



Spare the rod and spoil the child?

Good parenting requires striking delicate balance between guiding, nurturing and disciplining children: Academics

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'Laws must keep pace with tech'

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says Malaysia needs to pursue legislative reforms to address challenges posed by rapid technological advancements and foster greater opportunities for international collaboration.

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Anwar, accompanied by (from left) Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz and Digital Minister Gobind Singh Deo on their way to attend a media briefing at the Annual WEF 2025 Summit in Davos, Switzerland yesterday. —BERNAMAPIC



Move to boost local onion output lauded

Sustained efforts, collaboration between farmers, researchers and policymakers needed to achieve self-sufficiency, says lecturer.

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Important for public to know civil rights

Experts call for clearer procedural guidelines and public education on existing legislations to prevent potential abuse of power.

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Be attentive to people's issues, Pahang Sultan reminds state govt

KUANTAN: The Sultan of Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah has reminded the state government to remain attentive to the people's issues, emphasising that every policy and decision made must be rooted in the interests of the community and environmental sustainability.

He said people are the backbone of a state's

strength, and it is a collective responsibility to ensure that everyone, regardless of their social status, can live in peace, prosperity and harmony.

"Listen to their voices, be alert to their problems and needs. I call on all departments and agencies under the state government to take proactive steps to facilitate bureaucratic

processes for the people.

"An efficient and people-friendly approach will help ease their burdens and demonstrate our commitment to delivering the best services," the Sultan said during the presentation of the instrument of extension for the appointment of state executive council members at Istana Abdulaziz on Tuesday. - Bernama

China keen to work with M'sia for regional development

GEORGE TOWN: China is ready to collaborate with Malaysia to promote East Asian cooperation and regional economic integration during Malaysia's 2025 Asean chairmanship, said its Consul-General in Penang Zhou Youbin.

He added that China is also willing to work with Malaysia to maintain the trend of regional development cooperation as well as contribute to regional and global peace and stability.

"The Chinese Consulate-General in Penang will continue to deepen cooperation with the governments and (people of) all walks of life of the four states in the consular district, and promote steady development of local cooperation between China and Malaysia.

"We will also make unremitting efforts to build a China-Malaysia community with a shared future," he said during the Consulate-General Chinese New Year dinner held on Tuesday.

Zhou said Penang, Kedah, Perlis and Perak have witnessed continuous economic and trade cooperation with China, which has bolstered local economic growth.

Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow affirmed the state's commitment to regional priorities under Asean 2025.

"We bear significant responsibility in reshaping Asean and emphasising its principle of centrality. As a state, we are dedicated to fostering collaborations and cross-cultural exchanges as well as advancing economic initiatives."

Chow added that Penang continues to play a pivotal role in fostering strong bilateral relations between Malaysia and China, serving as a key hub for economic, cultural and tourism exchanges.

"Over the past 10 years, the state has attracted RM13.2 billion (6.8% of Penang's total foreign direct investments) in approved manufacturing investments from China, with a compound annual growth rate of 50.5%.

"From January to June last year, approved manufacturing investments from China amounted to RM411.8 million. To date, Penang hosts 53 Chinese companies - 46 in manufacturing, five in global business services and two in logistics."

China is Malaysia's largest trading partner and a major source of foreign direct investment. China's investment in Malaysia surged to RM10.8 billion from January to September 2024, making it the second-largest foreign investor in Malaysia. - Bernama

'Legislation must keep pace with tech advancements'

➤ Reforms needed to foster opportunities for collaboration to face challenges posed by global developments: PM

DAVOS (SWITZERLAND): Malaysia cannot rely on outdated legislation to address the challenges posed by rapid technological advancements and must pursue reforms to foster greater opportunities for international collaboration, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

During a media briefing titled "Unlocking Asean's Digital Future: Driving Inclusive Growth and Global Competitiveness" at the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual summit 2025, he underscored the government's commitment to ensuring that legislation keeps pace with global developments.

"We take all the latest pieces of legislation from all over the world and adjust (them) accordingly and push through.

"Fortunately, we have a two-thirds majority in Parliament. That helps immensely because people will see the array of things that we need to do to give meaning to effective collaboration, clarity of policies and fast-paced implementation," said Anwar, who is also finance minister.

The 30-minute session was moderated by WEF head of media development and planning Dai Di.

Other speakers included Bain & Company worldwide managing partner Christophe De Vusser and WEF Asia-Pacific head of regional agenda Joo-Ok Lee.

On unlocking Asean's full potential, Anwar said all member leaders must continue to craft the correct policies, especially regarding rapidly advancing new technology.

"As for the collaboration, as far as I'm concerned, it must (begin with) humility to acknowledge that these new technologies are challenging. We don't have all the answers, and therefore, the collaboration must begin with the key players, including companies and the states."

He said the task is not to impose prescriptions but to gather all the necessary inputs to determine what needs to be done, including fostering an ecosystem encompassing airports, ports, infrastructure, centres of excellence, research and

partnerships with universities.

He added that collaboration among Asean leaders must extend to the private sector, as technological progress demands that governments and ruling elites recognise their limitations and adopt a cooperative approach to succeed.

Anwar said the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the country's healthcare system would not only boost efficiency but also help reduce wastage.

He said his top priorities since assuming office and taking on the finance portfolio have consistently been education and healthcare, Bernama reported.

"I think it is grossly unjust, in my political philosophy, to deny the vast majority (of people) (access to) the best health facilities, and of course, the basic infrastructure in hospitals, and AI plays a critical role in it.

Anwar is on a three-day working visit to attend the summit. This marks his first participation in the WEF since assuming office in 2022.

Themed "Collaboration for the Intelligent Age", the high-level summit, which runs until tomorrow, will deal with the role and contribution of emerging technologies and the latest innovations in addressing global economic issues, among other topics.

No pressing need to adopt nuclear power, says Anwar

DAVOS (SWITZERLAND): Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Malaysia is not in "pressing need" to adopt nuclear power as it still sees much potential in solar power and the Asean Power Grid.

However, he said he does not dismiss the possibility of using nuclear energy, especially with the country having massive data centres in the pipeline.

"But notwithstanding, just to make sure,

because energy consumption of data centres is huge, and in every meeting people have been suggesting they want to put up small modular reactors (SMR), and I don't want to frustrate them because that is part of the overall artificial intelligence requirements, the nuclear option is there.

"I know Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia have embarked on this and I'm trying to get us to work together to show that we have a better

budgeting position," he told a media briefing at the World Economic Forum 2025.

SMR, which are capable of producing around 300 megawatts of electricity, could be integrated into existing building infrastructure or connected to the national grid with a relatively smaller footprint and cost.

It is said SMR could offer a potential alternative for data centres that need reliable and scalable power. - Bernama

Prime minister congratulates Trump

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has congratulated President Donald Trump on his inauguration as the 47th President of the United States (US).

Anwar said he is looking forward to working with Trump to further strengthen the robust, complementary and forward-looking ties between Malaysia and the US.

As Malaysia assumes the Asean 2025 chairmanship, he also extended an invitation to Trump to visit Malaysia.

"President Trump brings a unique approach to addressing domestic and global challenges, as evidenced by his pivotal role in facilitating the Gaza ceasefire even before his inauguration.

"Malaysia stands ready to collaborate on shared priorities as the Trump administration strives to herald a new golden age for America," Anwar said via a post on his Facebook page. - Bernama



TOWARDS BETTER SAFETY ...
Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil, accompanied by Deputy IGP Datuk Seri Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay, visiting a stall at an exhibition held in conjunction with the Asia International Security Summit & Expo 2025 at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIC**

'New hospital shift system an option, not replacement'

PUTRAJAYA: The staggered working hours system for medical officers is not a replacement but an extra option to the on-call and shift systems, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, adding that it is a new system that is at the proposal stage.

Dzulkefly said the system was designed by doctors for doctors in the field in selected hospital departments.

The system was developed after taking into account input from stakeholders at different levels, following the need to improve the existing work schedule system, Bernama reported.

"The selection of any work schedule arrangement is subject to the capability and availability of the respective hospital department and administration."

Previously, the Hartal Doktor Kontrak movement group called for the immediate withdrawal of the system, claiming it had caused frustration among medical officers as the Health Ministry had announced it without prior consultation with key stakeholders.

The Malaysian Medical Association also expressed concerns about the system, which it believed would exacerbate the existing shortage of staff, burden doctors with excessive duties and impact the quality of patient care.

Dzulkefly clarified that the implementation of such a pilot project could only begin once approved by the health minister, with the consent of the Public Service Department.

He said the purpose of the system is to reduce fatigue, improve the quality of life and welfare of medical officers, and enhance the quality of service.

He also said the system aims to reduce the on-call working hours from a maximum of 33 hours to 18 for each shift and ensure no medical officer works continuously for more than 24 hours.

Bullying ruled out in death of pathologist

PUTRAJAYA: The death of pathologist Dr Tay Tien Yaa in Lahad Datu, Sabah in August last year did not involve the issue of bullying or being burdened with an excessive workload, according to an independent inquiry into her death.

Independent inquiry panel chairman Tan Sri Borhan Dolah said claims of Tay being pressured, oppressed or bullied by her department head were baseless.

"If we look at the work results, they were a good team, always in contact and helping each other in their respective work affairs."

Postings on the death of Tay, who purportedly committed suicide due to bullying, was widely spread on social media last year. - Bernama

Heavy traffic expected during Chinese New Year festive period

KUALA LUMPUR: Traffic flow on major highways is expected to increase significantly, reaching 2.6 million vehicles per day heading towards the east coast, north and south from the Klang Valley during the Chinese New Year period.

Malaysian Highway Authority director-general Datuk Szalzi Harun

said about 2.2 million vehicles are expected on the North-South Highway, 198,000 on the KL-Karak Highway, 82,000 on the East Coast Expressway Phase 1, 48,000 on the East Coast Expressway Phase 2 and 120,000 on the West Coast Expressway.

"Vehicle movement out of the

(federal) capital for the long holiday is expected to increase from Jan 24 to 28 while traffic flow back to the capital is anticipated to rise from Feb 1 to 2."

The authority has instructed highway concessionaires not to carry out lane closures except for emergency cases and works from

today until Feb 3.

Smart lanes will be activated at 25 congestion hotspots on the North-South Highway, traffic management at toll plazas and intersections will be improved, tidal lanes will be activated, and extra toll payment counters will be added. - Bernama

Efforts to promote onion cultivation lauded

BY HARITH KAMAL
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➤ Move could reduce reliance on imports and boost food security, but farmers need training on techniques and systems required: Expert

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia's push to boost onion cultivation marks a step towards reducing dependency on imports and strengthening food security, but achieving self-sufficiency will require greater effort, said Universiti Putra Malaysia Department of Agribusiness and Bioresource Economics lecturer Prof Dr Norsida Man.

She said Malaysia previously relied on imported onions due to its affordability and lack of local cultivation.

"Imported onions were cheaper, so Malaysia did not grow it. Farmers are also more comfortable cultivating other crops.

"The global shortage of onions and export bans by major suppliers

underscored Malaysia's vulnerability to imports, which accounted for 687,000 metric tonnes worth RM1.58 billion in 2022. Last year, when India banned exports due to domestic shortage, Malaysia imported from South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, which was more expensive."

She said efforts by the government and the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (Mardi) in supporting local onion farming are commendable but there is still

much that needs to be addressed.

"Mardi introduced new shallot varieties, namely BAW-1, BAW-2 and BAW-3. The varieties are adapted to local soil and climate conditions, and offer hope for sustainable production."

In 2023, Mardi director-general Datuk Dr Mohamad Zabawi Abdul Ghani said the new varieties were the result of research involving genetic material from local and international sources.

"BAW-1 is vivid red, 25mm to 35mm in size, and thrives in

mineral and BRIS (beach ridges interspersed with swales) soils. BAW-2 is pink, 28mm to 32mm, and suitable for mineral and peat soils. BAW-3, also pink but smaller at 18mm to 25mm, can grow well in BRIS, mineral and peat soils."

He said the varieties could be harvested within 75 days and produce high-quality, disease-free yields.

Norsida praised the developments and acknowledged their potential to reduce the country's reliance on imports, but cautioned that the future of onion farming in Malaysia is uncertain.

"Malaysian farmers are unfamiliar with the crop as they are more accustomed to spring onions.

"It is important to educate and support our farmers, especially smallholders, to ensure the success of Mardi onion farming initiatives. Farmers need training to adopt new practices, techniques and systems required for onion cultivation."

She also said it could take a long time to learn the right techniques and smaller farmers must be encouraged to adjust and establish themselves before they can achieve significant production.

Norsida said the integration of modern technology, infrastructure and farming facilities could accelerate progress and with the right support, onion farming could become a viable source of income.

She added that onion farming must be part of a broader strategy to secure food security and reduce reliance on imports.

She said as Malaysia advances its onion cultivation initiatives, the need for sustained efforts and collaboration between farmers, researchers and policymakers to overcome challenges and secure the nation's food supply is critical.

On Jan 11, Agriculture and Food Security Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu said local onion cultivation could save the country millions in import costs.



Norsida acknowledged the potential to reduce Malaysia's reliance on imports, but cautioned that the future of onion farming locally remains uncertain. - ADIB RAWI YAHYA / THE SUN

Toll waivers during holidays do not reduce congestion, says DPM

PUTRAJAYA: Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the provision of toll waivers during festive seasons does not address congestion on highways.

He said it was important for road users to change their behaviour and plan their trips for the festive season.

"The amount of reimbursement in the form of compensation by the government to the toll

concessionaires is more than RM35 million per day."

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Rural and Regional Development minister, was responding after being asked to comment on the government decision to end the provision of toll waivers in conjunction with festive seasons.

He said the decision was made by the Cabinet last year following the

recommendation of Works Minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi.

He was speaking after the Rural Business Challenge 2.0 competition winners ceremony on Tuesday.

"What toll users should do (is) schedule their return."

He said the behaviour of road users must change from simply receiving discounts or being given toll waivers.

Alexander said: "There will be no toll waivers as 2024 was the last year for the provision of toll-free travel during festive seasons."

"The government has streamlined subsidies for a more targeted approach to benefit Malaysians, with details to be announced soon."

During the ceremony, Ahmad Zahid said rural entrepreneurs need to be brave to grow and lead

the market.

He urged rural entrepreneurs to master digital platforms, improve business skills and knowledge as well as develop networks and strategic collaborations.

At the event, 45 rural youth entrepreneurs, who had received business grant prizes of RM15 million during the competition, were presented awards. - Bernama



Kedah initiative to plant over two million trees by 2030

KUALA NERANG: Kedah will plant 2.2 million trees of various species from this year until 2030, as part of a state initiative to restore environmental sustainability and preserve its greenery for future generations.

Comptroller of the Kedah Royal Household and the "Two Million Trees Project" implementation committee chairman Datuk Bakar Din said the initiative aims to plant one tree for every resident in the state.

"This idea was inspired by the Sultan of Kedah, who emphasised the need to preserve the environment. Many forest areas have been encroached upon, with trees destroyed, cut down or stolen.

"Even mangrove forests, where local authorities have planted trees, have not reached satisfactory levels," he said at the launch of a tree planting project at Compartment 42 of the Pedu Forest Reserve on Tuesday.

Sultan of Kedah Al-Aminul Karim Sultan Sallehuddin Sultan Badlishah graced and officiated at the event, which was also attended by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor and joined by over 300 participants.

"We will focus on areas like the Pedu Forest Reserve, planting both native and rare species. The project will also focus on urban areas and mangrove forests, such as those in Sungai Merbok and Sungai Kedah to combat erosion,"

Bakar added.

Kedah Forestry Department director Muhammad Abdullah said 250 rare fruit-bearing trees from 17 species would also be planted.

