

ON MONDAY

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OVERFLOWING JOY ... A priest blesses a Ponggal harvest festival ceremony yesterday, where cow milk is heated in clay pots until it boils over to symbolise an abundance of wealth and health, at the St Joseph Catholic Church in Sentul, Kuala Lumpur.
- ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN



Healthcare review

BY **NURIN ABDULLAH**
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PETALING JAYA: The provision of healthcare for Orang Asli communities, which make up just 0.8% of the population, needs urgent re-evaluation, said two NGOs that interact with them.

This is because the communities face significant health-related challenges that could be prevented with proper care.

They say indigenous communities lack access to healthcare, specifically those living in rural and remote areas, who risk worsening health issues and even death.

Centre for Orang Asli Concerns coordinator Colin Nicholas said a lack of nutrition is the primary problem.

"When a person is unable to have access to proper nutrition, the immune system is weakened and therefore, the person is more susceptible to diseases than those with proper nutrition. Extensive deforestation is also among the chief causes that have affected the food source of Orang Asli."

He said the lack of reach and benefits felt from the healthcare system is making the indigenous people doubt its efficiency.

"We must have more dedicated and sympathetic healthcare workers treating them. By doing so, the Orang Asli will be able to build their trust in the system."

Common diseases affecting the indigenous people are malaria, dengue, tuberculosis and leprosy, due in part to a lack of proper infrastructure, such as facilities for clean water.

» Rural and remote Orang Asli communities at risk of worsening health issues and death if remedial action not taken

"They are unable to find a clean source of water, which can lead to dehydration, bad hygiene and unsanitary cooking and food preparation. Children are also dying at a rapid rate from easily treatable diseases," he said.

"Parents are disinterested in sending their sick children to clinics to get proper treatment due to several reasons. They have no access to proper roads that would allow them to reach the clinics safely. Illegal logging and deforestation make it even harder for them to travel to public health facilities."

"Some groups still rely on traditional treatment and shamans, as they have little to no faith in modern medicine and treatment."

Colin added that the life expectancy of an indigenous individual is eight to nine years shorter than the average person with access to proper healthcare.

He suggests the "DRsforALL" initiative to train volunteers from Orang Asli communities be strengthened.

"This initiative serves to provide the indigenous communities with a first line of defence in terms of healthcare."

"As some clinics and hospitals are hours away, its volunteers could provide crucial care and

treatment on-site," he said.

DRsforALL, established six years ago in collaboration with the Health Ministry, provides monthly visits by a mobile medical clinic for remote Orang Asli communities.

Its founder Dr Steven K.W. Chow said it aims to provide proper healthcare for indigenous people.

Approximately 5,500 individuals have benefited from the initiative. It provides basic and specialist medical care, regular deworming programmes and health education targeted specifically at women and children.

Ecotourism and Conservation Society Malaysia (Ecomy) CEO Andrew Sebastian said Orang Asli communities are so fragmented that access becomes an issue unless they are moved to proper living areas.

"There is a general mistrust between Orang Asli communities and the Health Ministry, and then there is the reliance of some communities on traditional medication and treatment over modern medicine."

He said it gets more difficult to deliver healthcare to nomadic communities such as the Batek people.

Ecomy has provided various services for



Orang Asli such as building houses, communal lavatories, clean water supply and other corporate social responsibility programmes.

"Orang Asli face more than just improper healthcare, they also suffer from lack of access to clean water, loss of livelihood and displacement," he said, while expressing hope that more allocation, thought and planning go into ensuring the welfare of indigenous communities.

PM, ministers attend retreat to enhance solidarity

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and 27 Cabinet ministers yesterday attended a Unity Government Cabinet Ministers Retreat at Seri Perdana Complex in Putrajaya.

According to a Prime Minister's Department statement, the programme, which is also attended by 10 senior government officials, was carried out to bolster consensus and solidarity among Cabinet ministers.

"In line with the desire of the prime minister in translating the resolution and reform agenda in the administration of the unity government, this retreat programme would have special briefing sessions covering important aspects towards strengthening delivery and governance of the government machinery," according to the statement. - Bernama

Anwar extends Ponggal greetings

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has extended Ponggal greetings to the Tamil community in Malaysia, celebrating the festival yesterday.

In a post on his Facebook page, Anwar hoped that the festival would bring prosperity and health to everyone.

"The Tamil community celebrates the Ponggal festival as a sign of gratitude for increased sustenance.

"In addition, this auspicious day for the Hindu is also a symbol and a catalyst to reject old practices or attitudes and promote change and create a new shift," he said.

The Tamil community celebrates the arrival of the Ponggal harvest festival in the 10th month of the Tamil calendar known as Thai and it is an important festival, especially for the farming community. - Bernama

RM1b annually for piping repairs

PASIR GUDANG: Pengurusan Aset Air Bhd (PAAB) has allocated about RM1 billion annually to carry out works to repair and upgrade the water piping system throughout Peninsular Malaysia, said its CEO Abdul Hadi Ali.

The allocation would be channelled to state water supply companies according to their respective annual business plans.

However, the states of Sabah, Sarawak and Terengganu do not come under PAAB's management.

"On average, the total annual allocation given out by PAAB is about RM1 billion. For pipe replacement works alone, there is an expenditure of RM600 million." - Bernama

PKR reps with govt positions told not to neglect party

➤ Leaders need to divide their time wisely and not get carried away with ministerial affairs, says Rafizi

SUNGAI PETANI: PKR deputy president Rafizi Ramli urged party leaders and elected representatives appointed to hold positions at the federal and state governments, not to neglect the role they need to play in the party, Bernama reported.

Rafizi said he understands the responsibilities of being part of the government, but party leaders need to realise that if it were not for the party, members and party machinery, the election would not have been won and positions subsequently given in government.

He said elected representatives and leaders who are appointed as ministers, deputy ministers and political secretaries need to divide their time wisely, and the same thing needs to be applied by those who

hold positions at the state government level.

"Sometimes we get carried away with the official affairs (of the ministry) alone, we work in the ministry or the state government from 8am to 6pm. However, we still have time from 6pm to midnight daily and there is still time on Saturdays and Sundays for the party and the people," he said while speaking at the Kedah and Penang PKR Election Convention here on Saturday night.

Rafizi said a person who is a minister is not forgetful, but gets carried away with official duties, causing disruption in the working process of the party.

Rafizi, who is also the economy minister, said those who were appointed to various positions in the government also need to maintain their style and mannerisms, similar to when the party was the opposition, by continuously getting to know the people.

"If all of a sudden now that we

have posts in the state and federal governments, and our (personal style) changes, that's the end of us."

Therefore, he reminded any member of the party who intends to contest as a candidate in the state elections in the six states, to think about a suitable way to get to know the people.

In another development, Rafizi said that PKR needs to defend the traditional five seats of the Kedah state legislative assembly which it won since 2008, namely Sidam, Bakar Arang, Bukit Selambau, Kulim and Lunas.

However, he admitted that there was a risk and a big challenge for PKR to retain those seats following the shift of Malay voter support to Perikatan Nasional in the last general election.



Teo with some of the students who received their devices. - BERNAMAPIC

63,000 appeals received under device programme

KULAI: The government received 63,000 appeals to obtain devices under the PerantiSiswa programme when the deadline for appeals ended on Dec 31 last year.

Deputy Communications and Digital Minister Teo Nie Ching said of the total, 25,000 have been approved so far.

"The rest are still being evaluated by the respective institutions of higher learning. They will verify whether the appellants are from B40 (lower income bracket) families.

"The Communications and Digital Ministry is the leading body (of the programme), whereby we do

the distribution (of the devices)," she told reporters at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tunku Abdullah Rahman Putra yesterday.

Teo, who is also Kulai MP, said a total of 301,737 tablets or 83% of the 362,016 applications approved, have been distributed to date. - Bernama

Zambry plays host to S'pore foreign minister

PUTRAJAYA: Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir will host his counterpart from Singapore Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, who will be on a four-day official visit to Malaysia until Jan 18.

According to the Foreign Ministry's (Wisma Putra) statement, it will be the first ministerial-level visit to be received by Zambry since assuming office on Dec 2 last year.

"The visit is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen existing close ties between Malaysia and Singapore.

"The visit by His Excellency Dr Vivian Balakrishnan will provide an excellent opportunity for Malaysia and Singapore to further strengthen the long-standing relations and multifaceted cooperation between the two countries."

During the visit, both ministers are scheduled to meet and exchange views on broad-ranging issues of common interest.

Balakrishnan is also scheduled to have an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah.

According to reports on Saturday, based on Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) statement, Balakrishnan is also scheduled to call on Transport Minister Anthony Loke, Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan and Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, as well as other Malaysian politicians and personalities.

The report said Balakrishnan would be accompanied by officials from the republic's MFA.

In 2022, Singapore was Malaysia's second-largest trading partner and the largest in Asean, with total trade amounting to RM336.73 billion, an increase of 30.8%, compared with the recorded value in 2021. - Bernama

Upko wants balanced allocations for Sabah, Sarawak

KOTA KINABALU: United Progressive Kinabalu Organisation (Upko) president Datuk Seri Wilfred Madius Tangau has called for allocations to Sabah, Sarawak and the peninsula to be balanced after the status of Sabah and Sarawak as a region in the Federation of Malaysia is gazetted.

In this regard, he said Sabah and Sarawak's allocation should be one-third of the funds under the Malaysia Five-Year Development Plan as well as the national annual budget.

"The requirement should be institutionalised. It is not only one-third of the seats in Parliament for

Sabah and Sarawak which received attention recently, but one-third of the development allocation and funds should also get due attention," he said when opening the 16th Upko triennial general meeting here yesterday.

He added that Upko wants wider focus to be given to Sabah and Sarawak, encompassing every aspect of the people's livelihood as well as quality facilities and infrastructure which are the basis of the socioeconomic status.

"When we talk about the target of achieving sustainable development goals (SDG), it should not remain on one's lips by claiming that Malaysia

adopted the SDG drafted by the United Nations. It should be translated and implemented to bring sustainable development," he said.

Meanwhile, Madius requested Upko vice-president Datuk Ewon Benedick to strengthen Upko so that it is always relevant, especially in the current era.

"Today we are in a new political landscape. It requires a new leadership approach. I am calling on all members to play a more effective role, based on the new approach, to succeed in our struggle and prioritise long-term benefits for the party and the people.

"Upko must always listen to the

people's voices and grouses. Times have changed in terms of various challenges which of course require us to make decisions throughout our struggle as a political organisation."

He said Upko needs to avoid things that the people hate the most such as the practice of racist politics, arrogance, religious extremism and acts of corruption.

Ewon will officially take over the position of Upko president from Madius at the conference after appearing as the sole candidate for the position while Madius, who is also Tuaran member of Parliament, will be appointed as Upko honorary president. - Bernama



STRIKING DISPLAY ...
A colourful giant lantern in the shape of a three-tier cake at the Fo Guang Shan Dong Zen Buddhist Temple in Jenjarom, Selangor creates a festive mood ahead of Chinese New Year on Jan 22. – **REUTERSPIC**

Foundation to help B40, Orang Asli own homes

➤ Financial assistance planned for group, including individuals from underserved community

■ BY **MUHAMMAD YUSRY**
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PETALING JAYA: Yayasan My First Home (YMFH) will assist 100 Malaysians from the B40 group to own a home this year, apart from building up to 50 houses for the Orang Asli.

Its general manager Nambie Ashvin Nambiar said about 40% of the population and the Orang Asli community are underserved. They also include those from the B40 group who typically live in poor housing conditions or with immediate family members and relatives.

“With the current economic situation, some in the B40 group are struggling financially. We hope to assist them own their first home.

“Since our inception in March last year, YMFH has screened over 2,000 applicants and assisted 19 of them with downpayments or deposits, legal fees, evaluation fees and others associated with owning a home.

“In total, we spent RM620,000 on such assistance last year,” he said.

“Those who are not earning well and have issues saving up for deposits, legal fees, or other downpayments related to owning a house, can contact us as we are keen to help them buy a house,” he added.

Nambie said YMFH reached out to the underserved community with the help of housing developer Melati Ehsan. Our financial assistance involved providing interest-free loans that covered house purchase and legal fees, ranging from RM65,000 to RM67,000 each on a flexible monthly repayment basis.

“This ownership of their first home was made possible by having a unique agreement with YMFH that was inked between the purchaser and a family member.

“This is a major socio-improvement for them as it means moving from a slum to a low-cost apartment,” he said.

“We assisted six squatters to own their houses because they failed to get housing loan from banks.

“We hope to help 100 people from the B40 group this year, apart from building up to 50 houses for the Orang Asli.

“From our observation, we find that most of the time the indigenous people live under poorly maintained premises which they call ‘home’.

“The houses are also vulnerable in terms of poor structure and maintenance, which make them impossible to live in during downpours. We aim to provide them with better living comforts.”

Nambie said for example, during its first Orang Asli community outreach programme, it identified the Lingser family in Kampung Orang Asli Serigala, Kuala Kubu Baru in Selangor, who were living in a one-bedroom house which lacked basic amenities such as electricity. For this programme, YMFH collaborated with Epic Homes, an NGO that trains volunteers to build houses in marginalised communities.

“The family now has a house with three bedrooms, living space and a cooking area.”

Nambie said YMFH hopes to train the Orang Asli community to build their own houses. This would help them financially as they could work as builders.

He called on more NGOs that work with the Orang Asli to partner with the foundation to build more homes for the community.

Visit YMFH website at www.yayasanmyfirsthome.my for more information.

Call for Mindef land swap probe to be continued

KUALA LUMPUR: The probe into the Defence Ministry’s (Mindef) controversial land swap deal should be continued by the new Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to enable the public to get a clearer picture of the issue, said Universiti Malaya Centre for Democracy and Elections sociopolitical analyst Prof Madya Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi.

He said the continuation of the probe should be done in line with the unity government’s policy to see a cleaner, better and more transparent administration.

“If not probed, it will raise more questions among the people. It should continue based on the findings of PAC’s earlier investigation,” he said.

It was reported that former PAC chairman Wong Kah Woh wanted the new

administration to go ahead with the investigation into the controversial land swap deal issue.

He said the committee under his watch had completed 50% of the draft on the probe, but it could not be finalised due to the dissolution of Parliament on Oct 10 last year.

Nusantara Academy of Strategic Research senior fellow Dr Azmi Hassan, who is also a defence analyst, agreed that the probe should continue to stop rumours and speculations of misconduct among the ministry’s officials.

“Maybe the officials involved have retired or been transferred elsewhere, but if the probe is stopped, there will be allegations that the current government is trying to hide something,” he said.

The land swap deal began in 2012, involving a 38.04ha army camp in Kinrara,

Selangor, the construction of an air force facility in Sendayan, and the building of an army camp in Port Dickson, both in Negeri Sembilan. However, in 2016, the proposal to construct an army camp in Port Dickson was replaced with the proposal to set up the Paloh camp.

In 2020, Wong said the issue was brought to PAC’s attention following a briefing by the special investigation committee on Public Governance, Procurement and Finance after investigating 16 cases of land swap cases involving 1,183ha of government land.

He added that the PAC was informed that one of the issues that surfaced in the land swap is related to government losses due to inconsistent methods used to determine the value of the land, and political considerations that outweigh defence interests. – **Bernama**

Negeri Sembilan to increase permanent forest reserve areas

KUALA PILAH: The Negeri Sembilan Forestry Department is committed to increasing the total area of permanent forest reserve in the state by another 500ha to preserve and conserve the quality of the environment and boost the state’s ecotourism.

Its director, Saleh Awaluddin, said the forest reserve covers 155,000ha, or 23% of the entire state, and 60% of it is timber production forest, while the remainder is protected forest, including water catchments.

“This is one of the efforts we are taking to ensure that the existing forest areas are maintained. The same goes for the mangrove forest areas which are seen to be decreasing.

“We have identified and are gazetting the areas involved, including the water catchment area and around the dam. It is not an easy task and will take some time,” he said after the reopening of Taman Eko Rimba and the hiking tracks here yesterday.

Saleh said Taman Eko Rimba and hiking tracks in the state have been reopened to the public from Saturday. They include Ulu Bendul, Batu Maloi, Jeram Tengkek, Gunung Datuk, Gunung Angsi and Gunung Tampin.

Meanwhile, he added that repair work on the facilities at Taman Eko Rimba Jeram Toi in Jelebu, which were destroyed by floods in December 2021, is expected to start in March and will be completed in November. The state government had allocated RM1 million for the repairs.

“However, it will only be reopened next year as we want to ensure that the park is safe for visitors,” he said. – **Bernama**

Sabah, Sarawak region status yet to be gazetted

KUCHING: The status of Sarawak and Sabah as regions has yet to be gazetted, and it will be discussed at the Malaysia Agreement 1963 meeting between the federal government and Sarawak on Thursday.

Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg said the change in the status of the two states as regions was still at the proposal stage.

“Since the beginning, we (Sabah and Sarawak) should have the status as regions, but the situation has changed. That is why we amended the Federal Constitution,” he said at the Kuching Car-Free Day Programme yesterday.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is scheduled to be in Sarawak on Wednesday and Thursday for a two-day working visit.

Last Friday, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Umno president, in his policy speech at the party’s general assembly, said Sabah and Sarawak have been accorded the status of region and are no longer regarded as states within Malaysia.

However, he did not say when it came into effect. – **Bernama**

Turtle sand sculpture sets M’sian record

KUALA LUMPUR: Great Eastern Takaful Bhd (GETB) has entered the Malaysia Book of Records for creating the largest turtle-shaped sand sculpture in Cherating, Pahang on Saturday.

The 8.8-metre long and 6.4-metre wide sand sculpture was created to raise awareness on environmental issues and how plastic pollution affects various species of marine life.

Great Eastern Takaful CEO Shahrul Azlan Shahrman said following the environmental crisis, GETB has taken a step forward to draw attention to plastic pollution.

“Reports related to marine life being severely affected by plastic are not new. It has been going on for a long time and such cases are increasing to the point that marine animals are facing the risk of extinction.

“We have introduced a two-in-one recycling and upcycling machine to produce a variety of items such as combs, rulers, bag clips and soap dishes made from plastic waste,” he said. – **Bernama**

'Have compassion for women in need'

➤ Free cervical screening programme would benefit individuals in group, says Wan Azizah

BY DHARSHINI GANESON
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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians have been urged to have a "humanitarian heart" when it comes to underprivileged women, who would benefit from free cervical screening.

Former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail made the call when launching Phase 3 of the Etiqa-Rose Foundation free cervical screening programme at Universiti Malaya recently.

The programme is a collaboration between Etiqa Life Insurance and the Rose Foundation.

The word "Rose" stands for "removing obstacles to cervical screening".

The foundation, established in 2019 as a company limited by guarantee and as a charitable foundation in Malaysia, is a joint venture between Universiti Malaya and the Australian Centre for the Prevention of Cervical Cancer.

She said she was positive new milestones would be set in the third phase of the programme this year in the drive to eliminate cervical cancer in Malaysia.

Wan Azizah, who also served as women, family and community development minister, said: "In January 2019, I officiated at the launch of the Rose Programme at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur. Six months later, I was honoured to launch the first Etiqa-Rose free cervical screening campaign at Pandan Mewah.

"Today, I am thrilled to celebrate

the success and continuation of this collaboration."

She said women in rural communities can be screened and immediately receive treatment, as the new screening equipment is battery-powered, unlike the non-portable conventional equipment used, which means screenings can be done in rural communities that lack access to power supply.

"The mobile colposcopy equipment will be useful in all these situations because trained medical volunteers can travel to rural and remote areas to provide follow-up treatment."

Wan Azizah said it was important for frontliners to be in good health and the Rose Programme provides free cervical cancer screening to the Armed Forces, police, healthcare professionals and other frontliners who have been serving the people and the country in trying times.

"The collaboration saw 1,000 policewomen, close to 400 army and immigration personnel, more than 7,500 Health Ministry employees and 300 Higher Education Ministry staff being screened."

Rose Foundation chairman Prof Datuk Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman said the programme allows women to take a human papillomavirus polymerase chain reaction sampling test, which is simpler, quicker and less painful than conventional pap smears.

"In 2022, the programme successfully screened over 21,000 women nationwide and detected



Wan Azizah at the launch of the programme in Kuala Lumpur recently. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

1,210 positive cases.

"More than 90% of those tested received follow-up treatment and under Phase 3, 5,500 women nationwide between the ages of 30 and 65 from under-screened

communities, including Orang Asli, have been identified for screening," said Adeeba, adding that in the last three years, the programme has been implemented in over 150 communities, 12 clinics across 12

states and 28 government hospitals.

She also said more than 90 healthcare professionals were engaged under the programme to provide follow-up treatment to women who tested positive.

Parcel bomb couple to be charged

KUALA LUMPUR: A married couple suspected to be involved in an explosion that killed a waiter in Pandan Indah, Ampang on Dec 29 will be charged at the Magistrate's Court today.

Ampang Jaya police chief ACP Mohamad Farouk Eshak said they will be charged at 10am, adding that they will be charged under Section 302 of the Penal Code for murder.

The 28-year-old male waiter died after a parcel left on his car bonnet exploded at 8.55pm. The homemade bomb is believed to have been remotely detonated. – Bernama

Shoe shop in mall destroyed in blaze

KUALA LUMPUR: A shoe outlet was razed at a shopping mall in Seri Kembangan yesterday morning.

Selangor Fire and Rescue Department director Datuk Norazam Khamis said the department received a call about the incident at 11.39am and firefighters arrived a few minutes later.

"The fire involved a shoe store on the first floor of the mall. It was completely destroyed. No casualties were reported and cleaning up work is being done."

He said a total of 33 personnel from the Serdang, Bangi, Bandar Tun Hussein Onn and Kajang fire and rescue stations were involved in the operation. – Bernama

10,000 lanterns to usher in CNY

BUTTERWORTH: Jalan Raja Uda here is being decorated with 10,000 red silk lanterns to usher in the Year of the Rabbit and add merriment to Chinese New Year, said Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce president Datuk Seri Hong Yeam Wah.

He said the lanterns, all shipped in from China, cost about RM350,000 and have been lit up since Jan 8 to welcome the festival, which falls on Jan 22.

"The lanterns will light up the street until the 15th day of the Chinese New Year," he said, adding that the state government, elected representatives and the Tah Wah Group split the cost.

"The lanterns were put up along a 4km stretch of the road, from the south junction of Jalan Telaga Air and cover the entirety of Jalan Raja Uda, where plenty of eateries are located.

"The reason for decorating the streets with the lanterns is to boost the Chinese New Year spirit among the people here."

Hong, who is Tah Wah Group managing director, said it is a tradition of the Butterworth community that started in 2009

with only 5,000 lanterns, to decorate the streets for Chinese New Year.

He said in 2015, Jalan Raja Uda made it into the *Malaysia Book of Records* for having 10,000 lanterns decorating the street.

"We have been following this tradition annually until two years ago due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Fortunately, everything is back to normal this year and we are glad to be able to bring this street back to life this festive season."

