainty of a deal."

Furthermore, a representative for BPI declined to comment, while CIMB and Metropolitan Bank & Trust, known as

Metrobank, didn't respond to requests for comment.

CIMB entered the Philippines in December 2018, and by September 2025 had 10 million customers, according to its website.

The lender also has a presence in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, as well as some operations in China, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. — Bloomberg

LPI Capital third-quarter net profit at RM96.8mil

PETALING JAYA: Insurer LPI Capital Bhd posted a drop in net profit to RM96.8mil for the third quarter ended Sept 30, 2026 (3Q26) compared to RM114.8mil in the same quarter of the previous year as a spike in bond yields weigh on the profitability of the company's general insurance business.

The company said in a stock exchange filing that the spike in bond yields had caused fair value losses to its investments whereas the insurance service results remained resilient in 3Q26, resulting in a decline in net profit.

"Likewise, net return on equity registered at 4.4% from 4.9% in 3Q25 while earnings per share was reported at 24.30 sen as compared to 28.82 sen in 3Q25."

The company reported 3Q26 revenue increased RM555.5mil from RM549.3mil in

3Q25 due to higher contribution from the general insurance business while the investment holding business recorded lower revenue mainly due to the lower tax-exempt dividend income received following the disposal of Public Bank Bhd shares on May 21, 2026.

Net profit for the first nine months of 2026 (9M26) stood at RM263.2mil compared to nearly RM296mil in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Revenue for the period increased 4.9% to RM1.65bil compared to RM1.57bil in the previous corresponding period.

The increase in revenue was mainly driven by the general insurance segment while the investment holding business recorded lower revenue.

The company noted that profit before tax

(PBT) for 3Q26 registered a 14.5% decline due to lower profits from the general insurance business attributable to net fair value losses of RM12.1mil in its investments as opposed to RM2.3mil net fair value gains recorded in the previous corresponding quarter due to a spike in bond yields.

The investment holding business reported a 53.4% lower PBT mainly due to the lower tax-exempt dividend income received from its equity investments. PBT for 9M26 was 10.5% lower at RM327.2mil.

The company's wholly-owned subsidiary Lonpac Insurance Bhd posted 7.6% lower PBT at RM107.7mil in 3Q26 mainly attributable to lower investment return whereas its insurance service results was 5.2% higher at RM103.9mil compared to the same quarter of last year.

Eco-Shop revenue surges to RM793.68mil in 1Q27

PETALING JAYA: Against a backdrop of evolving operating costs, Eco-Shop Marketing Bhd intends to continue prioritising efficient growth while maintaining disciplined cost management.

"Direct sourcing capabilities, economies of scale and financial discipline remain the cornerstones of Eco-Shop's strategy to pursue sustainable and profitable growth while preserving the value proposition," said the group's chief executive officer Jessica Ng.

In its financial results for the first quar-

ter ended Aug 31, 2026 (1Q27), the group's net profit rose 7.55% to RM63.19mil from RM58.76mil in 1Q26.

The group recorded a 1Q27 revenue of RM793.68mil, up by about 16% from RM684.33mil the year before, driven primarily by continued expansion of its store network.

According to Eco-Shop, 15 new stores were added during the quarter, bringing the total store count to 477.

The number of sales transactions also increased by 19.1% to 34.9 million in 1Q27,

supported by the store expansion.

Along with the results, Eco-Shop also declared a single-tier interim dividend 0.61 sen per ordinary share, totalling approximately RM35.1mil, to be paid on Nov 27, 2026.

"Eco-Shop is targeting another 100 new store openings in the financial year 2027, after opening 100 new stores in the previous year," Ng said.

Beyond new stores, 1Q27 also saw the group's same store sales growth return to positive territory, the group said.

Ni Hsin proposes bonus warrants

KUALA LUMPUR: Ni Hsin Group Bhd has proposed a bonus issue of up to 312.65 million warrants on the basis of one warrant for every two existing ordinary shares held by entitled shareholders.

In a Bursa Malaysia filing yesterday, the company – which specialises in stainless steel cookware and related products – said the warrants will be issued at no cost to entitled shareholders and will have a tenure of five years from the date of issuance.

Proceeds raised from the exercise of the warrants will be utilised for Ni Hsin's working capital and capital expenditure.

"The group intends to allocate 95% of the proceeds to working capital, comprising the purchase of inventories such as electric vehicle motorcycles, batteries, charging cabinets and stainless steel coils, as well as marketing, after-sales service and administrative expenses. — Bernama

PGB nets RM187.43mil from land sale

KUALA LUMPUR: Paragon Globe Bhd (PGB) expects to record an estimated net pro forma gain of RM187.43mil from its proposed RM398.11mil land disposal in Tanjung Kupang, Johor, following shareholders' approval.

In a filing with Bursa Malaysia, the property developer said shareholders approved the disposal of approximately 26.3ha to DayOne Data Centers Malaysia I Sdn Bhd at its EGM yesterday, with 99.99% of votes cast in favour.

PGB pointed out that based on its audited financial position as at March 31, 2026, and assuming the transaction completes, its net assets per share would rise from 64 sen to 89 sen, while its gearing ratio would fall from 1.06 times to 0.68 times.

The group said the lower gearing ratio takes into account the proposed repayment of RM56mil in bank borrowings, which is expected to generate annual interest savings of approximately RM3.09mil.

Infomina bags RM32mil job

PETALING JAYA: Enterprise technology and mainframe solutions provider Infomina Bhd has been awarded a project valued at RM32.1mil by the Home Affairs Ministry to provide maintenance and technical support services for the core application systems of the National Registration Department.

The company said in an announcement to the stock exchange that the project commences from Nov 1, 2026 and ends on Oct 31, 2028, with renewal or extension to be at the discretion of the ministry.

It added that the company would provide services comprising system maintenance, technical support, data and file management, as well as user training, technical courses and review workshops.

The company's chief executive officer/managing director Yee Chee Meng said in a media release that the contract reflects the continued confidence in its capabilities to manage and maintain critical technology environments that support essential public-sector operations

By YAP SAU SHIUNG

MALAYSIA's digital ambitions are clear. The recently announced Budget 2027 signals a more measured approach in the government's digital agenda.

Having established foundations for a digital economy through investments in artificial intelligence (AI) and digital infrastructure, the government is now placing greater emphasis on adoption, integration, and unlocking tangible benefits across areas like digital identity, healthcare records, and eCommerce.

As observed from recent budgets, the trajectory is less about the volume of new measures and more about how effectively individual platforms, incentives, and systems work together as a connected ecosystem.

This places greater emphasis on coherence, implementation, and scalability to widen access, support long-term viability, and translate investments into tangible outcomes for citizens and businesses.

The business case for digitalisation is sharpening

Malaysia's economic environment is increasingly making digital operations the default for businesses, especially micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Budget 2027 helps support this transition. A new RM30mil Malaysia Digital Economy Corp (MDEC) fund will support 4,000 MSMEs in adopting AI and automating parts of their operations.

At the same time, accelerated capital allowance for locally purchased machinery, computers and software have been extended until the end 2030.

Other measures point in the same direction.

The proposed move towards cashless salary payments for tax deductibility, together with a forthcoming eCommerce bill to strengthen accountability among online sellers and platforms, suggests digital processes are increasingly embedded in the normal operating environment rather than serving as an optional upgrade.

It's worth noting that one-off grants and incentives can spark interest, but sustained adoption depends on policies that consistently encourage businesses to digitalise.

Spread across 4,000 businesses, the new MDEC allocation adds up to roughly RM7,500 per firm. This may help firms take the first step, but lasting gains will

Turning digital ambition into public value

The proposed move towards cashless salary payments for tax deductibility, together with a forthcoming eCommerce bill to strengthen accountability among online sellers and platforms, suggests digital processes are increasingly embedded in the normal operating environment rather than serving as an optional upgrade.

come from using digital tools to build trust – from improvement in inventory management and operational visibility to market responsiveness.

The real opportunity lies in helping businesses embed these capabilities into their day-to-day operations, rather than treating digitalisation as a one-off technology investment.

The challenge now is to turn support measures into capability-building through tailored training or apprenticeships, so that MSMEs can participate confidently in the market, with a safe space to test ideas and innovate.

But capability building can only go so far without the infrastructure that enables businesses to access markets, tools, and knowledge in the first place.

Connectivity continues to be a key enabler

Budget 2027 continues to build on the Jendela initiative, with a clear focus on levelling the playing field for entrepreneurs and underserved communities by making access to opportunities fairer.

For many rural communities and businesses, dependable Internet access is still the difference between participation and exclusion. Connectivity opens up the

potential for economic activity, but doesn't guarantee it.

That's where targeted initiatives such as the National Information Dissemination Centre and Jom Malaysia can close the gap between connectivity and economic participation, giving underserved rural businesses a pathway into the digital economy and wider markets.

Digital services must be usable and trusted

Digital adoption at scale brings trust into sharper focus, especially with MyDigital ID now reaching more than 14 million users.

With the growing reliance on connected digital services, confidence in how data is accessed, shared, and protected is becoming increasingly crucial.

In healthcare, the proposed RM1bil investment by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) to expand the electronic medical record system to healthcare facilities nationwide supports the "one individual, one record" ambition.

To make care services more seamless, data trust cannot be an afterthought.

Budget 2027 recognises this need. The National Cyber Security Agency

and MCMC will develop homegrown data protection technologies designed to address emerging threats from quantum computing, as our cyberthreat architecture continues to evolve.

The upcoming Digital Trust and Data Security Strategy should provide a broader framework for protecting government and public data, while the Sovereign AI Cloud reinforces efforts to strengthen the security, control, and resilience of national data infrastructure.

Turning a digital ecosystem into economic value

Malaysia continues to attract significant digital investments, but investment approvals alone are not the final measure of success.

The more important question is how that investment translates into stronger local capabilities, quality jobs, and opportunities for Malaysian businesses.

The same test applies to the wider digital agenda. After several years of building infrastructures and platforms, the focus should now shift to the outcomes they deliver.

Three indicators will be worth asking in the year ahead: Are businesses, especially smaller ones, becoming more productive and better connected to supply chains and markets?

Is investment creating quality jobs and opportunities for Malaysian suppliers?

And does the rakyat find public services quicker, simpler, and safer to use, with greater confidence in how their data is protected?

If Malaysia can move forward on these fronts, the digital economy will be defined less by announcements, platforms, or subscriptions, and more by the impact it creates through stronger productivity, more competitive businesses, and tangible improvements in everyday life.

Yap Sau Shiung is chief digital officer and a partner at PwC Malaysia. The views expressed here are the writer's own.

By JAMIE MCGEEVER

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) skittishness has put the brakes on Wall Street's rally, resuscitating demand for US Treasuries as investors seek to protect portfolios, even as surging energy prices stoke inflation.

This could put the Federal Reserve (Fed) in an unenviable stagflationary bind.

For most of this year, the US bond market has been slammed by an inflation-inducing barrage of soaring energy prices, fiscal fears, and the AI boom.

Two of those forces remain very much in play, yet bond yields are no longer on a one-way path higher, with the 10-year falling below 5% for the first time in over a month last Thursday.

Investor sentiment around AI is souring. While there has been no single obvious trigger, long-held concerns about the vast sums being spent on the technology have been exacerbated by Big Tech earnings reports detailing gargantuan capital expenditure plans.

AI debt markets are wobbling too.

While this all may prove to be temporary – just another speed bump in the AI race – the mood shift suggests we may be at the point in the cycle where almost any news is bad news.

If so, this should spur a rally in "risk-free" Treasuries.

If the AI juggernaut is sputtering, Wall Street and Main Street should sputter too, given how fundamental the technology

AI gloom revives the specter of stagflation

has become to the stock market and economic growth.

But the alarming fiscal outlook hasn't changed, and energy prices are roaring higher again, with US crude futures rising 10% last week to a six-month peak above US\$110 a barrel, suggesting price pressures and inflation expectations aren't cooling anytime soon.

Persistent price pressures

A glance at a chart of the 10-year Treasury yield shows how closely correlated energy prices and the bond market have been this year.

The 10-year yield's lowest daily close in 2026 was 3.96% on Friday, Feb 27, the day before the United States and Israel attacked Iran. The subsequent surge in global crude, gas and fuel prices then propelled Treasury yields to their highest levels in more than two decades as investors bet that inflationary pressures would intensify.

The 10-year yield reached 5.36% earlier this month. But that relationship has broken down recently. Oil prices eased for a few weeks beginning in mid-September, but the relentless rise in bond yields continued. Now oil prices have rebounded sharply, yet Treasury yields are in retreat, culminating in last Thursday's steep

decline of 20 basis points.

Typically, a global energy shock would be expected to slow economic growth, causing investors to flee to the Treasury market. However, for most of this year, the tailwind from the AI juggernaut has kept the economy and Wall Street humming.

If the AI narrative is turning, bond investors will have to consider the potential valuation destruction and economic fallout from a deflating AI bubble.

That appears to be offsetting any fears of "higher-for-longer" energy prices. But the move back toward Treasuries may not be a simple switch to flick.

Stagflation return?

That's because "stagflation" could return to investors' lexicon.

A mix of stagnant growth and sticky inflation would complicate life for the Federal Open Market Committee.

While it raised its policy rate in September, it will almost certainly keep it on hold this today ahead of next week's mid-term elections.