"These species, including *tampoi*, *sentul*, *asam gelugur*, *kembang semangkuk*, cashew, jackfruit, durian, rambutan and mangosteen, were selected for their rapid growth, fruit-bearing ability and role in supporting wildlife and seed dispersal," he said. - Bernama

Tricky task of scaling slippery slope on parenting

➤ Delicate balance needed as excessive control may stifle development while too little could lead to behavioural challenges later in life, says senior lecturer

BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
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PETALING JAYA: With bullying cases in schools, ragging incidents in tertiary institutions, the *mat rempit* menace, *basikal lajak* and other forms of indiscipline being highlighted in the media so often, is the old adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child" outdated, or even more relevant to parenting today?

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Faculty of Educational Sciences and Technology senior lecturer Dr Lee Shih Hui said striking a balance between guiding, nurturing and disciplining children can often feel overwhelming, especially when deciding how much control to exert.

She said parenting requires a delicate balance, as too much control may stifle a child's development, while too little could lead to behavioural challenges as they grow into their teens and adulthood.

"Instead of exerting excessive control, parents should focus on fostering boundaries. During early childhood, parents should act as boundary-setters for acceptable behaviour and societal expectations," she said, adding that as gatekeepers, parents are expected to guide children through verbal and behavioural reinforcement while demonstrating positive examples themselves.

She said using praise and rewards can encourage children's efforts to acquire positive skills, and as they grow, parents can guide them to establish their boundaries and equip them to confidently navigate societal expectations.

Lee emphasised that authoritative parenting, which is a balance of warmth and control, is the most effective style for raising



Siti Aisyah advocates discipline strategies that include non-violent communication and positive reinforcement through discussions to shape children's behaviour. - MASRY CHE ANI / THE SUN

well-rounded children and helps prevent them from having anti-social attitudes.

"This approach creates a psychologically safe environment in which children feel supported while exploring their independence. Unlike 'authoritarian' parenting, which is characterised by high control and low warmth, authoritative parenting fosters confidence and security.

"Authoritarian parenting often leads to children hesitating to step out of their comfort zones, as their decisions are frequently doubted or opposed," she said, adding that traditionally, many Eastern cultures leaned towards authoritarian parenting, in which opposing parental decisions are considered disrespectful.

"Without clear guidance, children may struggle with self-discipline, poor social skills, and emotional weaknesses, which may encourage anti-social behaviour. Hence, effective control should always be followed with clear explanations."

She said traditionally, Eastern parenting styles emphasised strict authority, but societal transformations have encouraged more open and equal parent-child relationships.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia psychology

lecturer and deputy dean Prof Dr Siti Aisyah Panatik said beyond the family, communities play a significant role in shaping children's behaviour, values and overall development.

"Daily interactions within the community help mould a child's social skills, emotional resilience and world view. Supportive communities act as role models, instilling respect, empathy and responsibility in children while providing moral assistance to parents and caregivers," she said.

She said while public awareness campaigns and research findings are gradually influencing legal and societal changes, and promoting more child-centred approaches to discipline, she advocates healthier discipline strategies, including non-violent communication, positive reinforcement and clear boundary-setting through discussions.

"These methods foster emotional well-being, mutual respect and problem solving skills, strengthening relationships between parents, other caregivers and children.

"Being a good parent doesn't mean being perfect, it means being present, supportive and willing to grow alongside your child," she said, adding that parenting is challenging but profoundly rewarding.

RM93 million for hillside maintenance works

KUALA LUMPUR: The Works Ministry has received an allocation of RM93.374 million this year to carry out slope management works across Peninsular Malaysia.

Its minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi said RM59.885 million has been set aside for new slope repair works at 50 locations.

"In addition, RM29.233 million has been allocated for ongoing projects at 29 locations, while RM4.255 million will be for upgrading early landslide warning systems, collecting data and updating slope hazard risk maps," he said at the launch of the 2025 Work Directive Handover Ceremony at the ministry on Tuesday.

He added that the ministry has received over 500 official requests for slope repair, and 50 locations have been identified and approved.

"Although the number of approved applications is not large, this is part of phase one implementation. We will monitor progress and proceed with phase two as necessary," he said.

At the event, the work directives for slope maintenance projects on federal roads in Peninsular Malaysia was officially handed to Pintas Utama Sdn Bhd.

Alexander said the company has been appointed as a long-term contractor to assist the government in carrying out slope repair works in accordance with the ministry's requirements and approvals.

"The slope engineering branch of the Public Works Department has been entrusted as the project director to plan, manage and oversee slope maintenance operations along federal roads in Peninsular Malaysia," he said.

He added that the RM200.285 million allocated to the ministry in 2024 was successfully utilised for slope repairs at 166 locations at a cost of RM154.345 million.

"Preventive works were implemented at 20 slope locations with an expenditure of RM24.199 million, while RM21.74 million was used to upgrade early landslide warning systems, collect data, update slope hazard risk maps and perform routine slope maintenance," he added.

He said the ministry remains committed to improving infrastructure safety and facilities for the public. - Bernama

Lowest water consumption recorded in Penang last year

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation recorded the state's lowest per capita domestic water consumption in 24 years last year.

Its CEO Datuk K. Pathmanathan said Penang residents used 261 litres per capita per day (Lpcd) of treated water in 2024 compared with 284 Lpcd in 2023, representing a decrease of 23

Lpcd, or 8.1%.

"The 261 Lpcd is the lowest for Penang since 2000, which was at 255 Lpcd.

"But the Penang population in 2000 was 1.3 million compared with 1.8 million in 2024.

"As a result, overall domestic water consumption increased by 39.8%, from about 123 million cubic meters in 2000 to 172 million

cubic meters last year.

"The figure of 261 Lpcd represents a positive step forward in domestic water conservation.

From 2014 to 2023, domestic water consumption in Penang ranged between 276 Lpcd and 308 Lpcd," he said in a statement.

He expressed gratitude to Penang residents for conserving water last year, which helped

reduce pressure on the water supply infrastructure.

Pathmanathan said three main factors contributing to the reduction in domestic water consumption could be the implementation of new domestic water rates since Feb 1, increased public awareness and its 10% Reduction Campaign 2024. - Bernama

Public urged to be aware of their civil rights

➤ Experts call for clearer guidelines, education to prevent potential abuse of power

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
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PETALING JAYA: The public must be aware of their civil rights to protect themselves against potential abuse of power by law enforcement officers, said Malaysia Cyber Consumer Association president Sirajuddin Jalil.

"If one's rights are violated or if certain irresponsible officers misuse the law for personal gain, the public has the right to act by lodging a police report" he said, adding that the police force is fundamentally an integrity-driven body though the risk of its members abusing their authority cannot be ignored.

Sirajuddin was commenting on Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain's recent statement that the police have the authority to inspect a person's mobile phone if they suspect a crime has been committed.

Razarudin said this is based on provisions under Section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 which allows access to computerised data, including mobile phones.

He added that Section 116B of the Criminal

Procedure Code (CPC) also permits access to mobile phones which are considered computerised data.

Sirajuddin said police must strengthen internal integrity measures and implement audits to rebuild public trust.

"Proper documentation and accountability are crucial to preventing arbitrary phone inspections without reasonable cause as such actions breach privacy and fundamental human rights.

"The key question is how far police can go when checking mobile phone content. Everyone has personal content on their devices and such investigations can cause panic and fear among the public, which is why it becomes critical for the public to know their civil rights to protect themselves."

He added that anyone could potentially become a crime suspect due to the advanced techniques used by cybercriminals such as "spoofing" which involves altering email addresses, sender names, phone numbers or websites to deceive individuals into believing they are engaging with a trusted source.

Sirajuddin stressed that the scope of police authority to inspect mobile phones should be communicated more clearly and constructively, and this should include public education on existing laws as many are unaware of their existence or relevance.

Lawyer and former Selangor Bar chairman Kokila Vaani Vadiveloo said under certain conditions, the police can inspect a mobile phone without a warrant "where there is reasonable suspicion of criminal activity".

She explained that while Section 23(1) of the CPC provides the legal basis for searches and seizures without a warrant, clearer guidelines are needed to avoid ambiguity.

"The law's broad language can lead to misinterpretation and potentially abusive actions by law enforcement officials. For instance, the definition of 'reasonable suspicion' is not always clear and there may be inconsistencies in how it is applied across different cases," she said.

Kokila suggested that clearer procedural guidelines for situations involving mobile phone inspections along with specific legal protections for digital privacy could help ensure the law is used fairly and consistently.

"While the concept of reasonable suspicion allows for certain searches or seizures, it can also conflict with an individual's right to privacy as implied under Article 5 of the Federal Constitution which relates to the right to personal liberty."

She stressed that to avoid infringing on personal privacy without proper and lawful justification, enforcement officers must ensure "reasonable suspicion" is not abused or arbitrarily applied based on a mere hunch or notion that a crime may have been committed.

"If a person is uncertain about the legality of the police's request to inspect their mobile phone, they can seek clarification or request the presence of a lawyer. Individuals must understand their rights, including the right to challenge unlawful searches or seizures in court," she said.



Sirajuddin said the scope of police authority to inspect mobile phones should be communicated more clearly and constructively.
— SYED AZAHAR SYED OSMAN/THE SUN

FashionValet founders charged with misappropriation

KUALA LUMPUR: The founder of FashionValet Sdn Bhd Datin Vivy Sofinas Yusof and her husband Datuk Fadzaru bin Shah Anuar have been charged with misappropriating RM8 million from Khazanah Nasional Berhad (Khazanah) and Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB), belonging to the company.

Vivy Sofinas, 37, and Fadzaru bin Shah, 36, pleaded not guilty after the alternative charges were read before Sessions Court Judge Rosli Ahmad.

"We plead not guilty and request for a trial," the couple said.

They are accused of jointly and dishonestly misappropriating RM8 million of FashionValet's investment funds from Khazanah and PNB at Public Bank Berhad, Bukit Damansara Branch, 36-40 Medan Setia 2, Plaza Damansara, Bukit Damansara on Aug 21, 2018.

The couple are charged under Section 403 of the Penal Code, read together with Section 34 of the same Code, which provides for imprisonment of between six months and five years, along with caning and a fine upon conviction.

Addressing the issue of bail, deputy public prosecutor Hareesh Prakash Somiah requested the court to apply the same sum as in previous proceedings, RM100,000 for each accused, with one surety.

"I also request a mention date to allow the prosecution to submit the remaining case documents to the defence," he added.

The couple's lawyer Ashok Athimulan raised no objections, after which the court confirmed the same bail conditions and scheduled the next mention for March 10.

Earlier, Hareesh informed the court that during the previous proceedings, the prosecution had notified the court of its intention to file an alternative charge under Section 403 of the Penal Code for misappropriation of funds.

"The charges have been filed, and therefore, we request to proceed and for the charges to be read to both accused," he said.

On Dec 5 last year, Vivy Sofinas and Fadzaru bin Shah pleaded not guilty to charges of criminal breach of trust involving RM8 million of Khazanah and PNB investment funds.

They were jointly accused, in their capacity as FashionValet directors, of misappropriating Khazanah and PNB's entrusted funds by transferring RM8 million from the company account to 30 Maple Sdn Bhd without the board of directors' approval. — Bernama

MACC to continue probe on Daim, wife

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) is continuing its investigation involving the late Tun Daim Zainuddin and his wife Toh Puan Naimah Abdul Khalid, including tracing their overseas assets.

MACC Chief Commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said there were indicators suggesting the existence of foreign assets that need to be identified in relation to the case.

"Through cooperation with several foreign parties, the indicators show there are assets abroad that need to be traced.

"If there are any offences related to our investigation, we will file applications to recover the relevant funds," he said at a press conference on Tuesday.

Azam added that the investigation is complex as it involves foreign jurisdictions with differing legal frameworks and authorities.

In February 2023, the MACC opened several investigation papers based on information from the Pandora Papers, leading to probes involving the Finance Ministry during Daim's tenure as finance minister.

Subsequently, the MACC issued a notice to Daim on June 7, 2023, requiring him to declare all his assets within and outside the country in writing and under oath within 30 days of the notice.

However, Daim requested extensions five times, the latest being on Nov 14, 2023, to complete the declaration. — Bernama

Couple held over unreported infant death

PORT DICKSON: Police have arrested a couple on suspicion of concealing the birth and death of a baby girl at a house in Teluk Kemang on Tuesday.

Port Dickson district police chief Supt Maslan Udin said they received an emergency call from Port Dickson Hospital at 11.13am regarding a local teenager who had given birth, but the infant's whereabouts were unknown.

"We discovered the infant hidden in a bag at the house. The fully developed baby girl was already dead. There were signs of injuries on her chest, suspected to be caused by a sharp object," he said in a statement yesterday.

Subsequently, a team from the Special Investigation Branch of the Negeri Sembilan police contingent and the criminal investigation division arrested an 18-year-old girl and a 21-year-old local man at separate locations.

He added that the suspects had no criminal history, and the motive appeared to stem from fear and anxiety about their families.

The case is being investigated under Section 302 of the Penal Code. — Bernama

Convenience store splashed with paint

KUALA LUMPUR: Police have confirmed that a convenience store at a public university involved in the misuse of the halal logo related to a ham-and-cheese product was splashed with red paint.

Brickfields district police chief ACP Ku Mashariman Ku Mahmood said in a statement that a police report about the incident was lodged by an auxiliary police personnel from the university at 8am on Tuesday after being informed by the store worker about red paint on the store's front door.

He added that the incident was believed to have occurred at 12.50am and that the case is being investigated under Section 427 of the Penal Code for mischief.

The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia had issued a media statement on Jan 13 confirming that the ham-and-cheese product sold at the store did not have Malaysian Halal Certification and that the company producing the product was not *halal* certified. — Bernama



Free bus service to Penang Hill

GEORGE TOWN: Perbadanan Bukit Bendera Pulau Pinang (PBBPP), in collaboration with Rapid Bus Sdn Bhd and the Penang government, has announced the launch of a free shuttle bus service to Penang Hill from Komtar for five days, from Jan 29 to Feb 2, in conjunction with Chinese New Year.

According to a statement from PBBPP, the service will operate from 9am to 9pm, with eight trips per day in both directions every hour and a half.

Passengers can board the shuttle at the Station 9 Komtar bus stop located at Jalan Ria (the lower route next to the Rapid Penang kiosk) to reach the Penang Hill Lower Station and vice versa.

"The pick-up and drop-off locations will feature distinct visuals to make the service easier to identify. The shuttle buses are also designed to be wheelchair-friendly for passengers with accessibility needs.

"The shuttle buses will also be clearly marked as the Penang Hill free shuttle service for easy identification," said the statement.

PBBPP added that the schedule for the shuttle service is available on the official PBBPP website as well as on their social media sites.

"If the shuttle bus reaches its maximum capacity, visitors are encouraged to take the Rapid Penang Route 204 bus, which operates from the Weld Quay Bus Terminal via Komtar to Penang Hill at the regular fare. This service operates every 35 minutes during peak hours and every 45 minutes during off-peak hours."

PBBPP said since its launch in 2023, the service has received positive response, with the recent school holiday period in 2024 recording over 1,100 passengers using the free shuttle bus service.

"The consistent increase in passenger numbers highlights the popularity of the free shuttle service among both locals and visitors. It reflects the success of PBBPP efforts to improve accessibility and encourage the use of public transport to reduce traffic congestion." – Bernama

Medical tourism hub in the making

► Medi-City in Penang to include residential, retail and commercial elements to form sustainable urban enclave

■ BY T.C. KHOR
 newsdesk@thesundaily.com

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Medi-City in Batu Kawan will transform healthcare services in the state and will be a key hub for medical tourism and sustainable modern living, said Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow.

He added that the development is also expected to generate social and economic benefits, such as employment opportunities.

"It is more than just an infrastructure project. It is a holistic vision that integrates healthcare, economy and sustainability to ensure a better future for all stakeholders, including the local population and global community.

"It was not easy to get to this point, but we are confident that this collaboration with the developer Fajarbaru Builder Group Bhd (FBG) offers a winning formula," Chow said after the signing ceremony on Monday, that was witnessed by Penang Governor Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak.

Also present were Penang Development Corporation CEO Datuk Aziz Bakar, Youth and Sports exco Daniel Z.S. Gooi and Bukit Tambun state assemblyman Goh Choon Aik.