Hong said the lanterns would boost the business of traders at the Tow Boo Keong Temple night market.

"There are more than 200 stalls selling desserts, traditional cookies, outfits and decorative items at the night market, which is open daily from 7pm to 10pm."

A trader at the night market, Lim Chin Tat, 23, said the lighting up of the lanterns is an attraction that draws the crowds to the area.

"On the weekends, many people come to look at the lanterns and drop by at my stall to buy decorative items for their house."

"I am thankful to the authorities for helping to boost my business." – Bernama

Dad held for threatening to kill daughter

KUALA LUMPUR: Police arrested a local man on suspicion of assaulting and threatening to kill his 15-year-old daughter.

Petaling Jaya district police chief ACP Fakhrudin Abdul Hamid said the 58-year-old suspect, was arrested in Subang Valley, Selangor at 10.30pm last Friday after the teenager lodged a report at 1.18pm the same day.

"Investigations revealed the suspect hit the

victim with a belt and threatened to use a cleaver on her."

He said the incident is believed to have been caused by the victim playing on her smartphone until late at night, adding that police seized a cleaver measuring 33cm.

The suspect will be remanded for four days from Saturday to assist in the investigation in accordance with Section 3(1)(a) of the Child Act 2001. – Bernama

Search ongoing for missing umrah pilgrim, says family

BATU PAHAT: Efforts to find a teacher, Musthafa Kamal Abdullah, 49, who went missing while performing the umrah pilgrimage in Mecca a month ago is ongoing, said his eldest son Muhammad Nabil, 26.

He said he would be leaving for Mecca on Friday and would be there for 14 days.

He would be accompanied by his younger brother, Muaz, 17, and some family friends to continue searching as his family, including his mother Zurina Muhammad @ Shamsuddin, 49, are confident that their father is still alive.

"I would personally be distributing posters of our 'babah' (father) when I am in Mecca. I would also be performing the umrah and I hope the efforts would lead us to him."

"I also hope to continue receiving cooperation from the governments of both countries," he said when the family received a visit from Sri Gading MP Aminolhuda Hassan at their residence yesterday.

Meanwhile, Muaz, who performed the umrah with Musthafa, said he only realised the incident after discovering his father was not in his hotel room after complaining of being unwell, and did not perform the *tawaf* ritual with him.

Last Friday, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir said the Malaysian representatives in Saudi Arabia were closely monitoring the situation and would take appropriate action to help locate Musthafa. – Bernama

Daulat Tuanku



Merafak Sembah Dan Setinggi-Tinggi Tahniah
DULI YANG MAHA MULIA YANG DI-PERTUAN BESAR
NEGERI SEMBILAN DARUL KHUSUS
TUANKU MUHRIZ IBNI ALMARHUM TUANKU MUNAWIR

D.K., D.M.N., D.K. (PERAK), D.K. (PERLIS), D.K. (SELANGOR), D.K. (KEDAH),
 D.K. (KELANTAN), D.K. (JOHOR), D.K. (TERENGGANU), D.K.Y.R., P.P.T.

Semoga Allah Memberkati Pemerintahan Kebawah Duli Tuanku
Sempena Hari Keputeraan Ke-75

Pada
 14 Januari 2023 (21 Jamadilakhir 1444H)

Sembah Takzim Daripada

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yioun, Pengasas / Pengerusi
 Dato' Sri Robin Tan, Timbalan Pengerusi
 Vivienne Cheng, Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan Bersama
 Syed Ali Shahul Hameed, Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan Bersama
 Lembaga Pengarah
 Pengurusan dan Kakitangan

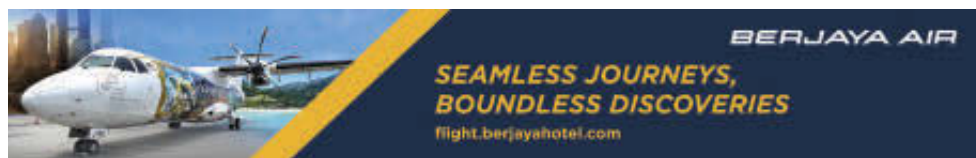


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[Registration Number: 200101019033 (554790-X)]





67 killed in Nepal plane crash

➤ Airline: 15 foreigners among 72 on board

KATHMANDU: At least 67 people were confirmed dead yesterday when a Yeti Airlines plane with 72 on board crashed in central Nepal in the country's deadliest aviation disaster in three decades.

"Thirty-one (bodies) have been taken to hospitals," police official A.K. Chhetri said, adding that 36 other bodies were still in the 300m gorge the aircraft plunged into.

"The aircraft crashed into a gorge so it is difficult to bring out the bodies. Search and rescue is ongoing. No survivors have been found yet," said army spokesman Krishna Prasad Bhandari.

One local official said some survivors had been taken to hospital but this was not confirmed by either the airline or others.

Yeti spokesman Sudarshan Bartaula said among those on board – 68 passengers and four crew – were 15 foreigners, including five Indians, four Russians and two Koreans. The rest were Nepalis.

The flight from Kathmandu slammed into the gorge and broke to pieces between the city of Pokhara's domestic and international airports shortly before 11am (1.15pm in Malaysia) yesterday.

After the crash, rescue workers were hosing down parts of the wreckage of the ATR 72 twin-engine turboprop while smoke drifted out of a ravine as hundreds of people watched.

The area was strewn with what appeared to be parts of the aircraft, including seats.

Footage shared on social media, which appeared to be shot just after the crash, showed raging flames on the ground and black smoke billowing into the sky from debris strewn across the crash site.

Another unverified clip shared online showed a plane flying at a



Rescue teams working to retrieve bodies at the crash site yesterday. – REUTERSPIC

low altitude over a residential area banking sharply to the left, followed by a loud explosion.

Pokhara's international airport, which opened on Jan 1, is meant to gradually replace an older one.

The city is a gateway for religious pilgrims and international trekkers.

Nepal's air industry has boomed in

recent years, carrying goods and people between hard-to-reach areas as well as foreign trekkers and climbers.

However, it has been plagued by poor safety due to insufficient training and maintenance.

The European Union has banned all Nepali carriers from its airspace over safety concerns.

The Himalayan country also has some of the world's most remote and tricky runways, flanked by snow-capped peaks with approaches that pose a challenge even for accomplished pilots.

The weather can change quickly in the mountains, creating treacherous flying conditions. – AFP

BRIEFS

EIGHT DEAD IN SOMALIA BOMBING

MOGADISHU: Police said yesterday eight people were killed in a roadside bombing claimed by Al-Shabaab in central Somalia. The attack occurred on Saturday afternoon in Buloburde, a city in Hiran district where government forces and clan militias have been battling Al-Qaeda-linked insurgents since the middle of last year. The bomber detonated a car laden with explosives near an administrative building, said local police commander Abdullahi Mohamud. "Five people were killed on the spot while three others died in hospital," he said, adding the bomber had been planning to destroy the city's main bridge before redirecting the attack at a civilian area. – AFP

TEACHERS MARCH FOR HIGHER WAGES

LISBON: Tens of thousands of teachers from across Portugal joined a protest in the capital on Saturday, after several days of industrial action for better working conditions and higher pay. Police said more than 20,000 people joined the march, called by the Union of All Education Professionals, the Lusa news agency reported, but organisers put the numbers at "more than 100,000". The teachers want a wage increase to keep pace with inflation, which reached an average of 7.8% in 2022, the highest level in 30 years. They also want their real working hours to be taken into account. Education Minister Joao Costa described the action as "atypical, disproportionate and radical in the middle of a negotiation process". – AFP

Iran executes British-Iranian dual national for spying

TEHRAN: Iran said on Saturday it had executed a British-Iranian dual national sentenced to death for spying for the United Kingdom, drawing strong condemnation from Western governments and international rights groups.

Alireza Akbari, 61, was hanged after being convicted of "corruption on earth and harming the country's internal and external security by passing on intelligence", said the judiciary's Mizan Online website.

It did not say when or where the execution took place.

Mizan said Alireza, who had been arrested more than two years ago, had been a spy for Britain's MI6 secret intelligence agency and had received around US\$2 million for his services.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he was "appalled" by the execution.

"This was a callous and cowardly act, carried out by a barbaric regime with no respect for the human rights of their own people," he tweeted.

Iran summoned the British ambassador to protest what it described as "unconventional interventions", after Britain said it would summon Tehran's envoy.

The United States was "horrified" by Alireza's hanging, according to a State Department spokesman.

US diplomat Vedant Patel said Washington was greatly concerned by reports Alireza had been "drugged, tortured while in custody, interrogated for thousands of hours and forced to make false confessions". – AFP

China reports 60,000 Covid deaths in a month

BEIJING: China on Saturday reported almost 60,000 Covid-related deaths in just over a month, the first major toll released by authorities since the government loosened virus restrictions early last month.

The government has been widely accused of underreporting the number of coronavirus fatalities since the abandonment of its zero-Covid policy.

Only a few dozen deaths had been recorded officially in December before Saturday's announcement, despite evidence of

crematoriums and hospitals being overwhelmed.

But a National Health Commission (NHC) official said on Saturday that China had recorded 59,938 Covid-related deaths between Dec 8 and Jan 12.

The figure refers only to deaths at medical facilities, with the total number likely to be higher.

The data includes 5,503 deaths caused by respiratory failure directly due to the virus, and 54,435 deaths caused by underlying conditions combined with Covid, Jiao Yahui, head of the NHC's Bureau of Medical

Administration, told a news conference.

Beijing revised its methodology for categorising Covid fatalities last month, saying it would count only those who die specifically of respiratory failure caused by the virus.

This was criticised by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which said the definition was too narrow.

Later in the day, the World Health Organisation issued a statement saying Beijing had shared a raft of data with the Geneva-based agency, in addition to the information

shared at the press conference – but that more was still needed.

The WHO "requested that this type of detailed information continue to be shared with us and the public", the statement said.

The request was made during talks between WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and China's Health Minister Ma Xiaowei.

Health officials said the average age of those who had died was 80, with more than 90% of fatalities above 65.

Most suffered from underlying conditions, they said. – AFP

Pakistani provincial assembly dissolved on orders of former PM

ISLAMABAD: The provincial assembly in Pakistan's most populous province, Punjab, was dissolved on Saturday in a move orchestrated by former prime minister Imran Khan as part of a bid to force early general elections.

The country has been gripped by political instability since Imran was ousted in a no-confidence vote and replaced last April by a shaky coalition led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The South Asian nation is also

battling a severe economic crisis.

It is drowning in debt, facing galloping inflation and dwindling foreign exchange reserves as the economy tries to claw to recovery from last year's devastating monsoon floods.

Punjab Governor Baligh Ur Rehman on Saturday signed a letter ordering the appointment of a caretaker chief minister, replacing Imran's coalition partner Chaudhry Pervez Elahi's government.

Chaudhry had advised the

governor to dissolve the assembly last week, with Imran's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party seeking a provincial election.

Imran's party continues to command popularity, and is expected to also dissolve the provincial assembly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where it holds power in a coalition government.

Fresh elections to the Punjab assembly – which governs vital services for roughly half of Pakistan's 220 million citizens –

must now be held within 90 days.

Provincial polls in Pakistan have historically been held at the same time as general elections, although the synchronicity is not constitutionally mandated.

A countrywide general election is due in October, and Imran's manoeuvre heaps financial and logistical headaches on Shehbaz's administration.

PTI spokesman Fawad Chaudry said the dissolutions were planned as "a huge pressure tactic". – AFP

BRIEFS

GOVT DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY IN LIMA

LIMA: Peru's government declared a state of emergency on Saturday in the capital and three other regions due to protests against President Dina Boluarte that have claimed 42 lives in recent weeks. The measure, in force for 30 days, authorises the army to intervene to maintain order and suspends several constitutional rights such as freedom of movement and assembly, according to a decree published in the official gazette. Supporters of ousted president Pedro Castillo have marched and barricaded streets across the country since December, demanding new elections and the removal of Boluarte. The state of emergency covers Lima, the regions of Cusco and Puno as well as the port of Callao. – AFP

NET TIGHTENS AROUND BRAZIL RIOT INSTIGATORS

BRASILIA: Brazil's new leftist government tightened the net around suspected instigators of riots that targeted the seats of power, ordering a probe of ex-president Jair Bolsonaro and arresting his justice minister on Saturday. A Supreme Court judge gave the green light on Friday for a probe into the origins of the riots to also look at Bolsonaro. A request to add Bolsonaro to the suspect list had come from the office of the prosecutor-general, which cited a video he had posted "questioning the regularity of the 2022 presidential elections". The far-right ex-president's last justice minister, Anderson Torres, who was in the United States when the riots happened, was arrested on Saturday on his return to Brasilia. – AFP

Girl, seven, critical after shooting outside UK church

LONDON: A seven-year-old girl was fighting for her life in hospital on Saturday after a shooting, in which five other people were injured, following a requiem mass for a mother and daughter.

Mourners ran screaming from the scene outside a Roman Catholic church in London as gunshots rang out.

"Initial enquiries suggest the shots were fired from a moving vehicle which was then driven away from the scene," police said in a statement as they launched an urgent appeal for witnesses.

The priest who conducted the service, Father Jeremy Trood, told the PA news agency it had been a requiem mass for Sara Sanchez, 20, and her mother, who both died within a month of each other in November.

The younger woman had succumbed to leukaemia while her mother died after suffering a blood clot on arrival at Heathrow from Colombia, the MyLondon news website reported.

"I heard this almighty bang and I thought this was not normal, and the next minute everyone was screaming and shouting," a neighbour told PA.

In addition to the seven-year-old girl, four women and another girl, 12, were wounded in the incident near the busy Euston train station.

The other girl was discharged from hospital after treatment for minor leg injuries.

A 21-year-old woman is also in a central London hospital.

Police said her injuries were not life-threatening.

Three other women aged 41, 48 and 54, remained in hospital with non life-threatening injuries, police said.

"An investigation into this dreadful attack is already well under way," said police Supt Ed Wells.

A witness told MyLondon the shots were fired as mourners who had attended the mass watched doves being released afterwards. – AFP

New California storms bring 'disastrous' floods

➤ US president declares disaster, thousands of homes without power

WASHINGTON: The latest in a damaging succession of storm systems blew into California on Saturday, bringing heavy flooding to already waterlogged regions and threatening snowfalls of up to 2m in areas.

The latest system was expected to bring "heavy lower-elevation rain, significant mountain snow, and strong winds", with "another surge of Pacific moisture" expected today, the National Weather Service (NWS) said.

It predicted "disastrous flooding" across the Salinas River Valley, a key agricultural region south of San Francisco Bay.

Late on Saturday, US President Joe Biden "declared that a major disaster exists in the state of California and ordered federal aid to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides", White House said in a statement.

The declaration makes federal funding available for relief to affected people, including temporary housing and repairs.

At least 19 people are known to have died from storm-related causes in the last three weeks.

Among them were drivers found in submerged cars, people struck by falling trees, and a husband and wife killed in a rockfall.

Rising waters and unsuitable conditions resulted in a halt in the search for five-year-old Kyle Doan, who was swept away in floodwaters as his mother tried to pull him to safety from their car, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's office said on Saturday.

An AFP journalist saw the Salinas River overflowing its banks

in many spots, at times covering farm fields for hundreds of yards, even as the rain continued under leaden skies.

In Spreckels, a community a few hundred metres from the river, most residents had opted not to evacuate despite warnings from authorities.

"It looks like we might have missed kind of the worst of it," said Robert Zagajski, out walking his dog under a light rain.

A few kilometres away, farm worker Erick Diaz, 30, watched the flooded fields from his home near the river.

Despite evacuation orders, he too had remained.

"I have nowhere to go and for the moment everything is fine."

Nearly 26 million Californians remained under a flood watch on Saturday evening, with tens of thousands under evacuation orders and advisories.

The storms of recent weeks were originally welcomed – coming after years of drought – but by now have brought "disastrous" flooding, officials have said.

There were more than 16,000 homes without power in California as of yesterday, according to poweroutage.us.

"This place was hit hard by the drought over the past years," farm worker Manuel Paris, 58, said near Salinas.

"We're not used to this much rain anymore."

The NWS said another 5cm to 7cm of rain could cause new flooding and mudslides, with parts of the Sierra Nevada seeing 1m to 2m of snow, and heavy winds buffeting central and coastal California at up to 80kph. – AFP



Remains of a car outside the residential building that was destroyed by a missile strike in Dnipro. – AFP/PIC

Britain to send battle tanks to Ukraine

KYIV: Ukraine said Russia had unleashed a fresh barrage of missiles on Saturday, killing at least 14 people, as Britain became the first Western country to offer it the heavy tanks it has long been seeking.

Meanwhile, Moldova said debris from the latest Russian missiles had landed on its territory and condemned the attacks.

Ukraine also insisted on Saturday that the fighting in Soledar was continuing, a day after Russia's claim that it had captured the ravaged eastern town following a long battle.

Victory there would be a rare achievement for Moscow after a series of military setbacks.

Ukrainian officials denounced the latest wave of deadly Russian missile strikes across the country, as the country celebrated the Old New Year, a popular holiday in Ukraine.

At least 14 people, including a 15-year-old girl, were killed and 64

wounded when an apartment building was hit in the eastern city of Dnipro, Dnipropetrovsk governor Valentyn Reznichenko said on messaging app Telegram.

Seven children were among the wounded, the youngest aged three, he said.

So far, 38 people had been pulled from the rubble and the search operation was continuing.

Rescuers were also working through the night to free a woman trapped under the rubble of a destroyed house in Dnipro after hearing her voice, the state emergency service said.

The strike on the Dnipro apartment block destroyed dozens of flats, leaving between 100 and 200 people homeless while around 1,700 were without electricity and heating, deputy head of presidency Kyrylo Tymoshenko said.

Earlier on Saturday, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak pledged to provide Challenger 2 tanks to Ukraine, the first Western country to

supply the heavy tanks Kyiv has been crying out for.

The tanks would arrive in Ukraine in the coming weeks, Downing Street said in a statement, adding that Britain would also begin training the Ukrainian soldiers to use the tanks and guns.

Russia's embassy in the UK swiftly issued a warning that "bringing tanks to the conflict zone, far from drawing the hostilities to a close, will only serve to intensify combat operations, generating more casualties, including among the civilian population".

Moldova, Ukraine's southwestern neighbour, said on Saturday it had found missile debris on its territory after the latest Russian strikes.

"Russia's brutal war against Ukraine directly impacts Moldova again," President Maia Sandu tweeted, posting photos of the wreckage.

"We strongly condemn today's intensified attacks." – AFP

More classified papers found at Biden home

WASHINGTON: Five additional pages of classified material have been found at Joe Biden's family home in Delaware, the White House said on Saturday in a new twist in a politically sensitive affair for the president.

It was the latest in a series of revelations about the apparently improper storage of papers dating from Biden's time as Barack Obama's vice-president.

Biden has said he had no intention of keeping any classified documents.

White House lawyer Richard Sauber said the latest papers were found after he visited the home on Thursday to oversee the transfer to the Justice Department of a first batch of documents found a day earlier in a room next to the home's garage.

Biden's personal lawyers searching the garage at the home in Wilmington, Delaware – where the 80-year-old president often spends weekends – had found a document marked classified in the garage itself.

As these attorneys lacked the necessary security clearance to read it, they notified the Justice Department, Sauber said in a statement.

A 1978 law obliges US presidents and vice-presidents to hand over their e-mails, letters and other official documents to the National Archives.

Sauber said he does have the necessary security clearance, so he then went to the Delaware house to check out the situation for himself.

That is when he found the other five pages, he said.

He said all documents were "immediately and voluntarily" handed to the Justice Department.

Critics of Biden have seized on the steady series of revelations to argue that he has not been transparent and forthcoming. – AFP



COMMENT by Dr Amar-Singh

Protect disabled children from abuse

HEARING of abuse, violence or murder of children with disabilities is nothing new. International data suggests that children with disabilities face three to five times more abuse than non-disabled children, and Malaysia is no different. Although we lack local studies, it is estimated that 50% of all children with disabilities experience some form of abuse.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which Malaysia ratified on July 19, 2010, explicitly includes articles on prevention of abuse and violence.

Article 16 on "Freedom from Exploitation, Violence and Abuse" provides: "States parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms

of exploitation, violence and abuse."

Article 10 on "Right to Life" reads: "States parties reaffirm that every human being has the inherent right to life and shall take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others."

Malaysia's ratification of the CRPD means it has an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the convention i.e. to ensure the protection of children with disabilities from abuse and violence, and uphold their right to life. The inhumane abuse and killing of a six-year-old disabled girl in Sarawak recently indicates gaps in child protection, especially for children with disabilities.

Some members of society may erroneously believe that the lives of children with disabilities are worthless, and even consider them to

"Make relevant improvements to the services and provide relevant social support to the families and children with disabilities."

be "less human". Others may think that the girl's death is understandable, and that caring for a person with a disability is challenging and the person was probably under too much stress. Hence, they may not be affected by news of abuse or murders of persons with disabilities. Such perception is abhorrent and demeaning. Abusing and murdering a child with a disability can never be justified.

It is important to reflect on how the society and government agencies have failed children with disabilities. It is not just about how we have failed to protect them from harm, violence, abuse and murder. It is about how we have continuously and systematically underfunded social supports that are essential for children with disabilities to live safely and thrive in the community.

We should reflect on our failure to

provide families and caregivers of children with disabilities the social support they need, including respite care, inclusive and affordable child care, affordable and accessible therapy services in the local community, inclusive education, funding for parents and caregivers, appropriate parent education, etc.

All parents who care for children with disabilities need such services and support. We urge the government to make relevant improvements to these services and provide relevant social support to the families and children with disabilities.

One child with disability murdered is one child too many.

Ng Lai Thin (Project Officer), **Datuk Dr Amar-Singh HSS** (Advisor), **Wong Hui Min** (President), National Early Childhood Intervention Council.
Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

LETTERS letters@thesundaily.com

We deserve better service

THERE have been calls to reform the civil service, which is one of the most intractable yet important challenges for the government of the day.

The civil service is the backbone of the administration at both state and federal levels, which supports and is accountable for the entire system of governance.

Some of the reforms called for are to improve service delivery, responsiveness, reduce bureaucracy, boost operations, enhance information technology in services, train staff on digital literacy and move towards digitalisation.

There are also criticisms over the escalating manpower cost, with the 1.6 million bloated civil service for a 33 million population, and the lack of accountability and transparency on spending without proper checks and balances on procurement, as well as deficient audits conducted that has led to abuses and corrupt practices.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called for reform of the civil service that has so far been neglected.

Civil servants must inculcate a service culture. The government must recruit staff who are hardworking and passionate. Training must be provided to spruce up efficiency in all departments.

Employ professionals as consultants to work on the reform criteria.

Implement effective ethic standards and hold civil servants accountable if they fail to carry out their duties diligently and honestly. Good governance is important and ministers must lead by example.

With 1.6 million staff, the civil service has the largest number of employees. They support the government in formulating and implementing various policies, conducting administrative work, delivering services as well as enforcing the laws.