Markets still expect it to tighten again in the coming months, but that assumes inflationary pressures outweigh AI wobbles. Last week, one-year market-based inflation expectations climbed to 2.8%, as measured by inflation swaps.

That's the highest since June, though the rise in longer-dated inflation swap rates has been less dramatic, suggesting investors don't believe the energy shock will become deeply embedded in higher goods and services prices.

Fed policymakers will likely be banking on that. But it's a risky bet. Producer prices, often a leading indicator of consumer prices, are rising at the fastest pace in four years.

The gap between producer and consumer price inflation is also the widest in four years. And it's worth repeating that consumer price inflation has been above the Fed's 2% target for close to six years.

"All main inflation measures are expected to increase over the next couple of months as base effects from last year's government shutdown in October and November create a low bar for rising inflation," UBS economists said.

"We expect little easing in inflation before the spring of next year," when the base effects from the start of the Iran war kick in.

Can the Fed afford to "look through" the latest spike in energy prices, while hoping that the AI wobbles don't snowball? — Reuters

Jamie McGeever is a columnist for Reuters. The views expressed here are the writer's own.

By RONNY P. SASMITA

INDONESIA'S decision to reduce natural gas exports to Singapore is more than an energy dispute; it is a test of whether resource nationalism can deliver the industrial transformation Jakarta has long promised.

On Oct 24, Indonesia began cutting pipeline gas supplies by 31 billion British thermal units per day (BBtud), comprising 15 BBtud from Natuna and 16 BBtud from Sumatra.

The government argues that domestic demand, particularly from the planned petrochemical industry, must take priority.

The objective is understandable, but its economic merits will depend on what Indonesia can produce with the gas it retains. Natural gas serves two competing purposes. Exports generate foreign exchange, while domestic consumption can support manufacturing, fertiliser production and petrochemicals.

The central question is not whether domestic use is preferable to exports in principle, but which allocation creates greater economic value.

Economic value

Indonesia exported 14.04 million tonnes of natural gas in 2025, down 9.4% from the previous year. Singapore accounted for 3.22 million tonnes, worth approximately US\$1.66bil.

Meanwhile, Indonesia held proven gas reserves of 34.78 trillion cubic feet. Yet abundant reserves do not automatically translate into affordable, reliable supplies for domestic manufacturers. Indonesia already directs most of its gas toward domestic consumption.

The Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry reported that gas utilisation reached 5,600 BBtud in 2025, of which 3,908 BBtud, or 69%, served domestic needs. Exports accounted for the remaining 1,691 BBtud.

These figures suggest that export restrictions alone cannot resolve industrial supply problems. The challenge is also one of distribution, infrastructure and affordability.

West Java illustrates the problem. Fulfillment under the government's special price gas scheme, known as HGBT, fell from 88.72% of allocated volumes in 2023 to 78.68% in 2024 and 65.69% in 2025. By April 2026, it had dropped to 46.36%, as *Antara* news agency reported.

Some manufacturers have consequently turned to more expensive regasified liquefied natural gas (LNG). For industry, gas

Gas policy must deliver more than energy control

The central question is not whether domestic use is preferable to exports in principle, but which allocation creates greater economic value.

that exists in national production statistics but cannot reach factories at competitive prices has little practical value.

Nor can additional supplies from Natuna or Sumatra automatically substitute for gas needed in Java. Pipelines, processing facilities, transmission capacity and contractual arrangements determine whether nominal allocations become usable industrial inputs.

When manufacturers must pay more for replacement gas, production costs rise, margins narrow and investment becomes less attractive.

Export restrictions may therefore increase the volume notionally available at home without improving industrial competitiveness. The country needs investment in production, processing and transportation, along with commercially viable projects and credible demand from industrial users.

Redirecting existing exports cannot compensate for missing infrastructure or uncertain investment conditions.

The strongest argument for retaining gas domestically is that processing it can generate more value than exporting an unprocessed commodity.

Petrochemicals, fertilisers and other gas-intensive industries can create jobs, strengthen domestic supply chains and reduce reliance on imported products.

But these benefits are potential outcomes, not guaranteed consequences of restricting exports. The government must evaluate the net economic value of alternative uses, including export earnings, production costs, infrastructure investment, subsidies, employment and tax revenue.

A factory producing goods with weak demand or persistently high costs may

destroy value despite receiving domestically supplied feedstock.

Conversely, a competitive petrochemical plant could generate sufficient additional value to justify prioritising domestic consumption.

The HGBT scheme illustrates why this distinction matters. Government estimates of its economic benefits, including industrial sales, investment and fiscal contributions, do not establish that every additional unit of gas redirected from exports will generate comparable returns.

The incremental benefits must be demonstrated rather than presumed. Jakarta should therefore publish a transparent framework for gas allocation.

It should identify industries capable of absorbing additional supplies, assess their production readiness, disclose infrastructure requirements and specify expected economic gains.

Performance should be measured through productivity, capacity utilisation, investment, employment and value added per unit of gas rather than simply the volume retained domestically.

The wider relationship with Singapore also deserves consideration.

Bilateral trade reached US\$32.8bil in 2025, while Singapore invested US\$17.4bil in Indonesia.

These figures do not mean that a gas dispute will necessarily undermine broader economic ties. They do, however, underline the importance of predictable commercial rules.

Investor confidence

Indonesia can legitimately revise its export priorities, but contractual obliga-

tions and credible long-term arrangements remain essential to maintaining investor confidence.

Singapore, meanwhile, has incentives to diversify its energy supplies as uncertainty over pipeline gas increases. LNG offers alternatives, although replacement supplies may be more expensive.

Indonesia should not assume that its position as a supplier guarantees permanent bargaining power. Its long-term leverage depends on the reliability, competitiveness and commercial attractiveness of the energy it delivers.

These considerations have wider regional implications.

South-East Asia needs reliable energy infrastructure as demand grows and domestic production faces constraints.

Cross-border energy cooperation depends on trust in the commercial arrangements underpinning long-term investments.

Indonesia does not need to preserve every export flow at the expense of domestic industry, but changes in allocation should follow clear rules and a credible industrial strategy.

In summary, Indonesia's gas policy should be judged by its economic results.

If retaining more gas generates productive factories, better jobs, stronger supply chains and higher domestic value added, Jakarta will have a compelling case for prioritising its own market.

If manufacturers remain short of affordable supplies while export earnings decline, the policy will have secured administrative control over a resource without capturing its full economic benefits.

Energy sovereignty is not simply the power to decide where a commodity goes. It is the capacity to turn that commodity into lasting economic strength. — The Jakarta Post/ANN

Ronny P. Sasmita is a senior analyst at the Indonesia Strategic and Economic Action Institution who holds a PhD in international political economy from The University of Tokyo. The views expressed here are the writer's own.

Nice earnings forecasts you have. Shame if something happened to them

By JOACHIM KLEMENT

THE bull case for equities rests on sky-high earnings forecasts. History suggests forecasts typically fail most spectacularly when markets are priced for exceptional future profit growth. That's exactly where we are right now.

Equity analysts are a chronically over-optimistic bunch, and their track record for earnings forecasts is never great, but that's especially true at the end of major bull markets.

Since 1992, average annual earnings per share (EPS) growth in the S&P 500 was 9.5%. The average EPS growth predicted by analysts was 22.3%, more than double the actual rate.

Unsurprisingly, the gap between forecast and realised EPS growth becomes especially large when realised EPS declines.

The largest misses in recent decades came after the 1990 to 1991 recession and during the dot.com bust of 2000 to 2002, the global financial crisis of 2007 to 2009, the 2015 to 2016 earnings recession and the Covid-19 shock in 2020.

In the months when S&P 500 EPS growth turned negative, the rolling 12-month growth rate averaged minus 4.5%. Yet, at the start of those periods, *Bloomberg* con-

sensus estimates projected EPS growth of 18.8%.

A few weeks ago, my forecast that the S&P 500 could fall to 5,000 points by the end of 2027 made waves.

I, like everyone, cannot definitively time the end of the current bull market, but I believe that within the next two years, we will enter a major bear market as the artificial intelligence (AI) investment boom ends.

My intention with this end-of-2027 forecast is to warn investors to prepare for such an event today, even if it may not come until 2028.

Strategists at other more bullish banks were quick to reject my call, arguing that investors underestimate future earnings growth and that earnings will "grow into" today's seemingly high valuations.

To which, I can only respond, "Nice earnings forecasts you have. Shame if something happened to them."

Analysts today are extremely optimistic about future EPS growth. That means price-to-earnings (PE) ratios based on 12-month forward EPS estimates can appear more attractive than trailing valuation measures suggest.

The current 12-month forward PE ratio of the S&P 500 is 18.9 times, roughly in line with its 10-year average. But that

holds only if we believe EPS will grow by 38.6% over the next 12 months.

Meanwhile, the 12-month trailing PE ratio is 26.2 times, about 14% above its 10-year average, indicating a somewhat expensive market.

Backtests suggest trailing valuation measures are a far better indicator of future stock market performance than forward PE ratios. And the longer a bull market lasts, the more unreliable earnings forecasts typically become.

The most dangerous forecasts, though, are the long-term ones, where scrutiny is weakest.

I started my career in the late 1990s at the height of the last technology boom. One thing we learned once the bubble burst was that analysts often sought to justify extremely high share prices by ramping up their earnings growth expectations. However, as the bubble continued, that became increasingly difficult since even the most gullible investor wouldn't believe that a large-cap stock with billions in revenue can grow its earnings by 100% or 200% every year.

In these types of situations, analysts will sometimes try to shift excessive EPS growth into the outer years, where there is less scrutiny of their assumptions.

Research by Allaudeen Hameed,

Massimo Massa, and Zhenghui Ni finds that companies in the decile with the highest long-term EPS forecasts usually underperform the rest by a wide margin over the following year.

Why is this? Probably because it simply becomes challenging for companies to meet these excessively optimistic forecasts.

The resulting disappointment, together with large downward earnings revisions, weighs heavily on these firms' share prices.

So, where do we stand today? The long-term EPS growth forecast for the S&P 500 is currently 16.7%, placing it in the top 10% for this century.

S&P 500 constituents with particularly high long-term EPS growth expectations include Nvidia, Advanced Micro Devices, Intel, Broadcom, Palantir and Micron. That leaves their shares more exposed if growth falls short of consensus.

None of us has a crystal ball, and bull runs can keep going longer than logic would deem reasonable.

But investors should be warned. — Reuters

Joachim Klement is an investment strategist for Panmure Liberum. The views expressed here are the writer's own.



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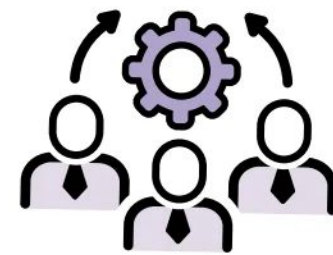
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Solid contract wins fuel Gamuda's prospects

Data centres among firm's domestic momentum drivers

CORPORATE

PETALING JAYA: Gamuda Bhd's share price recovery could gain further traction as strong contract wins and an anticipated earnings ramp-up reinforce its growth prospects, says Phillip Capital Research.

The research house said the group's share price had recovered from a decline of more than 20% earlier this year, leaving it down less than 1% year-to-date.

Phillip Capital attributed the earlier sell-off to technical selling, following Permodalan Nasional Bhd's US\$300mil secured exchangeable sukuk – which is convertible into Gamuda shares – and concerns that Sunway Bhd's previously proposed takeover of IJM Corp Bhd would create a larger competitor.

"In our view, the sell-off was more sentiment-driven than driven by any deterioration in fundamentals.

"Continued contract wins at the start of financial year 2027 (FY27) have reinforced order book momentum and supported the share price recovery," it said.

Phillip Capital expects Gamuda's core earnings to grow 43% in FY27, as projects secured progresses into their main construction phases. About 90% of the order book has yet to reach peak execution.

Taiwan's mass rapid transit projects are also expected to contribute more meaningfully to earnings in FY27 following their design phases over the past two years.

Philip Capital expects an annual order book replenishment of RM35bil to RM40bil over FY27 to FY29, with the group targeting FY27 contract wins broadly in line with FY26.

Of the RM15bil secured so far, wins were evenly split between traditional sectors – including rail and highways – and newer

"Valuations are back near the five-year mean price-earnings ratio, and we see earnings delivery as the key catalyst moving forward."

Phillip Capital Research

sectors such as data centres (DCs) and renewable energy (RE).

This mix balances longer-term revenue visibility from traditional contracts – typically lasting more than three years – with faster revenue recognition from newer projects, generally completed within two years.

Phillip Capital highlighted DCs as Gamuda's key domestic growth driver, with RM5.3bil in contract wins from Port Dickson, where it has secured all packages awarded to date.

It estimates that at least four additional DC campuses could be developed at the site, potentially generating RM15bil in construction value.

The research house believes Gamuda has a strong chance of securing the subsequent phases, given its incumbent status and familiarity with the site.

Beyond DCs, opportunities include the Northern Perak Water Supply Scheme, with an estimated engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning (EPCC) value of RM4bil.

Gamuda's 50% concession stake could also provide recurring tariff income from 2032 onwards.

Moreover, the group's 680-megawatt alternating-current hybrid solar and battery energy storage project under Malaysia's Corporate Renewable Energy Supply

Scheme has an estimated EPCC value of RM2.7bil, with recurring income expected from 2029 through its 33% stake.