Chow also revealed Penang now dominates the medical tourism sector in Malaysia, contributing 45% of such revenue.

He added that with this new development, Penang has successfully strengthened its position as a leading medical tourism destination in Southeast Asia and globally.

"The arrival of visitors to Penang Medi-City will significantly impact the local economy, especially by stimulating the business ecosystem and creating new opportunities.

"This project will not only benefit the



The first phase of the project, covering 51.17 acres, will involve at least 30% of the land area for a 200-bed specialist hospital, healthcare complex, wellness centre and related infrastructure, with the remaining 70% earmarked for mixed development.

healthcare sector but also open doors for small and medium enterprises to grow and provide an essential platform for skill development and career advancement," he said.

State Tourism and Creative Economy Committee exco Wong Hon Wai said the term "medical tourists" refers to individuals who travel abroad for medical treatment, check-ups and wellness programmes.

"With the visa exemption for tourists from India and China, I believe more people will choose Penang as a destination, not only for our excellence in medical facilities, but for our tourism offerings as well," he said.

Wong added that the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council is also expanding its collaboration with parties in the Middle East to attract medical tourists.

Meanwhile, FBG group executive chairman Tan Sri Chan Kong Choy said the 235.8 acre mixed development will integrate a wide range of healthcare solutions, from preventive care and diagnostic care to post-treatment, rehabilitation and wellness.

"The development project stands as a

testament to the ambition that we share with PDC to solidify Penang into a world-class regional medical hub delivering a complete ecosystem of healthcare and medical related facilities," he said.

For the first phase of the project, which covers 51.17 acres, FBG has committed to allocating at least 30% of the land area for medical and healthcare components.

"These will include a 200-bed specialist hospital, healthcare complex, wellness centre and related infrastructure. The remaining 70% of the land will be earmarked for mixed development and infrastructure."

Chan also said the medical facilities include specialisations such as heart, oncology, women and children, and associated medical services like wellness, medical school, nursing school and pharmaceutical, including traditional Chinese medicine.

Apart from the healthcare hub, there will be residential, retail and commercial elements to form a sustainable urban enclave.

The first phase of the development is estimated to be completed in eight years.

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Pardons likely for Papua detainees

JAKARTA: President Prabowo Subianto is considering pardons for prisoners linked to rebel groups in the restive easternmost province of Papua, including separatists, providing they renounce violence and abandon secessionist agendas.

Prabowo plans to grant amnesty to those convicted and awaiting trial if they pledge loyalty to Indonesia and "stop all activities to separate Papua from Indonesia", said Senior Minister for Law and Human Rights Affairs Yusril Ihza Mahendra.

The government is drawing up lists of eligible individuals, he said.

A low-level battle for independence has been waged in the resource-rich island of Papua since it was brought under Indonesian control following a disputed referendum overseen by the United Nations in 1969 at the end of Dutch colonial rule.

Many Papuans have said the outcome did not reflect local sentiment.

Indonesian security forces have kept a tight rein on the region and have been accused of human rights abuses, which they deny.

Prabowo plans to pardon 44,000 prisoners including drug offenders and activists jailed in Papua. – Reuters

Singapore signals imminent polls

SINGAPORE: Prime Minister Lawrence Wong has formed a committee to review electoral boundaries, the polls body said yesterday, an indicator that a general election in the city-state could come soon.

Singapore typically calls an election within two months of the committee publishing its report on the review.

The review looks at boundaries of electoral divisions based on population changes and the subsequent report is used to determine the number of candidates in each constituency and also, the number of parliamentarians.

The Asian financial hub must hold its general election by November this year, but Wong has the remit to call polls earlier.

His People's Action Party is almost certain to dominate the election and win most seats as it has every vote since independence in 1965.

Its share of the popular vote will be a barometer for Wong's public approval. He took over as prime minister in May 2024 from Lee Hsien Loong, who ran the country for two decades. – Reuters

Thailand denies plans to send 48 Uyghurs back to China

Detainees on hunger strike: Group

BANGKOK: Thai authorities denied yesterday there was an immediate plan to send back to China 48 Uyghurs held in the country's detention centres, after UN experts warned the group could face torture if they return.

The Uyghurs fled China more than a decade ago and live in constant fear of being sent back.

Rights groups have said the Thai government plans to return them soon, and on Tuesday United Nations experts urged authorities to "immediately halt" the possible transfer.

Thai authorities have repeatedly denied such a plan.

"The decision will be made by the national security council, so far there is no order (to send them back)," said a senior official from the immigration department, who declined to be named.

An official from the national security council said "there was no order".

That followed remarks on Monday by national police chief Kitirat Phanphet who said "Thai police and the immigration department have not received any reports about the deportation."

The group of 48 Uyghurs, arrested in 2013 and 2014, are being held in immigration centres around Thailand.

UN experts say they were detained after crossing the Thai border to seek protection, and they have allegedly been held in de facto incommunicado detention for

more than a decade, with no access to lawyers or family members.

Urging Thailand to help them access asylum procedures and humanitarian assistance, the experts said: "It is our view that these persons should not be returned to China ... We are concerned they are at risk of suffering irreparable harm."

Human Rights Watch said last week that Thai immigration officials had asked the Uyghurs to complete new paperwork and had photographed them, steps the group believes are in preparation for their forcible transfer.

The rights group says the Uyghurs are on hunger strike, although Thai authorities have denied this.

The United States has branded China's treatment of the minority a "genocide".

A damning UN report released in 2022 detailed violations including torture and forced labour and "large-scale" arbitrary detention in what Beijing calls vocational training centres.

Beijing denies allegations of abuse and insists its actions in Xinjiang have helped to combat extremism.

Many Uyghurs have fled China over the years, with some travelling through Myanmar to Thailand, but dozens have ended up stuck in detention centres – the apparent victims of what observers say is the kingdom's desire to avoid angering either Beijing or Washington.

The UN experts, who were appointed by the UN Human Rights Council but who do not speak on behalf of the United Nations, said 23 of the 48 Uyghurs suffer from serious health conditions. – AFP



SKYBORNE SPECTACLE ... Enthusiasts fly kites during the 'Qatar Kite Festival 2025' at Old Doha Port. The event highlights eco-friendly innovations, showcasing biodegradable materials. – AFPIC

Rescuers search for Java landslide survivors

PEKALONGAN: Hundreds of rescuers were searching through thick mud and debris to find survivors yesterday after a rain-triggered landslide killed at least 17 people and left nine missing.

Intense rainfall in a mountainous area near Pekalongan city in Central Java province sparked the landslide on Monday, collapsing bridges and burying cars and houses.

Search and rescue agency Basarnas said in a statement the toll remained unchanged from Tuesday at 17 dead, nine missing and 13 people injured.

But another body was found, Mohammad Yulian Akbar, a local official said later yesterday, giving a higher toll of 18.

Heavy machinery was deployed to clear road access for search teams and around 200 rescue personnel have been sent to help, Akbar said.

"The focus is to search for the victims," he said, adding that the local government had declared an emergency in the district for two weeks.

According to the local official, the worst hit area was Kasimpar village where the landslide struck a coffee shop and people who were trying to shelter from the rain.

Police, soldiers and volunteers have joined the search alongside rescue workers, which is taking place around 90km west of the city of Semarang.

But efforts were suspended on Tuesday as heavy rain continued to pound the area.

The weather forecast for the next three days suggests moderate rain that could "cause floods, flash floods and landslides", said Abdul Muhari, a spokesman for the National Disaster Mitigation Agency.

Indonesia is prone to landslides during the rainy season, typically between November and April. – AFP

South Korea to replace barriers at several airports

SEOUL: South Korean authorities said yesterday they will change the concrete barriers used for navigation at some airports across the country after the Jeju Air crash that left 179 people dead.

The Boeing 737-800 was flying from Thailand to Muan in the southwest on Dec 29 carrying 181 passengers and crew when it belly-landed at Muan airport and exploded in a fireball after slamming into a concrete barrier.

It was the worst-ever aviation disaster on South Korean soil.

South Korean and US investigators are still investigating the cause of the crash.

Attention has focused on several

possible causes but questions have been raised about why the concrete barriers, known as a localiser and used to help planes navigate their landings, was at the end of the runway.

The Land Ministry said "a special safety inspection revealed that improvements are needed for localisers at seven airports".

These include Muan and Jeju International Airport – a popular tourist hotspot and the country's second-largest airport, after Incheon which serves the capital Seoul.

The measures include "relocating the foundations underground and replacing them with lightweight steel structures".

Muan International Airport's concrete mounds will be removed and the localiser will be "reinstalled using breakable structures".

"This measure prioritises actions requiring immediate attention," said Transport Minister Park Sang-woo.

"We plan to establish measures for bird strike prevention improvement and an aviation safety innovation plan through further investigations and reviews," he said.

At the moment of the accident, the pilot warned of a bird strike before pulling out of a first landing attempt. The plane crashed on its second attempt when the landing gear did not emerge.

Feathers were found in both

engines, according to South Korean media reports, with a bird strike being examined as one possible cause.

According to the ministry, a comprehensive survey of bird-attracting facilities around airports began on Monday as part of the "bird strike prevention improvement plan".

The investigation was further clouded when the Transport Ministry said the black boxes holding the flight data and cockpit voice recorders for the crashed flight stopped recording four minutes before the disaster.

The Land Ministry said on Saturday that Muan airport's closure had been extended until April 18.

– AFP



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Trump escalates campaign against diversity initiatives

➤ FAA told to conduct review on staff competence

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump escalated his campaign against diversity programmes on Tuesday by pressuring the private sector to join the initiative, ordering aviation officials to review diversity hires and telling government diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) employees they would be placed on paid leave.

The measures come a day after Trump on his first day in office issued executive orders to end DEI programmes, which attempt to promote opportunities for women, minorities and other underrepresented groups.

Civil rights advocates have argued such programmes are necessary to address inequities and structural racism.

In an executive order issued on Tuesday, Trump revoked executive orders dating as far back as 1965 on environmental actions, equal employment opportunities and

encouragement to federal contractors to achieve workforce balance on race, gender and religion.

The 1965 order that was revoked was signed by President Lyndon Johnson to protect the rights of workers employed by federal contractors and ensure they remained free from discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin, according to the Labor Department.

The Trump executive order seeks to dissuade private companies that receive government contracts from hiring employees from marginalised backgrounds – what the order called “illegal DEI discrimination and preferences” – and asked government agencies to identify private companies that might be subject to civil investigation.

“As a part of this plan, each agency shall identify up to nine potential civil compliance investigations of publicly traded corporations, large non-profit corporations or associations, foundations with assets of US\$500 million (RM2.2 billion) or more, bar and medical associations, and institutions of higher

education with endowments over US\$1 billion,” it said.

The order issued on Tuesday stipulates that federal and private-sector employment preferences for military veterans could continue.

Separately, the administration instructed US federal departments and agencies to dismantle all DEI programmes, advising employees of such programmes that they would be immediately placed on paid leave.

Trump also signed a memorandum on Tuesday that ends a Biden administration initiative to promote diversity in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), ordering the FAA administrator to immediately stop DEI hiring programmes, the White House said.

Trump ordered the FAA to conduct a safety review that would replace any employees who fail to demonstrate their competence.

“President Trump is immediately terminating this illegal and dangerous programme and requiring that all FAA hiring be based solely on ensuring the safety of airline passengers and overall job excellence,” the White House said. – Reuters

Panama refers canal threat to UN

PANAMA CITY: Panama has referred to the United Nations US President Donald Trump’s “worrying” threat to seize the Panama Canal, even as it launched an audit of the Hong Kong-linked operator of two ports on the interoceanic waterway.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the government in Panama City referred to an article of the UN Charter precluding any member from “the threat or use of force” against the territorial integrity or political independence of another.

The missive, distributed to reporters on Tuesday, urges Guterres to refer the matter to the UN Security Council, without asking for a meeting to be convened.

Trump, in his inaugural address on Monday, repeated his complaint that China was effectively “operating” the Panama Canal through its growing presence around the waterway, which the United States handed over at the end of 1999.

“We didn’t give it to China, we gave it to Panama. And we’re taking it back,” Trump said.

The Panamanian comptroller’s office that oversees public entities then announced “an exhaustive audit” would be launched “aimed at ensuring the efficient and transparent use of public resources” at the Panama Ports Company.

The company, part of Hutchison Ports, a subsidiary of Hong Kong-based conglomerate CK Hutchison Holdings, operates the ports of Balboa and Cristobal on either end of the canal.

The comptroller’s office said the aim was to determine whether the company was complying with its concession agreements, including adequate reporting of income, payments and contributions to the state. – AFP



FESTIVE HERALD ...

Artistes take part in a folklore performance at an outdoor market ahead of the Lunar New Year in Beijing yesterday. – REUTERS/SPIC

Rubio, Quad warn China over actions at sea

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on his first full day in office on Tuesday warned jointly with Japan, India and Australia against coercive actions in Asia, in a veiled but clear warning to China over its actions at sea.

Rubio met his counterparts from the Quad a day after the inauguration of President Donald Trump, who has vowed to push back against a rising China.

But the gathering also marks a contrast with Trump’s frequent dismissal of US allies and partners, with the returning US president on Tuesday threatening tariffs against the European Union.

Rubio and his counterparts in a joint statement promised to work toward a “free and open Indo-Pacific”, using a codeword against Chinese assertiveness.

The four said they support a region “where the rule of law, democratic values, sovereignty and territorial integrity are upheld and defended”.

“We also strongly oppose any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion,” the statement said.

Rubio also met separately with each minister. With Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya, Rubio discussed North Korea and “joint efforts against China’s destabilising actions”, said State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce.

The Quad was envisioned by late Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe and expanded into a leaders’ summit by former president Joe Biden.

China has repeatedly lashed out at the

Quad, saying it is a US plot to encircle the rising Asian power.

Rubio arrived at the State Department with a promise to defend US diplomats – often maligned by his Republican Party – while also pursuing Trump’s belief in “America First”.

“I expect every nation on Earth to advance their national interests. And in those instances – and I hope there will be many – in which our national interests and theirs align, we look forward to working with them,” Rubio said.

“We recognise that there will be those times unfortunately as humans interact with one another because of our nature that there will be conflict,” Rubio said.

“We will seek to prevent them and avoid them, but never at the expense of our national security.” – AFP

BRIEFS

AUSTRALIA PROBES FOREIGN FUNDING LINK TO ATTACKS

SYDNEY: Australia is investigating whether local criminals were paid by foreign actors to carry out a spate of anti-Semitic attacks, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said. Vandals have in recent weeks torched a Sydney childcare centre, set cars ablaze in largely Jewish neighbourhoods and splashed inner-city synagogues with red paint and graffiti. He said some of the attacks appeared to have been carried out by “paid actors”. Police yesterday charged a 33-year-old man with attempting to light a Sydney synagogue on fire. Eight people were charged on Tuesday with a string of “hate crime-related incidents” dating back to November. – AFP

NEPAL HIKES PERMIT FEE FOR EVEREST CLIMBERS

KATHMANDU: Nepal will increase the permit fees for climbing Mount Everest by 36%, making the world’s tallest peak more expensive for mountaineers. A permit to climb the 8,849m mountain will cost US\$15,000 (RM66,615), said Tourism Department director general Narayan Prasad Regmi when announcing the 36% rise in the US\$11,000 fee that has been in place for nearly a decade. The new rate will come into effect from September and apply for the popular climbing April-May season along the standard South East Ridge or South Col route. – Reuters

TONGA KING APPOINTS NEW PRIME MINISTER

SYDNEY: Tonga’s King Tupou VI has appointed Aisake Eke as prime minister, a month after he was selected by lawmakers to be the Pacific Island nation’s next leader. Former prime minister Siaosi Sovaleni resigned last month. Eke, 64, also becomes chairman of the 18-member Pacific Islands Forum, where Tonga has supported a regional policing initiative to reduce the group’s reliance on outside security partners. Eke is a former public servant and finance minister who attended university in Australia and Fiji. – Reuters

UK to introduce digital driving licences

LONDON: Britain will introduce digital driving licences later this year in a push to use data to transform public services.