There must be zero tolerance for substandard performance. The government must ensure that civil servants are committed and ethical.

C. Sathasivam Sitheravellu
Seremban

Do away with contract system for doctors

INTRODUCED in December 2016, the contract system for doctors was deemed necessary to address the glut of medical graduates in Malaysia. The doctors on contract were offered a five-year term (three years plus two years extension).

Last year, a total of 55,981 medical officers had permanent employment with the Health Ministry, while another 23,096 were on contract. If the government can support 78,077 medical officers in that year, why can't it continue supporting this number as permanent staff with a slightly higher budget?

Costs aside, their services are needed now, more than ever. We have seen this great need during the Covid-19 pandemic when healthcare workers, in some cases, had to work 36 hours at a stretch to cope with the increasing numbers of critical patients.

If the overriding reason for introducing the contract system is to check the glut of medical graduates, doesn't it stand to reason to rather restrict the intake of students into medical colleges?

We do not impose such a system on the employment of, for example, teachers and civil servants although there is also a glut of these

professionals in the market.

There were 116,000 graduates without a job in 2020 but no contract system was imposed then. Cost is not a factor. It is all a question of budgeting. We can cut down on non-essential spending and allocate more funds for services that are sorely needed.

In my opinion, I do not think there was a glut of doctors, but rather it was a failure of the Public Services Department (PSD) to have proper planning. If there was a glut, why are those in service overworked? Would it not make sense to give full time employment to more doctors to relieve the workload?

The word "glut" seems to be a term used by the PSD to gloss over its shortcomings in human resource management? It is common knowledge that over the next decade or so, Malaysia will see an ageing population, with an attendant increased demand for healthcare. Therefore, it makes sense for us to invest now in manpower, equipment and other facilities for this eventuality.

Where facilities are concerned, the 145 hospitals and 2,000 health clinics existing today are grossly overcrowded. It has been estimated that more than half the country is

dependent on public healthcare but there has not been parallel expansion of facilities. And the demand is more acute in Sabah and Sarawak.

It has been suggested that to meet the increasing demand for healthcare services, hospitals and clinics should extend their operating hours. But won't this put an additional burden on the staff and increase their stress levels?

A bigger workforce is obviously the answer to this malady. There is talk of instituting a Health Services Commission to look into the healthcare challenges. But is this necessary? Aren't the shortcomings and their solutions plain for everyone to see?

Health Director-General Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah has truly cut to the chase when he said recently: "We are underfunded, understaffed, underpaid, overworked, overstretched and overcrowded with patients".

So, it is time for us to give our healthcare staff and services a much-needed booster shot to keep us safe and healthy.

Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye
Chairman
Alliance for a Safe Community

Media and information literacy

COMMENT
By Lai Cheng Wong

NEW media has come to dominate many aspects of our lives. It offers a range of opportunities, benefits and allows us to easily look up information, maintain social contacts and create and share information. We exploit these possibilities but, at the same time, we need to assess it continually, select the offer and choose how to deal with it, because, apart from opportunities and benefits, new media also presents challenges and possible dangers.

Rising cases of misinformation and disinformation around the globe amid growing access to the internet and social media, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, has led scholars and policymakers to rethink policies related to media and information literacy (MIL) to address issues arising from the lack of it. The move to educate society, particularly teachers and educators, on the importance of MIL came only as an afterthought.

The internet has revolutionised the way we read news and retrieve information. It has become a global means of daily communication. However, the tools we use for this are easily exploited to spread fake news and disinformation. This phenomenon affects the entire world, including Malaysia and its Southeast Asian neighbours. With over 400 million people in the Southeast Asia region accessing the internet, the battle to fight fake news is understandably arduous. Media activists and educators are also working frantically to teach MIL to citizens.

Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil calls on the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to take faster and tougher action on the recent post about Meta allowing scam ads on its platform. Fahmi said the special team established to deal with fake news on Dec 1 will handle the communication aspect, especially on how to deal with fake news. (Bernama, December 2022).

Meanwhile, Deputy Communications and Digital Minister Teo Nie Ching said the era of digitisation now allows information to be easily manipulated by parties having malicious intent, especially information disseminated on social media. Therefore, people need to be more aware in evaluating any information received before acting on it or sharing it with others.

The actual degree of damage caused by false rhetoric and malicious rumour-mongering is unknown. However, we have witnessed from anecdotes around the world the harm that false information can cause. Sick people who are scared to seek professional help have died from consuming off-label medications. Vulnerable groups have been targeted by hate speech, and political propagandists have pit supporters against one another.

MIL is crucial for developing the life and

work skills necessary for the 21st century. It is one of the tools that may be used to stop radicalisation, hate speech online, and enable individuals to recognise and defend themselves from political propaganda. The changing media landscape as a result of the digital revolution, as well as growing interest and participation in hybrid learning, has caused the issue of disinformation and a lack of MIL to worsen.

While the government's crackdown on fake news and false information is a much needed initiative, perhaps it is more important to go back to the root of the problem: The lack of MIL among Malaysians.

MIL competencies help us to better understand the messages that we receive and emphasise critical thinking skills that enable consumers to develop independent judgements about media content, and should be included in the school curriculum to better combat misinformation and disinformation issues.

Since teachers are primary agents of change (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), 2013) and play a key role in the 21st century learning environment (Sarah Gretter and Aman Yadav, 2016), they need to ensure that their curriculum develops the much needed MIL competencies, so that their students can take full advantage of knowledge societies, thereby becoming empowered global citizens (Unesco, 2013).

Renee Hobbs (2010) encourages the research community to "develop meaningful tests for new teachers to measure their ability to implement digital and media literacy instructional practices into the curriculum". In doing so, she stresses the importance of instruments in measuring teacher competencies in media literacy.

Teachers need to continue teaching about biased reporting and learn to find ways to gather evidence in the classroom through accurate data, not subjective opinions. In this context, teachers play a role in empowering students not only through knowledge transfer, but also by teaching them how to critically evaluate information, process verification, access credibility of source and use social media responsibly. Ambigapathy Pandian and Kalantzis M. (2001), in a publication titled "Literacy Matters: Issues for new times", pointed that Malaysia lacks trained teachers with MIL backgrounds.

Sharing the mission that MIL is a critical everyday life skill, the MIL for Asean Network, now a Unesco MIL Alliance and one of the primary drivers of MIL in the Southeast Asia region, strives to empower teachers across the region to integrate MIL components into the schools' curriculum. The network conducts regular dialogues for teachers and educators through capacity building programmes such as workshops, seminars and boot camps, research and consultancy work to inform policies, and runs communication and information campaigns on integrating MIL in their subject areas.

The work at MIL for Asean Network supports



Teachers must be well-trained to empower students with the necessary competencies to critically understand the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information from all forms of media.

and advances the achievement for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4, SDG 11 and SDG 16 by "Affording youth and adults with critical MIL competencies that enable quality education" (SDG 4), "Promoting citizens' own communications power that makes cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11), and "Enabling citizens to reflect on how information they interact with may influence their thoughts, beliefs and attitudes on others (SDG 16).

With fresh funding from the US State Department through the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF - a competition that provides alumni of US-sponsored and facilitated exchange programmes, with funding to expand on skills gained during exchange experience to design and implement innovative solutions to their community's global challenges) 2022, the co-founders of MIL for Asean Network, Lai Cheng Wong (Malaysia) and Melinda Quinones (the Philippines) will work with partners across the Asean region, namely Kampuchea Action to Promote Education in Cambodia, Seameo Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics in Malaysia, Seameo Regional Open Learning Centre in Indonesia, Centro Escolar University and Polytechnic University of the Philippines in the Philippines and Rangsit University in Thailand.

Taking off from the success of TechCamp Malaysia-Philippines "Teaching MIL in Everyday Life", the inter-region team will soon hold the Asean Teachers' Boot Camp themed "MIL: Building resilience for the futures of learning" and launch the MIL Hub official website in February. The theme is timely and pertinent as Malaysia and its neighbouring countries have seen a drastic increase in the

spread of disinformation and online scams over the last two years during the pandemic. The target groups for the boot camp are teachers and educators, administrators and education officers from public and private schools and teacher training institutions. A total of 100 highly aspiring and motivated teachers from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand will be selected.

The project aims to expand participants' knowledge and competencies on MIL, to enable them to integrate it across the curriculum and develop students' critical thinking skills so that they can actively engage with different segments of society.

Boot camp participants will have opportunities to participate in intensive seminars and discussions on topics related to MIL, such as countering misinformation and disinformation in a modern classroom, fact-checking, data privacy and protection, internet safety, and deep fakes detection.

Wong said: "The goal is to provide opportunities for teachers and educators to discuss and address critical issues such as cyberbullying, hate speech, misperceptions and information disorder in the media. Teachers must be well-trained to empower students with the necessary competencies to critically understand the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information from all forms of media. It is, therefore, important to take a healthy approach to the information disseminated in the media, a skill that should be practised from elementary school onwards."

Lai Cheng Wong, Educator and MIL Advocate for Asean Network.
Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

Authenticity vital asset for social media influencers

BY RHEA FREEMAN

MY social media feeds have been bursting with people I do not know, telling me what I need to buy to make my 2023 - maybe even my life - complete. Of course, influencers are nothing new, but maybe our attitude towards them is changing as we settle in to the new year.

Authenticity is a word that gets bandied around more and more, but when it comes to influencers (and whether or not we are influenced), it is essential that this core value is upheld. As someone who works in social media - and with influencers - I get it. Working with people who have a sizeable social media following can be a highly cost-effective way to get your product or service out to your target audience. But what happens when it is not? The number under an influencer's name is merely part of the package, the engagement (whether people comment on, like or respond to the post) is where the real magic happens. And this is where the disconnect (or lack of faith) comes from.

Keep in mind that we all have influence

when we use social media. Actually, we all have influence outside of the social media world, too. We can use this influence for good: We can tell people about important causes, raise awareness of issues that matter or share products we genuinely love. We can also use it for bad: To spout hatred, spread fake news and tell people to buy stuff we do not even like (but know will make us a quick buck).

Payment should not define whether or not an influencer is authentic or whether they choose to uphold their beliefs. These things should be non-negotiable. The best influencers continue to have a genuine affinity with the product they are selling, well beyond the end of their contract with that product's creator. They should create enough interesting content with it that we end up learning more about the product, and we should see it popping up frequently in their non-sponsored content, even when they are not actively being paid to talk about it. For influencers to have real influence, this authenticity must be maintained.

There is no doubt that it can be tempting to

sell out when someone wafts cash under your nose in exchange for content. But unlike in traditional media, where advertisements are not as reliant on that human endorsement, the appeal of an influencer is closely tied to their personality.

The short-term gains of this strategy are obvious: Influencers are asked to do something with a product, they negotiate a fee and then they share posts, videos and other content with their audience, featuring that product. They may be educated about the product or they may not be, but they make money regardless. Their endorsement does not have to be authentic, and it may even make little sense to their audience. It may even conflict with something they said the previous month or last week, but it is clear why this option is attractive nonetheless.

However, the cost of this can be huge in the long term. If influencers are not authentic and do things that erode the trust of their audience, then their long-term value takes a sharp nosedive. We are generally influenced by people (and brands, if we are honest) that we

know, like and trust. So, if the audience has no trust, then the influencer has limited influence, and that is a bad business call.

But it is not just the influencers who need to maintain authenticity: Brands do, too. The quick win is tempting. The influencer's large following and pretty content can give a brand a short-term win, but it can signal to the brand's current audience that its values are skewed towards exposure rather than loyalty. This can actually prove to be quite a turn-off for savvy social media users. So, what can influencers do? What can consumers do? What can brands do?

Influencers: Please play the long game and be honest about what you like - your audience deserves that from you at the very least. Consumers: Support influencers who do a good job. Reward them for correctly labelling their content, and when you like what they are talking about, engage with them and show your genuine support. And brands: Do not encourage influencers to be inauthentic. When you do that, nobody wins in the long term. - The Independent



Robert Kotuszewski (on left), Managing Director for Barry Callebaut Malaysia, and Jo Thys, Chief Operations Officer for the Barry Callebaut Group at the launch.

Sweet future for chocolate manufacturer

RECENTLY, Barry Callebaut, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cocoa products, announced the official opening of its Asia Pacific Business Excellence Centre (APAC BEC) in Petaling Jaya.

The APAC BEC will function as a centre of excellence, providing support across the company's financial and accounting services, information management and technology, customer service, and other corporate and shared service functions. The Centre will also help to improve customer experience through standardisation and scalability of processes.

Jo Thys, Chief Operating Officer of the Barry Callebaut Group, said: "The Asia Pacific Business Excellence Centre aims to deliver an enhanced customer experience and create value for our customers through service optimisation and automation. This Centre is a testament to our long-term commitment toward investing in Asia Pacific and will help us support our business growth in the region."

Malaysia continues to be key hub for Asia Pacific

The new APAC BEC in Malaysia represents a significant investment by Barry Callebaut in Malaysia and builds on more than 30 years of successful presence in the country.

At present, Barry Callebaut employs more than 600 employees across its two manufacturing sites and R&D centers in Pasir Gudang and Port Klang. The APAC BEC has already over 100 employees and aims to scale up to 150 in the coming months.

The company also imports premium European chocolate for artisanal and professional users of chocolate, such as chocolatiers, bakers, pastry chefs, hotels and restaurants. It also introduced several of its innovative chocolate products to customers in Malaysia, including its first dairy-free, plant-based chocolate and WholeFruit chocolate, which is made from 100% cacao fruit.

Robert Kotuszewski, Managing Director of Barry Callebaut in Malaysia, said: "Malaysia is an important hub for Asia Pacific thanks to its solid manufacturing base, cultural diversity, and multilingual talents who can help our customers and employees connect across markets in the region."



The Centre is home to more than 100 culturally-diverse multilingual talents to support the growth in the region.



The management of *theSun* and Carlsberg Malaysia posing with eight colourful lions during the visit.

Celebrating together

➤ Carlsberg Malaysia visits *theSun* to bring some cheer and good wishes for Chinese New Year

PROSPERITY came calling at *theSun* last week, as Carlsberg Malaysia paid a visit to spread some festive joy and to usher in the Year of the Rabbit.

The foyer area of *theSun*'s office was decorated with two giant cans of Carlsberg Smooth Draft and Carlsberg Danish Pilsner, each wrapped in artist edition packaging created by award-winning illustrator Feifei Ruan, with

images to herald a smooth and prosperous year ahead, in line with this year's theme, 'Brewing Prosperity Together.'

The festivities kicked off with a rousing drum performance by a four-man drum team, followed by a loh sang session that saw the management teams of Carlsberg Malaysia and *theSun* joining together in expressing their good wishes for the year ahead. Adam Ong, executive director for



DJ Kenji, dressed as the God of Prosperity.

theSun, then presented Carlsberg Malaysia corporate affairs and sustainability director Pearl Lai with a token of appreciation.

The party commenced with a lion dance performance accompanied by beats spun by DJ Kenji, who was dressed up as the God of Prosperity. There was much merriment as everyone reached out to touch the lions for a little bit of luck. The management and employees of Carlsberg Malaysia and *theSun* also took the opportunity to catch up.

Staff of *theSun* were then invited to take part in the 'Drumming Prosperity Together' game, which allowed them to win exclusive Carlsberg Malaysia ang pau packets, with one lucky colleague taking home a carton of Carlsberg. The lion dance troupe later visited the newsroom to continue to spread good cheer.

In all, it was a fun and memorable celebration that really brought home the spirit of celebration and togetherness.



Executive director for *theSun* Adam Ong trying his hand at the 'Drumming Prosperity Together' game as part of the activities.

Garnier educates students about sustainability

GARNIER Malaysia announced the wrap-up of its school education programme in partnership with the Malaysia Nature Society (MNS). The programme was launched in June 2022 with the objective to cultivate the next generation of Green Heroes through its nationwide 'Garnier Jom Kurangkan Plastik Program'.

The nationwide school education programme saw a total of 600 schools where a total of 2,288 students and 782 teachers benefitted from the programme. Both students and teachers were

educated on recycling, upcycling, and ways to tackle plastic pollution via virtual workshops. These students then put their knowledge to the test and ran respective recycling activities in their schools and managed to collect a total of 56,693kg of plastic during the duration of the campaign.

Green Beauty is Garnier's global initiative of an end-to-end approach to sustainability. This commitment has ambitious 2025 targets to dramatically reduce Garnier's overall environmental impact. The 2025 sustainability goals include ensuring

all products to be made with zero virgin plastic, as well as changes to packaging to ensure that all materials are reusable, recyclable, or compostable.

Taking green measures at all steps of the brand's value chain, Garnier commits to having 100% of their industrial sites to be carbon neutral by 2025. Garnier also aims to empower 1,000 communities through their Solidarity Sourcing programme.

For more information on the Garnier Green Beauty campaign, visit www.garnier.com.my/green-beauty.



<div> <div>INTER-PACIFIC</div> <div>SECURITIES SDN. BHD.</div> <div>197201001092 (1273843)</div> <div>A Participating Organisation of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad</div> <div>A Trading Participant of Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Berhad</div> </div>				
BURSA MALAYSIA TRADE STATISTICS - 13/01/2023				
Participation %		Bought RM m	Sold RM m	Net RM m
49.8	Institutions	1019.1	992.4	26.7
29.2	Retail	554.6	622.3	-67.7
21.0	Foreign	444.9	403.9	41.0
100.0		2018.6	2018.6	0
<small>Preliminary stats (excluding trade amendments). For final data, please refer to www.bursamalaysia.com Source: Bursa Malaysia</small>				

KL MARKET SUMMARY		
January 13, 2023		
INDICES	CHANGE	
FBMEMAS	10,785.80	+43.04
FBMKLCI	1,495.03	+6.37
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	595.44	+1.05
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	185.29	+1.48
CONSTRUCTION	155.41	-1.17
FINANCIAL SERVICES	16,621.15	+83.46
ENERGY	822.94	+6.67
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	583.50	+0.17
HEALTH CARE	1,676.64	-3.43
TRANSPORTATION	925.24	+14.57
PROPERTY	658.28	-1.85
PLANTATION	6,922.91	+0.29
FBMSHA	10,976.72	+31.87
FBMACE	5,455.48	+26.85
TECHNOLOGY	66.96	+0.67
TURNOVER	VALUE	
3.405 BIL	RM2.018 BIL	

5 MOST ACTIVES				
January 13, 2023				
STOCK	VOL	CLSG (sen)	+/- (sen)	
SERBADK	37,105,100	2.0	+1.0	
NATGATE	13,108,000	106.0	+6.0	
ZENTECH	10,253,600	4.0	+1.5	
ZENTECH-OR	88,352,700	2.0	UNCH	
SERBADK-WA	66,664,800	0.5	UNCH	



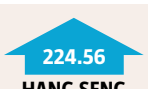



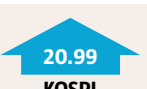
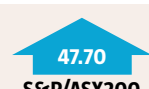
5 TOP GAINERS				
January 13, 2023				
STOCK	VOL	CLSG (RM)	+/- RM	
HEXTECH	281,500	24.22	+2.02	
MPI	226,000	33.74	+1.36	
PETDAG	313,300	22.40	+0.28	
CHINTEK	1,100	8.30	+0.20	
FANG-2XL	2,200	5.18	+0.20	

5 TOP LOSERS				
January 13, 2023				
STOCK	VOL	CLSG (RM)	+/- RM	
NESTLE	126,500	135.00	-2.30	
RAPID	2,400	15.84	-0.36	
BKAWAN	7,200	22.60	-0.20	
ARTRONIQ	42,467,900	0.745	-0.12	
HSI-HKA	150,400	0.465	-0.12	

EXCHANGE RATES			
JANUARY 13, 2023			
Foreign currency	Bank sell TT/OD	Bank buy TT	Bank buy OD
1 US DOLLAR	4.4025	4.2695	4.2595
1 AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR	3.0780	2.9560	2.9400
1 BRUNEI DOLLAR	3.3210	3.2250	3.2170
1 CANADIAN DOLLAR	3.2800	3.1920	3.1800
1 EURO	4.7750	4.6210	4.6010
1 NEW ZEALAND DOLLAR	2.8160	2.7110	2.6950
1 SINGAPORE DOLLAR	3.3210	3.2250	3.2170
1 STERLING POUND	5.3730	5.2020	5.1820
1 SWISS FRANC	4.7230	4.6140	4.5990
100 UAE DIRHAM	120.9600	114.6900	114.4900
100 BANGLADESH TAKA	4.2870	4.0210	3.8210
100 CHINESE RENMINBI	65.6000	62.9000	N/A
100 HONGKONG DOLLAR	56.8400	54.0100	53.8100
100 INDIAN RUPEE	5.5000	5.1700	4.9700
100 INDONESIAN RUPIAH	0.0300	0.0271	0.0221
100 JAPANESE YEN	3.4090	3.3010	3.2910
100 NEW TAIWAN DOLLAR	15.6000	N/A	N/A
100 PAKISTAN RUPEE	1.9600	1.8300	1.6300
100 PHILIPPINE PESO	8.1000	7.6400	7.4400
100 QATAR RIYAL	121.7700	115.6000	115.4000
100 SAUDI RIYAL	118.2000	112.2100	112.0100
100 THAI BAHT	13.8600	12.2900	11.8900

Source: Malayan Banking Berhad/Bernama

SunBiz

 6.37 KLCI 1,495.03	 25.97 STI 3,293.75	 224.56 HANG SENG 21,738.66	 31.85 SCI 3,195.31	 330.30 NIKKEI 26,119.52	 92.49 TSEC 14,824.13	 20.99 KOSPI 2,386.09	 47.70 S&P/ASX200 7,328.10
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FGV allocates more than RM1b for capex this year

➤ Funds will be used for oil palm tree replantation, machinery, seedlings, and asset replacement

■ BY **GLORIA HARRY BEATTY**
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

PASIR GUDANG: FGV Holdings Bhd will allocate over RM1 billion for capital expenditure (capex) for its financial year ending Dec 31, 2023 (FY’23) – to be utilised among others, for oil palm tree replantation and machinery, seedlings, said its group CEO Datuk Nazrul Mansor.

He said about RM400 million will be used for the replanting of old oil palm trees while a significant amount has been allocated for machinery, seedlings and other items that are needed for replanting.

“The remaining capex for year 2023 will be used for mainly asset replacement and upgrading to improve operating efficiencies as well as to meet regulatory requirements,” he told reporters during a media visit to FGV’s subsidiary, Delima Oil Products Sdn Bhd, in Johor Baru last Thursday.

In 2021, FGV allocated a total capex of RM614.75 million, while in 2020, RM471.65 million.

On outlook, Nazrul is optimistic on the



For growth, Nazrul said that food will be the key driver and opined that FGV is able to be a major local food player. – **GLORIA HARRY BEATTY/THESUN**

company’s consumer product business, which includes refined edible oil and margarine.

For growth, he said that food will be the key driver and opined that FGV is able to be a major local food player.

“With our strengths in distribution, it puts us in a perfect position to be a key food player for Malaysia,” he added.