On another note, Gamuda Engineering Australia has a tender pipeline exceeding A\$15bil, while its subsidiary DT Infrastructure (DTI) secured 47 contracts worth A\$3.5bil in FY26.

DTI is targeting four key markets including rail, infrastructure, defence and energy, which could support future order book replenishment.

However, Phillip Capital expects gross profit margins to ease slightly in FY27 as lower-margin DC and RE contracts account for a larger share of revenue.

Meanwhile, property revenue growth is expected to become more meaningful from FY28, driven by a RM7bil sales target for FY27.

According to the research house, this target is supported by RM9.7bil of launches in Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore.

The research house maintained a "buy" recommendation on Gamuda with an unchanged sum-of-the-parts-derived target price of RM5.80.

"Valuations are back near the five-year mean price-earnings ratio, and we see earnings delivery as the key catalyst moving forward," it said, adding that solid earnings delivery could drive the next leg of share price re-rating.

Affin Bank loan growth remains resilient

PETALING JAYA: Affin Bank Bhd is expected to deliver another quarter of healthy loan growth in the third quarter of its financial year ending Dec 31, 2026 (3Q26), although tighter margins and rising credit costs could weigh on earnings, according to TA Research.

Following a recent meeting with the bank's management, the research house said Affin Bank's loan growth remained robust through 3Q26 with full-year growth expected to reach about 12%, surpassing its initial target of 10%.

TA Research said existing loan pipelines are also sufficient to sustain the momentum through the remainder of the financial year.

In addition, management noted the deepening intensity of deposit competition, which has developed into an industry-wide price war across both retail and wholesale funding.

This has resulted in elevated deposit pricing, with banks increasingly competing on rates to defend existing relationships and attract new funding.

"Against this backdrop, management expects further quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) net interest margin (NIM) compression in 3Q26, following a seven-basis-point (bps) contraction to 1.47% in 2Q26.

"Recall that NIM contracted by seven bps q-o-q to 1.47% in 2Q26. We believe this is likely to remain a key near-term earnings headwind, particularly as competition for deposits typically intensifies towards year-end."

The research house said pricing discipline should help contain further margin erosion.

Management also noted that Affin Bank has adopted a more proactive funding strategy, having accumulated longer-tenor deposits to reduce its exposure to aggressive year-end deposit pricing.

"We note that Affin Bank is currently offering an eight and 12-month fixed deposit promotion at rates of 3.9% and 3.93%. On the lending side, the bank has become more disciplined in pricing certain consumer loan products, including mortgages and hire purchase loans.

"For instance, indicative mortgage rates are now some 15 to 20 bps higher year-on-year."

According to the research firm, asset quality will be another key area of focus in the upcoming results.

It said management highlighted mounting repayment stress among retail borrowers, particularly lower-income households grappling with rising living costs and energy prices.

Mortgages, hire purchase and credit cards have been identified as areas of concern, while small and medium enterprises are also facing weaker operating conditions and growing competition from Chinese eCommerce platforms.

Impact Capital Holdings launches IPO prospectus

PETALING JAYA: Impact Capital Holdings Bhd has launched its prospectus in conjunction with its proposed listing on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia.

The company is principally involved in the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) equipment and systems for critical infrastructure, supply of ICT hardware and software, and provision of ICT and other services.

In a statement, the company said that its initial public offering (IPO) comprises a public issue of 96.69 million new ordinary shares and an offer for sale of 28.62 million

existing shares. The group is expected to raise RM21.27mil through the public issue at an IPO price of RM0.22 per share.

In terms of the IPO proceeds, Impact Capital said RM4.67mil will be utilised for the expansion of offices.

This includes a new Klang Valley office which will house the group's Digital Innovation and Solutions Centre.

The funds will also cover relocation into larger offices in Bintulu and Kota Kinabalu, and the establishment of a new office in Johor Baru.

Additionally, RM4.53mil will be allocated

for expansion of workforce and business development initiatives, RM2.1mil will be for enhancement of technology capabilities, RM5.17mil will be for working capital requirements, and RM4.80mil will be for estimated listing expenses.

Upon listing, the group is expected to have a market capitalisation of RM105.6mil, based on the IPO price of RM0.22 per share and an enlarged issued share capital of 480 million shares.

Public Investment Bank Bhd is the principal adviser, sponsor, sole underwriter and sole placement agent for this IPO.

Gas Malaysia positioned for earnings recovery next year

PETALING JAYA: Gas Malaysia Bhd will likely see an earnings recovery next year as higher natural gas prices and a potential shake-up of the country's gas supply market open up new growth opportunities for the company.

UOB Kay Hian (UOBKH) Research – which has upgraded the stock to a "buy" – said the company could also benefit from Malaysia's energy transition, with more than eight gigawatts (GW) of new gas-fired power generation capacity expected to be built by 2031.

The potential liberalisation of the power sector natural gas supply chain would also allow power plants to secure gas independently from shippers such as Gas Malaysia.

Gas Malaysia is the largest natural gas shipper in Peninsular Malaysia, with a market share of 83% as of June 2026.

UOBKH Research noted that the company may benefit from off-grid co-generation opportunities as data centre operators seek to secure their own power supply.

Unknown to many, Gas Malaysia has experience operating a co-generation plant in Penang and could position itself to tap this emerging market.

The research house said that natural gas is projected to account for 56% of Malaysia's total primary energy supply by 2050, up from 47% in the first half of financial year 2026.

Meanwhile, the group's Yan regasification terminal (RGT Yan) in Kedah – with a

planned capacity of 500 million standard cu ft per day (mmscfd) – is expected to begin commercial operations in the first quarter of 2031.

UOBKH Research estimates that up to 90% of its capacity may have been secured, with the project potentially lifting earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) by 13% and contributing an estimated equity value of RM0.58 per share.

According to the research house, the Energy Commission estimates that the eight GW of new gas-fired power generation capacity needed by 2031 would require nearly 1,600 mmscfd of natural gas. This is almost double the power sector's current gas consumption of 800 to 1,000 mmscfd.

RGT Yan, with a capacity of 500 mmscfd, is estimated to cost approximately US\$250mil to US\$300mil.

Developed alongside Tokyo Gas Co and VTTI BV – with each holding a 15% stake – the project could lift Gas Malaysia's Ebitda by 15%, assuming a 50% stake in the joint venture, said the research firm.

Besides upgrading the stock to a "buy," the research house raised its dividend discount model-based target price to RM7 from a higher long-term growth assumption of 3%, up from 2%.

This incorporated the RM0.58 per share in equity value from RGT Yan.

At the time of writing, shares of Gas Malaysia traded at RM5.45, translating into a market capitalisation of RM7bil.

YTL Corp set for earnings acceleration

DC expansion and stronger cement sales support growth

CORPORATE

PETALING JAYA: YTL Corp Bhd could see earnings growth accelerate in its financial year ending June 30, 2028 (FY28), supported by expanding data centre (DC) operations, stronger water utility earnings and higher cement sales, while a widening valuation gap with its listed subsidiary offers scope for a share price re-rating.

The group is expected to deliver broadly flat earnings in FY27 before its bottom line grows by about 10% in FY28, as its utilities and cement businesses provide a stable earnings base.

According to Hong Leong Investment Bank (HLIB) Research, YTL has significant upside as it is currently undervalued despite growth of its subsidiaries.

"We view YTL as highly undervalued, with re-rating catalysts arising from the unjustified wide valuation gap between YTL and YTL Power International Bhd (YTLPI); valuation crystallisation from the potential listing of YTL DC, driving positive re-rating spillover to YTL, and potential direct exposure to YTL DC via an in-specie share distribution," the research house explained.

It ascribed a fair value of RM3.50 for YTL based on a 20% discount to its sum-of-parts valuation of RM4.37, with further upside potential from the exercise of its YTLPI warrants.

It maintains a "buy" recommendation on YTLPI, with a target price of RM8.08, citing growth opportunities from its DC ambitions.

"The key revaluation trigger lies in whether the group can translate its underlying asset value and expansion plans into stronger earnings visibility and improved shareholder returns."

An analyst

The research house said the valuation gap between YTL and YTLPI had widened significantly, with YTLPI's market capitalisation rising about 53% year-to-date, compared with a decline of around 3% for YTL.

"This divergence has reached a point where the market value of YTL's 52% stake in YTLPI is now broadly equivalent to YTL's entire market cap," it said.

"In other words, the market is effectively ascribing little-to-no value to YTL's other businesses," it added.

On the possible initial public offering of YTL DC in 2027, HLIB Research noted that a potential in-specie distribution of YTL DC shares by YTLPI could also give investors more direct exposure to the business.

YTL Cement remains another earnings pillar, with pre-tax profit rising 30% in FY26, supported by Malayan Cement Bhd (MCement) and its Singapore operations.

Higher cement demand from the Penang Mutiara light rail transit project and potentially Johor's electronic autonomous rapid transit system could support sales, alongside the eventual rollout of the Mass Rapid

Transit 3 project.

HLIB Research expects alternative fuels, which account for about 15% of MCement's fuel consumption, to help mitigate higher fuel costs.

It has a "buy" call on MCement with a target price of RM8.71.

YTL Construction's outstanding order book stood at about RM2bil as at June 2026, mainly comprising YTLPI's DC projects.

Its RM10bil to RM15bil tender book includes industrial warehouses, water treatment plants, a Singapore rail project, the Penang LRT project and Penang airport expansion.

Meanwhile, one analyst noted that YTL's diversified earnings base provides a degree of resilience, while its exposure to DCs offers a longer-term growth avenue as demand for digital infrastructure continues to expand.

"The key revaluation trigger lies in whether the group can translate its underlying asset value and expansion plans into stronger earnings visibility and improved shareholder returns," he told *StarBiz*.

SkyWorld banks on RM2.6bil launch pipeline

PETALING JAYA: Despite its recent share price decline, SkyWorld Development Bhd's earnings recovery and RM2.6bil property launch pipeline could present an attractive buying opportunity, according to Hong Leong Investment Bank (HLIB) Research.

On Oct 20, SkyWorld's share price fell 6.8% on heavy trading volume to 34 sen, despite management checks indicating no negative developments at the company.

HLIB Research believes the selling could reflect fund-specific considerations, such as a change in house views on the property sector or a need to raise cash, rather than a deterioration in the group's fundamentals.

It added that the sharp decline may have been exacerbated by a lack of incremental buyers to absorb the selling pressure, leaving the stock with limited buying support.

The research house maintained its "buy" rating and 90 sen target price, based on a 60% discount to its estimated revised net asset value of RM2.24 per share.

"In our view, SkyWorld's prospects are now at their strongest since listing, yet its share price is at an all-time low.

"This disconnect represents a gross mis-

pricing and offers an exceptional entry point, with our target price implying a total return of 160.2%.

"We believe the stock has reached its earnings inflection point, with financial year 2026 (FY26) marking the trough."

HLIB Research also suggested that the market is underestimating the pace of its billing growth once the group's precast volumetric construction plant commences operations, reflected in the undemanding stock valuation.

That said, SkyWorld is entering a new earnings upcycle, supported by Penang as a new growth driver, a rebuilt launch pipeline and record-high unbilled sales.

"With record-high unbilled sales, stronger billings are just a matter of timing," HLIB Research said.

It forecasts a three-year earnings compound annual growth rate of 82.6% over FY26 to FY29, with the stock trading at fully diluted price-to-earnings ratios of just 6.5 times, 2.9 times and 2.1 times for FY27, FY28 and FY29, respectively.

The research house said the worst was behind the property developer, with earn-

ings expected to rise further in the second quarter of FY27 (2Q27), both quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) and year-on-year.

Core earnings had bottomed out at RM4.2mil in 4Q26 before improving 4.8% q-o-q to RM4.4mil in 1Q27.

HLIB Research attributed the expected improvement to higher earnings recognition from completed unit sales at Curvo Residences, stronger progress billings from Vesta Residences as construction advances towards its targeted handover by end of FY27, and a lower q-o-q effective tax rate.

Following the recent commencement of previews for SkyWorld's SkySolis project in Vietnam, improved visibility on future sales could also support the recognition of relevant deferred tax assets.

"This could bring down the group's effective tax rate in 2Q27 and provide a further lift to earnings," it added.

On its RM2.6bil launch pipeline in the second half of FY27, SkyWorld is expected to record full-year sales of more than RM1bil and year-end unbilled sales of RM1.4bil to RM1.5bil, equivalent to 3.3 to 3.6 times its FY26 property development revenue.

OCBC ranked Asia Pacific's strongest bank, third globally

PETALING JAYA: OCBC has been recognised as the strongest bank in Singapore and Asia Pacific, and third globally, in the latest World's 1,000 Strongest Banks ranking by The Asian Banker.

The accolade comes after OCBC took the top spot among global banks in the inaugural World's Top Performing Banks ranking developed by *Forbes* and Statista in September 2026, said the bank in a statement.

"This marks the first time a Singapore bank has finished among the top three in the world since The Asian Banker's ranking was introduced in 2023.

"The bank is also the top performer in the Straits Times Index this year, with its share price up by 46.8% year-to-date as of Oct 23, 2026.

OCBC group chief executive officer Tan Teck Long said being named one of the world's strongest banks, soon after being

recognised as the 'top performing bank', reflects the resilience of the OCBC franchise.