The licence will be held in a new GOV.UK digital wallet on smartphones and it will enable users to easily prove their age when buying age-restricted items as well as proving a right to drive.

Security features built into smartphones like facial recognition will ensure digital documents are secure even if a device is lost, the government said.

Other credentials issued by the government such as veteran cards and criminal record checks will be added by the end of 2027, it said, while physical documents would remain available.

The wallet will come alongside a government app, due this summer, that will make using services like applying for childcare or reporting a lost passport easier.

Science Secretary Peter Kyle said the GOV.UK wallet would mean that every letter or identity document received from the government could be issued virtually.

"For people who choose to use GOV.UK Wallet, they will find it easier to prove they're entitled to benefits or check their age when buying alcohol or DIY equipment, with more security and trust than ever before," he said.

"Crucially, it also opens huge opportunities to make interacting with public services much easier by putting people in control of their own data."

A government review published on Tuesday said the full digitisation of public services could result in more than £45 billion (RM247 billion) a year of savings and productivity benefits.

Digital driving licences already exist in Australia, Denmark, Iceland and in some US states. – Reuters

Russia sees chance to forge deals with US

MOSCOW: Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Moscow sees a small window of opportunity to forge agreements with the new US administration of President Donald Trump.

"We cannot say anything today about the degree of the incoming administration's capacity to negotiate, but still, compared to the hopelessness in every aspect of the previous White House chief, there is a window of opportunity today, albeit a small one," Ryabkov said.

"It's important to understand with what and whom we will have to deal, how best to build relations with Washington, how best to maximise opportunities and minimise risks," he said, speaking at the Institute for US and Canadian Studies, a think-tank in Moscow.

Trump has said he could end the war in Ukraine swiftly.

He warned on Tuesday that he would likely impose more sanctions on Russia if President Vladimir Putin refused to negotiate to end the nearly three-year-old conflict.

Trump gave no details on the possible additional sanctions on Russia, which is already under significant Western sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. – Reuters

Shooting, explosions in Jenin as Israeli forces execute raid

UN secretary-general calls for restraint

JENIN: A Palestinian official reported shooting and explosions in the flashpoint West Bank town of Jenin yesterday as Israeli forces pressed a raid that the military described as a "counterterrorism" operation.

"The situation is very difficult," said Jenin Governor Kamal Abu al-Rub.

"The occupation army has bulldozed all the roads leading to the Jenin camp, and leading to the Jenin Governmental Hospital ... There is shooting and explosions."

On Tuesday, Israeli forces launched an operation in Jenin which Palestinian officials said killed

10 people, just days after a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas took effect in the Gaza Strip.

According to Abu al-Rub, Israeli forces detained around 20 people from villages near Jenin, a bastion of Palestinian freedom fighters.

The Israeli military said it had launched a "counterterrorism operation" in the area and had "hit over 10 gunmen".

"Additionally, aerial strikes on buildings were conducted and numerous explosives dismantled," it said in a statement yesterday.

"The Israeli forces are continuing the operation."

Defence Minister Israel Katz

vowed to continue the assault.

"It is a decisive operation aimed at eliminating terrorists in the camp," Katz said in a statement yesterday, adding that the military would not allow a "terror front" to be established there.

On Tuesday, the Israeli military and the Shin Bet security agency announced that, in coordination with the Border Police, they had launched an operation named "Iron Wall" in the area.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu linked the operation to a broader strategy of countering Iran "wherever it sends its arms - in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen," and the West Bank.

The Israeli government has accused Iran, which supports armed groups across the Middle East, including Hamas in Gaza, of attempting to funnel weapons and

funds to gunmen in the West Bank.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for "maximum restraint" from Israeli security forces and expressed deep concern, according to his deputy spokesman, Farhan Haq.

Jenin and its refugee camp are known strongholds of Palestinian groups, and Israeli forces frequently carry out raids targeting armed factions.

Violence has surged throughout the occupied West Bank since the Gaza war erupted on Oct 7, 2023.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, Israeli troops or settlers have killed at least 848 Palestinians in the West Bank since the Gaza conflict began.

At least 29 Israelis have been killed in the territory during the same period, according to official Israeli figures. – AFP

More than 2,400 aid trucks enter Gaza

NEW YORK: Nearly 900 humanitarian aid trucks entered the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, the third day of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, as a senior UN official said so far there had been no apparent law-and-order issues.

The latest arrivals bring the three-day total to more than 2,400 trucks entering the enclave.

Throughout the 15-month war, the UN has described its humanitarian operation as opportunistic - fixing problems with Israel's military operation, access restrictions by Israel into and throughout Gaza and more recently looting by armed gangs.

Muhammad Hadi, the top UN aid official for Gaza and the West Bank, said there had been minor incidents of looting in the past three days, but "not like before".

"It's not organised crime. Kids jumped on some trucks trying to take food baskets. There were some other people (who) tried to take some bottled water," he told reporters after visiting the Palestinian enclave on Tuesday.

"Hopefully within few days this will all disappear once the people of Gaza realise that we will have aid enough for everybody."

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said 897 aid trucks entered the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, citing information it received from Israel and the guarantors for the ceasefire agreement - the United States, Egypt and Qatar.

This compares with 630 on Sunday and 915 on Monday.

The truce deal requires at least 600 truckloads of aid to be allowed into Gaza every day of the initial six-week



A boy chases an aid truck coming in from the Kerem Shalom border crossing. – AFP/PIIC

ceasefire, including 50 carrying fuel. Half of those trucks are supposed to go to Gaza's north, where experts have warned famine is imminent.

Hadi warned that problems were likely to arise: "Let's not assume that because there is a ceasefire life is going

to be rosy and our work is going to be a walk in the park."

He said the aid operation faced logistical problems because roads in Gaza have been destroyed, adding that the movement of people in the enclave was also a complicating factor.

OCHA said on Tuesday that humanitarian priorities in Gaza include food assistance, opening bakeries, providing healthcare, restocking hospitals, repairing water networks, bringing material to repair shelters and reuniting families. – Reuters

France arrests second Algerian influencer for inciting attacks

PARIS: French authorities yesterday arrested another Algerian social media influencer as tensions soar between Paris and its North African former colony.

Rafik M. had "called on Tiktok for the carrying out of violent acts on French territory", said Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau on social media, without

saying where he had been arrested.

The influencer is one of half a dozen Algerians arrested in France over the last month on accusations of calling for violence on French territory.

One of them, known as "Doualem", was deported to Algeria where the authorities promptly sent him back in a move that incensed Retailleau.

Tensions have surged between France and Algeria after President Emmanuel Macron renewed French support for Moroccan sovereignty over the disputed territory of Western Sahara during a visit to the kingdom last year.

Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony, is mostly under the de facto control of Morocco. But it is claimed by

the Algeria-backed Sahrawi separatists of the Polisario Front, who want a self-determination referendum.

Algeria meanwhile has been holding French-Algerian novelist Boualem Sansal on national security charges. Sansal, who was arrested at Algiers airport in November, is a major figure in modern francophone literature. – AFP

Legacy and hot potatoes for Trump

SATIRE of US President Joe Biden and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussing Blinken's Jan 16 press conference.



ANOTHER TAKE
BY LIM TECK GHEE

Biden: Hello Blinky. Did you call me? I was having my afternoon nap. You know you shouldn't be calling at that hour. Don't do it again, okay?

Blinken: Sorry, Boss. I had a rough time at my press conference just now and wanted to warn you.

Biden: Warn me - about what?

Blinken: Well, there was this journalist who said that your legacy and mine was one of genocide; that we were compromised by Israel and allowed the Holocaust of our time to take place. One called me a criminal.

I called to warn you that the same may happen when you next meet the press. It's making headline news. US and international media were there and they are making us look bad.

Biden: Us? I wasn't involved. Shit. Who were they? How did they get into your briefing room?

Blinken: I got one of them removed, Boss. Security didn't do a good job of checking. But I am sure it's (Donald) Trump's and (Elon) Musk's work. They arranged for the journalists to get through. Probably paid them, you know.

Biden: Trumpie, again! Will he never leave me alone? Do you know that he is claiming credit for my work on the Gaza truce?

Blinken: Yeah, Boss. Staff showed me that on his X account. Pisses me off too. It's all our work. I flew umpteen times to Jerusalem. But he and others are saying that he is the architect of peace.

Biden: Too much. Looks like the media is changing sides again. CNN, *New York Post*, *New York Times*. Bastards! I reminded MSNBC of my accomplishments, including getting Hamas and Israel to do that ceasefire deal. Get your boys to tell them to run my interview again.

Blinken: Definitely. The ceasefire was our doing. Yours and mine. But the diplomats and officials and even the media are saying that it was Trump's demand that there would be hell to pay should hostages not be released before his inauguration, which they see as the turning point.

But you know - we could have produced a

ceasefire far earlier if we pushed Israel and Net (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) harder. Left, right and centre critics are saying that we were too weak, too incompetent or too much in bed with Israel to do so.

Biden: Come on, Blinky. Stop reminding me about Gaza, please. That's over and done with. Just focus on me - on us - and what we did to ensure that Palestinians and Arabs were saved. The whole Middle East should be grateful. Make sure the message goes out in the Arab media, all the media.

Blinken: Sorry, Boss. The press really upset me. Okie. Will do.

Biden: Well, I'm also pissed off too. No thanks for telling me. But I'm getting my own back on Trumpie and the Republicans.

Blinken: Whoa!

Biden: Handing him the TikTok, no sorry, I mean TokTik, no its TokTok, hot potato to handle.

Blinken: Brilliant, Boss! Great timing. That'll put his knickers in a twist.

Biden: I've been saying that people tell me that I look like I'm 40 but my mind is 20.

Blinken: I know, Boss.

Biden: You know me, Blinky, revenge is best served cold.

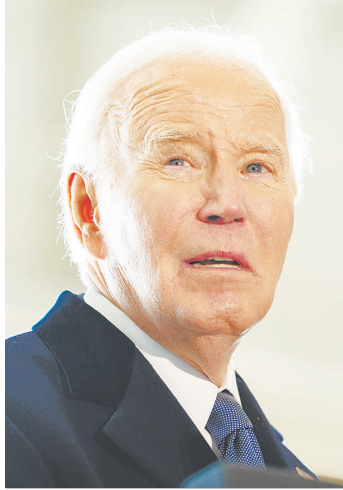
Here's another secret. I've got myself a Red Book account. Legit Tok Tok refugee. Do you know I once had hundreds of thousands of followers on my Tok. And I will be screwing Trump and Musk from the Red Book.

Man - I'm looking forward to the day after the inauguration. They are not going to know what hit them.

Blinken: Wow! Not Red Book, Boss. It's called RedNote (Xiaohongshu, China app). As a tokker there, you will simply hit it out of the park. No one will know. My kids are into TikTok too, you know. But they are also moving to RedNote.

Biden: Yup. Micky (Miguel Cardona, education secretary in the Biden administration) tells me that our young Tikkers are turning to Red Book and starting to make friends adviser China and reading Mao's Red Book.

Boy, oh boy - the whole bunch of Trumpies - (Mike) Waltz (incoming national security adviser in Trump's administration), (Marco) Rubio (incoming secretary of state),



Biden



Blinken

(Pete) Hegseth (nominated as secretary of defence) - will have their bowels in an uproar trying to handle this hot potato! They will go ballistic.

Here's something else. I'm going to get even with Nancy (Pelosi) (Democratic House representative from California), Bama (Barack Obama, US 44th president) and others on RedNote. I would have been president again but the b.....s put me down. Kamala (Harris) (former US vice president and Democratic nominee for president against Trump) was never gonna win. I could have even won by a landslide. But you know, I had one bad night and they all turned rats - I would have, should have won!

Blinken: Yeah. Definitely, Boss. And I could continue to keep America safe and secure. America is going to regret this.

We've left a terrific legacy, which Nancy and other Democrats don't seem to appreciate. Got Aussies to pay between A\$268 billion and \$368 billion (RM749 billion and RM1,026 billion) for Aukus American submarines to help our workers and budget. Record weapons money from Nato (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and Indo-

Pacific to keep our factories humming. And all this for our national security and younger generation. That's our legacy we can be proud of, and our history books will record, Boss.

Biden: Speaking of security, get me one more chat with Xi (Xi Jinping, president of China). Tell his boys that I can play a role in helping China get back into America's good books. China shouldn't trust Trump.

Blinken: Great idea, Boss. Especially since Trump has been crowing that he had a great chat with Xi and promising this and that, and making the world "more peaceful".

But don't send Hunter (Hunter Biden, Biden's Son) to help on this. Haha, Boss - just a joke.

Biden: Not a joke, Blinky. Get me the chat as soon as possible okay? Trump and the Republicans will regret messing with me. I am sure Xi will listen to what I have in mind. You know, he and I are old friends from a long time back.

Lim Teck Ghee's Another Take is aimed at demystifying social orthodoxy. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

EDUCATION

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Breaking cycle of victimisation

COMMENT

By Dr Treesna Nadira Johar

THE recent tragic incidents at the National Defence University Malaysia (NDUM) have cast a dark shadow over the institution, where brutal bullying episodes left several cadets severely injured and, most devastatingly, claimed a young life.

These events highlight a disturbing pattern and serve as a stark reminder of how institutional violence can perpetuate itself, creating cycles where today's victims risk becoming tomorrow's perpetrators, carrying learned behaviours into their academic and professional lives.

Beyond academy walls, a similar crisis unfolds in workplaces nationwide. Workplace bullying, which can affect mental health conditions and stifle professional development, often remains largely in the shadows, rarely making headlines or sparking urgent public discourse that it deserves.

The statistics of workplace bullying in Malaysia paint a disturbing picture. In 2019, researchers found that one in every three workers had faced bullying at work. A 2020 survey revealed an even darker reality, with approximately 65% of workers reporting experiences of bullying, most often in the form of verbal abuse.

In August 2024, news broke about a 30-year-old doctor in Sabah, who had reportedly been "mistreated and oppressed" by a senior colleague just months into her new role. The case echoed the NDUM tragedy in its devastating finality.

Workplace bullying manifests as sustained psychological harassment, often subtle enough to evade the notice of human resources, yet potent

enough to destroy careers and lives.

At its most overt, workplace bullying is often disguised as "strong leadership" or "maintaining high standards". We see it in managers who publicly tear apart someone's work during meetings or supervisors whose feedback crosses the line from constructive to crushing - their condescending remarks steadily chipping away at their targets' professional confidence and self-worth.

However, there are also cases where bullying happens in the shadows, using subtle forms of cruelty that is hard to prove but impossible to ignore.

Through calculated moves, victims find themselves mysteriously excluded from meetings, see their ideas claimed by others or become targets of whispered campaigns that slowly erode their professional reputation. Each action in isolation may seem minor but together, they weave a devastating pattern of abuse.

As Malaysia races toward digital transformation, these age-old power dynamics have found new platforms for breeding grounds. Initiatives like the Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDigital) promise innovation, yet traditional hierarchies have simply adapted to the digital realm.

Members of organisations who are steeped in hierarchical traditions now exploit digital tools

through unreasonable demands, for example through expectations of constant availability. This is especially challenging in cultures where refusing requests from superiors is often seen as taboo.

Exclusion has also taken on new forms in the sphere of digitalisation, such as being left out of important WhatsApp groups or subtly sidelined during virtual meetings, where traditional social cues are harder to read. This collision of technology and culture has created a perfect storm for modern workplace bullying.

The true cost of workplace bullying runs deep beneath the surface. Victims are often transformed from confident contributors into hollow versions of themselves - some becoming emotionally jaded and vengeful while others retreat into the background, mechanically performing their duties.

The impact of workplace bullying extends beyond the immediate victims, creating a toxic ripple effect throughout the entire organisation, stifling creativity and driving away talent. Even witnesses absorb the toxicity, developing their own anxieties and stress-related symptoms as they navigate this poisoned environment.