Currently, he said that there is no national food company in Malaysia as compared to other neighbouring countries like Indonesia (Indofood), South Thailand (CP), Vietnam

(Vinafood). With that, FGV sees an opportunity to fill in the gap.

“We aspire to be a Malaysian food company. In every household kitchen in Malaysia, at least 50% of the products are made up of our products, half of which are of the Saji brand,” added Nazrul.

He further said, “Our competitors are also doing what we are doing, so we need to make sure that for our downstream business we are ahead of the pack continuously and have more product innovation. Our new foray into the food business, we feel that it is the perfect timing for FGV to show our feathers in pursuing the national food security agenda.”

On the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) ban on its palm oil products, Nazrul hoped that it will be lifted by year end.

“We have set a target to submit the application by the first quarter of this year (by March 31). It will take some time for them (US CBP) to consider the petition and we hope the petition will be lifted towards the end of this year, maybe earlier,” he remarked.

In Sept 2020, eight Malaysian companies which consisted of rubber gloves and palm oil products manufacturers were slapped with the withhold release order by the US CBP concerning issues related to forced labour.

Asked on labour shortage, divisional director for the plantation sector Mohd Sarian Md Sahid expects the issue for FGV to be resolved by end of March this year as it will receive an estimated 5,000 foreign workers from India, Indonesia and others.

Registration for national taxation seminar reopens

PUTRAJAYA: Online registration to participate in the National Taxation Seminar (SPK) 2022 to discuss the various initiatives related to direct taxation after the tabling of Budget 2023, reopens from today.

The Inland Revenue Board (IRB) said that the seminar, registration for which can be done through its seminar registration portal at <https://spk.hasil.gov.my> will be held in two sessions on March 7 and 8.

“Two key topics will be discussed namely ‘Budget 2023 Proposals’ and ‘Corporate Taxation Governance – an IRB Perspective’ by experienced speakers comprising senior IRB officers as well as professional panelists representing tax practitioners.

“The public especially tax practitioners,

accounting firms and professionals and taxpayers are encouraged to attend the seminar which will offer the latest information regarding amendments to all Acts administered by IRB following the re-tabling of Budget 2023 by the Finance Minister on Feb 24,” it said in a statement yesterday.

According to the statement, SPK 2022 was scheduled to take place in October last year but had to be postponed following the government’s decision to re-table Budget 2023.

IRB said participants who have registered for SPK 2022 (Session 1: Oct 12, 2022 and Session 2: Oct 13, 2022), will be automatically registered as participants for Session 1:

March 7, 2023 and Session 2: March 8, 2023.

The statement also informed that participants who wish to change the seminar session can do so from today through the seminar registration portal and only participants who have made full payment of the participation fee will be allowed to attend the session.

“Participants who have registered but have yet to make payment and wish to confirm participation can also do so through the seminar registration portal,” the statement said.

Further information on the seminar can be obtained by contacting the SPK 2022 Secretariat (Budget 2023) via email at spkhasil@hasil.gov.my. – Bernama

Hong Leong Bank, PayNet launch Visit Sekinchan 2023 campaign

KUALA LUMPUR: Hong Leong Bank Bhd (HLB) has formed a partnership with Payments Network Malaysia Sdn Bhd (PayNet) to roll out the “Visit Sekinchan 2023” campaign in Sekinchan, Selangor, the first non-urban area to be cashless enabled.

HLB group managing director and CEO Domenic Fuda said cashless payments would help increase vendor sales value as customers may spend less without having to worry about finding an automated teller machine (ATM) if they run out of cash on hand.

“The bank has been working with the community for six months to ensure that Sekinchan accepts this change in the use of

cashless payments,” he said during the launch of the campaign on Saturday.

Fuda noted that Sekinchan was chosen because it is a focal point for foreign and domestic tourists and is strategically located near the Kuala Lumpur city centre.

He went on to say that cashless payment transactions can also be used in business premises such as public markets, restaurants, and accommodations, including in houses of worship.

Part of the bank’s environmental, social, and governance commitment is a dedication to closing the digital divide between urban and non-urban areas and ensuring that all communities benefit from digital and

financial inclusion, Fuda said.

“In addition to providing digital tools and hardware, our team is ready to help the Sekinchan community understand the ins and outs of technology and help them realise their potential with digital and cashless payment options in our HLB Connect app,” he said.

HLB has already supported 24,000 residents and businesses in Sekinchan by helping them open bank accounts, issue debit cards and connect with banks digitally without having to visit a bank branch.

The bank is also gradually providing 800 businesses with the HLB DuitNow starter kit, including schools. – Bernama



TH Properties-MRCB to build Kota Semarak project

► Joint venture firm restarts 11ha development in KL with targeted GDV of RM3.1b

KUALA LUMPUR: 59 Inc Sdn Bhd has restarted the Kota Semarak mixed development project with a targeted total gross development value (GDV) of RM3.1 billion.

The 70-30% joint venture (JV) company, formed between TH Properties Sdn Bhd (TH Prop) and Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd (MRCB), had planned to start the project in 2019 but was hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

TH Prop Group CEO Azman Ibrahim said the 11ha Kota Semarak project in Jalan Sultan

Yahya Petra will be developed in three phases.

The first phase is called 1A, which comprises four towers of 1,226 units of serviced apartments, including 100 units of the Federal Territories Affordable Housing Project (RUMAWIP), as well as 87 units of shop offices.

Phase 2 and phase 3 will be developed on 3.7ha and 4.4ha areas, respectively.

Phase 1A, with a GDV of RM850 million and a land area of 2.9ha, is earmarked to be completed in February 2027, with housing units priced from RM570,000 onwards.

"We are looking at RM650 per sq ft and this price range is much lower than what we can find in the surrounding high-rise developments.

"We are confident in the early part of launching to secure at least 50% (of bookings)," Azman said after the Kota Semarak

groundbreaking and memorandum of understanding signing ceremonies with the panel of end-financiers yesterday.

The JV company has secured financing from Bank Islam Bhd and MBSB Bank Bhd for the development.

"During the movement control order, we revised and studied the effectiveness of the project and we were able to reduce some elements, enabling us to maintain our construction costs," he said when asked about the rising cost of building materials and its effects on the project.

Kota Semarak offers contemporary two to four-bedroom units sized between 802 sq ft and 2,400 sq ft.

"We are targeting Kota Semarak as a stepping stone for more environmentally friendly and sustainable projects in the future," he noted. - Bernama

Labuan can become the next S'pore: Labuan Corp CEO

LABUAN: Labuan can potentially become the next Singapore with its booming international business and financial sector, oil and gas and maritime industries.

Labuan Corporation CEO Rithuan Ismail said the duty-free island's geographic position linking Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei, and other Asean countries would be an advantage for it to be a viable regional economic destination in the future.

"Foreign enterprises can use Labuan as a gateway to the international market and expand their business due to its strategic location within the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA)," he said at the launch of the Labuan-level Wave Federal Territory Flags Campaign yesterday.

He said Labuan, being a free port, has business-friendly policies to jumpstart its economic growth.

Rithuan said Malaysians are aware of Labuan's transformation from just being a duty-free island into a tax haven as Malaysia's international business and financial centre and oil and gas hub, after its elevation into a federal territory, alongside Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya in 1984.

"But, before it can be the next Singapore, it is worth looking at the characteristics which make the city-state successful in the first place," he said.

Rithuan said businesses in Labuan must work together with the local authority to turn the island into an attractive economic destination both for domestic and foreign investments.

"To move forward, we must all change our mindsets... this is important in all our endeavours to develop the island as it gives us direction on how to approach issues and challenges.

"The most important factor in becoming the next Singapore is to have a highly efficient system of government, dynamic and transparent, and be able to focus on economic growth and the well-being of its citizens," he said, adding Labuan would resolve various issues that hinder from becoming a developed federal territory.

Meanwhile, Rithuan said the focus on this year's Federal Territory Day is on prioritising the well-being and welfare of the citizens in the federal territories.

Labuan Corporation is a local authority which administers the Federal Territory of Labuan, Malaysia. This agency is under Ministry of the Federal Territories. It is the merger between two agencies, the Labuan Development Authority and Labuan Municipal Council. The agency is responsible for public health and sanitation, waste removal and management, town planning, environmental protection and building control, social and economic development and general maintenance functions of urban infrastructure. - Bernama



From left: Affin Islamic Bank Bhd chairman Tuan Haji Musa Abdul Malek, Datuk Paduka Syed Mashafuddin, Nor Azman Zainal, Takaful Malaysia Am chairman Ismail Mahbob and CEO Mohamed Sabri Ramli giving the thumbs up at the bancatakaful partnership ceremony.

Takaful Malaysia, Affin Islamic ink bancatakaful deal

PETALING JAYA: Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Keluarga Bhd and its wholly owned subsidiary Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Am Bhd have entered into a bancatakaful service agreement with Affin Islamic Bank Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Affin Bank Bhd to market family and general takaful products offered by Takaful Malaysia for five years from Jan 1 - with an option for Affin Islamic to continue the partnership for another five years.

The alliance provides Takaful Malaysia access to Affin Islamic's customer base, branch network and sales force as well as enabling the bank to expand its product offerings.

Takaful Malaysia group CEO Nor Azman

Zainal said that there are opportunities for future growth in the bancatakaful business and the alliance would benefit customers of Affin Islamic.

"The bancatakaful partnership echoes our commitment to providing Affin Islamic customers access to a suite of takaful products to meet their growing protection needs and develop the advisory family takaful business," he said.

Nor Azman added that the synergy with Affin Islamic would strengthen its business portfolio in the retail segment for family takaful and savings products complementing its core businesses in the credit-related business.

"The partnership demonstrates our commitment to putting the well-being of customers at the heart of what we do and is a testament to our plan to penetrate the untapped market," he said.

Affin Islamic Bank Bhd CEO Datuk Paduka Syed Mashafuddin Syed Badarudin said the partnership will allow its customers to be provided with access to the range of Takaful products and solutions.

"Our partnership with Takaful Malaysia will also enhance the overall customer experience. We are confident that all these efforts will contribute towards transforming Affin into a more progressive and modern bank," he concluded.

HSI, SP500, DNeX and Genting actively traded

WARRANTS WATCH

LAST week, the overall warrants turnover increased slightly by 5.4% week-on-week (w-o-w) to RM361.5 million, contributed by active trading in several underlyings such as the Hong Kong indices i.e. the Hang Seng Index (HSI) and Hang Seng Tech Index (HSTech) as well as other underlyings such as the S&P 500® Index and Malaysian stocks. The average daily turnover for warrants however, fell to RM72.3 million per day, compared to previous week's average daily turnover of RM85.8 million per day.

Warrants over the HSI continued to be the major contributor to the week's turnover, making up 89.2% of the total warrants turnover, despite its

weekly turnover inching up by only 2.1% w-o-w to RM322.3 million. Interestingly, there was also increased demand in the HSTECH warrants, resulting in its total turnover jumping by more than threefold to RM1.3 million last week. Warrants over the S&P 500® Index (SP500) and Malaysian stocks also saw active trading with their turnover significantly rising by 34.6% w-o-w and 51.5% w-o-w, respectively.

For the second week into the new year of 2023, the HSI extended its bullish momentum, soaring by 3.6% w-o-w as it closed at 21,738.66 last Friday, its highest closing level since July 2022. The two-week rally was contributed by positive news such as China's border reopening for the first time since 2020, as well as the easing of China's tech-sector clampdown.

Top warrants by value traded

Warrant name	Value (RM' mil)	Issuer	Exercise level	Expiry date
HSI-CJ5	106.6	Macquarie	21,400	30 Jan 2023
HSI-CLC	52.9	Macquarie	20,000	27 Feb 2023
HSI-CLB	46.0	Macquarie	22,000	27 Feb 2023
HSI-HE9	25.2	Macquarie	20,400	30 Jan 2023
HSI-HKH	20.4	Macquarie	21,000	27 Feb 2023

Likewise, the HSTECH also closed the week higher, recording a weekly gain of 2.8% as the index ended Friday at 4,554.78 after rebounding 1.5% to reverse a three-day decline.

Trading wise, the call warrant HSI-CJ5 remained as the top traded warrant with up to 312.8 million units exchanged hands and clocking in a total turnover of RM106.6 million, the highest among other warrants.

Investors net sold 16.8 million units of HSI-CJ5 for the week out of the 312.8 million units traded amid profit taking as the warrant surged by 38.2% w-o-w. Meanwhile, the put warrant HSTECH-HM (-36.8% w-o-w) was the most popular HSTECH warrant with investors net buying 1.7 million units out of 10.5 million units traded last week.

Other warrants that were popular

last week include the call warrant SP500-C16 (expiry: March 20, 2023) and warrants over local underlyings such as DNEC-C8 (expiry: Sept 25, 2023), DNEC-C4 (expiry: July 31, 2023) and GENTING-C1T (expiry: Feb 6, 2023).

To view the full list of structured warrants available on Bursa Malaysia, kindly visit malaysiawarrants.com.my.

Provided for Malaysian residents information only. This commentary has not been reviewed by the Securities Commission Malaysia. It is not an offer or recommendation to trade and is not research material. Past performance is not indicative of future performance. You should make your own assessment and seek professional advice.

The warrants will not be offered to any US persons.

Tax planning and minimising tax liability legally

TAX planning is the legitimate right of any taxpayer to manage and minimise taxes within the legal framework. The tax legislation is very specific, and it clearly lays out what income or capital or transactions should be brought to tax.

Anything outside the ambit of the tax legislation is not taxable. If there are choices available in the legislation, the taxpayer is not barred from taking advantage of the best available choice.

Tax evasion – where taxpayers set out to intentionally avoid paying taxes – is illegal. However, tax avoidance – taking advantage of the loopholes in the law – is probably unethical but legitimate and cannot be denied through legislation.

In Malaysia, tax mitigation is permissible where taxpayers obtain a benefit by incurring a cost or suffering a loss, and the transaction is commercially explainable or there is a valid family reason for undertaking the transaction.

Principles of tax planning

Tax planning is a continuous process throughout the tax year. A taxpayer should look at maximising

tax deductions on operating expenditure, claiming maximum capital allowance or tax depreciation on capital expenditure, maximise the utilisation of available tax incentives, organising revenue flows to benefit from lower rates of tax where choices are available, converting income into capital gains, deferring the timing and payment of taxes, benefitting from tax exemptions and reliefs available, etc.

These principles cut across income tax, real property gains tax, stamp duties, and indirect taxes such as sales and services tax, customs duties, etc.

Where do you start?

First, taxpayers should determine whether there is tax liability in the upcoming tax year. Next is to understand the nature of the inflows/outflows and their timing. This will help determine whether the inflows are of an income or capital nature.

In Malaysia, we do not tax capital gains except capital gains from real property transactions. The starting point here is whether the inflows can be legitimately structured to be

of a capital nature.

An example would be where the sale of a property through an investment holding company would be of a capital nature which may be subject to lower rates of real property gains tax (perhaps at 10%) versus a property developer where such inflows would be treated as income and will be subject to income tax at 24%.

Thereafter, taxpayers should consider taking advantage of tax incentives available under the Promotion of Investments Act such as pioneer status incentive or investment tax allowance, or the Income Tax Act, such as reinvestment allowance.

The next step is to look at your expenditure patterns to maximise your deductions. The taxpayer should look at increasing the amount of deductions through permissible double deductions – such as research and development, etc.

As for capital outflows such as expenditure incurred on buildings, plant and machinery, you need to structure your investments such that they qualify for capital allowances within the ambit of the law.

You also need to think about ways of

structuring your documents/instruments to minimise the stamp duty.

You should also not forget the impact of service tax, sales tax, and customs duties. You can take advantage of the exemptions available and selecting the correct HS Codes could reduce your taxes on importation and the manner in which you import could have an impact on your indirect taxes.

Conclusion

There is significant room for tax planning and reducing your taxes legitimately. However, be mindful that the tax authorities are continuously challenging taxpayers who attempt to step into the arena of unacceptable avoidance.

But if the taxpayer has legitimate commercial reasons for carrying out the transactions and has the necessary documentary evidence to support the transactions, then such challenges from the tax authorities can be defended against.

This article is contributed by Thannees Tax Consulting Services Sdn Bhd managing director SM Thanneermalai.



TAX MATTERS
BY S. M. THANNEERMALAI

We are never too old to learn new things

► **SME Association of Malaysia national president Ding Hong Sing, who is also PA Food Sdn Bhd founder and managing director, answers SunBiz's questions**



SUCCESS: THE INSIGHT STORY

How has your life experience made you the leader you are today?

I was 20 years old when I joined Hazama Bumi Sdn Bhd, a Japanese construction company, back in 1982. I had no formal education qualification so it was difficult for me to find my way around the engineering business and gain the respect of colleagues.

Over the course of three years, I became a site supervisor by learning through my own initiative and working hard. I also helped the company save several million ringgit in a work project, eventually gaining the approval and trust of my Japanese boss. He passed me a sum of money as a token of appreciation and kind regards when I left the company in May 1985 to start my own business – the beginning of PA Food.

The PA Food business started in my kitchen with three family members as helpers. Today, we employ over 200 employees.

Based on my experience, I believe people can become good at what they do if they are first given a chance to try their best, then guided and corrected by a senior based on the results produced.

I was president of the SME Association of Hulu Langat in Selangor for 16 years and national treasurer of SME Malaysia for 13 years, besides holding various council positions in trade, clan and school associations since 1998. These have sharpened my leadership skills in not-for-profit and voluntary organisations.

What traits do you look for in your talent or how do you decide who is right for a job?

In order of importance, I look for a responsible character first, related work experience and a willingness to learn new things.

How do you think the industry you are in will evolve?

Generally speaking, the manufacturing industry will require:

- ➡ far higher levels of automation to reduce reliance on human labour and enhance productivity;
- ➡ higher number of new and innovative products; and
- ➡ greater export activity for Malaysian-grown products to penetrate new markets abroad.

What advice can you offer those looking to start their career/own business?

Focus on branding to enhance your company's image, products and services. Young entrepreneurs

must embrace new technology and learn about current trends in digitalisation and automation according to the industry they operate in.

We all know about the industrial revolution, are we in for a technological revolution? Your thoughts.

Yes, we are. Many markets and products now need to focus on technology and digitalisation to stay ahead. Business is evolving and we should adopt new methods of production that can increase output while using less labour and save time. However, mindset change and the willingness to adopt these new technologies are personal obstacles that SMEs need to overcome. Those who don't adapt will be left behind in the technological revolution.

How has mentorship made a difference in your professional life?

Personally, I never had any mentor as my Japanese ex-boss adopted the "try your best first then I'll correct you" approach. In my food business, I teach and guide the employees based on this model too. I believe that knowledgeable and skilled employees at PA Food will contribute to the expansion and prosperity of the company so I am happy to share my business knowledge for win-win outcomes.

What do you want to accomplish in the next five years?

In my role as national president of SME Malaysia, I want to get SMEs fully focused on improving the quality of their goods and services, the importance of branding and to increase their level of exports. These interrelated themes are not new yet they still fall short or have not been developed to their full potential among SMEs, based on my observations.

Best piece of advice you ever received on your career.

I never received a formal education, having studied up to Form Four in secondary school. It was HELP University's co-founder and president, Professor Datuk Dr Paul Chan, whom I met in the first quarter of 2022 who suggested I pursue the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) course as I already possess 40 years of business and leadership experience.

The opportunity to further my education is now in my hands. It is exciting to be a university student at my age and to attend a combination of online and physical classes at the HELP University campus. It will be a proud day for me

to earn a doctorate title through my own efforts when I graduate.

Most-admired business leader? Why?

I admire Malaysian tycoon Robert Kuok, leader of the Kuok group with interests in properties, logistics, hospitality, food, agri-business and maritime.

He has the business acumen to select and successfully run enterprises whose products and services every one requires.

As I am in the food industry too, I marvel at his investments in commodities such as flour, sugar, palm oil and bread which will always be in demand by consumers. These industries will still perform well during economic slowdowns as they are food staples.

How do you stay abreast of issues affecting your industry?

My daily schedule as SME Malaysia national president is packed with meetings since the association is represented on numerous consultative panels of government ministries and agencies to escalate issues affecting SMEs for discussion and resolution.

SME Malaysia is a supporting partner with state and private entities in respect of industry-related collaborations and events – such as halal certification, Industrial Revolution 4.0 digital transformation, technology and automation, human resources, education, business expos – which I attend in my official capacity. These events serve to update me on latest industry developments and trends.

I also read digital newspapers, the internet and news from WhatsApp business groups.

How do you expect policies on climate change to impact businesses?

Many SMEs in Malaysia are not ready to implement climate change policies immediately. For example, requirements on green technology and reducing their business' carbon footprint. In respect of environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues, most SMEs are just coming to terms with the concepts although I recognise that some companies have begun to take baby steps vis-à-vis environmental and social indicators as they realise the benefits of ESG for their businesses.

Policies on climate change that do not consider the state of preparedness of SMEs will affect these businesses badly, especially if fines or penalties are imposed for non-compliance.

As such, government policies should be customised to suit the local business setting with prior consultation with stakeholders, besides the offering of financial or tax incentives for buy-in from the SME community.

Another option is early announcement of policy implementation timelines to enable SMEs to prepare their businesses ahead for eventual compliance in several years' time.

If you could have an hour with any thought leader in the world, whom would it be and why?

That would be Jack Ma.

I would like to learn from his experience in strengthening Alibaba's capabilities and business standards through the use of IT and digitalisation.

What has been the biggest challenge you have faced and what did you learn from it?

The biggest challenge so far was a lack of cash flow to operate my business during the two-year Covid-19 pandemic. At times, there were no incoming collections to cover high operating expenses for my companies.

I learned how to survive without money as an SME. This included cutting expenses where possible.

What man-made innovation confounds you? Why?

PA Food acquired a fully automated production line recently. As with new automation, I found the system "too high-tech" at first and could not understand its workings. The puzzle was unravelled once the machine supplier explained the mechanics of the production line and how to operate it.

New technology may appear unfamiliar to us but we will be able to learn the ropes once we understand it. We are never too old to learn new things.

Malaysia's greatest brand.

Petronas (Petroliam Nasional Bhd). It is internationally known and acclaimed.

A must-read for every business owner/manager is...

Quality and management. No specific books or magazines to recommend, but the two subjects are a "must-know" for daily practice by business owners, general principles of which can be modified to suit each setting.

What are the top three factors you would attribute your success to?

One, adherence to global food safety standards, i.e. ISO 22000, HACCP, BRC, Halal and RSPO. Two, branding of PA Food and its products. Three, products with added-value. They command a higher profit margin.