"Such resilience is built on customer trust that endures over generations.

"Every day, thousands of OCBC colleagues across the group sustain that trust by serving our customers and enabling them to realise their aspirations.

"We will continue to build on this strong foundation to create lasting value for our customers, communities and shareholders."

CPE to buy RM14.5mil Johor properties

PETALING JAYA: CPE Technology Bhd is proposing to acquire a double storey factory together with a three storey office in Johor Baru from Logitech Engineering Solutions Sdn Bhd for RM14.5mil.

In a filing with Bursa Malaysia, CPE Technology said the proposed acquisition is in line with the long-term strategy of the group and its subsidiaries to strengthen its manufacturing and industrial capabilities, as well as expand production capacity.

"The proposed acquisition will provide an opportunity for CPE Technology to acquire additional space within the vicinity of its existing factories to set-up additional and/or new manufacturing lines in the near future.

"The proposed acquisition is expected to enhance the group's manufacturing footprint and support the expansion plan of the group."

CPE Technology said the proposed acquisition is not expected to have any material effect on the earnings and earnings per share of the group for the financial year ending June 30, 2027.

Bintai Kinden bags RM20mil TNB contract

PETALING JAYA: Bintai Kinden Corp Bhd (BKCB) has secured a contract from Tenaga Nasional Bhd worth RM20.28mil.

In a statement, the mechanical and electrical (M&E) engineering services specialist said the contract involves the extension of two 45 megavolt-amperes, 132/33 kilovolts transformers at the PMU Avetani substation in Pahang.

"The project is expected to be completed within 540 days from the commencement date."

BKCB said this latest contract award further strengthens the group's order book and reinforces its position in Malaysia's power infrastructure and M&E engineering sector.

"With this latest contract win, BKCB's outstanding order book stands at RM183.8mil, providing earnings visibility over the near term."

HLB, UPI in cross-border payment tie-up

PETALING JAYA: Hong Leong Bank Bhd (HLB) has partnered UnionPay International (UPI) to expand cross-border payment connectivity, enabling its customers to make payments at more than 120 million merchants across China, as well as participating merchants in Hong Kong, Macao and Thailand.

The collaboration leverages UPI's integrated network with Weixin Pay, allowing HLB customers to pay directly by scanning merchant QR codes through the HLB Connect app.

The feature complements HLB's existing multi-currency capabilities under its Pay&Save Account, allowing customers to lock in favourable exchange rates while avoiding third-party apps and wallet top-ups.

HLB group managing director and chief executive officer Kevin Lam said the partnership would give customers greater confidence and convenience when making overseas payments.

CORPORATE

PETALING JAYA: Analysts believe that plantation group IOI Corp Bhd will record a higher net profit in the first quarter ended Sept 30 (1Q27) compared to 1Q26 due to stronger crude palm oil (CPO) price and production.

Citing the Malaysian Palm Oil Board, AmInvestment Bank Research said average CPO price was RM4,552 per tonne in 1Q27, 6.6% higher than RM4,271 per tonne in 1Q26.

"As for manufacturing (refining and oleochemicals), we think that earnings before interest and tax would improve year-on-year (y-o-y) in 1Q27 as selling prices of oleochemicals rise in line with crude oil prices.

"Dampener is Bunge Lodgers Crockaan, which may record lower earnings due to a decline in the selling prices of cocoa butter substitutes.

"Hence, we maintain a 'hold' on IOI with a target price of RM5 per share," it told clients. At last look, the stock was trading at RM4.42.

AmInvestment said it forecasts IOI's fresh fruit bunch (FFB) production to decline by 2.5% in FY27 (FY26: 4.2%, 1Q27: 4.6% y-o-y) due to El Nino.

"We believe that the impact of 2026's El Nino would not be as severe as 2015/2016 as there is occasional rain in Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia," it said, noting that FFB production fell by 11.2% y-o-y in FY16

IOI Corp poised for higher quarterly profit

Firmer CPO prices support earnings amid rising costs

"A hike in minimum wage from RM1,700 per month to RM2,000 per month is not expected to affect IOI significantly as most of the estate workers in Malaysia are paid higher than RM2,000 per month."

AmInvestment Bank Research

due to the El Nino in 2015.

It said it believed that fertiliser costs would rise by 10% to 15% in 2027.

"Hence, IOI's CPO cost of production (based on cost of sales) may rise to more than RM2,660 per tonne in FY27 from RM2,593/tonne in FY26.

"A hike in minimum wage from RM1,700

per month to RM2,000 per month is not expected to affect IOI significantly as most of the estate workers in Malaysia are paid higher than RM2,000 per month."

AmInvestment added that recently, Indonesia passed a land reform law, which may see 20% of titled landbank being handed over to the government.

Details on the law are pending, it noted, but said that the silver lining was that IOI's exposure to Indonesia is smaller than the other large plantation companies in Malaysia.

It said IOI has 21,369ha of oil palm estates in Indonesia, which are 12.5% of the total planted areas.

The research house applied a price-to-earnings (PE) of 18 times on IOI's 2027 earnings per share to arrive at the target price of RM5 per share.

The PE of 18 times is one standard deviation below the average of 20 times for big-cap planters in the past five years, it said, adding that it applied a discount due to structural changes in the refining and oleochemical industries arising from overcapacity in Indonesia and China.

"Key risks for the company are a fall in CPO prices and the absence of a recovery in the oleochemical industry," said the research house.

Solar investment to hit RM93bil

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia may need to invest some RM93bil to build 24 gigawatts (GW) of new solar capacity over the next decade as it seeks to meet rising electricity demand while containing carbon emissions, according to CIMB Research.

The research house said the expansion over 2026 to 2035 would support Malaysia's ambition to become a sustainable regional data centre (DC) hub, creating opportunities for renewable energy (RE) developers and contractors.

"Based on committed investments, the government projects DC electricity consumption to rise by nearly 600% between 2026 and 2035, increasing its share of Peninsular Malaysia's total electricity demand to 31% by 2035," it said.

CIMB Research said RE's share of the peninsula's energy mix was projected to double to 22% by 2035, while gas would rise to 59% and coal decline to 10%.

"Considering the 2GW of installed solar capacity commissioned to date (excluding behind-the-metre resources) in Peninsula Malaysia, 24.3GW of new solar capacity may need to be built between 2026 and 2035 (with 20.2GW to be paired with on-site battery energy storage systems or Bess)."

Bess would account for part of the estimated investment, with solar projects incorporating storage costing about RM4mil per megawatt, compared with RM3mil for solar alone, it said.

CIMB Research identified Solarvest Holdings Bhd and Samaden Group Bhd among potential beneficiaries, alongside mechanical and electrical engineering specialist Kee Ming Group Bhd.

"To maintain a 25% firm reserve margin, we estimate RM83bil will need to be invested to build 15GW of new gas-fired capacity over the next decade," it said.

"If the power purchase agreements of four coal-fired power plants ending 2029 to 2033 are extended, a lesser 7GW (RM42bil) of new gas-fired power plant capacity will be required," the research house added.

Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB), YTL Power International Bhd and Malakoff Corp Bhd could lead the gas-fired capacity expansion, the research house said.

Moreover, the research house has maintained an "overweight" stance on the utilities sector.

PGF Capital braces for higher costs in second half

PETALING JAYA: Despite PGF Capital Bhd's earnings growth in the first half ended Aug 31, 2026 (1H27), rising cost pressure could weigh on performance in 2H27, according to TA Research.

Following its second quarter (2Q27) results, the research house said it is making no changes to its conservative earnings forecasts for PGF, and keeping its "buy" call on the stock as well as sum-of-parts based valuation of RM2.70 per share.

In 1H27, PGF's core profit rose by 5.7% year-on-year (y-o-y) to RM15.6mil, supported by higher revenue which increased 8.1% y-o-y to RM92.9mil.

TA Research attributed the improved revenue to robust demand for glass wool insulation products and cost-push price increases.

Additionally, PGF saw core profit expand by 5.1% quarter-on-quarter in 2Q27, under-

pinned by a 12.4% rise in revenue.

"The earnings growth can be attributed to strong Australian demand for glass wool insulation products," said TA Research.

While the 1H27 core profit figure represents 69.3% of its full-year forecast, TA Research said the performance still fell within its expectations after factoring in increasing cost challenges in 2H.

"1H27 adjusted pre-tax profit margin was little changed at 23%, justifying that some degree of electricity cost pass-through to its customer during the period," it said.

It also noted that the group has begun discussions with its customers concerning a potential gas price rise in Malaysia.

"However, we do not think this would be easy as Australian builders, PGF's key customers, are also facing cost pressures from other building materials, particularly fuel and steel," it opined.

TNB pledges one-year grid connection for approved DCs

SINGAPORE: Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) has pledged to connect approved data centres (DCs) to the electricity grid within one year, as Malaysia strengthens its domestic network to keep pace with rising power demand and regional electricity connectivity.

TNB chief distribution network officer Ahmad Sazree Abd Aziz said strong domestic transmission and distribution networks were crucial to ensuring that Malaysia could fully benefit from the Asean Power Grid (APG).

"APG does help to strengthen the regional electricity security, but, at the same time, the real benefit from APG came about from how strong is the domestic network, in particular, transmission and distribution," he said during a panel session titled

Strengthening Electricity Security through the APG at the Singapore International Energy Week 2026 here today.

Ahmad Sazree said TNB needed to keep pace with growing electricity demand arising from economic growth, residential and commercial consumption, as well as energy-intensive DCs, while ensuring that the network remained reliable and resilient.

He said three practical measures were important in preparing Malaysia's electricity network for growing demand, namely demand forecasting, network capacity planning and targeted infrastructure development.

"For Malaysia, we do actually have pressure in terms of the DC.

"So, once it's been approved by the ministry-chaired committee, we pledge to get

DCs connected to the grid in one year's time," he said.

He said TNB also needed to ensure that its distribution networks were modernised and digitalised to facilitate renewable energy interconnections at the distribution level.

In addition, he said integrated demand and supply planning was essential to enhance coordination between transmission and distribution networks, enabling the system to accommodate rising demand from DCs and the integration of renewable energy.

He said aligning demand forecasts, infrastructure planning and investment priorities would also help ensure that network development strengthened the electricity system as a whole. — Bernama

SKA Capital eyes bigger contract via EPCC expansion

PETALING JAYA: SKA Capital Bhd is poised to benefit from rising investment in Malaysia's power infrastructure as it expands its capabilities to undertake larger projects, according to MBSB Research.

Renewable energy (RE), such as solar and hydropower, are among the sources being integrated into Malaysia's electricity grid.

"We see SKA Capital as an emerging ben-

eficiary of Malaysia's accelerating power infrastructure investment cycle, underpinned by rising electricity demand, the rapid expansion of data centres, industrial electrification and the integration of RE into the national grid."

To capture these opportunities, SKA Capital has expanded from civil and structural (C&S) to engineering, procurement,

construction and commissioning (EPCC).

Previously, SKA Capital had mainly undertook C&S works for high-voltage substations as a subcontractor, including foundations, control buildings and switchyards.

While this built its track record, its scope limited the share of the overall contract value it could capture.

Maxis acquisition of Astro's broadband business a positive move

PETALING JAYA: Analysts say Maxis Bhd's acquisition of Astro's broadband business is likely to provide the group with an enlarged subscriber base and boost its converged solutions strategy, despite offering limited immediate earnings impact.

Maxis announced a conditional sale and purchase agreement between its wholly-owned subsidiary, Maxis Broadband Sdn Bhd, and Astro Malaysia Holdings Bhd's wholly-owned Measat Broadcast Network Systems Sdn Bhd (MBNS) to acquire MBNS' broadband business assets for up to RM83mil in cash.

Under the agreement, MBNS' entire broadband subscriber base, which stood at 178,631 active subscribers as of end-February, will be acquired by Maxis Broadband.

In a note, MBSB Research estimated that

inorganic growth from the acquisition could potentially increase consumer home revenue by slightly over 20%, based on Maxis' average monthly consumer home revenue of RM84mil.

However, it noted that this may only translate into 2% growth in service revenue.

"This, nonetheless, provides Maxis with an opportunity to cross-sell and up-sell its existing services via its convergence strategy," it added.

The research house said Maxis' home connections could potentially increase by 22% to 991,600 subscribers, and that the average revenue per user (Arpu) could be similar to Maxis' current home blended Arpu of RM109.10 per month.

It also said the proposed acquisition cost would be minor, given the group's existing

cash reserves of RM804mil as at the second quarter ended Jun 30, 2026 (2Q26).

Notably, the purchase consideration is not fixed and subject to downward adjustment according to the number of subscribers transferred to Maxis upon completion.

MBSB Research retained its "buy" recommendation on Maxis and made no changes to its target price of RM4.31 per share.

BIMB Research said it was positive on the deal as it would give Maxis an immediate increase in fixed broadband subscribers, noting that its home fibre subscribers have stagnated at around 720,000 since end-2024.

At maximum, it estimated the acquisition could increase fibre subscribers by approximately 25% and contribute around

3% in annual service revenue once fully integrated. The research firm consequently raised its earnings forecasts by a marginal 3% from the financial year 2027 onwards after factoring in the acquisition.

It upgraded its call on the stock to a "hold" from "sell", with a higher discounted cash flow or DCF-derived target price of RM3.40 from RM3.30 previously.