Perhaps the most disturbing is the generational impact: bullying victims either become bullies themselves or, upon reaching

leadership positions, build systems that silently condone the very behaviour that once broke them, perpetuating a cycle of organisational trauma that can persist for decades. These consequences make addressing workplace bullying increasingly urgent.

Breaking this cycle demands solutions that target both symptoms and root causes. Organisations must implement interventions at all levels, combining cultural transformation with individual accountability.

This means establishing support systems for victims and perpetrators, launching early intervention programmes, conducting regular workplace climate assessments focusing on psychological safety and creating protected whistleblower systems.

Education programmes should focus on fostering empathy and awareness while clear response protocols ensure accountability and timely action.

Dismissing workplace bullying as "office politics" reflects a failure of leadership. Unlike physical wounds, these invisible scars affect not just individuals but entire organisational cultures, passed down through generations of workers.

Organisations that eliminate bullying create healthy environments where talent flourishes. When psychological safety becomes the foundation, innovation thrives and performances soar.

The cost of ignoring workplace bullying is too high - in both human potential and organisational success.

Dr Treesna Nadira Johar is a senior training consultant at the Centre for Public Policy Studies, Project Management and Governance, National Institute of Public Administration. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

"Dismissing workplace bullying as 'office politics' reflects a failure of leadership. Unlike physical wounds, these invisible scars affect not just individuals but entire organisational cultures, passed down through generations of workers."

Take intestinal parasites seriously

COMMENT

By Nabila Abu Bakar

"WHO, what, when and why should one be concerned with taking a deworming tablet?". This was the quest I took over the last three years as I embarked on my PhD research.

Although intestinal parasitic infection (IPI) in the country has been on the decline over three decades, infections continue to persist, particularly among vulnerable communities.

My quest took me to a community often missed - residents of low-cost public housing in Klang Valley.

Urban parasite problem

When we talk about urban living, we often envision modern infrastructures and complete amenities within the hustle and bustle of city life. Yet, beneath this fancy facade lies an unsettling public health concern: IPI.

These infections, often associated with rural and impoverished settings, are still lurking among the urban population, affecting about one in five people.

Despite modern facilities, urban areas are not immune to the factors that facilitate IPI. Indiscriminate waste management, overcrowding and poor sanitation practices are rampant in low-cost housing areas like People's Housing Projects (PHP), contributing significantly to the infection statistics.

Recent studies show that the common parasites that infect urban Malaysians are roundworms (*Ascaris lumbricoides*) and whipworms (*Trichuris trichiura*).

As it turns out, this infection does not discriminate against gender, age or ethnic group. However, children and residents of low-cost housing projects are at a greater risk of infection due to their actual living conditions and lack of civic-mindedness.

Once, during an engagement with residents from one of the PHP in Klang Valley, as I was

making my way back to my car, I was unexpectedly showered with a stream of curry sauce, carelessly thrown from one of the flats. Few people can claim such an experience. On another engagement, a bottle of Vitagen was dropped onto my head.

Sadly, this is the harsh reality of today's many PHP. It is common to see rubbish and waste littered (and flying) around their vicinities.

High-rise dumping, where unwanted furniture and waste are thrown from upper floors to the ground, is rampant.

Such practices create a conducive environment for pests like rodents and wild animals to thrive while also increasing the risk of tragic accidents, including fatalities caused by discarded heavy furniture.

The waste collection facilities at these PHP are in poor condition and insufficient to handle the volume of waste generated by residents.

As a result, the facilities overflow, forcing residents to discard their waste haphazardly. This situation contributes to the persistence of intestinal parasites in urban areas, exacerbated by a lack of understanding about the infection's causes among urban inhabitants.

Our modern diet of undercooked meat and fish, sushi, raw vegetables and unwashed fruits also increases the risk of infection as microscopic parasitic eggs and/or larvae may be present without us realising it.

Push for change

For the past few years, we have been working closely with PHP residents across Klang Valley to better understand why this infection persists despite basic facilities being provided.

As a result, we developed a community-based intervention programme called "Bersama Mencegah Jangkitan Parasit", or Cegah JaP for short, supported by a fundamental research grant scheme from the Higher Education Ministry and ThinkCity's Kita-Untuk-Kita (K2K) community grant.

This pilot programme introduced residents from three different age groups to interactive



The waste collection facilities at these PHPs are in poor condition and insufficient to handle the volume of waste generated by residents. - AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN

activities designed to educate them about the causes, risk factors and prevention of IPI (likely referring to a specific health or social issue). These educational elements were incorporated into familiar and enjoyable games like Bingo, musical chairs and charades to ensure engagement and accessibility.

Gross specimens of the parasites were also exhibited to help the participants better grasp the gravity of the infection more effectively and how easy it is to avoid infection with better hygiene practices.

This approach created a more relaxed and casual environment for participants to learn new information without the pressures of a traditional classroom setting. The results were surprising, with over 70% of participants significantly improving their understanding of the subject.

IPI often presents no symptoms and can go unnoticed for years. However, it can lead to general fatigue and tiredness, which are commonly overlooked but can impact overall quality of life.

As humans, we sometimes neglect our health until it becomes a serious issue. For IPI, however, a simple and affordable annual treatment of 400mg albendazole, costing just RM10, is enough to eliminate the risk of infection.

So, when was the last time you took a deworming tablet?

Nabila Abu Bakar is a fourth year PhD student at Universiti Malaya. Her research centred around neglected tropical diseases, including intestinal parasitic infections amongst residents of PHP in Klang Valley. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

December steel prices dip from previous month

Unit price index down between 0.1% and 4.6%, biggest drop in Perak

PUTRAJAYA: A monthly comparison showed a decrease in the unit price index of steel between 0.1% and 4.6% for almost all areas in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak in December 2024 compared to the previous month, said Chief Statistician Malaysia Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin.

The highest decrease was recorded in Perak (-4.6%), followed by Tawau (-2.3%) and Sandakan (-2%).

Apart from that, Mohd Uzir also informed that the unit price index of steel & metal sections registered a decline between negative 0.3% to -0.8% for almost all areas in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak in December 2024 as compared to the previous month. Meanwhile, he said the unit price index of cement remained unchanged for almost all areas in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak in December 2024.

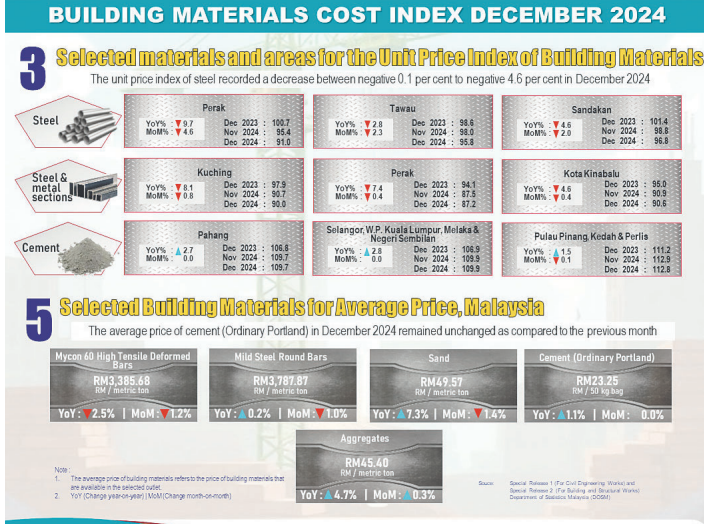
An annual comparison for the period of December 2023 and December 2024 indicated that the unit price index of cement increased between 0.1% and 2.8% for almost all areas in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

The highest increase was recorded in Selangor, W.P. Kuala Lumpur, Malacca & Negri Sembilan (2.8%), followed by Pahang (2.7%), Penang, Kedah & Perlis and Perak (1.5%), respectively.

Nevertheless, an annual comparison of the unit price index of steel recorded a decrease between -1.7% to -9.7% in December 2024 as compared to the same month last year for almost all areas in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. The highest decrease was recorded in Perak (-9.7%).

Mohd Uzir said that the average price per unit of steel, consisting of mild steel round bars and Mycon 60 high tensile deformed bars recorded a decrease (-1.1%) with an average price of RM3,588.30 per metric tonne as compared to the previous month (November 2024: RM3,628.90 per metric tonne).

The average price of this material has been



declining since July 2024. Meanwhile, the average price of cement (Ordinary Portland) in December 2024 remained unchanged with an average price of RM23.25 per 50kg bag as compared to the previous month.

BCI with steel bars for all building categories recorded a slight decrease between -0.1% to -1.9% in December 2024 as compared to the previous month. The decrease for BCI with steel was recorded for almost all building categories except Timber Piling in Penang, Kedah & Perlis, Johor and Selangor, W.P. Kuala Lumpur, Malacca & Negri Sembilan.

Apart from that, the index for almost all other building categories in Terengganu & Kelantan remained unchanged.

Additionally, BCI with steel bars in Sabah also showed a slight decrease between -0.2% to -0.8%

for almost all building categories (except for Timber Building and Timber Piling) in Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan.

Meanwhile, BCI in Tawau recorded a decrease between -0.1% to -0.9% for almost all categories of building except an increase in index for Single Storey (Reinforced Concrete) Building (0.1%), Single Storey Steel Frame (Building) (0.2%) and Timber Building (0.5%).

A monthly comparison of BCI with steel bars in Sarawak for December 2024 also registered a slight decrease between -0.2% to -0.5% for almost all categories of buildings (except Timber Building and Timber Piling) in Kuching and Sibiu. However, BCI with steel bars for almost all building categories in Miri showed a slight decrease between -0.1% and -0.2% for almost all categories of buildings.

Mah Sing to tap opportunities in JS-SEZ for growth

KUALA LUMPUR: Mah Sing Group Bhd is positioned to capitalise on the transformative opportunities presented by the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ).

Designed to stimulate economic activity, attract investments, and elevate Johor as a hub for innovation and development, the JS-SEZ sets the stage for robust growth in the region.

"The JS-SEZ is a transformative initiative for Johor and Malaysia as a whole," said Mah Sing founder and group managing director Tan Sri Leong Hoy Kum.

"Having operated in Johor since 2000, we've long recognised the region's immense potential. In 2024, we acquired six parcels of land with a total GDV of about RM5.8 billion, of which three were in Johor contributing RM3.41 billion GDV. With our diverse portfolio of developments, including the landmark M Grand Minori just 3km from the Johor-Singapore Rapid Transit System Link, Mah Sing is primed to lead Johor's transformation into a key economic hub. Our commitment to Johor remains strong, and we are continuously seeking new opportunities to expand our landbank for townships, industrial projects, and M Series developments."

Beyond M Grand Minori, Mah Sing's flagship projects in Johor – M Tiara 2 and Meridin East – are poised to strengthen the group's growth trajectory and provide earnings visibility from the Southern corridor. M Tiara 2, spanning 100.4 acres of freehold land between the established townships of Mutiara Rini and Lima Kedai, boasts a GDV of RM1.45 billion.

Meridin East, meanwhile, stands as one of Johor's largest integrated townships, spanning over 1,300 acres. Together, M Tiara 2, Meridin East and M Grand Minori underscore Mah Sing's strategic vision of aligning with Johor's economic momentum.

The JS-SEZ introduces groundbreaking initiatives that directly benefit Mah Sing's operation. The Invest Malaysia Facilitation Centre-Johor acts as a one-stop centre, streamlining approvals and expediting processes to create an investor-friendly environment. These efforts enhance investor confidence and position the region to attract substantial foreign direct investment.

Gamuda Land, Public Bank launch Malaysia's first 120% home financing

PETALING JAYA: Gamuda Land in collaboration with Public Bank Bhd, has introduced the PB SmartLiving financing package, offering Malaysian homebuyers unprecedented flexibility and affordability.

The PB SmartLiving package is an industry-first offering by Public Bank and Gamuda Land, tailored exclusively for The Clove, a pioneering home typology in the Park Homes series.

This financing package sets it apart in the market with its unmatched benefits, offering up to 120% financing to cover home loans, renovation costs, and appliance purchases.

"Our collaboration with Public Bank underscores our commitment to delivering not only sustainable and

thoughtfully designed homes but also innovative financial solutions that simplify the journey to homeownership. By forming long-standing partnerships with impactful organisations like Public Bank, we are able to collaboratively create solutions that empower Malaysians to own and customise their homes with greater ease," said Gamuda Land CEO Chu Wai Lune.

With competitive interest rates starting as low as 3.3% per annum for the first year of the home loan, complemented by a compelling 4.3% per annum for financing renovation costs and appliance purchases — the lowest available for such a scheme in Malaysia — it provides exceptional affordability.

Additionally, the package features a flexible loan tenure of up to 35 years, making it an ideal solution for Malaysian homebuyers seeking both financial ease and long-term flexibility.

"Public Bank is delighted to collaborate with Gamuda Land to introduce the PB SmartLiving package, which underscores our commitment to supporting Malaysians in achieving their homeownership dreams. This financing solution not only caters to the evolving needs of modern homeowners but also reinforces Public Bank's dedication to delivering value-added services that enhance customers' quality of life," said Public Bank managing director and CEO Tan Sri Dr Tay Ah Lek.

Frontiercity @ Ainsdale Phase 2 units see brisk demand

SEREMBAN: Following the resounding success of Phase 1, Frontiercity @ Ainsdale's Phase 2 is now selling fast, reaffirming its position as the premier commercial hub along the North-South Expressway.

Strategically located near the Seremban R&R and adjacent to the Bandar Ainsdale toll plaza, Frontiercity aims to transform the travel experience with premium dining and retail options, setting a new standard beyond the traditional R&R offerings.

WB Land Group managing director Kevin Woon remarked: "The overwhelming response to Phase 1 and the strong momentum for Phase 2 are a testament to Frontiercity's

potential as a future hub of commerce and connectivity. With its strategic location and premium offerings, Frontiercity is perfectly positioned to cater to the growing demand for modern travel and lifestyle experiences. We are proud to deliver a development that not only meets market needs but also contributes to the region's economic growth."

Phase 2 of Frontiercity showcases Western-inspired architecture with 2- and 3-storey shop offices that combine functionality with modern lifestyle appeal.

In line with its commitment to sustainability, Frontiercity has partnered with ChargeSini to establish Seremban's first public-private EV charging infrastructure.



Bank Negara's benchmark rate remains at 3%

PETALING JAYA: The Monetary Policy Committee of Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) yesterday decided to maintain the Overnight Policy Rate (OPR) at 3%.

In a statement, BNM said global economic growth for 2024 turned out higher than expected, reflecting better outturns in the major economies and stronger global trade. For 2025, the global economy is anticipated to be sustained by positive labour market conditions, moderating inflation and less restrictive monetary policy.

"Global trade is expected to remain broadly sustained, supported by the continued tech upcycle. However, this outlook could be affected by the uncertainty surrounding more trade and investment restrictions. The elevated policy uncertainties could also lead to greater volatility in the global financial markets," the central bank said.

For the Malaysian economy, overall growth for 2024 was within expectations. BNM said the strength in economic activity is expected to be sustained in 2025, driven by resilient domestic expenditure.

"Employment and wage growth, as well as policy measures, including the upward revision of the minimum wage and civil servant salaries, will support household spending. The robust expansion in investment activity will be sustained by the progress of multi-year projects in both the private and public sectors, the continued high realisation of approved investments, as well as the ongoing implementation of catalytic initiatives under the national master plans."

These investments, supported by higher capital imports, will increase exports and expand the productive capacity of the economy, it said.

BNM said headline and core inflation averaged 1.8% in 2024. Going into 2025, inflation is expected to remain manageable amid the easing global cost conditions and the absence of excessive domestic demand pressures.

Global commodity prices meanwhile are expected to continue to trend lower.

In this environment, it said, the overall impact of the recently announced domestic policy reforms on inflation is expected to be contained. Upside risk to inflation would be dependent on the extent of spillover effects of domestic policy measures, as well as global commodity prices and financial market developments.

On currency, the central bank said the ringgit's performance continues to be primarily driven by external factors.