**SCHRODERS GETS NOD TO SET UP CHINA FUND UNIT**

SHANGHAI: Schroders has obtained Chinese regulatory approval to set up a wholly owned mutual fund unit in China, as Beijing accelerates opening up its giant financial sector to foreigners. The China Securities Regulatory Commission gave the green light to Schroders late on Friday, allowing the British asset manager to expand its footprint in China, where Schroders already owns a mutual fund venture, as well as a wealth management venture. – Reuters

OPEC+ FACES OIL SUPPLY, DEMAND VOLATILITY: UAE

CAIRO: Opec+ is facing “volatile prospects” in oil markets both in supply and demand, United Arab Emirates (UAE) energy minister Suhail al-Mazrouei told Asharq TV on Saturday. He said this was due to European sanctions on Russian crude taking effect in addition to China lifting its “zero-Covid” policy. Opec+ production capacity was down 3.7 million bpd due to fewer investments in the oil sector, Al-Mazrouei said. Opec+ groups the Organization of the Petroleum Producing Countries members and their allies, including Russia. – Reuters

Iran oil exports – record high finish, strong start

LONDON: Iranian oil exports hit new highs in the last two months of 2022 and are making a strong start to 2023 despite US sanctions, according to companies that track the flows, on higher shipments to China and Venezuela.

Tehran’s oil exports have been limited since former US president Donald Trump in 2018 exited a 2015 nuclear accord and reimposed sanctions aimed at curbing oil exports and the associated revenue to Iran’s government.

Exports have risen during the term of his successor President Joe Biden, who had sought to revive the nuclear deal, and hit the highest since 2019 on some estimates. This comes despite headwinds such as a stall in those talks and competition from discounted Russian crude.

Energy consultant SVB International said Iran’s crude exports in December averaged 1.137 million barrels per day, up 42,000 bpd from November and the highest 2022 figure SVB has reported based on estimates given earlier.

“In comparison to the Trump administration, there hasn’t been any serious crackdown or action against Iran’s oil exports,” said Sara Vakhshouri of SVB. “January exports were so far strong like previous months.”

“Lower Chinese demand and Russia’s supply to China have been a major challenge for them. Most of its oil still goes to the Far East, ultimately China. Iran also helps Venezuela to export its oil.”

Consultant Petro-Logistics, which tracks oil supply, said it was also seeing an upward trend in Iranian crude exports which, in its view, in December reached their highest level since March 2019.

Kpler, a data intelligence firm, put Iranian crude exports at 1.23 million bpd in November, the highest since August 2022 and almost on a par with April 2019’s rate of 1.27 million bpd, although they slipped to just below 1 million bpd in December.

The Iranian oil ministry did not respond to a request for comment on exports. Iran’s draft state budget is based on even higher shipments of 1.4 million bpd, the semi-official Fars news agency reported last week.

China is Iran’s biggest customer.

Also, Iran last year expanded its role in Venezuela, also under US sanctions, sending supplies of light oil for refining and diluents to produce exportable crude grades. – Reuters

China’s 2022 GDP growth seen at lowest in 40 years

BEIJING: China’s economic growth for 2022 is expected to have been among its weakest in four decades after the twin crises of the pandemic and property woes, analysts said ahead of tomorrow’s gross domestic product (GDP) announcement.

Ten experts interviewed by AFP forecast an average 2.7% year-on-year rise in GDP for the world’s second-largest economy, a sharp plunge from China’s 2021 growth of more than 8%.

It could also be China’s slowest pace since a 1.6% contraction in 1976 – the year Mao Zedong died – and excluding 2020, after the Covid-19 virus emerged in Wuhan in late 2019.

Beijing had set itself a growth target of around 5.5% for 2022 but this was undermined by the government’s “zero-Covid” policy, which put the brakes on manufacturing activity and consumption.

Strict lockdowns, quarantines and compulsory mass testing prompted abrupt closures of manufacturing facilities and businesses in major hubs – like Zhengzhou, home of the world’s biggest iPhone factory – and sent reverberations across the global supply chain.

Beijing abruptly loosened pandemic restrictions in early

➤ However, economist says worst is over and declares 2023 as ‘the year of returning to certainty’

December after three years of enforcing some of the harshest Covid measures in the world.

China is battling a surge in Covid cases that has overwhelmed its hospitals and medical staff.

This is likely to reflect in 2022’s fourth-quarter growth, which will also be announced tomorrow alongside a series of other indicators such as retail, industrial production and employment.

“The fourth quarter is relatively difficult,” said economist Zhang Ming of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

“No matter whether it’s by the metrics of consumption or investment, the growth is slowing.”

China’s exports took their biggest plunge since the start of the pandemic in December, contracting 9.9% year-on-year, while consumption was in the red in November and investment has slowed.

“The three horse carriages of the Chinese economy are all facing a relatively evident downward

pressure in the fourth quarter,” Zhang said.

Rabobank analyst Teeuwe Mevissen echoed Zhang, saying the final quarter will “almost certainly show a decline because of the fast spread of Covid” after the loosening of health restrictions in December.

“This will affect both demand and supply conditions for the worse,” he said.

Problems in the property sector are also still weighing on growth, Mevissen said.

This sector, which along with construction accounts for more than a quarter of China’s GDP, has been suffering since Beijing started cracking down on excessive borrowing and rampant speculation in 2020.

This regulatory tightening marked the beginning of financial worries for Evergrande, the former Chinese number one in real estate that is now strangled by huge debt.

Real estate sales have since fallen in many cities and many developers are struggling to survive.

However, the government appears to be taking a more conciliatory approach to reviving this key sector.

Measures to promote “stable and healthy” development were announced in November, including credit support for indebted developers and assistance for deferred-payment loans for homebuyers.

Some analysts took these measures as a reason for optimism.

“The transitional phase will likely be bumpy as the country may need to grapple with surging cases and increasingly stretched health systems,” warned analyst Jing Liu of HSBC, predicting a slowdown in the near term.

But, after three years of health restrictions, “China’s reopening process has started,” she said.

The World Bank forecast China’s GDP will rebound to 4.3% for 2023 – still below expectations.

Economist Larry Yang declared 2023 as “the year of returning to certainty”.

He said he expected growth to accelerate quarter by quarter in 2023, forecasting 5% GDP for the full year – a prediction in line with other analysts interviewed by AFP.

“The worst period of the economy itself has already passed,” Yang said. – AFP

Pakistan economy grinding to a halt amid dollar shortage

KARACHI: Thousands of containers packed with essential food items, raw materials and medical equipment have been held up at Pakistan’s Karachi port as the country grapples with a desperate foreign exchange crisis.

A shortage of crucial dollars has left banks refusing to issue new letters of credit for importers, hitting an economy already squeezed by soaring inflation and lacklustre growth.

“I have been in the business for the past 40 years and I have not witnessed a worse time,” said Abdul Majeed, an official with the All Pakistan Customs Agents Association.

He was speaking from an office near Karachi port, where shipping containers are stuck waiting for payment guarantees – packed with lentils, pharmaceuticals, diagnostic equipment and chemicals for Pakistan’s manufacturing industries.

“We’ve got thousands of containers stranded at the port because of the shortage of dollars,” said Maqbool Ahmed Malik, chairman of the customs association, adding that operations were down at least 50%.

State bank forex reserves this week dwindled to less than US\$6 billion (RM26 billion) – the lowest in nearly nine years – with obligations of more than US\$8 billion due in the first quarter alone.

The reserves are enough to pay for around a month of imports, according to analysts.

Pakistan’s economy has crumbled alongside a simmering political crisis, with the rupee plummeting and inflation at decades-high levels, while devastating floods and a major shortage of energy have piled on further pressure.

The South Asian nation’s



A dealer counts US dollars at a money exchange market in Karachi. Pakistan’s state bank forex reserves have dwindled to less than US\$6 billion – the lowest in nearly nine years. – AFP/PIIC

enormous national debt – currently US\$274 billion, or nearly 90% of gross domestic product – and the endless effort to service it makes Pakistan particularly vulnerable to economic shocks.

Islamabad has been pinning its hopes on an International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal brokered under the last Pakistani leader Imran Khan, but the latest payment has been pending since September.

The global lender is demanding the withdrawal of remaining subsidies on petroleum products and electricity aimed at helping the population of 220 million with the cost of living.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week urged the IMF to give Pakistan some breathing space as it tackles the “nightmarish” situation.

Zubair Gul, a 40-year-old father of four and daily wage labourer in Karachi, said it has become “hugely

difficult” to live on his earnings.

“I have to queue up for two or three hours to purchase subsidised flour – the regular prices are not affordable,” he told AFP.

For Shah Meer, an office worker, borrowing from relatives or using credit cards are the only ways to get by.

With an election due at the end of the year, implementing – or campaigning on – the tough conditions demanded by the IMF would be political suicide, but Pakistan is unlikely to secure fresh credit without making at least some cutbacks.

On Thursday, the United Arab Emirates agreed to roll over US\$2 billion owed by Pakistan and provide the country with an extra loan of US\$1 billion, helping it to avoid immediate default.

Islamabad won some relief last week when donors pledged over

US\$9 billion to help with recovery efforts after devastating monsoon floods left almost a third of the country under water last year.

But that cash, even when it does arrive, will not help the current forex crisis, so Sharif continues to press allies – including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and China – which has invested billions as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project.

The forex crisis has deepened the woes of textile manufacturers, which are responsible for around 60 percent of Pakistan’s exports. They have suffered as a result of the country’s energy shortages, damage to cotton crops during the floods, and a recent hike in taxes.

The troubles together have led to around 30% of power looms in the city of Faisalabad, the centre of the textiles industry, temporarily shutting down, with the remaining ones working on alternate days, said Baba Latif Ansari, head of the Labour Qaumi Movement union.

“More than 150,000 workers who had come from surrounding villages to work here have had to go back because of a lack of work in the past few weeks. Others are just sitting at home hoping the situation improves,” he told AFP.

Some factories have complained of a backlog of imported raw materials such as dyes, buttons, zippers and spare parts for machinery held up at the Karachi port.

Abdul Rauf, an importer of grain and pulses, said he has just 25 days of stock left and without the release of dollars, there will be an “immense shortage” during the holy month of Ramadan, which begins in March.

“I’ve never witnessed a situation where people are so worried,” he told AFP.

BY SHOBANA MANOKARAN

HAVE you ever wondered about some of the most popular tattoo designs? Are you curious about their significance and what they stand for? After all, tattoos can have many metaphorical meanings.

This list includes some of the most beautiful and meaningful tattoo designs, as well as the various meanings behind them.

Semicolon tattoo

One of the most popular small, significant tattoos is the semicolon. This tattoo is usually associated with mental health difficulties.

This symbol gained popularity after being associated with The Semicolon Project, a global initiative which raises awareness of mental illness and suicide survival, when an individual had the option of ending a sentence but opted to continue. The semicolon indicates that your story could have ended here, but it did not.

Amperсанд tattoo

The meaning of the ampersand is “and”. This has a multitude of connotations, one of which is connection and togetherness – especially if you get this as a matching tattoo with a significant other.

The other possible significance is that there is always more to the story. An ampersand creates a nice simple pattern; it’s a lovely tattoo for individuals who prefer something small and subtle. Choose your typeface carefully if you want your ampersand tattoo to stand out.

Anchor tattoo

The anchor is a classic traditional tattoo design which was once associated with sailors, but has taken on a new meaning in modern times, and now symbolises stability and peace.

When worn as a matching tattoo with someone else, it serves to remind them that they are each other’s anchor and that they both ground each other, which is both beautiful and reassuring.

Butterfly tattoo

Butterflies are a symbol of transformation, as seen when it evolves from a mere caterpillar into a winged beauty. Many people find the connection reassuring, and take comfort in the tattoo of the creature which represents them going through difficult times, and emerging stronger and better as a result.



(left) Nordic inspired Viking tatoos. – ALL PIX BY PINTEREST

Mandala tatoos (right) can be as simple or as intricate as you like.



(right) Sometimes a single word is more than enough.



A pair of intriguing Semicolon and Butterfly tattoos.

Marked for life

» A tattoo is a permanent piece of body art, and the message behind it will last the rest of the person’s life

Viking symbol tattoo

There are numerous powerful symbols in Norse mythology that have been passed down from the Vikings’ early days, and have enjoyed a resurgence as tatoo designs. Some popular rune tattoos

include the inguz, which looks like a diamond and means “abundance”, or “new beginnings”, the valknut, which looks like three interlocking triangles and represents the cycle of life, and mjolnir, also known as Thor’s Hammer.

Arrow tattoo

Arrow tattoos represent finding your way. Arrows also represent strength due to their connection to hunting and being a powerful weapon. This combined meaning could represent you as a powerful fighter or warrior as you seek your own path in life.

Tribal tattoo

The meaning of tribal tattoos varies by culture and design. With this genre of tattoo design, it’s important to do your research to ensure you understand the significance of the tattoo design you’re considering.

Tree of Life tattoo

The tree of life is a Kabbalistic symbol (from the Kabbalah), though it is used in many religions. The tree of life represents a connection to everything in the universe. This is a very spiritual concept shared by many faiths.

Dots tattoo

Dot tattoos are among the most basic, minimalist tattoo ideas. A single full stop, or dot, represents the conclusion of one phase and the beginning of another.

The ellipses are represented by three dots on a line; this grammatical tattoo signifies that the sentence is not fully complete. This is about an unfinished journey or the principle of persistence.

Angel wing tattoos

Angel wing tattoos are used to remember loved ones who have died.

This is also a protection symbol. It often symbolises purity, and for some people, this tattoo has religious significance.



The Zen circle tattoo represents finding beauty in flaws.

Zen Circle tattoo

The Zen Circle, also known as Enso, is an unfinished circle that represents enlightenment and strength. This tattoo design also symbolises the beauty of flaws.

Word tattoo

Simple words are among the most popular tattoo designs. What better method to explain your meaning than to write it down?

The typeface you select can have a significant impact on the overall look and feel of the written word, and they can be made as small or large as you like.

These tattoos are quite profound, whether you choose a single word or an entire sentence. You may also tattoo words in another language if that language or culture means something to you.

Mandala tattoo

“Mandala” is the Sanskrit word for “circle”, and these intricate tattoo designs are popular among those who value beauty and detail.

A mandala is seen to represent the spiritual journey, beginning at the core and working its way out through the multiple layers. Mandala tattoos are frequently combined with various designs, such as flowers.

Mandalas are something that you can expand on and add to; if you want a full-body tattoo, Mandala designs are a fantastic alternative.



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Proud to be Malaysian

WHILE the bulk of her fame came from her performances in Hong Kong and Hollywood films, there is no denying that Michelle Yeoh has never been shy about reminding people of her Malaysian roots.

The 60-year-old star made headlines last week at the Golden Globes in Los Angeles for being the first Malaysian to take home an award from the star-studded gala, and the second Asian to win for best actress in the show's history, following her critically-praised performance in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*.

Her win means that Yeoh is also a favourite for the best actress award at this year's Academy Awards in March.

During her Globes acceptance speech, she spoke of her "amazing journey and incredible fight to be here", sharing anecdotes about her struggle to be taken seriously as an actor in Hollywood due to her Asian heritage.

"I came here and was told, 'You're a minority,' and I'm like, 'No, that's not possible,'" she recalled.

Congratulations also came from Malaysian fans, and even several politicians including Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. However, her win was not without some controversy.

One Hong Kong lawmaker earned the ire of Malaysian netizens

➤ New Golden Globe winner Michelle Yeoh attempts to put questions of her citizenship to rest



Yeoh is a favourite for this year's Oscar race.
- A24/IMDB.COM

(left) Yeoh posing with congratulatory bouquets following her Golden Globes win.
- INSTAGRAM



when he referred to Yeoh as a "Hong Kong actress" when congratulating her.

Over the weekend, Yeoh herself appeared to try to put the issue to rest, with an Instagram post in which she thanked her supporters.

Yeoh began by expressing her gratitude for the "outpouring of love and congratulations from family friends around the world".

She then thanked "my King and Queen and PM and leaders of Malaysia, my extended family in [Hong Kong and] in China".

"My deepest gratitude," she added. "That's where my journey began as an actor which brought me to here today. [Thank you] for all [your] love and support, valuable lessons."

Yeoh has also been nominated for best actress for the upcoming Screen Actors Guild Awards to be held on Feb 26.

Is Ezra Miller's plea deal enough to save The Flash?

IN an anticlimactic end to the criminal saga that occupied headlines for months in 2022, actor Ezra Miller pleaded guilty last week to unlawful trespassing in a Vermont burglary case.

The 30-year-old *Fantastic Beasts* and *Justice League* star, who is non-binary, took a plea deal in order to avoid jail time. In return, Miller was ordered to pay a US\$500 (RM2,170) fine and face one year of probation. They also agreed to several conditions that included staying sober and undergoing mental health treatment.

Last year, Miller made the news for a string of offenses, including two arrests in Hawaii, a suspected kidnapping case involving a Native American teenager, and the aforementioned burglary charge. Their mounting legal issues raised questions about the actor's upcoming film *The Flash*, which reportedly cost US\$200 million (RM868 million) to make, and which Warner Bros. had been banking on reviving the flagging DCEU brand.

At one point, studio executives had been considering scrapping the film, which was to have been released last year, and recasting the role of The Flash for any future DCEU films. Ultimately, *The Flash* and another DCEU film, *Shazam! Fury of the Gods*, had their release dates moved to 2023, to make way for Dwayne Johnson's *Black Adam*.

Last August, Miller was spotted at the Warner Bros. lot in California attending what



For the moment, Miller has retained the role of The Flash in the superhero film franchise. - WARNER BROS. PICTURES

appeared to be a secret meeting with studio executives. A day later, they released a statement that reassured their commitment to the franchise and apologised for "bringing negative attention to the film" with their behaviour. "I am committed to doing the necessary work to get back to a healthy, safe and productive stage in my life," they said in their statement.

It appears that Miller's efforts have mollified the studio, as they

do not appear to have been affected by the recent recastings since James Gunn and Peter Safran took over the franchise.

Furthermore, Warner Bros. executives are apparently open to retaining Miller as The Flash for future films, according to a recent report by Variety. However, this could all depend upon the performance of the film - and whether or not the studio can recoup its investment - when it opens in theatres worldwide on June 16 this year.

Austin Butler pays tribute to late Lisa Marie

TRIBUTES have continued pouring in for the late Lisa Marie Presley following her unexpected passing last Thursday at age 54.

The daughter of the late Elvis Presley and Priscilla Presley died is hospital after suffering an apparent cardiac arrest at her Los Angeles home. She will be buried at Graceland, the famed home of her late father, in a plot next to her son Benjamin who passed away in 2020.

Fans paid their respects at Graceland's gates following news of her death, writing messages on the stone wall, leaving flowers and sharing memories of Lisa Marie, a singer and songwriter who was one of the last remaining links to her father, whose influence is still felt today.

Her death came as a shock to many, especially since it occurred just days after she and her mother attended the Golden Globes to witness actor Austin Butler win best actor for his portrayal of her father in the biopic *Elvis*.

As one of the last people to spend

time with Lisa Marie, Butler, 31, said Friday that his "heart is completely shattered" for her children and mother after "the tragic and unexpected loss of Lisa Marie."

"I am eternally grateful for the time I was lucky enough to be near her bright light and will forever cherish the quiet moments we shared," the actor said in a statement shared with *People* magazine.

"Her warmth, her love and her authenticity will always be remembered."

In his acceptance speech at the awards show last Tuesday, Butler thanked the Presley family "for opening your hearts, your memories, your home to me."

Lisa Marie herself had nothing but praise for Butler. Just one week ago at a party to celebrate the film, she said: "I'm so overwhelmed by this film and the effect that it's had and what [director] Baz [Luhrmann] has done, Austin's done. I'm so proud, and I know that my father would also be very proud."



Butler (left) and Lisa Marie had grown close following the release of the Elvis biopic. - TWITTER

Desolation in post-fungus America

➤ HBO's *The Last of Us* avoids the live-action video game adaptation curse

BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

BASED on Naughty Dog's *The Last of Us* video game series, HBO's *The Last of Us* is an adaptation of the first game's story, which is focused on the journey of franchise leads Joel and Ellie in a post-apocalyptic America.

Twenty years before the main story begins, America falls due to an outbreak of the real-world cordyceps fungus that mutates to take over the brains of human hosts, effectively turning them into mindless monstrosities.

After the outbreak, remnants of uninfected humans are scattered, with most being contained in 'Quarantine Zones' run by FEDRA, a military organisation that took control after the fall of the government. Survivors in these zones live by working for FEDRA as hard labour.

In Boston's quarantine zone, Joel (Pedro Pascal) lives a double life as a smuggler with his partner Tess (Anna Torv).

Following an attack on the Boston FEDRA Fireflies – freedom fighters that formed in response to FEDRA's totalitarian rule – Fireflies leader Marlene (Merle Dandridge) tasks Joel and Tess with smuggling Ellie (Bella Ramsey) out of the "safe" quarantine zone for unknown reasons.

At the same time, Joel

seeks out his missing brother, Tommy (Gabriel Luna).

Not the usual zombie fare

It needs to be stated that *The Last of Us* is not your run-of-the-mill zombie story. It never was in the games by Naughty Dog, and the same applies to HBO's show.

For one, the Infected are not the generic zombies plaguing every other zombie TV series out right now. They're basically "mushroom-people"; humans with varying degrees of mutations caused by the cordyceps fungus.

Secondly, the show – like the game – is more about the humans, the relationships they share with each other, the grey morality of the world they live in and the bleak choices that dictate their survival.

Tying in with the bleak world, the first season seemingly also sets up its second season, which will adapt the much, much bleaker sequel to the first game, *The Last of Us Part II*.

The rich storytelling is aided by the impeccable cast of actors.

Praises have been sung of Pascal for his previous performances, and it will continue with his portrayal of Joel. Instead of mimicking

Troy Baker's



Joel and Tess (on the right) quickly find out why Ellie has to be smuggled elsewhere. – ALL PIX BY HBO GO

performance in the games, Pascal brings his own vulnerable, but hard as nails take on the character.

Sadly, scorn has been shot at the casting of Ramsey as Ellie. But her portrayal of Ellie is less about looks and more about performance, and boy, does she perform.

On that merit and her ability to bring the character's feisty spirit to a live-action medium, Ramsey was perfect for the role.

The other supporting cast are nothing to scoff at either, particularly Nick Offerman as Bill, who gets an entire episode for himself.



Pascal's Joel is more realistic compared to video game Joel.

Faithful adaptation, with compromises

Fans of the games should not go into HBO's *The Last of Us* expecting a 1:1 live-action remake of the first game.

The show adapts the source material's story and expands on it exponentially.

For fans who will watch the show, I personally know they will love these "additions" that essentially boil down to crucial character development that was not in the first game.

The show's other co-creator and co-writer Craig Mazin (the brains behind HBO's *Chernobyl*) treats the characters and story with the same care Druckmann did for the games, and this wouldn't be possible anywhere else other than

HBO, which is known for its prestige storytelling.

Unfortunately, this heavier focus on storytelling is a double-edged sword.

In the original game and its sequel, gameplay was secondary to the story; Naughty Dog pushed storytelling and character building to the forefront. For the HBO show, evidently, there is no "gameplay". It's all live-action. On paper, that sounds great, but in practice, there is a lot left to be desired.

This is because there is only a handful of action sequences in HBO's *The Last of Us*.