"The stock's current valuation appears fair, with limited downside and upside catalysts in the near term, resulting in a more balanced risk-reward proposition," it said.

Meanwhile, RHB Research maintained its "neutral" stance on Maxis and its DCF-derived RM3.80 target price.

The research house said it views the transaction positively for strengthening the company's fibre broadband market share amid stiff competition.

GDB Holdings earnings visibility gets timely boost

Latest ParkCity Residence deal lifts order book to RM2bil

CONSTRUCTION

PETALING JAYA: GDB Holdings Bhd's latest ParkCity Residence contract win will lift the group's order book to RM2.05bil, thus extending earnings visibility through financial year 2031 (FY31), according to Apex Securities Research.

The RM1.02bil new construction award for the main building works of ParkCity Residences in Desa ParkCity, Kuala Lumpur, is also the largest residential contract in the group's history, commencing on Nov 4, 2026 with completion scheduled for Aug 18, 2031.

Applying an 8% profit after tax (PAT) margin, the research house said in a report that the latest contract could contribute roughly RM81.4mil in cumulative PAT, or around RM17mil a year over its 58-month tenure, equivalent to about 21.8% of its FY27 core net profit forecast.

Year-to-date contract wins for GDB comprised ParkCity Residences (RM1.02bil), the Wolo Hotel & Residences Mont Kiara KL (RM439.4mil), Sarawak roadworks (RM121.4mil), the National Flood Forecasting and Warning Programme Phase 3 (PRAB) flood forecasting sub-contract (RM119mil) and the water treatment plant in Song District, Sarawak (RM115.5mil).

Apex Securities Research also said the group's tender book now stands at about RM3.3bil following the ParkCity Residence award, spanning industrial, data centre, commercial, mixed-use, infrastructure and residential sectors.

"The group's tender book now stands at about RM3.3bil following the ParkCity Residence award, spanning industrial, data centre, commercial, mixed-use, infrastructure and residential sectors."

Apex Securities Research

Demand for high-end residential towers in established Klang Valley enclaves such as Desa ParkCity – alongside industrial, data centre and Sarawak infrastructure work – continues to underpin the group's pipeline across Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak, the research house added.

Meanwhile, Apex Securities Research has revised GDB's FY26 order book replenishment assumption upward to RM2bil, while also maintaining its FY27 and FY28 assumptions at RM900mil each.

Consequently, the research house has upgraded GDB's earnings forecasts for FY26, FY27 and FY28 to RM75.1mil, RM78.1mil and RM72.2mil respectively.

It maintained a "buy" call on the stock with an increased target price of 67 sen from 60 sen previously.

Apex Securities Research continues to like GDB for its sizeable tender book of about RM3.3bil, its expansion into Sarawak infrastructure works and its diversification

into property development.

The risks to its call include rising material prices, failure to secure new contracts, and the risk of liquidated ascertained damages.

An analyst with a local brokerage viewed the latest contract win positively, saying it extends GDB's relationship with Perdana ParkCity Sdn Bhd dating back to 2013, during which the group delivered One Central Park, Westside III and Park Regent at Desa ParkCity.

The execution risk appears manageable given the group's quality track record, with Park Regent achieving a BuildQAS score of 85.5% and Metrohub 4 a QCLASSIC score of 90%.

That said, running two large high-rise jobs concurrently – Wolo and ParkCity – will test project management capacity and working capital, while the long tenure exposes margins to building material and labour cost movements, the analyst added.

Robust prices propel 3Q26 outlook for plantation players

PETALING JAYA: Plantation companies are expected to post a stronger third quarter financial tear (3Q26) earnings sequentially due to higher production levels in the upstream segments and strong product prices.

Hong Leong Investment Bank (HLIB) Research anticipates core net earnings of upstream operations to improve notably, with output across companies under its coverage forecast to have expanded between 6% and 35.6% quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q).

The sector also enjoyed stable crude palm oil (CPO) prices as support in the quarter.

It stated Malaysia-centric planters such as Hap Seng Plantations Holdings Bhd, Johor Plantations Group Bhd (JPG) and IOI

Corp Bhd have outperformed industry peers in Indonesia in terms of output expansion in the period.

The research house added narrower CPO export tax differential, stable palm kernel prices and proactive restocking activities should provide near-term relief to downstream segment profitability as well on a q-o-q basis.

Hence HLIB Research expects earnings of planters under its coverage to be largely in line with its projections.

On a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis however, the downstream segment's refining profitability is expected to remain under pressure from a wider y-o-y CPO export tax differential and persistent industry overcapacity.

"This may be partly mitigated by active

restocking in the oleochemical segment, driven by geopolitical uncertainties and the impending implementation of the European Union deforestation regulation," HLIB Research stated in a report.

Y-o-y, upstream earnings are expected to post growth, bolstered by higher fresh fruit bunch production and stronger palm product valuations, but partially tempered by elevated fertiliser costs.

The yield improvement forecast is supported by historical replanting done by most planters, but JPG could be the exception due to yield compression from accelerated replanting and moisture stress, HLIB Research noted.

HLIB Research reiterated its average CPO price projections at RM4,450 per tonne for 2026 and RM4,500 for 2027.

Coastal Contracts' profit to ramp up from Mexico projects

PETALING JAYA: Coastal Contracts Bhd's earnings are expected to be supported by engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects undertaken through its Mexican joint venture and upcoming vessel deliveries, says TA Research.

Coastal Contracts holds a 50% stake in Mexican joint venture Coastoil Dynamic SA de CV, through which it provides integrated oil and gas infrastructure, natural gas recovery, conditioning, and processing services in Mexico.

In a report, TA Research said the Coastoil's EPC works for the second Papan onshore gas processing plant and a gas separation plant in Mexico's Ixachi Field would be key earnings drivers over the "medium term".

According to TA Research, the second Papan plant remained on track, with construction progress reaching 40% as of June.

"On-site activities and long-lead equipment procurement are underway, with commercial operations targeted for the first quarter ending March 31, 2027 (1Q27) for the 150 million standard cubic ft per day (mmscf) facility," it said.

Upon completion, the plant is expected to operate under a nine-year operations and maintenance (O&M) contract, with net profit margins of between 20% and 25%, based on management's guidance.

It added Coastoil has commenced work on the US\$170mil EPC contract for the plant's permanent infrastructure in 2Q26, with completion targeted for 1Q27.

"The contract was awarded by Mexico's state-owned oil company Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex), with revenue to be recognised upon project completion and acceptance by Pemex," it said.

Separately, TA Research said the US\$461.3mil EPC contract for a gas separation plant has moved into execution, with Pemex issuing the first work order for Phase 1 in August 2026. Based on management's guidance of an EPC margin of about 20%, TA Research expects revenue and earnings from the project to be recognised across Coastal Contract's financial year 2027 (FY27) and FY28, providing an earnings growth driver over the medium term.

At group level, TA Research said Coastal Contracts' vessel construction programme provides earnings visibility from the second half of FY26, with at least three vessels scheduled for delivery in 3Q26 and 4Q26.

"The group is currently constructing three 40-metre unmanned surface vessels and three 85-metre subsea support and maintenance vessels, with the vessels expected to be completed between 1Q27 to 1Q28," it said.

"Management noted that purchase commitments are typically secured three to six months ahead of vessel completion, providing reasonable visibility for future monetisation."

GDP tops forecasts on AI chip-led exports

Private consumption falls for the first time in four years

StarAsean+
SOUTH KOREA

SEOUL: South Korea's economy grew faster than expected in the third quarter (3Q) as a global artificial intelligence (AI) chip boom boosted exports and investments, advance central bank estimates has showed, though domestic demand has remained weak.

Gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 1% in the July to September quarter from the preceding three months, when it grew 0.6%. It was stronger than a median 0.7% increase tipped in a *Reuters* poll of economists.

It was also higher than the Bank of Korea's (BoK) forecast of 0.3% in August, when the central bank projected this year's growth at 3.3%. The economy is now seen growing 3.7% this year, if GDP in the 4Q stays at the same level as the 3Q.

"It is estimated that half of economic growth is being driven by semiconductors," Lee Dong-won, director general of BoK economic statistics department said.

Exports and investments are expected to remain robust in the 4Q, Lee said, adding that chip production volume will expand further next year while prices will continue to grow but at a slower pace.

Private consumption – which fell for the first time in nearly four years in the 3Q – will likely recover, as dividend payouts by chip firms to their shareholders in the 4Q and bonus payments to employees in the 1Q of 2027 boost household income, Lee said.

Amid the global boom in AI investment, South Korea's exports topped US\$800bil in January to September, higher than last year's full-year record, and are on track to exceed US\$1 trillion this year.

This will make South Korea the fourth



Robust growth: Pedestrians walk across the road near the BoK headquarters in Seoul. The economy is now seen growing 3.7% this year if GDP in the 4Q stays at the same level as the 3Q. — Bloomberg

country to reach the milestone, after the United States, China and Germany.

The central bank kept interest rates unchanged last week, after back-to-back hikes in July and September, but maintained a hawkish stance by upgrading its economic growth forecasts and remaining upbeat about the country's export momentum.

"Exports and investments are leading growth, but the downside is that private consumption remains weak compared with the overall growth momentum," said Park Sang-hyun, an economist at iM Securities.

"There could be short-term boosts, but it is difficult to expect strong momentum given labour market conditions and restric-

tive interest rates," Park said.

In a BoK survey released last Thursday, consumer sentiment fell slightly in October, as the outlook for household income and consumer spending weakened.

In the 3Q, exports rose 2.3% on demand for semiconductors, machinery and electric equipment, while imports grew 2.4%.

Facilities investment jumped 4.1%, led by machinery such as semiconductor manufacturing equipment. Private consumption fell 0.2% as financial services declined on a stock market slump and car purchases fell due to strikes at major automakers.

On a year-on-year basis, GDP grew 3.4%, after rising 3.7% in the quarter before, also stronger than economists' expectations for a 3% increase. — Reuters

Tata Consumer gains on new business growth optimism

MUMBAI: Shares of India's Tata Consumer Products has risen as much as 5.5% after two brokerages upgraded the stock following better-than-expected quarterly results, citing strong growth in newer businesses and prospects for a margin recovery.

Shares of the company touched 986.10 rupees as in the morning yesterday, after closing down 2.84% in the previous session.

Systematix upgraded the stock to "buy", citing strong volume-led growth and a shift towards higher-margin packaged foods and beverages that would reduce dependence on its traditional tea business.

BOB Capital Markets also upgraded Tata Consumer to a "buy" from "hold", saying it expects growth in newer businesses and price increases to support earnings.

Tata Consumer reported a 16% rise in second-quarter profit to 4.69 billion rupees (US\$49.27mil) on Monday, beating analysts' estimate of 4.66 billion rupees, according to LSEG-compiled data.

Revenue rose 14% to 56.61 billion rupees, supported by growth in packaged foods, beverages and salt, while tea volumes remained flat. The company's growth businesses recorded a 40% rise in revenue during the quarter, accounting for 38% of its India business.

Jefferies retained its "buy" rating, saying Tata Consumer was well placed to benefit from the rapid expansion of quick commerce, particularly through its packaged foods and beverages portfolio.

It expects newer businesses to account for half of the company's India sales within three years, compared with 38% currently.

Citi also maintained its "buy" recommendation, forecasting a margin improvement of about 50 basis points in the second half of financial year 2027 as price hikes in tea and salt take effect.

Tata Consumer has raised tea prices by 8% to 10% since the start of the financial year and increased salt prices by about 6% in early October. — Reuters

MSCI fallout widens as Indonesia corporate bond sale shelved

JAKARTA: MSCI Inc's threat to strip Indonesian equities of emerging-market status is now also weighing on dealmaking in the corporate bond market.

Bank KB Indonesia postponed a dollar bond sale, which would have been the first by a company from the nation since the index provider's warning, according to people familiar with the matter.

The lender cited market volatility for halting the sale and said it may revisit markets at a later stage, the people said, asking not to be identified.

A spokesperson for the issuer wasn't immediately able to comment.

The pulled bond sale also faced a tougher global backdrop after yield premiums on corporate bonds around the world widened to a 17-month high, as concerns about artificial intelligence funding and mounting fiscal challenges facing governments dented risk sentiment.

"The MSCI threat and ratings actions by Moody's and Fitch have hurt investor sentiment toward Indonesia in general."

Nicholas Yap

Still, Indonesian corporate bonds have sold off more than regional peers after MSCI's Oct 15 announcement put a spotlight back on governance issues in South-East Asia's largest economy.

Moody's Ratings and Fitch Ratings lowered their outlooks on the sovereign earlier this year, citing concerns about policy credibility and governance under President Prabowo Subianto.

The MSCI threat and ratings actions by Moody's and Fitch have "hurt investor sentiment" toward Indonesia in general, said Nicholas Yap, head of Asia credit desk analysts at Nomura Holdings Inc.

KB Bank's inability to issue the dollar bonds can also be attributed to idiosyncratic factors such as its small size, weak standalone fundamentals and rush to issue before the end of the month, he said.

KB Bank had begun marketing on Monday a three-year note with an expected rating of BBB from Fitch, the firm's second-lowest investment-grade credit score.

The initial pricing guidance of around 275 basis points over Treasuries on the deal was one of the widest for an investment-grade bond in the market so far this year, and compares with roughly 120 basis points for similarly-rated Asian corporate debt, data compiled by *Bloomberg* showed.