"The narrowing interest rate differentials between Malaysia and the advanced economies is positive for the ringgit. While financial markets could experience bouts of volatility due to global policy uncertainties, Malaysia's favourable economic prospects and domestic structural reforms, complemented by ongoing initiatives to encourage flows, will continue to provide enduring support to the ringgit," said BNM.

At the current OPR level, it added, the monetary policy stance remains supportive of the economy and is consistent with the current assessment of inflation and growth prospects.

New Investment Incentive Framework out by mid-year

■ BY HAYATUN RAZAK
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry and the Malaysian Investment Development Authority will announce the New Investment Incentive Framework (NIIF) by the middle of this year.

Deputy Investment, Trade, and Industry Minister Liew Chin Tong said the NIIF builds on the National Investment Aspiration introduced in 2022.

"This framework evaluates investments based on a six-point scorecard, focusing on factors like economic complexity, job creation, and wage growth. For instance, investments in less-developed states like Kelantan and Terengganu, or those prioritising environmental, social, and governance practices, will score higher," he told reporters after officiating the opening of HSBC's first wealth centre in Malaysia yesterday.

Liew said the framework will shift the focus from only attracting investment volumes to assessing their outcomes. "We aim to

➤ Evaluations will be based on six-point scorecard, focusing on, among others, economic complexity, job creation and wage growth: Liew

generate better economic results, such as higher wages and stronger local supply chains, rather than just counting the ringgit value of investments."

The government is also targeting foreign direct investments (FDI) that boost domestic direct investments (DDI), he said.

"Of course, we want FDI. I mean, we welcome FDI, we welcome domestic investment, but we also want to stress that we want more FDI that will generate stronger DDI. For instance, we want to have investments that create a strong local supply chain," Liew explained.

As part of this shift, he said, the National Semiconductor Strategy sets goals, including developing 10 Malaysian semiconductor companies with annual revenues of

US\$1 billion (RM4.4 billion) each and another 100 companies with annual revenues of RM1 billion.

"These are aspirations, difficult. We understand this is difficult, but this is an opportune time for us to pursue these lofty ideas to position Malaysia as a high-value investment destination," Liew said.

HSBC opened its flagship wealth centre in Malaysia at Menara IQ at the Tun Razak Exchange for HSBC's Premier Elite and high-net-worth clients. HSBC said the opening aligns with the positive growth seen in Malaysia's wealth market, as the country progresses towards achieving high-income status.

According to estimates, the value of liquid assets held by high-net-worth individuals in Malaysia in 2024 stood at US\$176.62 billion and will increase at a compound annual

growth rate of 6.1% from 2024 to 2028.

With Malaysia assuming the Asean chairmanship in 2025, the establishment of the flagship wealth centre also aligns with the region's growing importance as a wealth producer, investment destination, and wealth management market, HSBC said.

The centre was officially opened by Liew and witnessed by HSBC Bank Malaysia CEO Datuk Omar Siddiq and international wealth and premier banking country head Linda Yip.

Yip said Malaysia's strong economic fundamentals provide a foundation for the growing wealth segment, which is important to the country's aspirations to become a high-income nation. "Therefore, the timing is right for HSBC to open its flagship Wealth Centre in Malaysia."

She said HSBC sees increasing demand for more sophisticated and specialised wealth solutions to help customers navigate life's journey and achieve their goals.

HSBC also has wealth centres in mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan.

StashAway optimistic investors will explore opportunities in Bitcoin and Ethereum ETF

■ BY JOHN GILBERT
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: StashAway, Malaysia's leading digital investment platform, expects a portion of its 50,000 clients to explore investment opportunities in its newly introduced Bitcoin and Ethereum exchange-traded funds (ETF) offered through its regulated channel.

StashAway Malaysia country manager Wong Wai Ken (*pic*) said many investors who are sceptical about investing in crypto can now do so confidently through the regulated fund manager, as the platform offers secure, safe, and easy investing in crypto assets.

"We see the market for crypto as positive following the re-election of Donald Trump as US president, which augurs well for the development of crypto."

"Many of our clients have expressed interest in the long-term potential of major cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin but have been hesitant because of security concerns or the complexities of navigating crypto exchanges. We are now offering them a familiar and safe way to diversify their

portfolios by incorporating crypto through a platform they already know and trust," he said at a media briefing yesterday.

According to news reports, the US Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) new leadership has created a task force to develop a regulatory framework for crypto assets, in the first major move by Trump's new administration to overhaul crypto policy.

Trump, who campaigned on promises to be a "crypto president", has pledged to reverse an industry crackdown under former president Joe Biden's SEC, which sued multiple crypto companies, including Coinbase, opens new tab and Kraken, alleging they had flouted its rules.

The reports noted that the task force's focus will be to help SEC draw clear regulatory lines, provide realistic paths to registration, craft sensible disclosure frameworks, and deploy enforcement resources judiciously.

StashAway's launch of Bitcoin



and Ethereum ETF comes at a pivotal moment in the crypto market, marked by growing institutional adoption as the price of Bitcoin crosses the US\$100,000 (RM444,000) milestone.

With the newly inaugurated Trump 2.0 administration signalling support for crypto-friendly regulations, investors have shown renewed interest in this new and growing asset class.

Wong said that despite the growing adoption of cryptocurrencies by mainstream and institutional investors, many individuals remain cautious due to the complexities involved, such as the risk of losing funds if a private key for their crypto wallet is lost or compromised.

Crypto exchanges also often have complex fee structures, including trading fees, withdrawal fees, and gas fees which can fluctuate unpredictably. However, on the positive side, multiple studies have shown that a small allocation to Bitcoin in a diversified portfolio

can enhance long-term returns without heightening volatility.

Over the long term, a 5% allocation to Bitcoin in a traditional 60/40 portfolio can uplift returns while improving the risk-to-reward ratio.

To help investors manage their crypto exposure more easily and securely, StashAway is adding Bitcoin and Ethereum ETF to its Flexible Portfolios.

This existing feature lets clients customise their own portfolios from over 70 ETF across various asset classes. With the addition, investors can create diversified portfolios that include both crypto and traditional assets such as equities, bonds, and gold.

In line with StashAway's fee structure, Flexible Portfolios offer a clear and simple annual management fee ranging from 0.2% to 0.8%, with no lock-in period or minimum investment requirement. For portfolios containing only a single ETF, the management fee is a flat 0.3% per year.

The crypto ETF available in Flexible Portfolios – Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund and Fidelity Ethereum Fund – carry an annual expense ratio of 0.25%.

Malaysia's inflation slows to 1.7% in December

Driven by more moderate increases in non-food items

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia's inflation moderated to 1.7% in December 2024 with the consumer price index (CPI) standing at 133.4 as against 131.2 in the same month of the previous year.

Inflation in December 2024 was driven by a slower increase in the main groups of personal care, social protection & miscellaneous goods & services (3.2%); recreation, sport & culture (1.7%); health (1.1%) and furnishings, household equipment & routine household maintenance (0.4%).

Meanwhile, inflation for restaurant & accommodation services and food & beverages increased at a higher rate of 2.9% and 2.7% compared to 2.8% and 2.6% respectively in November 2024.

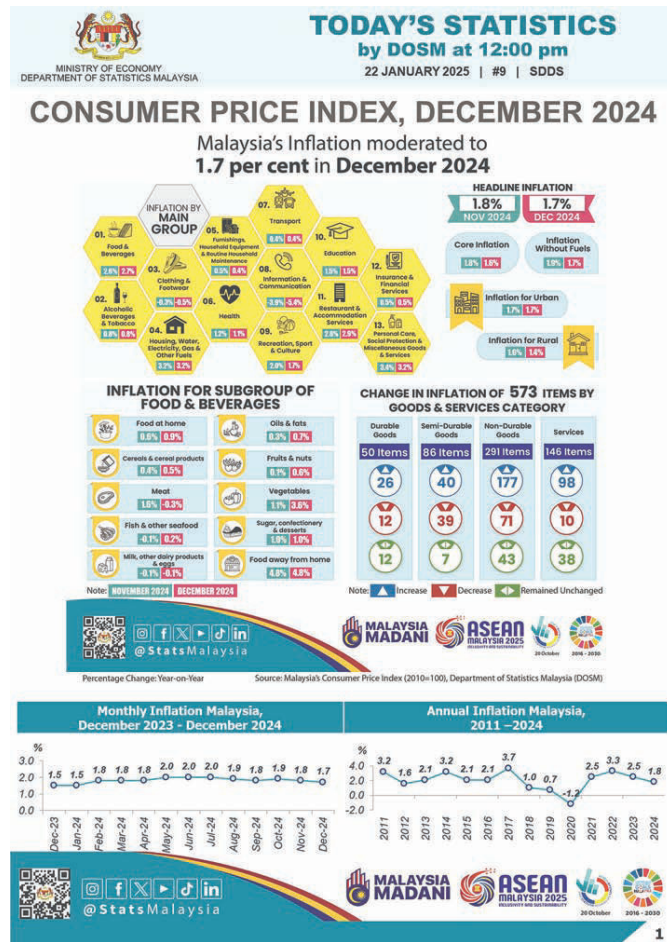
Chief Statistician Malaysia, Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin said, inflation for information & communication continued to decrease to negative 5.4% in December 2024 (November 2024: -3.9%). This was due to the decline for main subgroup of information & communication services at negative 6.4% (November 2024: -4.4%).

Clothing & footwear remained in negative territory and posted negative 0.5% (November 2024: -0.3%). Meanwhile, housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels (3.2%); education (1.5%); alcoholic beverages & tobacco (0.8%); insurance & financial services (0.5%) and transport (0.4%) increased at the same rate as in the previous month.

The food & beverages group which contributes 29.8% to the total CPI weight increased by 2.7% in December 2024 (November 2024: 2.6%). The main subgroup of food at home increased by 0.9% (November 2024: 0.6%) due to the inflation in the expenditure class of vegetables which recorded an increase of 3.6% (November 2024: 1.1%).

Apart from that, the main subgroup of food away from home increased 4.8%, the same rate as in the previous month.

Furthermore, inflation for transport remained at 0.4% in December 2024 as compared to November 2024. The increase was contributed by main subgroup of operation of personal transport equipment which increased 1% in December 2024



New journey ahead for airports as privatisation of MAHB nears completion

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) is closer to privatisation, with the deal now nearly finalised as it reached 86.5% acceptances, said a foreign bank analyst.

He said the 90% threshold was set as the offerors intended to get the company delisted. "It was the level that made the most sense although the acceptance level can be reduced at any time," he told Bernama.

Regardless, the reduction remains within the takeover code, he said. Gateway Development Alliance (GDA) and its shareholders' (the consortium) right to lower the acceptance condition is clearly stated in Section 2.2(iii) of the offer document dated Dec 6, 2024.

GDA is in compliance with the Securities Commission Malaysia's Takeovers, Mergers and Compulsory Acquisitions Rules. This includes the downward revision of the acceptance condition for the MAHB offer threshold for shareholder acceptance to 85%, as announced by the consortium on Jan 20, 2025 which was conducted in full compliance with Note 7 to Paragraph 6.01 of the Rules on Takeovers, Mergers, and Compulsory Acquisitions issued by the SC.

This revision requires that the offer remains open for a minimum of 14 days following the announcement, which sets the new closing date to Feb 4, 2025.

Additionally, it allows shareholders who have already accepted the offer to withdraw their acceptances within eight days of the revision, specifically by Jan 28, 2025.

"It is just a matter of time before MAHB gets delisted since there are not many shares left available for trading.

"Now that the offer is unconditional and at 86%, MAHB is likely to be removed from MSCI and other indices, triggering the remaining acceptances from index funds," said an industry expert.

Index funds hold about 4.0% of MAHB, thus the consortium's ownership would jump from 86% to 90%, meeting the requirement to delist MAHB.

The consortium expects to declare the offer unconditional and remains confident that total acceptances would exceed 90% and that MAHB would be delisted from Bursa Malaysia.

He said the delisting should free up more capital, which could flow into other blue chip companies and play into other themes such as data centres and energy transition.

The privatisation comes at a crucial time as the under-investment and deteriorating service at MAHB over the years are clear indication that they need a new strategy to transform the group.

"I believe investors are largely in line with this view as demonstrated by the high acceptance level of the deal," he said.

He believes that the immediate focus for the airport would be to get the aerotrain up and running as soon as possible.

In addition, the commercial space reset is also a priority to increase non-aero revenue, he said.

"I believe the consortium will have to create a long-term strategy for the airport group in order to set proper investments and returns for the group," he said.

He noted that such a transformation is expected to improve MAHB's competitive edge in the regional aviation sector.

US\$115.5b international reserves on Jan 15:BNM

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's international reserves stood at US\$115.5 billion (RM512.8 billion) as at Jan 15, 2025, compared to US\$116.2 billion as at Dec 31, 2024, according to Bank Negara Malaysia.

The central bank said the reserves position is sufficient to finance 4.9 months of imports of goods and services and is 1.0 times the total short-term external debt. - Bernama

MNRB delivers strong performance in Q3'25

PETALING JAYA: MNRB Holdings Bhd delivered a sustained strong performance across its business segments for the third quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q3'25).

MNRB's notable performance was reflected in the significant increase in its annualised return on equity, which rose year-on-year to 12.2% from 9.6%.

For Q3'25, the group posted a net profit of RM115.9 million, marking a 37% increase from RM84.6 million in the same period last year. Revenue in the quarter grew 15.8% to RM936.7 million from RM808.6 million in the previous corresponding period, contributed mainly by growth in the reinsurance and general takaful segments.

For the first nine months of financial year 2025, MNRB's group net profit reached RM300.8 million, marking a robust 54%

growth, compared to RM195.7 million in the same period last year. The group recorded RM2.9 billion revenue, an 11.5% increase over the RM2.6 billion in the previous corresponding period.

MNRB chairman Datuk Johar Che Mat said: "MNRB has maintained a robust performance in Q3 FY2025, reflecting the effectiveness in aligning our strategic vision to the successful execution of key initiatives which focuses on profitable growth."

Malaysian Reinsurance Bhd (Malaysian Re), the group's wholesale reinsurance/retakaful segment, continued its strong performance in Q3'25 by recording a net profit of RM257.3 million, a remarkable 65.1% increase from RM155.8 million in Q3'24.

Malaysian Re's insurance/takaful revenue increased by 16.7% to RM1.4 billion from

recorded inflation below the national inflation level of 1.7%. However, inflation for five states were above the national inflation level, namely, Penang (2.6%), Pahang (2.3%), Selangor (2%), Johor (1.8%) and Sarawak (1.8%).

RM1.2 billion, mainly due to growth in foreign risk transfer facilities, voluntary cession and domestic treaties.

The group's retail takaful segments, Takaful Ikhlas General Bhd and Takaful Ikhlas Family Bhd, collectively known as Takaful Ikhlas, recorded a net profit of RM49.4 million as compared to RM51.7 million in the same period last year. The net profit was contributed predominantly by the general takaful segment, which recorded increase in takaful revenue mainly from the motor and fire classes.

Takaful Ikhlas' revenue remained strong at RM1.1 billion, driven primarily by its general takaful segment.

Johar disclosed that Malaysian Re recently received approval from Bank Negara Malaysia to renew its voluntary cessions for three years, starting from Jan 1, 2025.

EdgePoint Towers, Sunway in landmark 5G deployment

► Companies collaborate to install Malaysia's first such indoor network in a commercial building

KUALA LUMPUR: EdgePoint Towers Sdn Bhd (part of EdgePoint Infrastructure), an Asean-based independent telecommunications infrastructure company in partnership with the Sunway Group, have deployed Malaysia's first indoor 5G network in a commercial building.

This future-ready in-building coverage solutions (IBC) is an extension of Sunway's telecommunications infrastructure upgrade to improve connectivity in its prime commercial areas in Sunway City, which includes the Sunway Pyramid Mall & Convention Centre and the Sunway Medical Centre.