For the games, the action set pieces were in-between storytelling scenes or area explorations. As the show has very little action, there is nothing to break the pacing, and bring that thrill, or sense of danger, to

the characters.

It's an odd creative decision, especially taking into account how few these encounters are in the show, whether its against humans, the Infected or both. This isn't accounting for how the devastating violence from the games is toned down to almost nothing as well.

Selling the idea of a brutal world filled with opportunistic humans who would kill you just for a chance to steal a can of fruits, and deformed mushroom-monsters, becomes hard when the brutality or monstrosities are rarely shown.

Technically sound

On the technical side, the show's cinematography, visual effects and sound design does not fall short, and this is important to note because the screeners that I – and probably other media were given access to – had unfinished CGI and sound effects.

Despite that, the show still looked and sounded amazing, particularly the Infected's unique sound design.

The Infected were also brought to life with a mixture of CGI and prosthetics, and they look aesthetically both terrifying and beautiful. It's a feat how something from a video game is translated so faithfully to live-action television.

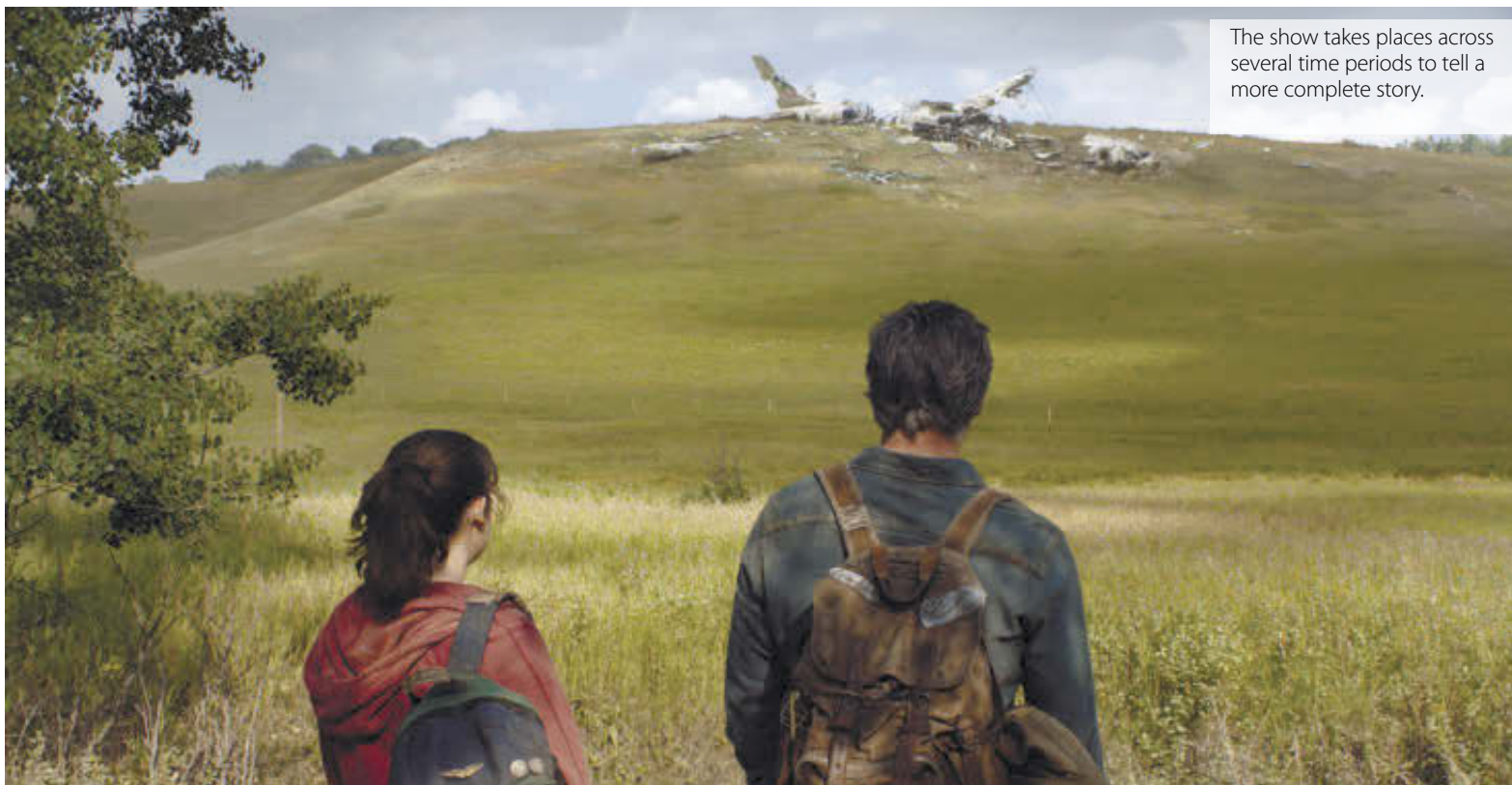
The close-ups and camera work, coupled with how the cinematography plays with the lighting, deserve to be applauded as well, as they bring a surreal sense of intimacy. This can be seen most vividly during the episode with Offerman.

Gustavo Santaolalla who scored the original game (and its sequel) returns to compose the show's score, and he does a great job in "grandios-ing" the original theme (also called *The Last of Us*) from a video game to a television format.

Once the show is out in full, I will definitely be revisiting each and every episode.

The Last of Us will premiere on HBO GO and HBO (Astro Ch 411) today.

Gabriel Luna will play a bigger role as Tommy if the second season is greenlit.



The show takes places across several time periods to tell a more complete story.

BY **SHOBANA MANOKARAN**

DEREK LANDY'S *Skulduggery Pleasant* is a series of dark fantasy novels. The volumes follow the exploits of aspiring investigator Valkyrie Cain and her mentor Skulduggery Pleasant, as well as various friends and allies. The main plot revolves around Valkyrie's effort to stop evil forces from endangering the planet, as well as her internal struggle to resist the darkness within.

The first series, which spans a total of nine books, begins when Valkyrie's uncle dies, leaving her a fortune and his mansion. Valkyrie – who is going by the name Stephanie Edgley at the time – is later rescued by Skulduggery Pleasant, a mystery skeleton mage. She soon discovers that her uncle was killed by the villain Serpine.

Stephanie and Skulduggery attempt to thwart Serpine's plot for world dominance with the help of Ghastly Bespoke, China Sorrows, and Tanith Low. Serpine is seeking the Scepter of the Ancients, a weapon intended to overthrow the despotic gods known as the Faceless Ones.

Serpine once killed Skulduggery

The perfect mix of Darkness

► Mysterious, tense, and thrilling – your hands won't want to put these books down

and his family in a war four hundred years ago. However, Skulduggery inexplicably returns from the dead as a living skeleton.

Stephanie sees her True name in the Book of Names during the fight with Serpine in the Sanctuary, but forgets it, just before the Book of Names was burned.

Skulduggery then offers Stephanie a position as his assistant and apprentice because she is a descendant of the Ancients, and she chooses the name Valkyrie Cain.

In their next adventure, Valkyrie and Skulduggery must deal with Baron Vengeous, who causes dead bodies and vampires to start

appearing all across Ireland. With Baron Vengeous pursuing Lord Vile's lethal armour and nearly everyone out to murder Valkyrie, the brave investigative duo face their most difficult struggle yet.

In the next book, Skulduggery Pleasant suddenly vanishes, having been pulled into a parallel dimension ruled by the Faceless Ones. There's a band of villains bent on destroying the Sanctuary, some very powerful people want Valkyrie dead, and it appears that a sorcerer named Darquesse is planning to kill the world and everyone on it.

War eventually arrives. But this is a conflict between Sanctuaries, not between good and evil, or light and dark. Allies become opponents, friends become foes, and Skulduggery and Valkyrie must band together with the rest of the Dead Men if they are to maintain the balance of power and get to the bottom of a great conspiracy that has been in the works for years.

Valkyrie then faces her own conflict, as her own dark side, the outrageously strong entity known as Darquesse, is about to emerge. And if Valkyrie falters even for a second, Darquesse will rise and the world will burn.

Eventually, the Sanctuaries War is won, but not without cost. Skulduggery Pleasant is forced use any and all means to seek down and stop Darquesse before she converts the globe into a burnt, lifeless cinder, assembling a band of warriors, monster hunters, killers, criminals ... and Valkyrie's own vicious reflection.

While story arc this effectively ended the *Skulduggery Pleasant* book series in 2014, Valkyrie Cain and Skulduggery returned in the *Valkyrie Cain* sequel book series three years later.

As the new series begins, Valkyrie is still recovering from her conflict with her alter-ego Darquesse, which nearly destroyed her and everyone else. When Skulduggery learns of a conspiracy to resurrect a frightening evil, he convinces Valkyrie to join him for only 24 hours in a new



Skulduggery Pleasant's *Playing with Fire*.

mission, and they are joined by a new character named Omen Darkly.

They then are plunged into a series of adventures, including having to rescue the soul of Alice, Valkyrie's younger sister.

By the time the penultimate book in the sequel series, titled *Dead or Alive*, was released last year, the stakes have been raised in a final, desperate search for Alice, the Child of the Faceless Ones, who is destined to bring back humankind's old overlords.

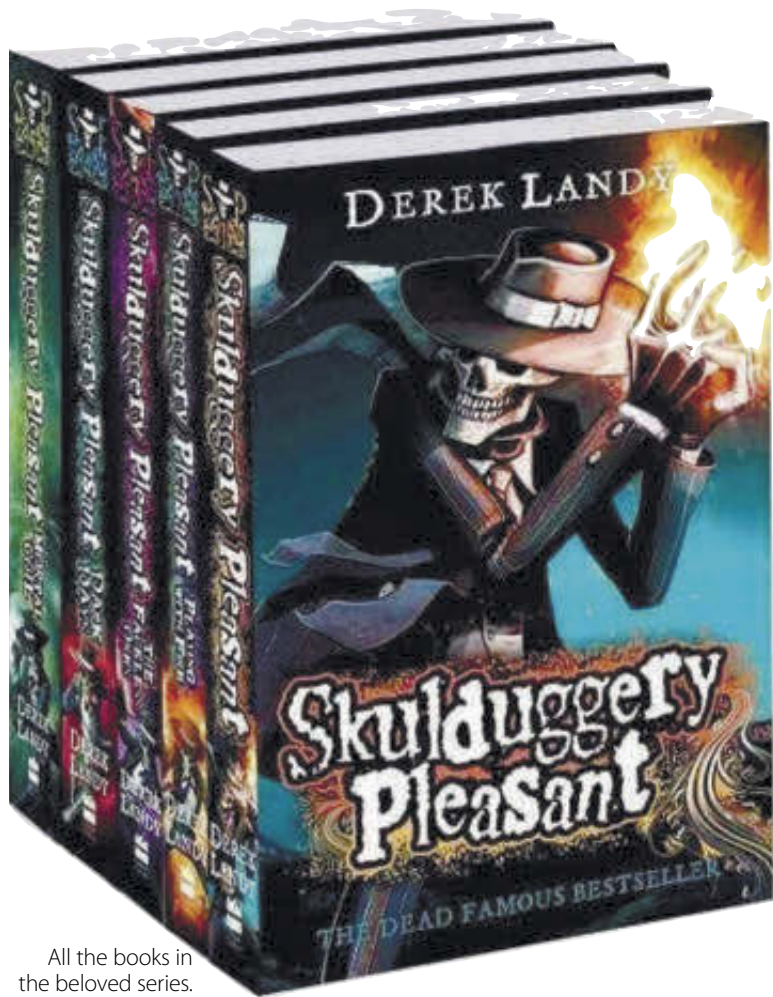
Skulduggery Pleasant and Valkyrie Cain find themselves forced to consider assassinating the villain Damocles Creed. With riots and revolutions looming in the magical city of Roarhaven, Valkyrie must choose between becoming the hero who risks all for a noble cause and the killer who sacrifices her own soul for the fate of humanity.

The *Valkyrie Cain* series finally

ended last year with the aptly titled *Until The End*, which sees the return of the Faceless Ones to our universe.

With the end of the world just days away and no longer able to rely on Valkyrie Cain, Skulduggery must forge allies out of foes if he is to save what's left of the globe. And just when things appear to be getting worse, Omen Darkly is forced to stand up when his brother, the Chosen One, vanishes.

However, this is not really the end of the *Skulduggery Pleasant* saga. In October, series author Landy announced that he was working on a "one-off prequel" officially titled *Skulduggery Pleasant: Hell Breaks Loose*, which will be released this April. The plot focuses on an enraged Skulduggery, 13 years after being killed and resurrected as a living skeleton, and the Dead Menhunting down Serpine and Vengeous, the Generals of Mevolent.



All the books in the beloved series.

AFTER months of anticipation and a sustained publicity blitz, Prince Harry's autobiography *Spare* finally went on sale in his native UK last week, threatening more embarrassment for the royal family.

Some British stores stayed open late for the midnight release of the biggest royal book since Harry's mother Princess Diana collaborated with Andrew Morton for *Diana: Her True Story* in 1992.

The publication was accompanied by four television interviews in the UK and the United States, where Harry now lives with his wife Meghan.

But the contents of the ghost-written memoir, which will be available in 16 languages and as an audiobook, have already been widely leaked after copies mistakenly went on sale early in Spain.

The book contains a claim from Harry that his brother William physically attacked him as they argued about Meghan, according to those who got their hands on one of

Spare a thought for Harry

those copies.

It also gives an account of how he lost his virginity, an admission of teenage drug use and a claim he killed 25 people while serving in Afghanistan with the British military, which earned him a rebuke from hardline Islamists the Taliban.

At a bookshop in London's Victoria train station, workers pulled fresh copies of the book from their packaging at the stroke of midnight.

First in line was Chris Imafidon, chair of an education charity, who said he wanted to hear about Harry's life "from the horse's mouth".

"I'm very keen on hearing what he has to say about what he's been through," he said.

And Sarah Nakana, a 46-year-old surveyor in commercial property, who was also in the queue, said: "I want to hear his story in his words, because, at this point, I feel like the British media are radicalising the

British public against Prince Harry."

Popularity plunge

The royal family, particularly William and their father King Charles III, will fear what other embarrassing and dangerous revelations contained in the book, as the UK press picks over Harry's claims in minute detail.

Queen Consort Camilla also looks set for a rough ride after Harry used an interview with US network CBS to take aim at his stepmother.

Camilla – long vilified as the "other woman" in Charles and Diana's marriage – waged a cunning but "dangerous" campaign to win over the press herself, he said, calling her "the villain".

The book comes on the back of the six-hour Netflix docuseries *Harry & Meghan*, in which the couple again aired their grievances with the royal family and the British media. – ETX Studio



After months of hype, Prince Harry's memoir goes on sale. – AFP

BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

SUCCESSFUL restaurant owners have a variety of qualities. They have a love of cuisine, a spirit of curiosity, a solid work ethic, and the capacity to mentor and lead. While the top restaurateurs may inherently possess these qualities, they may still develop useful habits that will help them operate their establishments more successfully and achieve their objectives.

Ganesan – better known as Ganesh – the owner of Madera restaurant and bar, has an electrical engineering background, but developed an early interest in the fast-moving consumer goods sector.

He began working in the F&B industry at the age of 18 following his SPM exams. While he enjoyed the experience, he realised that he needed to at least obtain a degree before he could invest in his own business.

When we asked what motivated him to become a business owner, Ganesh, now 28, responded: “I don’t like the idea of working for someone else; I wanted to be my own boss.”

He claimed he finds it difficult to concentrate by simply sitting still since he is often distracted.

Thus, he came to the realisation that, rather than simply working for others, it would be better for him to go into business for himself.

He started out as a liquor supplier, a career his family members did not take kindly to, since they believed it would not provide a solid income or secure his future.

However, Ganesh used this job to build contacts, which helped him when he launched Madera.

“Madera was first opened in 2019. Thank goodness my wife was there for me from the start, making it easier for me to handle the tough times.”

Madera had its soft opening prior to the pandemic. Like everyone else, Ganesh believed that the industry was progressively developing, and that it would be a good time to start a business.

However, when the government declared a lockdown, things quickly went downhill.

Ganesh said: “Even though the restaurant wasn’t even [allowed to] open, I was forced to make monthly payments for my staff and the rental. For something that was just not operating, I paid close to half a million [ringgit].”

Ganesh claimed that despite his many challenges, he never once considered giving up. “It wasn’t easy for me to start Madera, and now it’s just impossible to go back. My efforts must not be in vain.”

When Madera eventually held its official grand opening in October 2022, things improved for Ganesh.

Madera began as a largely fine dining concept establishment. However, Ganesh said: “We drew ideas from many eateries that we visit frequently. We would go to other eateries to get inspiration in order to come up with something unique.”

Madera initially had trouble with the fine dining idea since they had trouble drawing clients. He surmised that customers had probably visited a variety of restaurants, thus Madera was probably seen as simply another nice dining establishment, and did not stand out.



Madera is flourishing as a result of its Indian fusion concept. – PIX BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN / THE SUN & MADERA



Madera's best selling finger food, cheezy nachos.

A will to succeed

► Careful planning and outlining of goals while remaining flexible helped this restaurateur weather the pandemic



This space combines wood flooring along with wood tables making it a cosy hangout space.

When Madera organised a Deepavali night with a local theme, things began to shift. Consumers responded well to the event, and as a result, they saw an increase in Indian customers.

“I realised that many individuals enjoyed the notion we had the other day and requested for something similar,” Ganesh explained.

Following customer feedback, the fine dining restaurant was then renamed Madera Restaurant & Bar. The menu was also changed to include more Asian and Indian street food, such as sardine perattal, spicy chicken, and mutton perattal, as well as mutton varuval pizza.

There are also Western meals like Hawaiian chicken and assorted mushroom pizza.

“We still have non-Indian customers strolling in, although about 80% of our customers are all Indians.”

Today, Madera is prospering and is increasing in popularity. Ganesh acknowledged that there are some amenities he wishes he had, such as a pool table where customers can relax while enjoying a drink. “There is yet time; we are working on it.”

Finding qualified employees is one of the key challenges. “I want responsible employees for my restaurant, but sometimes it’s just too difficult to find people who are dedicated to their jobs.”

He also outlined issues such as alcohol and food waste.

“Even when it’s just one [customer], I don’t turn anyone away; I always serve them. Beer only lasts for three days once opened (I’m talking about the huge buckets), so if I didn’t have enough customers – which occurs sometimes, especially on quiet days – I would have to throw away the leftover beer.”

Ganesh wants Madera to be a franchise and wants to ensure that it becomes widely recognised among the people. “I’ll work hard for it even if it’s not easy.”

His advice to anyone thinking about taking a similar road is to have a clear strategy for what they aim to achieve. “If you want to build a restaurant or take another look at where you are in your path as a restaurateur, you must prepare a business plan. A great business plan addresses everything from the cuisine you will serve, to the appearance of your restaurant and how you want your customers to feel. Most significantly, it will serve as a road map to financial success,” he added.

Madera

📍 **Address:** E-33-01, 2, Jalan 19/1, Dataran 3 Dua, 46300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

🕒 **Opening Hours:** Tuesdays-Sundays (5pm-2am)



Mutton varuval pizza.

Red card for Salt Bae

CELEBRITY chef and social media meme Nusret Gokce – better known as “Salt Bae” – managed to turn his singular way of seasoning a steak into global fame and outsized wealth.

The 39-year-old Turkish fitness fanatic first gained renown a decade ago with YouTube videos showing him pouring salt on a cut of meat down his bare arm with an overtly sexual pout.

Last month, his 50 million Instagram followers saw him posing in his trademark dark glasses and slicked back hair with the FIFA World Cup and some Argentinian football stars.

Viral social media images showed the diminutive chef trying to fight his way through a swarm of security personnel towards Argentina’s captain Lionel Messi

on the pitch after the match.

One clip showed Messi seemingly brushing away Salt Bae and attempting to walk away.

A picture subsequently posted on Salt Bae’s Instagram account shows him clasping Messi’s hand and gesturing triumphantly towards the camera.

“You’re the man, Messi,” Salt Bae wrote next to the photograph in Turkish. The picture included the hashtag #saltlife.

That life is being chronicled by smartly-dressed social media assistants that Salt Bae hires to follow him around and record his every step.

How Salt Bae actually got to touch the golden trophy after Argentina’s win over France is currently the focus of a FIFA probe. – ETX Studio



The Turkish celebrity chef is at centre of a FIFA probe after his post match antics went viral. – IG



Mushroom soup with garlic bread.



Mutton varuval with rice.

A study said impelling fossil fuel firms to suck carbon from the air and bury it back in the ground would be a cost-effective decarbonisation strategy. – **AFP**

Seeking compensation

COULD fossil fuel companies be forced to remove planet-heating carbon pollution from the atmosphere? Researchers argue in a new paper that would be a cheaper, fairer solution to the climate crisis.

They suggest, in the research published Thursday, that the principle of extended producer responsibility (EPR) – a policy tool often used to deal with waste – should be extended to the oil, gas and coal industries.

The study said impelling fossil fuel firms to use technologies to suck carbon from the air and bury it back in the ground would be a cost-effective decarbonisation strategy.

“It would also mean that the principal beneficiary of high fossil fuel prices, the fossil fuel industry itself, plays its part in addressing the climate challenge,” said the paper published in the journal *Environmental Research Letters*.

The invasion of Ukraine by key oil

» Experts are debating whether fossil fuel firms should be forced to clean up carbon pollution

and gas producer Russia has sent shockwaves through energy markets, resulting in prices surging and shining a spotlight on bumper fossil fuel industry profits.

The study’s authors, including scientists and experts in Britain and the Netherlands as well as a former ExxonMobil manager, said the paper was a response to the energy crisis and potential lessons for the challenge of getting to net zero emissions.

Geological net zero

“We need to start a conversation on how we redirect this colossal amount of money that currently is simply injected into fossil fuel rents to addressing the climate problem,” co-author Myles Allen, a professor at Oxford University, told journalists.

“We are going to have to stop fossil

fuels from causing global warming before the world stops using fossil fuels.”

To do that, he said, requires “geological net zero” – for every tonne of CO₂ emitted by a fossil fuel, one tonne of the greenhouse gas would need to be sucked out of the atmosphere and permanently put back in the ground.

The authors propose that all extractors and importers of oil, gas and coal be required to dispose of an increasing proportion of the CO₂ generated by their activities and products – up to 100 percent by 2050.

This would require increasing use of technologies to extract carbon dioxide at the emission source or directly from the air and store it permanently in the ground.

While there are projects doing just this already, these are not at anything

like the scale needed. The largest direct air capture facility in the world, run by Swiss-based Climeworks, removes in a year what humanity emits in a few seconds.

Lacking motivation

But the economics would change if the fossil fuel sector were forced to rely on technology, the authors argue.

Hugh Helferty, co-author of the study and a former employee of oil giant ExxonMobil, said the industry is “capable” of removing CO₂.

“What it lacks today is the business case, the motivation for executing it,” he told reporters at a press briefing, calling for regulation, like the rules banning lead in petrol.