KB Bank is two-thirds owned by higher-rated South Korean lender Kookmin Bank.

The initial mandate announcement for a potential deal came earlier this month before the MSCI warning.

"Government-owned issuers with decent fundamentals should still be able to access the dollar bond market," added Yap.

"Although they will likely have to provide investors with larger-than-normal new-issue premiums." — Bloomberg

China property woes strain Huafa's US\$62bil debt repayment

BEIJING: China's unprecedented property crisis has just reached another flashpoint, as one of the country's biggest local-government owned conglomerates struggles with debt payments.

Based in the southern province of Guangdong, Zhuhai Huafa Group Co missed payments on two trust products that were due recently, people familiar with the matter said on Monday.

The firm, which has helped build landmarks such as the 330m tall Zhuhai Tower skyscraper, has also been asking to extend loans from at least three banks.

That makes it the largest company heavily reliant on the property sector to try pushing back debt payments since China Vanke Co, once the country's biggest developer, took similar steps about a year ago.

The development underscores how

China's years-long real estate debt woes are still spreading despite recent signs of stabilisation in the housing market.

Huafa has developed over 200 residential projects across China.

The conglomerate had 413 billion yuan (US\$61.9bil) of interest-bearing liabilities, including bank and trust loans as well as bonds, as of March, according to a company document this month.

"Huafa is facing the same challenges as other Chinese developers, but it also plays such a crucial role in the local economy that local governments are highly likely to step in and support it," said Yao Yu, chief executive officer and founder of credit research firm RatingDog.

"The eventual repayment outlook of Huafa's bonds is not overly pessimistic." — Bloomberg

Ex-BoJ chief backs hikes but deputy urges caution

Remarks reflect Japan's uncertain outlook, policy path

StarAsean+
JAPAN

TOKYO: The Bank of Japan (BoJ) will likely consider raising interest rates at each upcoming meeting, according to a new book by former bank chief Haruhiko Kuroda, who supported his successor's current push to unwind a decade of extremely loose monetary policy.

Kuroda's views contrast with those of his former deputy Masazumi Wakatabe, whose book published in September warned against premature rate hikes and urged policymakers to stay focused on boosting demand.

The remarks show a divergence in policy thinking between Kuroda, who took part in the monetary leg of former premier Shinzo Abe's "Abenomics" reflationist policies, and Wakatabe who, together with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi have focused on preserving the legacies of "Abenomics".

While raising interest rates too hastily could cause economic stagnation, moving too slowly could prevent incumbent governor Kazuo Ueda from completing policy normalisation, Kuroda said.

"I'm sure the BoJ will examine whether to raise interest rates by 25 basis points at each policy meeting to bring them close to levels deemed neutral to the economy," he said in the book published this month, which looked back at his decade at the helm at the BoJ.

Wakatabe, however, believes there are other priorities for monetary policy.

"Real economic growth remains low and while Japan is experiencing inflation, half of the price rises are driven by cost-push factors," Wakatabe said in his book on Takaichi's economic policies.

Wakatabe is known as a reflationist with close ties to Takaichi and serves as a member of a key government economic panel.

Kuroda deployed a radical stimulus pro-



Policy examination: Kuroda speaks at an interview in Tokyo. He believes that while raising interest rates too hastily could cause economic stagnation, moving too slowly could prevent incumbent governor Ueda from completing policy normalisation. — Reuters

gramme in 2013 with a pledge to fire up inflation to the BoJ's 2% target in two years.

But the target proved elusive, forcing the BoJ to maintain ultra-loose policy throughout his term that ended in 2023.

Ueda steered an exit from Kuroda's stimulus in 2024, as a tight job market and rising raw material costs from the Ukraine war lifted consumer inflation. The BoJ has raised rates several times, including in September to a 31-year high of 1.25%, and is likely to declare victory on Friday in its 14-year battle to meet its price target.

In his book, Kuroda said he sought to eradicate Japan's deflationary mindset with simple communication, and "cut off his escape route" by setting a timeframe for hitting the price goal at the risk of depriv-

ing the BoJ of policy flexibility.

He said he became convinced Japan had fully emerged from deflation around 2024 as wages began to rise. Wakatabe served as deputy BoJ governor from 2018 to 2023.

He is seen as among candidates to succeed Ueda when his term ends in 2028, if Takaichi were to stay on as premier long enough to hand-pick the next BoJ chief.

"The BoJ would need to do quite some explaining if it were to raise rates when real economic growth is negative and price rises are driven mostly by cost-push factors," Wakatabe wrote in his book.

A rate hike is possible if Takaichi's spending plans and growth strategies stimulate investment and fund demand and push up Japan's neutral rate, he said. — Reuters

S'pore launches first LNG tender, eyes third terminal

SINGAPORE: Singaporean state gas buyer GasCo has launched its first procurement exercise to secure term supplies of liquefied natural gas (LNG), according to Gan Siow Huang, the Energy, Trade and Industry Minister.

The city-state, which relies on natural gas to generate about 95% of its electricity, is also studying the feasibility of a third LNG import terminal on the northeastern island of Pulau Tekong, Gan said at the Asia Gas Markets conference yesterday.

The moves come as Singapore prepares to expand its gas-fired power generation capacity.

On Monday, the government said it would add five new gas-fired power plants to raise its electricity generation capacity by around 26% early next decade from around 12 gigawatts at present.

Gan did not provide additional details on GasCo's procurement exercise or the size of the potential third import terminal.

GasCo, which was established in 2025 to centralise Singapore's gas procurement and supply, previously said it would seek long-term LNG supplies in the first quarter of this year for delivery from 2028 onward, moving to secure multi-year contracted volumes rather than relying on one-off spot purchases.

The country is expected to face a gas supply gap of about three million tonnes in 2028 and 2029, which is expected to widen to around six million tonnes by 2035.

The US-Israeli war on Iran broke out in late February, pushing global gas prices to record highs. Singapore imports LNG as well as piped gas from neighbouring Malaysia and Indonesia.

On Saturday, Indonesia's upstream oil and gas regulator said it had cut pipeline gas exports to Singapore by 31 million standard cubic feet per day, to divert supply to its domestic power sector. — Reuters

China industrial profits rise amid economic divide

BEIJING: China's industrial profits has grown at a faster pace, though a deepening divergence across the economy weighed on business earnings.

Profits at industrial firms rose 14.4% from a year earlier last month, quickening from a 4.2% increase in August, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed yesterday.

Profits were up 15.5% in the first nine months of this year, largely unchanged from the 15.7% increase in the January to August period.

The sectoral divide remained pronounced, with profits in the computer, communication and other electronic equipment manufacturing category more than doubling over the nine-month period, whereas profits in the furniture manufacturing sector fell by more than half.

Also casting a shadow over the sustainability of profit growth, export-oriented firms are bracing for more uncertainty as expanding trade surpluses stoke tensions with trading partners, particularly Europe.

However, Citic Bank International's chief China economist, Ding Meng, expressed optimism about the outlook due to the rapid growth in artificial intelligence (AI)-related industries.

"This suggests that domestic and external demand generated by the AI supply chain has become a key force supporting industrial profits." — Reuters

Timor-Leste buys out Woodside in Greater Sunrise

SINGAPORE: Timor-Leste has agreed to buy Woodside Energy's stake in the Greater Sunrise gas project for up to US\$200mil, paving the way to speed up development of the fields first discovered in waters off northwestern Australia more than 50 years ago.

Woodside, long the operator of the project, said it would sell its 33% stake to Timor-Leste's national oil company, Timor Gap, including the titles containing the Greater Sunrise fields, which will make Timor Gap the 100% owner.

"We are now in a stronger position than ever to expedite the development of Greater Sunrise and advance the selection of the Timor-Leste liquefied natural gas (LNG) development concept, bringing us closer to realising our nation's long-standing aspiration of developing Greater Sunrise on Timor-Leste's southern coast," Timor Gap chief executive officer (CEO) Rui Soares said in a statement yesterday.

The two fields that make up Greater Sunrise are estimated to hold 5.1 trillion cubic feet of gas and 226 million barrels of condensate, a light crude oil typically found with gas.

In September, Timor-Leste's petroleum minister said the earliest possible start of production from the project had been pushed back by two years to 2034.

"We certainly know Sunrise has the

"We are in a stronger position to expedite the development of Greater Sunrise and advance Timor-Leste LNG development concept, bringing us closer to realising our nation's aspiration of developing Greater Sunrise on Timor-Leste's southern coast."

Rui Soares

potential to deliver great value to Timor Leste in the region.

But it is a complex project, particularly a project of this scale, and it requires the appropriate development pathway," Woodside CEO Liz Westcott told *Reuters* last week.

The transaction remains subject to conditions, including government, regulatory and joint venture approvals, with completion targeted for the first half of 2027, Woodside said.

"While Sunrise remains a high-quality resource, the transaction further simplifies Woodside's portfolio and allows capital and management attention to be focused

on opportunities that present the greatest shareholder value," Westcott said.

In early September, entered an agreement to acquire Osaka Gas' 10% interest in the project.

The Greater Sunrise project was first stalled by a long-running dispute between Australia and Timor-Leste over their maritime border and share of revenue from the project, which was resolved in 2018.

Since then, development has been held up as Woodside and the Timorese disagreed whether gas from the deepwater fields should be piped to a LNG gas plant in Darwin, in northern Australia, or to Timor-Leste. — Reuters

UK firms pin budget hopes on energy relief

Healey to cut electricity levies after chambers warning

LONDON: UK businesses are hopeful Chancellor of the Exchequer, John Healey, will cut levies from their electricity bills in his budget after being told that help with energy costs is the government's top priority for firms, according to industry leaders familiar with the plans.

Healey has promised to give companies "breathing space", saying last week that he would get rid of regulatory paperwork to save them an estimated £800mil a year and be a chancellor "who backs business in Britain making a profit".

The British Chambers of Commerce said a small cut in red tape would be a "welcome first step", but that companies expect further measures.

Jonathan Reynolds, the UK business secretary, urged Healey to make cutting the cost of energy his top issue for businesses, according to two people familiar with the discussions.

Reynolds fears Britain's high energy costs are a dead weight on business and a drag on growth, a third person said.

UK businesses are up in arms over energy costs, which are among the highest in Europe.

As well as having to cover green and social levies in their bills, they complain they are punished by the United Kingdom's dependency on gas in a marginal pricing system where the final unit of supply sets the overall price.

The Iran war, which has driven oil prices above US\$100 a barrel from just US\$60 at the start of the year, has made the issue more immediate.

Reynolds and Healey are considering removing the contracts-for-difference programme for clean-energy generators, according to one of the people who has spoken to them.

Taking those off business bills and moving the costs to taxpayers would save about £2bil a year, according to the data from the Office for Budget Responsibility.

An alternative approach, removing the Climate Change Levy, would also save £2bil.

Former Chancellor Rachel Reeves pioneered a similar approach last November.



Potential measures: Britain's Chancellor John Healey (left) meets Prime Minister Andy Burnham at 11 Downing Street in London ahead of the budget. Healey says he recognises that energy costs are the top concern for UK businesses.

Reeves removed 75% of the renewables obligation from household bills to address cost-of-living concerns and mechanically reduce the official inflation rate at the time.

Around £2bil a year was moved to general taxation. Under that programme, the cost will move back onto bills in 2029 and 2030.

Healey may take the same approach by making any reduction in energy bills time-limited. When he spoke with industry trade groups last week, he told them he recognised that energy costs topped their list of concerns.

A Treasury spokesperson said that "decisions on tax are a matter for the chancellor to set out at fiscal events".

The Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade said budget matters were for the Treasury.

The hopes for energy bill relief follow a series of economic announcements:

Healey has given some business support already.

Pubs, social clubs and live music venues have had a 20% cut to business rates, helping around 32,000 venues. Roughly £210mil is also being spent bringing boarded-up high streets back to life.

The lead-up to the budget has been different from the Labour government's first two budgets under Healey's predecessor, Rachel Reeves, with less speculation about potential measures and more rhetoric about helping businesses.

"The government has realised the narrative about business and wealth creation has been extremely negative," PIMCO's senior adviser for the United Kingdom, Rupert Harrison, told *Bloomberg Radio* on Monday.

"I think they do realise that's having an impact on investment and location decisions and they want to try and change the narrative." — Bloomberg

Petrol vehicle resales weaken as NEVs gain popularity

SHANGHAI: Petrol vehicles are losing their advantage in resale value in China, as price competition and rapid technological change reshape the country's automotive market.

The average three-year retention rate of petrol vehicles fell to 46.07% in the first half of 2026.

Meanwhile, the figure for new energy vehicles (NEVs) stood at 44.8%, according to a report released by the China Automobile Dealers Association and vehicle valuation platform Jingzheng.

The scenario was a different story just a few years ago. In 2023, petrol vehicles' three-year residual value averaged 62%, 20 percentage points higher than NEVs'.

Data from used-car platform Guazi showed a similar trend.

In September, the three-year retention rate for fuel-powered vehicles on the platform was 51.1%, down 0.4 percentage points from August, while the rate for NEVs rose 0.5 percentage points to 48%.

NEVs aged one to two years even recorded higher retention rates than their fuel-powered counterparts, according to the platform's monthly report.

Petrol vehicles, particularly established foreign brands, have traditionally commanded stronger resale values, supported by service networks and relatively predictable product cycles.