As part of the collaboration, EdgePoint deployed active in building solutions to complement the existing Passive Distributed Antenna System (DAS) in-building solutions, which will enhance 4G coverage with high speed 5G coverage. The initial trial comprises 5G-enabled hotspot coverage at selected high-traffic areas around the food and beverage outlets, restaurants and cafes.

Plans for the year include further expansion of 5G coverage throughout the mall towards ensuring faster, seamless connectivity for all the mall's visitors and businesses.

EdgePoint Towers CEO Muniff Kamaruddin said, "EdgePoint has enjoyed a mutually

beneficial relationship with the Sunway Group, and this collaboration to upgrade Sunway Group's buildings with 5G ready technology is a natural next step for us. We hope that the success of this initiative will serve as an effective 5G solution use case for other large and multi-purpose commercial businesses who are serious about stepping up connectivity, user experiences and productivity levels within their properties. We look forward to continuing to play a key role driving 5G adoption throughout the Klang Valley."

Sunway Digital Wave Sdn Bhd CEO Anandan Balakrishnan said, "As one of Southeast Asia's leading conglomerates, our goal is to build sustainable townships and communities by finding innovative ways to create enriching, safe and connected environments within them. Fast, reliable and seamless connectivity is key to realising that vision and enabling our plans to support businesses, customers and residents within Sunway City."

He added EdgePoint's future-ready customisable in-building systems, and their operational readiness made them the ideal partner to achieve their shared vision of creating a well-connected environment for everyone.

The installation of the IBC systems and adoption of 5G network technology builds upon Sunway's continuous digital transformation journey - effectively meeting indoor the growing needs of all their tenants, clients and also visitors, he said.

"Our priority is to ensure that our customers have access to all modern-day conveniences afforded by high-speed internet connectivity. For now, users of Malaysia's largest mobile network operator will be able to enjoy seamless 5G connectivity, and by year end all shoppers at Sunway Pyramid mall will enjoy the experience of unlimited, ubiquitous 5G. This being the first commercial building to provide seamless indoor 5G connectivity is a nice coincidence, and we are proud to be part of this collaboration," added Anandhan.

Muniff concluded, "We are glad to partner the industry's leading players to deliver this national first. This collaboration reiterates our continued commitment to supporting businesses and the nation towards having one of the best-performing and most reliable 5G networks in the world. From ensuring nationwide network coverage to deploying highly specialised and targeted 5G solutions tailored to the needs of one of Malaysia's largest conglomerates, the Sunway Group, our efforts do not stop here."

EdgePoint Infrastructure is the fastest growing multi-country tower company with scale in Asean with 15,600 sites in its portfolio, and is the second largest tower company in Malaysia.

Sunway REIT buys Aeon Mall Seri Manjung for RM138m

PETALING JAYA: Sunway REIT Management Sdn Bhd, the manager of Sunway Real Estate Investment Trust (Sunway REIT), reported that on Jan 20, RHB Trustees Bhd, the trustee of Sunway REIT had entered into a conditional sale and purchase agreement (SPA) with Kar Sin Bhd and YNH Hospitality Sdn Bhd, the subsidiaries of YNH Property Bhd, to acquire Aeon Mall Seri Manjung in Manjung, Perak for RM138 million.

Upon completion of the proposed acquisition, Sunway REIT's assets under management (AUM) will increase to RM10.8 billion, solidifying its position as the second largest listed REIT in Malaysia, measured by AUM.

Sunway REIT Management Sdn Bhd CEO Clement Chen said Aeon Mall Sri Manjung will provide them with stable long-term rental income through the lease with Aeon which has been recently renewed till 2037.

"We are confident with the prospects of the property as it has established itself as the dominant leading mall serving the surrounding areas of Manjung, Sitiawan and Lumut with the eclectic tenant mix curated by Aeon over the years satisfying the local community's requirements."

In the longer term, he added, they believe that the vicinity of the property will benefit from the completion of the WCE which will further improve accessibility and potentially attract more frequent patrons from Teluk Intan or Beruas.

He said economic activities in the area will also benefit from state sponsored projects like the Lumut Maritime Terminal 2 and the proposed Lumut Maritime Industrial City which are expected to attract significant investments, catalysing economic growth in the locality.

Barring any unforeseen circumstances, the proposed acquisition is expected to be completed by Q2'25.

Asian Supply Base's new facility will enhance crew change process

LABUAN: The Asian Supply Base (ASB) has launched a new crew change facility designed to streamline the signing-on and signing-off for oil and gas (O&G) crew, marking a significant advancement in offshore operations in Malaysia.

The facility was jointly inaugurated by Labuan Member of Parliament Datuk Dr Suhaili Abdul Rahman and Labuan Corporation CEO Mohd Sukuran Taib.

Suhaili who is also Asian Supply Base Sdn Bhd chairman emphasised ASB's important pivotal role as a reliable supply base for the O&G sector, particularly in Sabah waters.

"ASB is investing RM25 million into the development of this standalone facility, which is set to be completed by November 2025.

"Following a gazettelement by the home minister on Dec 16, 2024, ASB has been officially recognised as an authorised landing place and point of entry for work pass holders in the O&G industry, as issued by the Sabah immigration director," he told Bernama after the launch of the facility at the site yesterday.

This facility marks a major step in simplifying the crew change process for offshore operations, enabling ASB to serve as a designated immigration point, he added.

Suhaili said the temporary terminal crew change at ASB is now equipped with immigration services, which was made possible through the support from the Sabah and Labuan Immigration Department, ensuring smooth and regulated crew movements.

Keyfield completes solar PV system on work barge

KUALA LUMPUR: Keyfield International Bhd has completed its pilot solar photovoltaic (PV) project onboard its largest vessel Keyfield Wisdom (formerly known as Blooming Wisdom), a 500-men accommodation work barge.

The project was undertaken in collaboration with Worldwide Holdings Bhd, the turnkey project contractor who is renowned for its expertise in energy efficiency and sustainability.

Recently commissioned, the solar PV system involves the installation of a 121.2kWp solar hybrid system with battery energy storage system which reduces Keyfield Wisdom's reliance on onboard generator sets, thereby reducing its fuel consumption and cutting carbon emissions. Malaysia Book of Records has also certified Keyfield Wisdom for having the most solar panels with battery storage onboard an offshore vessel.

Keyfield's Group chief operating officer and executive director Mohd Erwan Ahmad said, "We are extremely thrilled that this solar PV system is now fully completed and operational. It demonstrates our commitment to advancing sustainability within the maritime industry while representing a significant step forward in our group's Environmental, Social and Governance journey. By adopting innovative solutions to greenify our assets within the space confines of our vessel(s), we aim to contribute to global climate action while continuously achieving long-term operational excellence."

He added that the solar PV project is part of their broader strategy to enhance energy efficiency in their operations.

"We undertook this project at our own initiative as we understand that it aligns well with the sustainability agenda of our clients such as Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd and Sarawak Shell Bhd/Sabah Shell Petroleum Co Ltd. It will reduce their operational costs when they are chartering our vessels which are equipped with such a system," he said.



The successful feat also earned Keyfield a spot in the Malaysia Book of Records.

Worldwide chief operating officer (renewable energy division) Alif Shah said, "As Keyfield's EPCC (Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Commissioning) partner, we played a crucial role in delivering this sustainable solution, demonstrating our commitment to advancing green energy initiatives and supporting the maritime industry to adopt cleaner and greener practices. From conception to inception and completion, the project was executed with exceptional precision."

He added one of the challenges for this project was the time factor.

Due to its chartering commitments to its clients, Keyfield Wisdom was only available for us to carry out the work when it was berthed in Labuan while undergoing its periodic maintenance works. Nevertheless, we managed to complete the project 15 days ahead of schedule, reflecting the effective co-ordination and dedication of all parties involved. The recognition from Malaysia Book of Records was the icing on the cake," he said.

Trump delivers fresh tariff threats against EU, China

➤ Memo calls for April 1 reports on deficits, trade remedies

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Tuesday vowed to hit the European Union (EU) with tariffs and said his administration was discussing a 10% punitive duty on Chinese imports because fentanyl is being sent from China to the US via Mexico and Canada.

Trump voiced his latest tariff threats in remarks to reporters at the White House a day after taking office without immediately imposing tariffs as he had promised during his campaign.

Financial markets and trade groups exhaled briefly on Tuesday, but his latest comments underscored Trump's longstanding desire for broader duties and a new Feb 1 deadline for 25% tariffs against Canada and Mexico, as well as duties on China and the EU.

Trump said the EU and other countries also had troubling trade surpluses with the United States.

"The European Union is very, very bad to us," he said, repeating comments made on Monday. "So they're going to be in for tariffs. It's the only way ... you're going to get fairness."

Trump said on Monday that he was considering imposing the duties on Canada and Mexico unless they clamped down on the

trafficking of illegal migrants and fentanyl, including precursor chemicals from China, across their US borders.

Trump had previously threatened a 10% duty on Chinese imports because of the trade, but realigned that with the Feb 1 deadline.

White House trade adviser Peter Navarro told CNBC early on Tuesday that Trump's Canada and Mexico tariff threat was to pressure the two countries to stop illegal migrants and illicit drugs from entering the US.

"The reason why he's considering 25, 25 and 10 (%), or whatever it's going to be, on Canada, Mexico and China, is because 300 Americans die every day" from fentanyl overdoses, Navarro said.

Trump on Monday announced a sweeping immigration crackdown, including a broad ban on asylum.

Trump on Monday signed a broad trade memorandum ordering federal agencies to complete comprehensive reviews of a range of trade issues by April 1.

These include analyses of persistent US trade deficits, unfair trade practices and currency manipulation among partner countries, including China.

Trump's memo asked for recommendations on remedies, including a "global supplemental tariff", and changes to the US\$800 de minimis duty-free exemption for low-value shipments often blamed for illicit imports of fentanyl precursor chemicals.

The reviews ordered create some breathing room to resolve reported disagreements among Trump's Cabinet nominees over how to approach his promises of universal tariffs and duties on Chinese goods of up to 60%.

Trump's more measured approach to tariffs fuelled a rally in US stocks that pushed the benchmark S&P 500 index to its highest level in a month, though Trump's new salvo on China and the European Union may deflate that momentum.

Trump likely "decided to go a little slower and also to make sure he has as firm a legal foundation as he can get for these kinds of actions", said William Reinsch, a trade expert at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"He's figuring out how to best use his leverage to get what he wants."

Mexico and Canada struck conciliatory tones in response to Trump's Feb 1 deadline.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said that she would emphasise Mexico's sovereignty and independence and would respond to US actions "step by step". - Reuters



Trump gesturing as Altman speaks next to Son and Ellison at the Roosevelt room at White House. - REUTERS/SPIC

OpenAI, SoftBank, Oracle team up for US\$500b AI project

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced a private sector investment of up to US\$500 billion (RM2.2 trillion) to fund infrastructure for artificial intelligence, aiming to outpace rival nations in the business-critical technology.

Trump said that ChatGPT's creator OpenAI, SoftBank and Oracle are planning a joint venture called Stargate, which he said will build data centres and create more than 100,000 jobs in the United States.

These companies, along with other equity backers of Stargate, have committed US\$100 billion for immediate deployment, with the remaining investment expected to occur over the next four years.

SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman and Oracle chairman Larry Ellison joined Trump at the White House for the launch.

The first of the project's data centres are

already under construction in Texas, Ellison said at the press conference.

Twenty will be built, half a million square feet each, he said.

The project could power AI that analyses electronic health records and helps doctors care for their patients, Ellison said.

The executives gave Trump credit for the news. "We wouldn't have decided to do this unless you won," Son told Trump.

"For AGI to get built here, we wouldn't be able to do this without you, Mr President," said Altman, referring to more powerful technology called artificial general intelligence.

It was not immediately clear whether the announcement was an update to a previously reported venture.

In March 2024, *The Information* website reported OpenAI and Microsoft were working on plans for a US\$100 billion data centre project

that would include an AI supercomputer also called "Stargate" set to launch in 2028.

The announcement on Trump's second day in office follows the rolling back of former President Joe Biden's executive order on AI, that was intended to reduce the risks that AI poses to consumers, workers and national security.

AI requires enormous computing power, pushing demand for specialised data centres that enable tech companies to link thousands of chips together in clusters.

"They have to produce a lot of electricity, and we'll make it possible for them to get that production done very easily at their own plants if they want," Trump said.

As power consumption rises from data centres and the electrification of transportation and buildings, half the US is at increased risk of power supply shortfalls in the next decade, the North American Electric Reliability Corp said. - Reuters

Zomato posts Q3 profit slump on stiff competition

NEW DELHI: Indian food delivery company Zomato's third-quarter profit more than halved, as rising competition in the quick commerce space and increased spending on opening more fulfilment centres for its Blinkit platform weighed on margins.

Net profit fell 57% to 590 million rupees (RM30 million) in the quarter ended Dec 31, from 1.38 billion rupees a year ago.

Zomato's quick commerce platform Blinkit was a drag on profit. The segment's adjusted core loss widened to 1.03 billion rupees from last year's loss of 890 million rupees, even as orders surged.

Blinkit, a leader in India's quick commerce space with a 46% market share, is facing fierce competition from rival Swiggy's Instamart, start-up Zepto and deep-pocketed rivals such as Walmart-backed Flipkart and Tata Group's BigBasket.

"Heightened competition has led to a pause in margin expansion in the business", Blinkit CEO Albinder Dhindsa said in a statement, but added that it was "expected" and likely to be temporary.

Blinkit has through the year ramped up discounts and free deliveries, while investing in expanding the number of "dark stores" and distribution warehouses, used to ship orders in urban centres.

The company's third-quarter revenue rose 64% to 54.05 billion rupees, as the period included festivals like Christmas and Deepavali, where Indians typically splurge on everything from sweets and snacks to clothing.

Revenue in its food delivery business increased nearly 22% in the quarter, while revenue from Blinkit surged more than two-fold. - Reuters

Australia earmarks A\$2 billion for 'green' aluminium

SYDNEY: Australia will reward power-guzzling aluminium smelters that use renewable electricity instead of coal, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said as he unveiled a A\$2 billion (RM5.3 billion) green metals plan.

Australia is the world's sixth largest producer of the in-demand metal, according to officials, which is used in everything from aeroplane parts to soft-drink cans.

Aluminium ore is refined in hulking smelters that suck up almost 10% of Australia's electricity, analysts say, a process that has long relied on polluting coal-fired power.

Production credits worth A\$2 billion have been earmarked for companies that instead produce "green" aluminium using renewable electricity, Albanese said.

"Increasingly the world is looking to import clean, reliable metals like Australian-made aluminium."

"Which represents a massive opportunity for growth in a decarbonising global economy."

Companies will be able to claim a to-be-determined amount for every tonne of "clean" aluminium they produce over the next 10 years.

With almost all of Australia's coal plants slated to close over the next decade, a number of smelters have already begun switching to renewable energy.

Aluminium is the world's second-biggest metals industry behind steel, according to the World Economic Forum. - AFP

NEW YORK: Netflix reaffirmed its dominance of the streaming video market on Tuesday, as its mixture of live sporting events, popular returning series – and singular moments, such as a football halftime performance by Beyoncé – helped attract a record number of subscribers over the holiday quarter.

The company added 18.9 million subscribers in its fourth quarter to bring its total global subscriber base to nearly 302 million customers – a number that dwarfs its Hollywood streaming rivals.

Netflix sought to capitalise on its popularity by raising prices in the US, Canada, Portugal and Argentina as it spends more on programming.

In the United States, the company's ad-supported service will cost US\$7.99 a month, up from US\$6.99, while the premium package will cost US\$24.99, up 9% from existing pricing.

Investors reacted enthusiastically to the results, sending Netflix's stock surging about 13% in extended trade, lifting its stock market value by almost US\$50 billion.

Over the last year, Netflix shares have gained more than 77%, outpacing the S&P 500's 24% rise.

"Netflix reaffirms its leadership position and is absolutely running away in the streaming market," said Paolo Pescatore of PP Foresight.

"It is now flexing its muscles by adjusting prices given its far stronger and diversified programming slate compared to rivals."