Hannah Chalmers, Reader in Sustainable Energy Systems at the University of Edinburgh who was not involved in the research, said that

EPR would be a “gamechanger” in delivering affordable low-carbon energy.

US oil and gas major Occidental last year announced plans to build by 2024 what the company says will be a bigger direct air capture project in the US Permian basin in oil field in Texas, with a one-million-tonne annual carbon dioxide removal capacity.

The Paris Agreement calls for capping global warming below two degrees Celsius, and most countries have signed on for a more ambitious limit of 1.5°C.

To meet that challenge, UN climate experts said in a landmark report last year that even under the most aggressive carbon-cutting scenarios, several billion tonnes of CO₂ will need to be extracted each year from the atmosphere by 2050. – **AFP**

Europe’s largest rare earths deposit discovered in Sweden



The recent discovery in Sweden has wider implications for the global market. – **123RF**

EUROPE’S largest known deposit of rare earth elements – key for the production of electric cars – has been discovered in Sweden’s far north, Swedish mining company LKAB said last week.

LKAB said the newly-explored deposit, found right next to an iron ore mine, contained more than one million tonnes of rare earth oxides.

“This is the largest known deposit of rare earth elements in our part of the world, and it could become a significant building block for producing the critical raw materials that are absolutely crucial to enable the green transition,” LKAB’s chief executive Jan Mostrom said in a statement.

“We face a supply problem. Without mines, there can be no electric vehicles,” Mostrom added.

The full extent of the deposit has not been established yet.

Mostrom said it would likely “take several years to investigate the deposit and the conditions for profitably and sustainably mining it”

Asked when the deposit could

actually be mined, Mostrom said at a press conference it would largely depend on how quickly permits could be secured.

But based on experience it would likely be “10 to 15 years,” he said.

The find was presented as a delegation from the European Commission visited Sweden, which took over the rotating EU presidency at the start of the year.

Swedish Energy Minister Ebba Busch noted that the “need for minerals” is great as the EU is striving to transition to fossil-free production.

The European Union has agreed to phase out new CO₂-emitting vehicles by 2035, effectively banning combustion engine cars.

“Electrification, the EU’s self-sufficiency and independence from Russia and China will begin in the mine,” Busch said.

Politicians must provide industry the conditions needed “to switch to green and fossil-free production,” she added. – **AFP**

Tough test for Nadal Down Under

RAFAEL NADAL opens his Australian Open title defence today feeling vulnerable and against a dangerous young opponent, with women's top seed Iga Swiatek also facing a tricky encounter as she targets a maiden crown.

The first Grand Slam of the year kicks off at Melbourne Park with the men's world No. 1 ranking at stake and a new women's champion set to be crowned after Ashleigh Barty's shock retirement following her win last year.

Spanish great Nadal, 36, has lost six of his past seven matches, including his opening two this year, ahead of a difficult afternoon clash on Rod Laver Arena against Britain's in-form Jack Draper.

"Probably one of the toughest first-round (games) possible, being seeded," said the 22-time Grand Slam winner and top seed. "Young, powerful, growing very, very fast on the ranking, playing well."

The fast-improving Draper, 21, made the semifinals of the Adelaide International this week and said he would not be overawed, despite Nadal being an idol.

"I want to go and compete hard and really play well and I want to go and win the match, of course. So that will be the plan," Draper said.

Nadal surged to the title last year with a thrilling five-set win over Russia's Daniil Medvedev, who faces American Marcos Giron on centre court in an evening match.

His run to a first Australian crown since 2009 came in the absence of nine-time champion Novak Djokovic, who is back this year and heavy favourite after missing the 2022 event when he was deported over his Covid vaccination stance.

The 35-year-old Serbian begins tomorrow against Spain's Roberto Carballes Baena, bidding not just for a 10th title and to equal Nadal's 22

Slams, but to reclaim the top world ranking.

"I like my chances," said Djokovic, who is in form, winning at Adelaide last week after ending 2022 with another ATP Finals triumph.

Top seed Swiatek is clear favourite having dominated women's tennis following the retirement in March last year of Barty.

With retired great Serena Williams and two-time Melbourne winner Naomi Osaka also missing, it is almost certain that there will be a new name on the Daphne Akhurst trophy.

Swiatek begins today against Jule Neimeier, the German world No. 68 who reached the quarterfinals at Wimbledon last year.

"It's not going to be easy," she said of Neimeier.

"But any match in a Grand Slam is always more intense and more stressful than other tournaments. I'll be ready for it." – AFP

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF MYCITACB SDN. BHD. (IN LIQUIDATION) (200701020754 (778770-H))

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that Ng Choon Jin was duly appointed as Liquidator of the abovementioned Company pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur under Companies (Winding-Up) No. WA-28NCC-551-07/2022 on 4th of January 2023.

The Creditors of the abovenamed Company, are required on or before 4:00 p.m. of 15th February 2023, to send their names and addresses and the particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned Liquidator of Suite 8-1, 8th Floor, Oval Damansara, No. 685, Jalan Damansara, Wilayah Persekutuan, 60000 Kuala Lumpur, and, if so required in writing from the Liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.

Ng Choon Jin
Liquidator

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF ASAS SEJATI SDN. BHD. (IN LIQUIDATION) (198801003894 (171251-M))

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that Datuk Ng Seing Liong, P.J.N JP was duly appointed as Liquidator of the abovenamed Company pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur under Companies (Winding-Up) No. WA-28NCC-502-06/2022 dated on 4th January 2023.

The Creditors of the abovenamed Company, are required on or before 4:00 p.m. of 15th January 2023, to send their names and addresses and the particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned Liquidator of 41, Jalan Goh Hock Huat, 41400, Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, and, if so required in writing from the Liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.

Datuk Ng Seing Liong, P.J.N JP
Liquidator

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF JUBILEE MARKETING SDN BHD (201101033643 (961778-H)) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held at No. 21-2, Jalan Puteri 2/3, Bandar Puteri, 47100 Puchong, Selangor Darul Ehsan on the 13th day of January, 2023 the Special Resolution was duly passed:-

JUBILEE MARKETING SDN BHD be wound up voluntarily and that TAN OOI HAN be appointed liquidator for the purpose of winding up the company.

TAN OOI HAN
Kuala Lumpur

Dated this 16th day of January, 2023

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF JUBILEE MARKETING SDN BHD (201101033643 (961778-H))

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of the abovementioned Company which is being wound up voluntarily, are required on or before 13th day of February, 2023 to send their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned, the liquidator of the said Company, and if so required in writing prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof, they will be excluded from the benefits of any distribution made before such debts are proven.

TAN OOI HAN
Liquidator

No. 7, Jalan 3/116D,
Kuchai Entrepreneurs' Park,
Jalan Kuchai Lama,
58200 Kuala Lumpur.

Dated this 16th day of January, 2023

322 Notices

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR (BAHAGIAN SIVIL) SAMAN PEMULA NO: WA-24NCvC-4346-12/2022

Dalam Perkara Mengenai LAM PHEN

DAN

Dalam Perkara Harta Pusaka Lam Phen

DAN

Dalam Perkara Seksyen 108, Akta Keterangan 1950.

DAN

Dalam Perkara mengenai Aturan 7, Aturan 92 kaedah 4, Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah 2012

HOW KIW @ HO KIEW
[NO. K/P: 450715-06-5229] ... PEMOHON

NOTIS PEMAHLUMAN

Kepada:-

WARIS -WARIS LAM PHEN

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa satu Saman Pemula di Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur telah difailkan oleh HO KIW @ HO KIEW (Pemohon) untuk satu perintah Anggapan Kematian terhadap LAM PHEN.

Permohonan anggapan kematian ini dibuat oleh anak saudara kepada Lam Phen tersebut dan mereka tidak mempunyai apa-apa maklumat dan/atau rekod kematian bapa saudaranya yang telah meninggal dunia sekitar tahun 1959-an. Pihak M. Ananth, Suzieta & Co. selaku peguamcara kepada Pemohon mohon jasa baik sesiapa yang berkenaan yang mempunyai sebarang maklumat mengenai LAM PHEN yang berasal dari negara China dan telah datang ke Malaysia sekitar tahun 1930-an dan menetap di Kuala Lipis, Pahang sehingga kematian beliau. Sila hubungi pihak M. Ananth, Suzieta & Co. di talian 09-3122080 dengan kadar segera jika terdapat apa-apa maklumat untuk kami menyelesaikan urusan permohonan berkaitan yang melibatkan LAM PHEN tersebut yang telah difailkan di Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur.

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF ELECTRICAL ENTERPRISE SDN. BHD. (24888-V) (In Members' Voluntary Winding-up)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT pursuant to Section 459(1) of the Companies Act, 2016, the Final Meeting of the Members of the abovenamed Company will be held at Suite 1.00, Level 11B, Akademi Etiqa, 23, Jalan Melaka, 50100 Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday, 7th February 2023 at 11.00 a.m. for the following purposes :-

A G E N D A

1. To receive and consider the Liquidator's Final Account showing how the winding-up has been conducted and to receive any explanations thereof; and
2. To resolve, under Section 518(3) (b) of the Companies Act, 2016, that the books, accounts and documents of the Company shall be destroyed after the expiration of 3 months from the date of the dissolution of the company.

(Signed)
TAN TENG MAN
(Liquidator)

Dated : 16th January 2023

Note : A member entitled to attend and vote at the above meeting may appoint a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf and such proxy need not be a member of the Company. Proxy form will be sent by or may be obtained from the Liquidator. The instrument appointing a proxy must be lodged with the Liquidator at Suite 1.00, Level 11B, Akademi Etiqa, 23, Jalan Melaka, 50100 Kuala Lumpur not less than 48 hours before the time set for holding the meeting.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF SING WAH TRADING SDN. BHD. (197801001848 (38878-T)) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, a Final Meeting of the Members of Sing Wah Trading Sdn. Bhd. will be held at No. 40A, Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh, Perak on Friday, 17 February 2023 at 10.00 a.m. for the following purposes:

A G E N D A

1. To receive and adopt the accounts from the Liquidator showing the manner in which the winding up has been conducted and to hear any explanation that may be given by the Liquidator.
2. To determine pursuant to Section 518(3)(b) of the Companies Act, 2016, the manner in which the books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator thereof shall be disposed of.

CHEN KIAN LEONG
Liquidator

Dated: 16 January 2023
Ipoh

Note : A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him. A proxy may but need not be a member of the Company. The instrument appointing a proxy must be deposited at the registered office of the Company at No. 42A, Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh, Perak not less than 48 hours before the time appointed for holding the meeting.

To the mother, Mu Wei of a child born on 27 November 2008 at 10.30 am at Pusat Maternity Dan Surgeri Pertama, Taman Pertama, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur.

Kindly contact our firm, Messrs Ruby Anthoa & Partners at No. 12, Jalan Anggerik Vanilla 31/100C, Kota Kemuning, 40460 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan at 03-51318106 with regards to a matter filed at Ampang Session's Court. And you are also required to attend Ampang Session's Court (MSS 1) on 7th February 2023 at 9.00 am.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF SECONDREAM ENTERPRISE SDN BHD (201301011691 (1041529-H)) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held at No. 21-2, Jalan Puteri 2/3, Bandar Puteri, 47100 Puchong, Selangor Darul Ehsan on the 13th day of January, 2023 the Special Resolution was duly passed:-

SECONDREAM ENTERPRISE SDN BHD be wound up voluntarily and that Tan Ooi Han be appointed liquidator for the purpose of winding up the company.

LIM PHANG KEE @ LIM SEOW MEI
Kuala Lumpur

Dated this 16th day of January, 2023

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF SECONDREAM ENTERPRISE SDN BHD (201301011691 (1041529-H))

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of the abovementioned Company which is being wound up voluntarily, are required on or before 13th day of February, 2023 to send their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned, the liquidator of the said Company, and if so required in writing prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof, they will be excluded from the benefits of any distribution made before such debts are proven.

TAN OOI HAN
Liquidator

No. 7, Jalan 3/116D,
Kuchai Entrepreneurs' Park,
Jalan Kuchai Lama,
58200 Kuala Lumpur.

Dated this 16th day of January, 2023

DALAM MAHKAMAH SESYEN DI KUALA LUMPUR DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN, MALAYSIA GUAMAN SIVIL NO. WA-A52NCvC-846-11/2022

ANTARA

1. LAW THAI HIN (No. K/P: 640224-10-5457)
2. LU MI LIN (No. K/P: 630109-10-7140) ... PLAINTIFF-PLAINTIFF

DAN

1. KALTHUM BINTI A AZIZ (No. K/P: 850226-11-5902) berniaga sebagai HSA Auto Services (No. Pendaftaran Perniagaan: 201903032482 (002932361-T))
2. ADIL SHABIBR (No. Passport Pakistan: AE5136573) ... DEFENDAN-DEFENDAN

NOTIS PENYAMPAIAN GANTI BENTUK IKLAN

Kepada :

Kalthum Binti A Aziz berniaga sebagai HSA Auto Services (No. Pendaftaran Perniagaan: 201903032482 (002932361-T)) No. 37, Jalan 3/33A, Kepong Baru, Kepong, 52100 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

Dan

Adil Shabibr No. 37, Jalan 3/33A, Kepong Baru, Kepong, 52100 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ Saman telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Sesyen Kuala Lumpur dalam Guaman No. WA-A52NCvC-846-11/2022 oleh Law Thai Hin dan Lu Mi Lin dan Mahkamah memerintahkan Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan ("Kertas Kausa tersebut") disampaikan kepada kamu dengan menampalkan sesalanan Kertas Kausa tersebut bersama Perintah untuk penyampaian ganti di Papan Kenyataan di Mahkamah Sesyen Kuala Lumpur dan pada satu bahagian yang jelas kelihatan di alamat perniagaan Defendan Pertama dan alamat terakhir Defendan Kedua. Kedua-duanya beralamakan di No. 37, Jalan 3/33A, Kepong Baru, Kepong, 52100 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur dan mengiklankan sekali Notis dalam satu suratkhabar harian keluaran "The Sun". Penampalan dan Pengiklanan tersebut hendaklah dianggap penyampaian sempurna dan cukup ke atas kamu 7 hari selepas tarikh akhir penampalan dan pengiklanan tersebut. Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membatalkan undakan ini, kamu mestilah menyebabkan suatu kehadiran dalam masa 14 hari dari tarikh iklan ini disiarkan atau hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu, akan didengar di hadapan Puan Lalitha Zuraida binti Harron @ Harun di Mahkamah Sesyen Kuala Lumpur secara atas talian (E-Review) pada 30 Januari 2023, 9.00 pagi. Jika kamu ingkar berbuat demikian, Perintah atau Penghakiman Ingkar boleh dicatatkan terhadap kamu sebagaimana yang difikirkan adil dan sesuai oleh Mahkamah.

Kertas Kausa tersebut boleh diperiksa oleh kamu atas permohonan di Mahkamah.

Bertarikh pada 4 haribulan Januari, 2023.

t.t

Tetuan Tee & Teoh
Peguamcara Plaintiff-Plaintiff

NOTIS PENYAMPAIAN GANTI BENTUK IKLAN ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Tee & Teoh, Peguamcara bagi pihak Plaintiff-Plaintiff yang beralamat di No. 20-2, Jalan P.JU 5/20D, The Strand, Kota Damansara, 47610 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. (Ruj: TT/L/0472/22/T/SLWS/A01/LTH/rp & rl) Tel.: 03-6142 2238 Faks:- 03-6151 2122

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUALA LUMPUR DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR NO. PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERALAKSANAAN : WA-76J-1731-09/2022

ANTARA

LALITHA A/P NAGAMUTHU (sebagai pemilik tunggal firma guaman Lalitha & Co)PEMIUTANG PENGHAKIMAN

DAN

SELLAM A/P PUSHPANATHAN (NRIC NO : 670702-08-5460)PENGHUTANG PENGHAKIMAN

NOTIS

Dalam perkara Saman Penghutang Penghakiman bertarikh 26.9.2022 dan melalui Perintah Mahkamah bagi penyampaian ganti bertarikh 19.12.2022 telah dikeluarkan

Kepada :

SELLAM A/P PUSHPANATHAN 42, Jalan Bukit Permai 2/3 Taman Bukit Permai 2 65100 Cheras Kuala Lumpur

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa satu Saman penghutang Penghakiman telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu dalam Mahkamah Majistret ini oleh Lalitha a/p Nagamuthu dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Saman Penghutang Penghakiman termeterai bertarikh 26.9.2022 diserahkan kepada kamu melalui penyampaian ganti dengan menampalkan sesalanan Saman Penghutang Penghakiman berserta dengan sesalanan Perintah termeterai Untuk Penyampaian Ganti di alamat terakhir kamu yang diketahui iaitu di 42, Jalan Bukit Permai 2/3, Taman Bukit Permai 2, 65100 Cheras, Kuala Lumpur DAN di Papan Notis Mahkamah Majistret Kuala Lumpur DAN dengan mengiklankan sekali satu Notis di dalam satu terbitan akhbar harian tempatan "Sun Daily" dan bahawa penampalan dan pengiklanan hendaklah dianggap penyampaian yang sempurna dan mencukupi akan Saman Penghutang penghakiman tersebut tujuh (7) hari selepas dari tarikh terakhir akan penampalan atau pengiklanan tersebut.

Ambil Perhatian bahawa jika kamu tidak hadir ke Mahkamah sedemikian maka suatu perintah untuk menangkap kamu boleh dikeluarkan.

Bertarikh pada 19 Disember 2022.

T.T.

Penolong Pendaftar
Mahkamah Majistret
Kuala Lumpur

NOTIS ini difailkan oleh Pemuitang Penghakiman yang mempunyai alamat penyampaian di LALITHA & CO, di No. 19B, 2nd Floor, Jalan 1B, Taman Jab, 48020 Rawang, Selangor No Tel : 03603444202 Telefon Bimbit : 0176737797 / 0126149396 Email : lalithanco@yahoo.com Ruj: LC/lt/06-2-10-Sellam Pushpanathan

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF PERCETAKAN SING WAH SDN. BHD. [197801003535 (40520-T)] (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, a Final Meeting of the Members of Percetakan Sing Wah Sdn. Bhd. will be held at No. 40A, Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh, Perak on Friday, 17 February 2023 at 10.30 a.m. for the following purposes:

A G E N D A

1. To receive and adopt the accounts from the Liquidator showing the manner in which the winding up has been conducted and to hear any explanation that may be given by the Liquidator.
2. To determine pursuant to Section 518(3)(b) of the Companies Act, 2016, the manner in which the books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator thereof shall be disposed of.

CHEN KIAN LEONG
Liquidator

Dated: 16 January 2023
Ipoh

Note : A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him. A proxy may but need not be a member of the Company. The instrument appointing a proxy must be deposited at the registered office of the Company at No. 42A, Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh, Perak not less than 48 hours before the time appointed for holding the meeting.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF SIERRA LIBERTY SDN BHD Company Number: 199601015373 (387723-K) (In member's voluntary winding-up) NOTICE OF RESOLUTION

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of Sierra Liberty Sdn Bhd duly convened and held on 09/01/2023, the following resolutions was passed to approve a members' voluntary winding up of the Company: -

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS:

(i) That the Company be wound up voluntarily by way of a members' voluntary winding up pursuant to Section 439(1)(b) of the Companies Act 2016;

(ii) That the Liquidator may exercise any powers in accordance with Section 456 and Eleventh Schedule of the Companies Act 2016; and

(iii) That in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company, the Liquidator be hereby authorised to distribute to the members the whole or any part of the assets of the Company.

ORDINARY RESOLUTION:

Resolved that in accordance with Section 445(1) of the Companies Act 2016, Mr. Loo Hin Lam of No. 17, Etitis Dahina, Valencia, 47000 Sungai Buloh, Selangor Darul Ehsan, be hereby appointed as the Liquidator for the purposes of such winding up.

LOO HIN LAM
Liquidator

Petaling Jaya
Dated this: 16/01/2023

322 Notices

NOTICE OF REDUCTION OF SHARE CAPITAL IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF LANDAS ASPIRASI SDN. BHD. [201001035602 (919526-A)]

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 117(1) of the Companies Act 2016 that the members of LANDAS ASPIRASI SDN BHD have passed a Special Resolution on 6th January 2023 to reduce the issued and paid-up share capital from RM100,000.00 comprised of 100,000 ordinary shares to RM10,000.00 comprised of 10,000 ordinary shares.

Mohd Iwan Jeffry bin Abdullah
Director
Date: 13 January 2023

NOTICE

Kindly be informed that
MEGAHARTA REAL ESTATE SDN BHD
E(1) 1215/2
(Bangi Branch)
Has ceased operation on 31 December 2022
Any enquiries please direct to
MEGAHARTA REAL ESTATE SDN BHD
(HQ)
No. 87, Jalan SS 2/55, 47300 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Tel: 03-7877 7878
www.megaharta.com

NOTICE OF REDUCTION OF SHARE CAPITAL IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF LANDAS DRILLING SDN. BHD. [201601012931 (1182224-D)]

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 117(1) of the Companies Act 2016 that the members of LANDAS DRILLING SDN BHD have passed a Special Resolution on 6th January 2023 to reduce the issued and paid-up share capital from RM500,000.00 comprised of 500,000 ordinary shares to RM150,000.00 comprised of 150,000 ordinary shares.

Mohd Iwan Jeffry bin Abdullah
Director
Date: 13 January 2023

PicklesAuctions

18 Bank Repossessed cars, and bikes for sales by auction, all at attractive reserve prices. All are invited, come join our **PUBLIC AUCTION** on Wednesday, 18th January 2023 at 11.00am - 12.00pm. Viewing and inspection on Tuesday, 17th January 2023 from 9.30am - 5.30pm.

Download Pickles Auctions app to view all auction listings or visit www.pickles.my

Item	Reg No	Make Model	Price
1	AKJ9968	2014 VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT	TBA
2	MCX9743	2013 PROTON EXORA	11000
3	BPJ6420	2017 NISSAN ALMERA	25000
4	WC3203M	2016 PROTON PERSONA	16000
5	VB1772	2015 BMW 3	TBA
6	WXM6318	2012 PROTON PREVE	10500
7	VBD3310	2017 MERCEDES-BENZ E200	189000
8	WA43	2018 MERCEDES-BENZ GLC	215000
9	VBL9360	2017 MERCEDES-BENZ E	193000
10	QBC4224	2015 BMW 3	TBA
11	VAF9339	2016 NISSAN X-TRAIL	47000
12	WTA2512	2009 PROTON SAGA	3000
13	VB4778	2017 BMW 530i	TBA
14	WVP9439	2011 NISSAN TEANA	12000
15	VT3557	2017 NISSAN ALMERA	25000
16	VBC1884	2017 KTM 250 DUKE	5500
17	VGR2861	2021 HONDA VARIO	4000
18	PPX5430	2021 VMOTO VM110	2500

AC MILAN'S Serie A title defence suffered another blow yesterday as despite coming back from two goals down to draw 2-2 at Lecce the champions sit nine points behind rampant league leaders Napoli.