But the latest figures suggest that petrol cars can no longer be assumed to hold their value better simply because of their powertrain.

One major pressure on petrol cars' residual values is the changing price environment in the new-car market.

As automakers cut new car prices to defend sales, the value of comparable used vehicles comes under pressure.

Buyers can compare used models against discounted new vehicles, forcing dealers to adjust their valuations.

The pressure is significant for volume brands, including Toyota and Volkswagen, which are facing intensifying competition from domestic brands and NEVs.

Even vehicles that once enjoyed strong resale premiums can lose value when new-car discounts widen or their product competitiveness weakens, according to the reports. — China Daily/ANN

China's Supreme Court puts green practices at heart of BRI disputes

BEIJING: China's top court emphasises the importance of green practices in cases related to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as part of efforts to promote high-quality development at home and sustainable growth globally.

Recently, the Supreme People's Court (SPC) released six typical cases related to the BRI, highlighting the need to make green development a key consideration in resolving disputes.

The cases demonstrate how judicial proceedings can support the initiative's long-term sustainability and credibility.

The SPC highlighted the green principle enshrined in the Civil Code, which provides a legal basis for addressing environmental concerns.

The Ecological and Environmental Code further promotes green and low-carbon development and emphasises global environmental governance, aiming to strengthen international cooperation on environmental protection.

"The BRI has entered a phase of high-quality development," the Supreme Court said.

"Promoting green development in BRI projects aligns with the central leadership's

"Promoting green development in BRI projects aligns with the central leadership's requirements on environmental protection and the rule of law, and is an important step towards addressing climate change and safeguarding global ecological security."

Supreme People's Court

requirements on environmental protection and the rule of law, and is an important step towards addressing climate change and safeguarding global ecological security."

The court added that the approach would help deepen exchanges and cooperation under the BRI, foster harmony between humanity and nature, and contribute to global sustainable development goals.

One of the six cases involved a Chinese solar equipment seller that contracted a

logistics company to transport goods to Germany.

After the buyer collected the shipment without paying the outstanding balance, the logistics company was held liable for the resulting loss.

In this case, a new energy company in Wuxi, Jiangsu province, sold a solar power system to a German trading company.

The buyer paid a 20% deposit, with the remaining 80% due upon presentation of the bill of lading.

The Wuxi company hired a logistics firm in Wuhan, Hubei province, to transport the goods from Wuxi to Duisburg, Germany, via the China-Europe freight train service.

Under their agreement, the logistics company was to release the cargo only after confirming receipt of the outstanding payment.

However, the German buyer collected the goods without paying the balance. In August 2023, the Wuxi company sued the logistics firm for releasing the cargo without authorisation.

After hearing the case, a court in Wuhan ruled that the logistics company, acting as a multimodal transport operator, had breached its contractual obligations by releasing the goods without authorisation.

It ordered the firm to pay 380,000 yuan in damages, after deducting the freight charges owed by the Wuxi company.

The Wuhan court's ruling was upheld by the Hubei High People's Court in August 2025, despite the logistics company's appeal.

The SPC described the case as a typical example of a dispute over a green transport international freight forwarding contract under the BRI. — China Daily/ANN

AMSTERDAM: Dutch investors will likely ditch their cryptocurrency if the asset class is carved out of a shift to a new investor-friendly wealth tax, industry groups warn.

Under current government proposals, investors in crypto, along with gold and foreign currencies, will continue to pay an annual levy on unrealised gains until at least 2030.

Crypto-linked exchange-traded products, by contrast, would fall under the new capital gains regime.

"Many of our major members are indeed very afraid of that," said Jan Scheele, board member of the Blockchain Netherlands Foundation, representing all start-ups and companies across the Dutch blockchain ecosystem.

Such a shift could happen fast too, as "the beauty of crypto is that you can very quickly withdraw it from an exchange and deposit it somewhere else".

The sell-off "is very likely to happen, since the majority of crypto-holders do not want to be taxed on unrealised capital gains from a volatile asset", said Mauro Halve, chairman of the Dutch trade association of regulated crypto service providers NVC.

NVC's members represent over 95% of the assets under management in the nation's crypto sector, including Bitvavo, Moonpay and Coinmerce.

The Dutch plan to move from a tax on paper profits to a capital gains tax, paid upon sale for investments like shares, bonds and options by 2028.

The switch will bring the Netherlands in line with most other European countries and has been welcomed by investors for being fairer and simpler than taxing paper or theoretical profits.

Still, in a rush to push through the wealth tax reform, the Dutch government could

Dutch crypto to face upheaval under new tax

Investors expected to shift holdings elsewhere

"The temporary distinction is justified because it is an interim step that will more quickly bring a larger portion of the assets under capital gains tax."

Finance Ministry spokesperson

potentially open the door to fresh legal challenges, after years of court battles over the taxation of unrealised gains.

Treating economically similar investments differently based on their legal structure could raise questions under the same property rights and anti-discrimination principles that led the Supreme Court to rule against the previous tax on assumed returns in 2021, according to both industry groups.

"The temporary distinction is justified because it is an interim step that will more quickly bring a larger portion of the assets under capital gains tax, a spokesperson for the Finance Ministry said.

A previous change to wealth taxes

included a legal framework that allowed the quick introduction of capital gains tax for 90% of financial assets held by Dutch taxpayers, such as shares and bonds, but not for a range of other assets including crypto and gold.

Without this framework, there is not enough time to switch to capital gains tax in 2028, according to Tax Secretary, Eelco Eerenberg.

"The group of people who will not yet be subject to capital gains tax is getting smaller and smaller, but it's not zero, and that is the price we pay for this fast-track approach," Eerenberg said.

Such a distinction is "unfair and legally questionable", according to Paul Buitink,

managing director of Holland Gold, one of the biggest precious metal retailers in the country.

Halve added that "the line in the sand" that Eerenberg draws is unfair, as "the same asset should have the same tax".

Eerenberg's plan is not yet final and could still change. The Council of State, the government's highest legal advisory body, is expected to issue its opinion on the legislation at the end of October, potentially prompting the cabinet to revise its proposal.

Both the NVC and Holland Gold submitted objections to the council and hoped the process could still lead to changes.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the tax plans on Nov 12, leaving the Senate to approve the legislation before the end of the year.

The switch to capital gains tax for 90% of financial assets will initially generate €3bil less a year than under a previous proposal of an annual paper profits tax on shares and bonds.

A reduction in crypto holdings by Dutch taxpayers could widen this gap in the medium term. Dutch companies, institutions, and households held €1.2bil in crypto securities by October 2025, according to the Dutch central bank. — Bloomberg

French bond risk falls the most since 2020

PARIS: A measure of French bond risk posted its biggest drop since the 2020 pandemic as local markets rallied after the nation dodged a downgrade at Moody's Ratings.

The extra yield investors demand to hold 10-year French bonds, known as OATs, over safer German debt fell 14 basis points to 154 basis points on Monday, the largest drop in six years on a closing basis.

France's stocks rose and the euro outperformed most of its G10 peers.

Moody's kept France's rating steady at Aa3 with a negative outlook last Friday, surprising many who had expected a downgrade.

Despite the challenging political and social environment, the firm said its baseline assumption is that "a deficit-reducing budget for 2027 will eventually be adopted, possibly by decree".

The decision is "a pleasant surprise for battered OATs", said Rohan Khanna, head of European rates strategy at Barclays Plc.

French bonds rallied on Monday, with the 10-year yield down 12 basis points, the most since April, to 4.90%.

The euro, which took a hit from the turmoil in French markets, slipped 0.1% to US\$1.1191 amid broad dollar strength but still outperformed most peers. The CAC 40 Index rose as much as 1.2%.

A downgrade from Moody's was widely expected partially because other major rating firms already have lower credit scores for France.

S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings place the nation's debt one notch below, after cutting their assessments during a budget clash in the fall of 2025.

"We were surprised by Moody's not downgrading," said Piers Hillier, chief investment officer at Jupiter in France. "Maybe it's just a matter of time. But the backdrop there is not getting any better any time soon."

Barclays's Khanna also questioned how far the tailwind from the decision will last, citing upcoming European Central Bank and US Federal Reserve interest rate deci-



Credit scores: An employee boards a high-speed passenger train at Alstom's plant in Belfort. France's sovereign credit rating was spared a downgrade by Moodys, surprising many analysts who had expected a more negative fiscal outlook. — AFP

sions as well as inflation numbers for October among a host of potential triggers for market moves.

France remains unable to find a way to contain its swelling debt burden, which put the nation at the forefront of market anxiety over the past weeks. The premium investors demand to hold French 10-year bonds over German peers has surged over the past month, reaching 178 basis points last week, the highest since 2011.

Stocks have also underperformed, with the CAC 40 falling about 4% this year while the Stoxx Europe 600 gained nearly 8%.

France's debt mountain is fuelled by a deficit set to blow out to 5.4% of economic output this year. Political gridlock, slumping growth and rising interest costs have derailed attempts at consolidation.

Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu has

proposed a finance bill to sharply constrain spending and raise tax revenues to meet a deficit goal of 5% next year, but the blueprint's future is uncertain as he has no majority in parliament.

France's National Assembly rejected the "receipts" portion of the 2027 social security budget bill, which sent the original version of the draft law to the Senate.

"There is no change in the current paradigm and what you have today is a mix of a technical rebound and some relief on the Moody's status quo," said Christopher Dembik, senior investment adviser at Pictet Asset Management, who sees the 10-year French yield trading higher between 5% and 6% until the presidential election.

"I can't see any solution for France's fiscal position to improve in the short term." — Bloomberg

Congo removes boss of artisanal mining regulator

KINSHASA: The Democratic Republic of Congo's Mines Minister suspends the official in charge of overseeing the artisanal mining sector, as the government tries to curb unauthorised operations on copper-cobalt concessions held by international investors.

Mines Minister Louis Watum removed Jean-Paul Kapongo Kadiobo as director general of the agency known by the French acronym SAEMAPE on Oct 21, according to a decree seen by *Bloomberg News*.

The order said he failed to prevent "illicit artisanal mining" within permits assigned to other firms.

The decision comes after about 300 Chinese nationals working in Congo's copper belt were detained as part of a crack-down on illegal mining. *Bloomberg* reported the arrests, which took place mostly around the city of Kolwezi, on Oct 16.

Chinese mining and processing firms account for most copper and cobalt production in the central African nation where the two metals are often found together.

SAEMAPE is the government body responsible for supervising and formalising artisanal and small-scale mining in the world's second-biggest copper supplier and top source of battery material cobalt.

The provincial head of the agency in Lualaba, of which Kolwezi is the capital, was also suspended, according to local media reports.

Foreign companies such as China Molybdenum Co Ltd, Glencore Plc and Zijin Mining Group Co Ltd produce most of the copper and cobalt in Congo.

But the artisanal sector provides livelihoods for hundreds of thousands of local people who typically operate – sometimes protected by members of the armed forces – inside licenses held by industrial mining firms. — Bloomberg

NEW YORK: The average price Americans are paying for petrol under President Donald Trump has overtaken the average during the Biden administration, underscoring the political pressure on Republicans ahead of the midterm elections.

Trump had pledged to lower petrol prices to below US\$2 a gallon, but almost two years into his presidency the fuel's retail cost has averaged US\$3.472 a gallon, according to the American Automobile Association (AAA).

That surpassed the average under former President Joe Biden of US\$3.471 a gallon by less than a cent, according to daily AAA data released on Monday.

Petrol prices surged this year after the start of the United States and Israel's war in Iran, crippling oil flows and further squeezing global refining capacity.

Over the past eight months, US average pump prices have risen 43% while diesel prices have surged almost 70% and topped the highest level on record.

The issue has become a flashpoint for Trump's Republican party in mid-term elections, as inflation-weary voters are further strapped by elevated energy prices.

Americans have never paid this much for fuel this late in the year, with a national average price of US\$4.286 a gallon as of Sunday, according to the AAA.

Biden still holds the record for the single-highest nationwide petrol price of US\$5.02 a gallon in June 2022, in the months after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The global market is missing around 400,000 barrels a day of petrol that would normally be exported from the Middle East, said Susan Bell, senior vice-president, downstream at Rystad Energy.

The cost of diesel has been the main focus for the Trump administration in the weeks leading up to the mid-term elections with prices reaching a record high of US\$6.53 a gallon last month.

Average prices of diesel under Trump have already exceeded the same figure under Biden by about 6%.

Fuel prices have become a lightning rod for critics of the Trump administration because their rapid increase this year has exacerbated a cost of living crisis that voters point to as their top concern.

They also represent a broken promise from Trump, who pilloried Biden constantly for high pump prices during the 2024 presidential election.

Trump has repeatedly said that petrol and diesel prices will come down once the

Trump's petrol prices surpass Biden's average

Fuel costs add political pressure on Republicans



Rapid increase: California Republican governor candidate Steve Hilton refuels his vehicle in Pomona, California. Rising fuel costs have emerged as a key issue in the run-up to the US mid-term elections. — Bloomberg

war with Iran is over, but the conflict is showing no signs of abating.

At a rally last weekend, Trump celebrated how US oil companies have added "hundreds of billions of dollars" for the country.

"President Trump is talking about all the money they're making while people are suffering at the pump, that'll be the headline," he said.

"I don't give a damn. I'm going to say it, we're making a freaking fortune."

High energy costs are threatening to turn solidly red areas of the United States into swing states.

Kansas, Iowa, Ohio, Texas and Alaska, which Trump won by double-digit margins in 2024, are now considered toss-ups for Senate races by the *Cook Political Report*, a nonpartisan election forecaster.

Households in each of these states, with the exception of Texas, spend more of their income on energy than the US average,

according to James West, a managing director at Melius Research LLC.

Voters will likely weigh current gas prices against where Trump promised they would land, pre-pandemic prices that consistently averaged under US\$3 a gallon, said Ryan Cummings, chief of staff at Stanford University's Institute for Economic Policy Research and a former staff economist on the Biden Administration's Council of Economic Advisers who worked on petrol policy.

"Really, what they're comparing against is a US\$1.50 difference," Cummings said.

The Trump administration has taken steps to reduce the impact of fuel supply disruptions from the Iran war, including controversial measures such as a diesel deal with Russia.

But experts said the deal is too limited to meaningfully move prices at the pumps ahead of November's midterm elections.

The administration also invoked war-time powers last Thursday to boost fuel production in the United States, with the Department of Energy announcing last Friday that it has US\$150mil earmarked for investments in refineries.

One of the largest US refiners, Valero Energy Corp, last week said Trump's latest efforts to tamp down pump prices would have little impact.

The Russian diesel shipments aren't a "significant volume", chief operating officer Gary Simmons said.

Valero's chief executive officer Lane Riggs noted that Trump's plans to boost production domestically would not pay off quickly.

"Almost any refinery that's been shut down will take a while to start up, so it would be very difficult for them to help the prompt situation," Riggs said.

"The idea that there's these refineries that you can sort of walk in and flip the lights and they're going to start running is not exactly the case." — Bloomberg

Britain declines joining Canada-led defence bank

LONDON: Britain will not join the Canada-led Defence, Security and Resilience Bank, in a setback to efforts to create the world's first global defence bank, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The two countries instead said on Sunday that they would develop a framework for cooperation between their respective defence-funding initiatives, establishing two distinct but complementary institutions to support each other on investment opportunities and strategic challenges.

"We have been working closely to consider how the Multilateral Defence Mechanism (MDM) and Defence, Security and Resilience Bank (DSRB) can best advance our shared objectives," the statement said.

The two governments were unable to agree on key issues, including the location of the headquarters of a joint institution, the level of joint procurement, lending to members, and the rules around new members, a second person said.

The MDM will focus on accelerating defence investment, joint procurement through financing, and bringing together demand across the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation allies to reduce procurement costs, while the DSRB will complement it by supporting investment in defence industries and supply chains, focusing more on single sovereign lending, the person added.

The DSRB, which will be based in Canada,

"Membership is open to other allies and close partners, who share the bank's objective."

Francois-Philippe Champagne

has faced challenges securing support from larger European nations. *Reuters* was first to report in September last year that Britain had declined to join the project.

There were hopes Britain would reconsider its position under new Prime Minister Andy Burnham and his team.

Germany had previously declined to join. A spokesperson for the German Finance Ministry said Germany was an observer in the negotiations on DSRB's charter and is reviewing open questions.

Britain and Canada said the MDM and DSRB will be designed to work in close partnership, so they can support each other on emerging industrial priorities, investment opportunities and strategic financing challenges.

The DSRB has been aiming to raise around €100bil and use the money to lend at low cost to governments and contractors for defence projects. It will also offer guarantees for lenders financing smaller firms seen as riskier borrowers.

So far Albania, Belgium, Greece, Latvia,

Luxembourg, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine have pledged their support, along with Canada.

Canadian Finance Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne said the group would meet in Luxembourg on Nov 30 to sign articles of agreement establishing the bank.

"Membership is open to other allies and close partners, who share the bank's objective," he said in a statement.

Reuters previously reported that potential members had not joined because of concerns, including whether the DSRB can offer cheaper financing than highly rated national governments, as well as the amount of capital countries would need to commit, the bank's governance, and overlaps with existing initiatives.

Britain's Defence Secretary Wes Streeting had recently described the DSRB as a "really interesting and innovative mechanism" and said that he did not see the proposed defence bank and MDM as being in competition. — Reuters

Australia to refresh critical minerals plans

SYDNEY: Australia will refresh its critical minerals strategy to place greater emphasis on refining and processing, a senior minister says, as competition for investment intensifies and supply-chain concerns persist.

Resources Minister Madeleine King said the revised strategy would guide the next phase of the industry's development, with a sharper focus on capturing "more economic and strategic value".

"It places greater emphasis on processing and refining critical minerals. Particularly where Australia has, or can develop, a comparative advantage," she said.

Australia is one of the world's largest suppliers of critical minerals, including rare earths used in defence and renewable energy.

However, China dominates the complex and environmentally challenging refining stage of the supply chain.

Western nations are seeking to expand their critical minerals capabilities and diversify supplies as they move to reduce reliance on China for materials essential to the energy transition and national security. — Reuters

NEW YORK: Anthropic PBC's initial public offering (IPO) is laying bare the stark extremes of the multi-trillion-dollar AI boom business model: astonishing growth paired with uncertainty about demand and the spending required to continue developing the technology.

The startup, which publicly filed IPO paperwork on Monday, is poised to be the first major US firm focused solely on building AI software to make its market debut.

The filing offers proof of the billions of dollars in sales per year that Anthropic's products generate, but also puts forth hard questions about its extreme losses, profitability, government intervention and the potential for catastrophic harms that are specific to cutting-edge AI developers.

Just five years into its existence, Anthropic is expected to raise more money in its IPO than any firm in history and overtake Berkshire Hathaway Inc in market value.

Its valuation has surged from US\$183bil a little over a year ago to US\$965bil in its most recent round, with early expectations that the company could be worth upwards of nearly US\$2 trillion once it goes public - creating a massive windfall, even for employees and investors who got into the company somewhat late.

Its public market performance might cement or capsize Wall Street's confidence in the trillion-dollar AI boom at a moment when investors are increasingly anxious about the borrowing binge underpinning it.

More than any other companies, Anthropic and archrival OpenAI have set the pace for global AI development.

Anthropic has also put itself at the centre of a complex web of interconnected investments from leading chipmakers and cloud providers that are helping to prop up the entire sector and the US economy.

"This will really be investors' first significant opportunity to invest directly in the company that is driving the AI economy," said Gil Luria, head of technology research at DA Davidson. "It's of monumental importance."

At the same time, Anthropic's IPO may shape the prospects for an entire generation of AI startups.

It's anticipated to funnel more capital into the ecosystem through what promises to be an almost unparalleled wealth creation event and is expected to open the floodgates for others to go public in the coming months after a period of paralysis for the IPO market.

In a sign of Anthropic's influence, investors made the pilgrimage to its San Francisco offices this month to hear execu-

A defining moment for Wall Street and AI boom

Anthropic's IPO shows the extremes of the AI surge



Man of the moment:

Amodei is the CEO and co-founder of Anthropic. The company's IPO is expected to shape the prospects for an entire generation of AI startups. — AP

tives lay out their vision while a small group of protestors gathered outside, calling to "block the IPO" over concerns about the technology.

Public and private markets have closely scrutinised every tidbit of information on Anthropic's business, including its non-standardised revenue figures.

And on the eve of Anthropic staffers becoming millionaires, wealth management firm IEQ Capital threw a party for AI investors and employees, according to one person familiar with the matter.

The invite-only party promised a performance from DJ Diplo.

"Never have IPOs represented so much to the venture capital industry writ large," said Ravi Viswanathan, founder and managing partner of NewView Capital, about the much-anticipated offerings of Anthropic and, eventually, OpenAI.

Over the years, Wall Street has grown accustomed to a certain Silicon Valley success story.

Tech firms, including Amazon.com Inc and Meta Platforms Inc, spend money to increase their share of the market, then reach an inflection point where they become consistently profitable.

Anthropic, by its own account, isn't

promising any consistency. "I don't think the economics of this industry work that way," chief executive officer Dario Amodei said in a lengthy podcast interview near the start of the year.

It's uniquely challenging to predict future demand for a rapidly evolving technology and pace costly, longer-term computing investments accordingly, he said.

"If I'm just off by a year at that rate of growth, or if the growth rate is five times a year instead of 10 times a year, then you go bankrupt."

Founded in 2021 by former OpenAI employees with the goal of building AI more responsibly, Anthropic now embodies the core tensions that have come to define the industry.

It's simultaneously calling for slowing down the pace of AI development to mitigate the potential for severe harms to humanity and pushing ahead with a public offering that's likely to create added shareholder pressure to generate greater returns on investment.

Some, including New York City's comptroller, previously called on Anthropic to pause its IPO until it fully addresses safety risks.

Anthropic intends to use the capital

raised from its public offering to fuel investments in chips, data centres and talent to build a technology it believes can reshape the global economy.

Though that goal is lofty and far from certain, Anthropic has gained momentum this year thanks to a surge in demand for its Claude AI software to streamline more complex workplace tasks, particularly writing and debugging code.

Like other AI firms, however, it is working to prove the broader utility for its products beyond software engineers, who are typically early adopters.

Anthropic, which had over 1,000% revenue growth year-over-year in 2025, has since seen that pace temper.

The company's revenue hit US\$16.3bil in the first half of 2026, according to its IPO filing, a more than 14-fold increase from the same period in the prior year.

But as *Bloomberg* previously reported, its revenue rate of growth has since slowed from around 140% to 45% in the second to third quarter in 2026.

The company also faces a concentration of risk: In the first half of 2026, 48% of Anthropic's sales to customers came from three technology firms' cloud marketplaces, some of which are building their own models and may someday wean off of Claude, threatening future sales.

Meanwhile, Anthropic disclosed wild swings in its bottom line, including a net loss of almost US\$42bil in 2025 and nearly US\$81bil in the first two quarters of this year, easily dwarfing the amount Uber Technologies Inc burned through annually before going public.

And the Claude chatbot maker said that just since the end of 2025, it has committed to invest a staggering US\$417bil, with terms ranging from one year to 20, on computing and infrastructure capacity to support its software.

A core assumption is that Anthropic and its peers will eventually generate stratospheric revenue from more advanced AI software in the years ahead that offsets the immense investments made today. — *Bloomberg*

Mercuria says rival fears drove disputed Baltic tanker rate

GENEVA: Commodity trader Mercuria Energy Group is accusing the Baltic Exchange of continuing to publish the world's benchmark oil tanker rate, despite distortions caused by the Iran war, because it fears losing business to a competitor.

Lawyers for Mercuria kicked off a London trial claiming that the Baltic Exchange should have suspended the benchmark rate after exports through the Strait of Hormuz were strangled by the conflict between the United States, Israel and Iran.

The Baltic Exchange said the commodity trader's claim reflects "instability and opportunism".

Founded in 1774, the Baltic Exchange plays a central role in setting global shipping rates.

It maintains it was still possible to put a price on the freight risk, and that it had consulted consistently with the market after the Iran war severely disrupted oil shipments through Hormuz. Flows have since recovered close to pre-war levels.

In an April 14 call, a senior freight assessor described the risk of the benchmark being replaced by a competitor as "the overriding fear of what we do here," according to a document given to the court by Mercuria's lawyers before the hearing*

"The Baltic Exchange is confident that it has met all its statutory, contractual and regulatory obligations in the production of the TD3C benchmark."

Mark Jackson

on Monday. Mercuria also gave examples of tanker market participants, including the Baltic Exchange's own staff, who called into question the continued publication of a rate for the route.

The trading house said that the Baltic Exchange's freight assessor didn't submit a value into the company's internal system that's supposed to represent his personal view of where the index will be.

When he did eventually submit a value, it included comments such as "doesn't make any sense to shed an opinion on this route - crazy that we have to!"

The case calls into question a pricing tool that until the Iran war acted as the benchmark for oil tanker earnings across the globe.

The key TD3C rate underpins contracts between tanker owners and their customers as well as billions of dollars in derivatives.

It is based on the cost of hiring a supertanker from Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura, inside the Persian Gulf, to China, and also serves as a reference point for other routes.

The Baltic Exchange is confident that it has met all its statutory, contractual and regulatory obligations in the production of the TD3C benchmark, chief executive officer Mark Jackson said in a statement.

The claim from Mercuria is "without merit," he added.

Mercuria has "huge index-linked exposures, which it has failed to manage", lawyers for the Baltic Exchange said.

After being caught out by the sharp rises in the benchmark, Mercuria "wishes to unseat TD3C, and it is reaching for any available argument to do so", they added.

Mercuria's lawyers said the evidence showed the Baltic Exchange did not suspend the index because it wanted to keep the market for certain freight agreements active, and to avoid the risk of being replaced by a rival.

One of the brokers who contribute to the index said on April 2 that it was "utter nonsense" to provide an assessment of the TD3C benchmark, given the unprecedented levels of disruption to traffic through Hormuz, according to another transcript presented by Mercuria.

Mercuria is urging the court to declare that the Baltic Exchange breached its obligations and ought to have suspended the TD3C route.

Lawyers for the Baltic Exchange said the risk of being replaced by a rival provider did not drive its decision making. The lawyers said passage through Hormuz was still possible.

"The Baltic's decision to continue publishing TD3C, was a decision which was not taken lightly," lawyers for exchange said in a court document countering Mercuria's allegations. — *Bloomberg*