Rafeal Leao and Davide Calabria struck to pull Milan back from a dismal first half display which left them trailing to a Theo Hernandez own-goal and Federico Baschirotto's well-placed header.

Stefano Pioli's side showed fight to level against promoted Lecce, who beat Atalanta and Lazio in their last two matches at the Stadio Via Del Mare.

But the draw, which moved second-placed Milan a point above Juventus who were ripped to pieces by Napoli on Saturday, concludes a poor week which has severely compromised their bid to retain the *Scudetto*.

It comes after throwing away a two-goal lead in the final minutes against Roma the previous weekend and then being dumped out of the Italian Cup at the last 16 stage by 10-man Torino midweek.

"We'll believe in it right until the end. Now we

AC blowing hot and cold

Milan trail leaders Napoli by nine despite fightback at Lecce

need to look at what we did badly and what we did better," said midfielder Ismael Bennacer when asked if Milan still had hopes of holding on to their title.

"We're a good team, when we have these problems we're capable of resolving them on the pitch."

Milan, who travel to Saudi Arabia for the

Italian Super Cup against Inter Milan (Thurs 3am Malaysian time), now only lead their local rivals by a point after Lautaro Martinez shot them to a 1-0 win over struggling Verona.

"We got everything wrong that we could have possibly got wrong in the first half. We made silly mistakes and from that point on it was an uphill struggle," Pioli told DAZN.



Lecce keeper Wladimiro Falcone in action with AC Milan's Olivier Giroud (left). – REUTERSPIX

And after Calabria headed Milan level in the 70th minute they rarely threatened to snatch the three points, with Fikayo Tomori almost handing Lecce the win late when he nearly diverted Antonino Gallo's cross into his own goal.

"We had the Italian champions in front of us... if you don't get after them and press them you'll end up in trouble," said Lecce coach Marco Baroni.

"We're a newly promoted team, we want to create a space for ourselves... with these results we're getting closer to doing that."

Lecce are 12th and a point behind Monza, who saw off bottom team Cremonese 3-2 to continue a remarkable first-ever season in Italy's top flight.

Monza were in the third tier when former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi bought the club in 2018.

Now they sit 11th after their seventh win under 38-year-old Raffaele Palladino – who took charge in mid-September – thanks to Patrick Ciurria's eighth-minute opener and goals in each half from Gianluca Caprari. – AFP

SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5582/2023 DATE: 15/01/2023 (SUN)

STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD. (8420 - D)
FORMERLY KNOWN AS SPORTS TOTO MALAYSIA SDN. BHD.

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	9308
2nd Prize	2403
3rd Prize	8995

Special	Consolation
6757 2289	6686 5621
9198 7843	7608 6496
5022 4400	7631 8789
3810 0610	3065 5717
7950 7185	7146 7681

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 4,146,449.28**

9308 2403	2403 9308
9308 8995	8995 9308
2403 8995	8995 2403




















Jackpot 2 **RM 537,345.33**

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize	9308	+	
2nd Prize	2403	+	
3rd Prize	8995	+	RABBIT
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number		

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

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		or	7 5 5 1 6	or	7 5 5 1 6
			5 5 1 6	or	5 1 6
			5 1 6	or	1 6

TOTO GAMES GIVES YOU MORE WINNING CHANCES!

SUPREME	8	22	36	43	49	58
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Jackpot **RM 26,306,975.98**

POWER	8	17	25	28	44	45
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Jackpot **RM 7,303,585.11**

STAR	2	5	7	23	25	26	+	29
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Jackpot 1 **RM 1,505,439.62**

Jackpot 2 **RM 180,377.58**

Visit www.sportstoto.com.my for e-Results and more info.



Sociedad win Basque derby

REAL SOCIEDAD strengthened their hold on third place with a convincing 3-1 Basque derby victory over Athletic Bilbao yesterday.

Elsewhere Yangel Herrera's late lob earned Girona a 2-1 win over Sevilla, piling more misery on Jorge Sampaoli's side, 17th.

Imanol Alguacil's Real Sociedad, aiming to qualify for the Champions League for the first time since 2014, moved six points behind leaders Barcelona.

Alexander Sorloth, Takefusa Kubo and Mikel Oyarzabal's goals helped the hosts beat their rivals at the Reale Arena.

Oihan Sancet struck for Athletic, who had Yeray Alvarez sent off in the second half for a foul on the superb Kubo.

"(I feel) joy, goals are important for people that play up front," Oyarzabal told Movistar.

"The most important thing was everything else – winning, the way we did it, we were better in almost all the game."

Earlier Sevilla fell to defeat at Girona and could drop into the relegation zone depending on other results.

Tanguy Nianzou sent Sevilla ahead in the 13th minute but it was the French defender's mistake which allowed Herrera to pounce in the final stages.

Cristhian Stuani levelled at the start of the second half, with Girona, 11th, on top and they deserved their win with Sevilla only mustering two shots on target.

Sevilla forward Rafa Mir fired over in the final stages but with the game heading for a draw, Herrera punished him with his 88th minute winner.

Nianzou, who had already got away with one ball lost in a dangerous area, was robbed on the edge of his own box and Herrera did the rest with an exquisite finish.

"Individual errors (cost us), we do a lot of things well but like that, it's very hard," Sevilla midfielder Ivan Rakitic told Movistar.

"We have to understand that we can't mess up, this can't happen."

"Everyone individually has to find their pride, this cannot happen again."

Rayo Vallecano won 1-0 at Real Valladolid, while Osasuna beat Mallorca by the same score at El Sadar. – AFP

Burnley maintain promotion surge

BURNLEY maintained their march towards promotion to the Premier League as the Championship leaders won 1-0 against Coventry, while Cardiff boss Mark Hudson was sacked after a 1-1 draw with Wigan yesterday.

Vincent Kompany's Burnley are on course for an immediate return to the top flight after last season's relegation.

They sit five points clear of second-placed Sheffield United after Jordan Beyer headed the winner in the 82nd minute at Turf Moor.

Hudson's time as Cardiff manager ended following his struggling team's lacklustre display against rock bottom Wigan.

Cardiff are just above the relegation zone after Will Keane's stoppage-time

equaliser cancelled out an 82nd minute opener from Callum O'Dowda.

Hudson was visibly downcast afterwards and Cardiff later announced Dean Whitehead would take over as interim boss.

"Cardiff City Football Club has relieved Mark Hudson of his duties as first-team manager," a club statement read.

"The board of directors would like to place on record its thanks to Mark for all of his work as a player, coach and manager whilst with the Bluebirds. We wish Mark all the very best of luck for the future."

Sheffield United kept pace with Burnley after a 3-1 win against Stoke while Watford moved into third place after a 2-0 victory over lowly Blackpool at Vicarage Road. – AFP

WINNING NUMBERS

PAYMENT GUARANTEED IN FULL damacai

Draw Date: 15/01/23 (Sun) Draw No: 5529/23 Venue: PERAK TURF CLUB

1+3D SUPER 1+3D

1st Prize	6239
2nd Prize	8720
3rd Prize	4655

Starters	Consolation
3144 0683	4797 5836
0827 1762	4207 3533
2223 5615	9810 4786
4862 8043	6477 8423
9240 9840	7225 6206

1+3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM10,370,862.40**

6239 + 8720	8720 + 6239
6239 + 4655	4655 + 6239
8720 + 4655	4655 + 8720

Jackpot 2 **RM433,279.50**

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
146 239 +	RAT	RM2,056,002.90

2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
038 720 +	SNAKE	RM931,666.60

3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
144 655 +	DOG	RM2,115,972.10

Starters	Consolation
543 144 130 683	374 797 035 836
360 827 181 762	764 207 593 533
272 223 245 615	239 810 114 786
474 862 098 043	716 477 718 423
559 240 709 840	847 225 136 206

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
239	720	655

3D Jackpot

Jackpot **RM751,249.40**

239 + 720 + 655	720 + 655 + 239
239 + 655 + 720	655 + 239 + 720
720 + 239 + 655	655 + 720 + 239

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

HSSB 1+3D JP2 RM114K & 3+3D Bonus 1 RM405K won on 14/1/23



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RESULTS & STANDINGS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE: Brentford 2 (Toney 39-pen, Jensen 75) Bournemouth 0, Brighton 3 (March 47, 53, Welbeck 81) Liverpool 0, Everton 1 (Onana 39) Southampton 2 (Ward-Prowse 46, 78), Manchester United 2 (Fernandes 78, Rashford 82) Manchester City 1 (Grealish 60), Nottingham Forest 2 (Johnson 56, 85) Leicester 0, Wolves 1 (Podence 48) West Ham 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	17	14	2	1	40	14	44
Man City	18	12	3	3	46	18	39
Man Utd	18	12	2	4	29	21	38
Newcastle	18	9	8	1	32	11	35
Tottenham	18	10	3	5	37	25	33
Fulham	19	9	4	6	32	28	31
Brighton	18	9	3	6	35	25	30
Brentford	19	7	8	4	32	28	29
Liverpool	18	8	4	6	34	25	28
Chelsea	18	7	4	7	21	21	25
Aston Villa	19	7	4	8	22	27	25
Crystal Palace	17	6	4	7	17	25	22
Nottm Forest	19	5	5	9	15	34	20
Leeds	18	4	5	9	26	33	17
Leicester	19	5	2	12	26	33	17
Wolves	19	4	5	10	12	27	17
Bournemouth	19	4	4	11	18	41	16
West Ham	19	4	3	12	15	25	15
Everton	19	3	6	10	15	26	15
Southampton	19	4	3	12	17	34	15

CHAMPIONSHIP: Bristol City 4 Birmingham 2, Burnley 1 Coventry 0, Cardiff 1 Wigan 1, Hull 1 Huddersfield 1, Luton 2 West Brom 3, Middlesbrough 1 Millwall 0, Preston 0 Norwich 4, Reading 2 QPR 2, Rotherham 4 Blackburn 0, Sheffield Utd 3 Stoke 1, Sunderland 1 Swansea 3, Watford 2 Blackpool 0.

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burnley	27	17	8	2	53	25	59
Sheffield Utd	27	16	6	5	47	24	54
Watford	27	12	7	8	33	28	43
Mid'boro	27	12	6	9	42	33	42
Blackburn	27	14	0	13	30	34	42

LA LIGA: Real Valladolid 0 Rayo Vallecano 1 (Palazon 65), Girona 2 (Stuani 46, Herrera 88) Sevilla 1 (Nianzou 13), Osasuna 1 (Oroz 47) Mallorca 0, Real Sociedad 3 (Sorloth 25, Kubo 37, Oyarzabal 62-pen) Athletic Bilbao 1 (Sancet 40).

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	16	13	2	1	35	6	41
Real Madrid	16	12	2	2	36	16	38
Real Sociedad	17	11	2	4	26	18	35
Villarreal	17	8	4	5	20	13	28
Real Betis	16	8	4	4	19	13	28

SERIE A: Inter Milan 1 (Martinez 3) Verona 0, Cremonese 2 (Ciofani 67, Dessers 83) Monza 3 (Ciurria 8, Caprari 19, 55), Lecce 2 (Hernandez 3-og, Baschirotto 23) AC Milan 2 (Leao 58, Calabria 70).

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Napoli	18	15	2	1	44	14	47
AC Milan	18	11	5	2	35	20	38
Juventus	18	11	4	3	27	12	37
Inter Milan	18	12	1	5	38	24	37
Lazio	17	9	4	4	29	15	31

FRENCH LIGUE 1: Lens 1 Auxerre 0, Marseille 3 Lorient 1, Lyon 1 Strasbourg 2.

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	18	15	2	1	48	13	47
Lens	19	13	5	1	32	13	44
Marseille	19	13	3	3	39	16	42
Rennes	18	10	4	4	35	20	34
Monaco	18	10	4	4	35	25	34

■ CARL MARKHAM

UNDER-PRESSURE Everton manager Frank Lampard denies his side have forgotten how to win but admits the damaging 2-1 defeat to fellow strugglers Southampton could have been avoided.

His side got themselves in front courtesy of Amadou Onana's first goal for the club since joining in the summer with a header from a corner shortly before half-time.

However, James Ward-Prowse equalised two minutes into the second half and then delivered the decisive blow from a 78th-minute set-piece to move within two of David Beckham's Premier League freekick record of 18.

Everton's 15 points from 19 League games is the joint-lowest in their history – taking into account games adjusted to three points for a win – and the last time they had this number they were relegated in 1951.

It has left Lampard under huge pressure after just one win in their last 11 league matches.

"Obviously really disappointed with the result. It's a game that could have gone for us or against us," said Lampard, who apologised for arriving for

Toffees in free fall

... but Lampard denies Everton have 'forgotten how to win'

his press conference almost 90 minutes after the final whistle.

"It was a tense game, one that we lost. Frustrated to lose, frustrated for everyone.

"I don't know about forgetting how to win. Sean Dyche (the former Burnley manager) said that about us last season and we went and beat Man United.

"It's clear in football that sometimes if you aren't winning games it can become contagious in terms of confidence and we know we are in that spot.

"When you go 1-0 up it is crucial you dig in and don't make a mistake to give a goal away early in the second half.

"Both of their goals could have been stopped from our point of view. It feels like a casual statement – 'forgetting how to win' – but I understand the point – we are in a period of

games where we are not winning."

Threats made to senior Everton officials during the week meant the entire board were ordered to stay away from the game but Lampard did not want to use that distraction as an excuse.

"It's a difficult time. I don't have thoughts as such in that I don't want to comment on it on the back of the game, I'm more concerned about the game and that we didn't win it," he added.

"That's my first port of call – that's not me making light of anything, I understand the situation we are in here, I hear the noise but I have to keep working.

"The one thing I suggest, which is really important for me, is everyone involved here in every side is for Everton. We want to be successful, we are passionate about what we do.

"We need to just work in our own way to do the best and my own way is to wake up tomorrow morning and go: 'OK, let's go again.'" – The Independent



'Leicester in relegation battle'

■ JONATHAN VEAL

LEICESTER boss Brendan Rodgers says he cannot pretend his side are not in a relegation battle after they were beaten 2-0 at Nottingham Forest.

The Foxes went down to two second half goals from Brennan Johnson as they lost for a fourth Premier League game in a row following the resumption of the season.

They are just two points above the drop zone in a congested bottom six and Rodgers knows they have a fight on their hands to retain their top-flight status.

Asked whether they were in a relegation battle, the Northern Irishman replied: "Absolutely, let's not pretend we're not.

"This is a long season. I have to be honest, if you look at our form and where we are then of course it is a worry.

"But there is still so many games to go and if we can get back the players that gives an extra dimension to our team then we can push on again. But at the moment with what we've got is a real challenge.

"It is just the same as what we were earlier in the season. I think before a ball was kicked I told everyone it was going to be a tough season.

"The Premier League is very competitive, you see Southampton the other night beating Manchester City (in the Carabao Cup), it is very competitive.

"But you want to be in it and you have to fight to be in it and that's what we are going to do."

In contrast, Forest are beginning to look up after an impressive win that moves them four points clear of trouble.

The result and performance provided a marked contrast from the reverse fixture in October that saw Forest lose 4-0 and boss Steve Cooper claim it was the nadir of his managerial career.

"I showed a video to the boys before the game of our supporters at 4-0 down at the King Power. I said it's important that we give a bit back on this particular fixture this week... it was something we owed back to the supporters." – The Independent

Bournemouth boss rages at penalty decision

GARY O'NEIL branded the penalty given to Brentford in Bournemouth's 2-0 defeat "scandalous".

Ivan Toney was pulled to the floor by Marcos Senesi shortly before half-time, giving referee Jarrod Gillett what looked a simple penalty decision.

However, Cherries boss O'Neil insisted VAR should have spotted Toney actually held on to the defender's arm until they reached the box.

But the decision stood and Toney, still to miss a penalty for Brentford, duly took his unblemished record to 21 successful spot-kicks from 21 attempts.

Mathias Jensen added the second with a cool finish from the edge of the area to

condemn Bournemouth to a sixth consecutive defeat, all since O'Neil was made permanent manager.

O'Neil said: "Ivan Toney has managed to lock Marcos' arm under him and pulled him down.

"In this day and age with VAR it's scandalous. I've spoken to the referee and told him I expect an apology.

"When I watched it I thought, 'They're definitely overturning that'. I thought it was a terrible decision.

"We had the same referee in the playoff semifinal here two years ago and I thought he was equally as bad this evening as he was then. I thought it was a strange game to

give him.

"But he should have been helped by VAR. Live I can see how it was given, but how we can't then come to the right decision is scandalous."

Bournemouth are now just a point above the relegation zone, but O'Neil added: "I'd rather talk about the players and performance, they worked their socks off to the end. I didn't think there was much in the game against a good side.

"What I saw today is they are still fully committed. I thought they were ready to go this evening and they competed with Brentford. I thought they were unfortunate to come away with nothing." – The Independent

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3417 4136

5503 9291

6363 4369

0843 6229

9532 4372

6294 0284

9772 3939

7555 6614

jackpot

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6310 + 5339

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

Obviously really disappointed with the result. It's a game that could have gone for us or against us. It was a tense game, one that we lost. Frustrated to lose, frustrated for everyone."

Everton manager Frank Lampard

Staying grounded

Ten Hag says United

fans can dream of title but not players

■ RICHARD JOLLY & JAMIE BRAIDWOOD

ERIK TEN HAG has told Manchester United supporters they can dream of the title after their Manchester derby victory – but insisted his side cannot.

United beat Manchester City 2-1 with goals from Bruno Fernandes and Marcus Rashford and are now only a point behind Pep Guardiola's defending champions.

Ten Hag's side have won their last nine games in all competitions, gathering momentum that could take them to a first Premier League crown since Sir Alex Ferguson retired.

"The fans may dream but we're not," Ten Hag said. "We have to keep our feet on the ground and then face that our game has a lot to improve."

The Dutchman was delighted with the

improvement in his side's mentality, which was demonstrated in their comeback.

He added: "We often talk about teams, developing, tactics progressing but one of the main jobs for a manager and a coaching staff is to work on the mentality of the team and this mentality has a lot of elements.

"One of them is resilience. The determination of this team is progressing a lot in dealing with setbacks, dealing with suffering in painful moments and keeping going after setbacks like a goal against us.

"I think we have also players on the pitch experienced and know that one moment games can change and I think we are much better to deal with such situations than a couple of months ago."

Ten Hag praised Rashford for

showing he could suffer and playing through the pain barrier.

The forward struggled with a hip problem in the first half but carried on and scored in a ninth successive match at Old Trafford, leading his manager to say he is unstoppable.

"I think he learned already," he said. "He knows that in football you have to suffer and sacrifice and have painful moments, especially a player like he is.

"He is unstoppable and opponents will go tough against him but he keeps going and he got rewarded and the team got a reward."

Meanwhile City defender Manuel Akanji said the decision to award United their controversial equaliser was a "joke".

When asked

about the controversial equaliser after the game, Akanji said he believed Rashford had intervened in the play as he had been prevented from making a tackle.

Akanji also claimed that Premier League teams have been briefed by referees that such situations would be given as offside.

"To be honest the first goal is a joke, that is allowed like this," the Swiss centreback told the BBC. "I saw Rashford, he was clearly offside, so I played him offside.

"He runs until the last second and he stops when the ball is in front of him and he's right in front of (goalkeeper Ederson), ready to score the goal, because Bruno Fernandes is shouting (at) him.

"I understand he doesn't touch the ball but he's running for 30m and until the last second. For me it is clearly offside.

"The referee doesn't even look at the situation. It got explained at the start of the year that this

would be clearly offside."

City boss Pep Guardiola said Rashford's run clearly impacted the reactions of both Akanji and Ederson.

"The decision is the referee's, the VAR, (but) our defenders make a line (for Rashford)," he said.

"If we know it's Fernandes we don't make the line, we follow the action, and after the action the interference for Eddy.

"For Eddy he is going to shoot, that's the point, but the rule is the rule and the interpretation belongs to the referee.

"This is the decision in this stadium with the referee and the VAR. After conceding a goal we cannot concede the next one, this is the most important detail we have to improve in the future."

– The Independent

Bruno Fernandes (front) celebrates scoring Manchester United's first goal during the English Premier League match at Old Trafford on Saturday.
– REUTERSPIX

Klopp admits Brighton defeat worst of Liverpool reign

JURGEN KLOPP said he "can't remember a worse game" in his career as he apologised and took full responsibility for Liverpool's thumping 3-0 Premier League defeat to Brighton.

The Reds were outclassed at the Amex Stadium and suffered an emphatic loss following Solly March's double and a late volley from substitute Danny Welbeck.

Klopp's stunned visitors had no response on another disappointing day in their stuttering season, leaving the rampant Seagulls to leapfrog them into seventh position.

"There was no moment in the game where we could get a little lift and go from there and the outcome is horrible to watch," said the Liverpool manager.

"Everybody with a Brighton shirt on or a Brighton heart enjoyed the game a lot and I don't think anybody with a Liverpool heart enjoyed it for a second. I have nothing good to say about this game.

"It's my job to make the right line-up, to set

up the right tactics, a lot of things.

"I'm not sure if it's because the game is still only a few minutes ago but I can't remember a worse game – and I mean all, not only Liverpool. And that's my responsibility. That makes it a really low point.

"It's fully my responsibility because I had an idea with a different formation and that didn't work out – sorry."

Liverpool were extremely fortunate to be level at the end of an opening period in which they were pinned back and failed to register a shot on target.

March broke their resistance immediately after the restart and then swiftly doubled the lead before former Manchester United player Welbeck rubbed salt into the wounds.

Following a 3-1 defeat at Brentford on Jan 2, the 2020 champions have now lost their opening two League fixtures of a calendar year for the first time since 1993 and already dropped a staggering 26 points this term.

"Congratulations to Brighton, they played an outstanding game," said Klopp.

"I really thought in moments we maybe made it a little bit too easy for them but in general they played outstanding and we did not.

"The problems are the same as last week (a 2-2 FA Cup draw with Wolves). We don't win the key battles on the pitch, the key challenges and we give the ball away too easy.

"It's difficult to organise protection for losing balls you should not lose. This is not easy."

Liverpool icon Jamie Carragher slammed the Reds for their display and suggested his former side could have lost by more than the three goals they conceded at the Amex.

Carragher felt that Liverpool could have lost by more had Alisson not been in goal. The Brazilian kept Brighton at bay in the first half, with the Seagulls going close on several occasions.

The former defender tweeted: "Liverpool are as bad defensively as anyone in the Premier

League right now. Fortunately they have the best keeper which means they aren't further down the table."

Captain Jordan Henderson said their performance yesterday was the team's worst during Klopp's eight years in charge.

"Probably (the worst). I can't remember another one. A really tough day," the midfielder said.

Asked what went wrong, Henderson added: "Everything. Everything went wrong from the start to the end. Brighton were better than us in all departments.

"It's a real low point as a team. We have to stay together. It's a tough moment but we need to get together, stay together and try and change things quickly. We have to try and learn and show a reaction.

"There wasn't one thing. It was numerous things and it hasn't been right for a little while now. We have to try to put it right" – The Independent/Express Newspapers