Netflix adds record number of subscribers

▶ Streaming giant says it will raise prices in US, Canada, Portugal and Argentina

The firm said its fourth-quarter programming slate surpassed its own expectations, with viewers bingeing on the second season of its dystopian survival thriller *Squid Game*, which the company said is on track to become one of its most-watched original series.

Netflix's deepening investment in live-streamed events is drawing tens of millions of viewers.

The heavyweight boxing match between Jake Paul and Mike Tyson in November attracted 65 million streams.

The two National Football League games on Christmas Day, one featuring Beyoncé's halftime performance, brought in an average of 30 million global viewers, ranking among the most-streamed competitions in league history.

"To state the obvious, it's content

that drives users to streaming services," said Forrester Research Director Mike Proulx.

"With the biggest bump in subscribers ever, Netflix's attention to quality content is the reason for an overall strong year and fourth quarter."

Netflix said it has shaken off the impacts of Covid-19 and the 2023 Hollywood writers' and actors' strikes, and is delivering returning seasons of its most popular shows, including the Addams Family series *Wednesday* and the supernatural *Stranger Things*.

It will also broadcast more live events, including weekly installments of WWE *Monday Night Raw* wrestling.

It secured the rights for the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2027 and 2031, a deal which it says illustrates

its strategy to deliver special-events programming, rather than regular season sports packages.

Such live events are attractive to advertisers, because they draw audiences that watch in real time.

"We exceeded our ads revenue target in the fourth quarter," said Netflix Co-CEO Greg Peters, adding: "We doubled our ads revenue year over year last year. We expect to double it again this year."

The company said the ad-supported version of its service accounts for 55% of its new sign-ups in countries where it is available.

Macquarie Equity Research analyst Tim Nollen predicted that ad revenue will increase to US\$2 billion this year, as more people sign up for the firm's advertising-supported tier and advertising technology matures.

This quarter will also mark the last time Netflix reports subscriber additions, as the company emphasises other performance metrics including revenue and profit – a change analysts attribute to slowing subscriber growth. – Reuters

Chevron keen on Greece hydrocarbon exploration

ATHENS: US oil producer Chevron has expressed an interest in exploring for hydrocarbons in Greece, southwest of the Peloponnese peninsula and up to the west of the island of Crete, the Greek Energy Ministry said.

The ministry added in a statement that it would issue a decision this week on the exact area of exploration and would launch an international tender soon.

"It is a very important development, part of our national strategy for energy independence and reducing energy costs," the ministry said.

Chevron did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The existing research areas for exploration would eventually be increased by 25%, or by 11,000 square kilometres, government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis said.

Greece, which views gas as a transition fuel as it ramps up renewables capacity, has produced small quantities of oil in the past and has attempted to explore its hydrocarbon potential.

In October, the country said that an ExxonMobil-led consortium would move to the second phase of seismic research for gas exploration in a block off Crete.

The ministry said that Chevron's interest, while ExxonMobil is already active in the country, showed that Greece can play a leading role in the global energy market. – Reuters



Greenpeace activists holding a banner as they protest in the main hall of the Congress Centre during the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos. – AFP/IC

EU: Facebook, X, YouTube to do more against online hate speech

BRUSSELS: Meta's Facebook, Elon Musk's X, Google's YouTube and other tech companies have agreed to do more to tackle online hate speech under an updated code of conduct that will now be integrated into EU tech rules, the European Commission said.

Other signatories to the voluntary code set up in May 2016 are Dailymotion, Instagram, Jeuxvideo.com, LinkedIn, Microsoft hosted consumer services, Snapchat, Rakuten Viber, TikTok and Twitch.

"In Europe there is no place for illegal hate, either offline or online. I welcome the stakeholders' commitment to a strengthened Code of conduct under the Digital Services Act (DSA)," EU tech commissioner Henna Virkkunen said in a statement.

The DSA requires tech companies to do more to combat illegal and harmful content on their platforms.

Under the revised code, the firms pledged to allow not-for-profit or public entities with expertise on illegal hate speech to monitor how they review hate speech notices, and to assess at least two thirds of these notices received from them within 24 hours.

The companies will also take measures, such as the use of automatic detection tools to reduce hate speech on their platforms, and provide information on the role of recommendation systems and the organic and algorithmic reach of illegal content prior to its removal.

They will present country-level data broken down by the internal classification of hate speech such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation. – Reuters

Oxfam warns of emerging 'aristocratic oligarchy'

DAVOS: A leading NGO warned of an emerging "aristocratic oligarchy" with massive political clout and primed to profit from Donald Trump's presidency, as global elites meet at the World Economic Forum in Davos for their annual confab.

Global charity Oxfam said in a report that Trump's election win and tax-cut plans are a boon to billionaires, whose combined wealth already grew by another US\$2 trillion (RM8.9 trillion) last year to US\$15 trillion.

"Trillions are being gifted in inheritance, creating a new aristocratic

oligarchy that has immense power in our politics and our economy," Oxfam said in its traditional annual report on the super rich.

The organisation echoed similar language used last week by outgoing US president Joe Biden, who sounded the alarm about an extremely wealthy oligarchy that "literally threatens our entire democracy".

Oxfam pointed out that Tesla and X owner Elon Musk helped to bankroll Trump's campaign.

"The crown jewel of this oligarchy is a billionaire president, backed and

bought by the world's richest man Elon Musk, running the world's largest economy," said the charity's executive director Amitabh Behar.

"We present this report as a stark wake up-call that ordinary people the world over are being crushed by the enormous wealth of a tiny few."

The report, titled *Takers Not Makers*, found that 204 new billionaires emerged last year – almost four every week – to bring the total to 2,769.

Total billionaire wealth grew three times faster last year than in 2023, each billionaire seeing their fortune increase

by US\$2 million per day on average.

And, according to Oxfam, five trillionaires could emerge in a decade.

Trump's election "gave a huge further boost to billionaire fortunes, while his policies are set to fan the flames of inequality further", Oxfam said.

In the US, "we are in a situation where you can buy a country, with the risk of weakening democracy," said head of Oxfam France Cecile Dufflot.

The world's three richest men are Musk, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg, whose Meta empire owns Facebook and WhatsApp. – AFP

British banks resist mortgage rate hikes

➤ Lenders competing strongly to secure new home loan business

LONDON: Britain's banks are accepting smaller profit margins and bigger risks on UK mortgage lending as stress in sterling money markets continues, industry sources said, with appetite to lend greater than worries about higher funding costs.

The cost for banks of hedging their mortgage lending via products known as swaps has risen as a spike in UK government borrowing costs to multi-decade highs has kindled fears Britain may struggle to meet its fiscal rules.

While investors are demanding bigger returns to hold UK sovereign debt, major banks are for now still willing to lend through the malaise without immediately passing on higher costs to customers seeking home loans, the industry sources said.

One source at a major UK lender said the mortgage market remained very competitive and banks were prepared to swallow lower asset margins and wider liability margins on lending to keep activity levels high.

Lloyds Banking Group, NatWest, HSBC,

Barclays and Britain's biggest building society Nationwide are continuing to jostle for a bigger slice of Britain's mortgage market, with such assets typically providing consistent income streams to offset bank balance sheet liabilities, including interest-bearing deposit accounts.

House prices dropped unexpectedly by 0.2% in December for the first time since March, figures from mortgage lender Halifax showed.

Prices ended the year 3.3% higher, a lower annual rise than the 4.2% forecast in a Reuters poll of economists.

Some analysts say those falls could stimulate housing market activity this year, but other data show borrowers remain worried about possible hikes in the cost of mortgage debt.

According to a Barclays *Property Insights* report published last week, consumers' confidence in their ability to afford their rental and mortgage payments dropped three percentage points to 52% in December, the lowest level in 2024.

Rachel Springall, finance expert at Moneyfacts, said lenders still needed to make efforts to entice new business.

"There are millions of borrowers due to come off fixed deals, so remortgage activity will be booming in 2025," she said.

Banks use swaps to manage the risks of their mortgage lending.

The price of two-year swaps has risen to 4.6%, the highest since July 2024, while

five-year swaps have risen to 4.52%, the highest since November 2023.

Average five-year mortgage rates are at 5.27% compared to 5.25% on Jan 1.

News of the banking sector's sanguine approach to mortgage lending will be welcomed by Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, as they battle to meet fiscal targets and reassure international investors the UK is still a safe, rewarding bet.

The annual rate of inflation slowed last month to 2.5%, soothing markets and providing some relief for policymakers.

Sustained gradual increases in swap rates have chipped away at profit margins on mortgages but lenders continue to compete hard for business, despite the rising cost of funds, said David Hollingworth, Associate Director at L&C Mortgages.

"The inflation figures today will help give a bit more positivity and a further element of stability into mortgage rates as it will firm up the hopes for a cut in base rate next month."

HSBC cut mortgage rates on Jan 6 by up to 0.47% for existing customers, and also made further downward changes on Jan 13 to select products.

"We frequently review mortgage rates, and a number of factors are taken into account when setting them, but we remain focused on continuing to provide competitive rates," a HSBC spokesman said. – Reuters

Spain plans ban on home purchases by non-EU buyers

MADRID: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez proposed to ban people outside the European Union (EU) from buying housing in the country, as part of his drive to ease an affordable-homes crisis.

The plan followed the Socialist leader's proposal last week to slap a tax of up to 100% on such property deals in a country struggling with strong demand and soaring prices.

"We are going to propose to ban non-EU foreigners from buying houses in our country, in cases where neither they nor their families reside here and they are just speculating with those homes," Sanchez told a gathering of his Socialist party in the western Extremadura region.

Announcing a list of proposed measures last week, he vowed to offer more social housing, improve regulation and provide more support to renters.

He blamed the crisis on measures passed by the conservative Popular Party when it was in government during the financial crisis that erupted in 2008.

Announcing his 12-point programme to alleviate the crisis, the prime minister said non-residents from outside the European Union bought around 27,000 houses and apartments in Spain in 2023.

According to real estate registry data, Britons led the way for foreign property buyers in 2023 with 9.5% of the total transactions by non-Spaniards.

Sanchez has also announced higher taxes and tighter regulation for tourist apartments, often blamed for reducing the availability of residential properties and causing rents to spike. – AFP

French champagne shipments hit by gloomy consumer mood

PARIS: French champagne shipments fell by nearly 10% last year as economic and political uncertainties hit consumers' appetite for the sparkling wine in key markets such as France and the United States, the producers association said.

Producers had called in July for a cut in the number of grapes harvested this year after sales fell more than 15% in the first half of 2024.

Full year shipments were down 9.2% from 2023 at 271.4 million bottles, the Comite Champagne (Champagne Committee) said.

"Champagne is a real barometer of the state of mind of consumers," Maxime Toubart, president of the Syndicat General des Vignerons and co-president of the committee, said in a statement.

"It is not time to celebrate given inflation, conflicts across the world, economic uncertainties and political wait-and-see in some of the largest champagne markets, such as France and the United States."

The French market made up 118.2 million bottles, down 7.2% compared to 2023, which the association put down to prevailing economic and political "gloom" in the country.

Champagne exports also fell, with just 153.2 million bottles shipped, down 10.8% compared to 2023.

"It is in less favourable periods that we must prepare for the future, maintain our environmental (standards) trajectory, conquer new markets and new consumers," said Champagne Committee co-president David Chatillon. – Reuters



A Commerzbank logo at the bank headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany. – REUTERS/SPIC

Commerzbank considers cutting thousands of jobs: Report

BERLIN: Commerzbank is exploring cutting thousands of jobs as it seeks to fend off an unwanted approach from Italy's UniCredit, the *Financial Times* newspaper reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

The plans that are not yet finalised, were expected to be unveiled to the workers' council over the coming weeks, it added.

Commerzbank did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment outside regular business hours.

Commerzbank's supervisory board chairman Jens Weidmann said there is little chance for an amicable merger with UniCredit after the Italian bank's surprise purchase of a large stake in the

German lender, Germany's business newspaper *Handelsblatt* reported earlier this week.

UniCredit now controls around 28% of the shares in Commerzbank, in which the lender holds about 9.5% directly, and it has also secured access to a total of 18.5% through financial instruments. – Reuters

MARKET ROUND-UP: JANUARY 22

Bursa Trade Statistic

22 JAN 2025

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

Participation

Category	Net (in RM mil.)
Retail (19.21%)	+27.49
Institution (42.59%)	+42.78
Foreign (38.20%)	-70.26

Bought (in RM mil.) / Sold (in RM mil.)

Category	Bought	Sold
Retail	444.38	416.89
Institution	976.35	933.57
Foreign	821.38	891.64

Preliminary status (Excluding Trade Amendments) | Final data, refer to Bursa website

Need Some Ideas?
Our Monthly Trader's Talk will be held Every 1st Monday of the Month Live webinar with Q&A

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SUNBIZ presents a summary of the day's trading activity on Bursa Malaysia and other markets in an easy to digest format.

Sources: Bursa Malaysia, Bernama, shareinvestor.com and websites

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Bursa Indices

INDEX	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	12,159.50 +18.21
FBMKLCI	1,587.80 +7.34
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	528.90 +0.11
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	170.21 -0.74
CONSTRUCTION	283.80 -2.46
FINANCIAL SERVICES	18,945.40 +109.60
ENERGY	855.02 -3.18
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	530.74 -2.10
HEALTH CARE	2,208.81 -7.22
TRANSPORTATION	1,052.54 +6.87
PROPERTY	1,081.61 -6.16
PLANTATION	7,421.70 +45.54
FBMSHA	12,035.30 -20.70
FBMACE	5,238.59 -7.73
TECHNOLOGY	61.54 -0.69

TURNOVER: 2.968 bil VALUE: RM2.241 bil

FBM KLCI higher on bullish Wall Street, unchanged OPR

THE FBM KLCI advanced for the fourth consecutive day yesterday, reflecting the robust performance on Wall Street overnight, and Bank Negara Malaysia's decision to keep the Overnight Policy Rate (OPR) at 3%.

At 5pm, the FBM KLCI rose 7.34 points, or 0.46%, to 1,587.80, anchored mainly by the plantation and financial sectors. The benchmark index opened 2.76 points higher at 1,583.22 from Tuesday's close of 1,580.46.

Market breadth, however, was slightly negative as losers led gainers 447 to 424, while 605 counters were unchanged, 892 untraded, and 10 suspended.

Turnover slid to 2.99 billion units valued at RM2.24 billion from Tuesday's 3.42 billion units valued at RM2.61 billion.

UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors Sdn Bhd head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan noted that the market's performance yesterday was bolstered by BNM's decision to maintain the OPR, which has provided a stabilising effect on the financial system amid ongoing monitoring of US trade policy developments.

Furthermore, he said US President Donald Trump's announcement of a potential 10% tariff on China, instead of a more severe measure, has brought much-needed clarity to the market and eased investor concerns.

Among the heavyweights, Maybank added eight sen to RM10.36, CIMB gained 12 sen to RM8.06, Public Bank rose three sen to RM4.40, while Hong Leong Bank was flat at RM20.18, and Press Metal fell 17 sen to RM5.01.

Of the active stocks, Harvest Miracle increased half-a-sen to 17.5 sen, Mah Sing was four sen higher at RM1.53, while EA Holdings and Green Ocean were flat at half-a-sen and 18 sen respectively. - Bernama

Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-PWB3	0.145	+0.020	+16.00	1,697,901
HSI-CWAI	0.140	-0.030	-17.65	1,676,085
HSI-CWAY	0.085	-0.030	-26.09	1,409,957
TWL	0.025	-	-	899,641
HM	0.175	+0.005	+2.94	699,756
CBHB	0.350	-0.015	-4.11	623,532
EAH	0.005	-	-	516,621
HM-WD	0.075	-	-	423,931
VELESTO	0.195	-0.005	-2.50	418,626
MYEG-C6Z	0.035	+0.015	+75.00	395,300
HSI-PWB1	0.055	+0.010	+22.22	390,727
UJM-C85	0.025	-	-	366,803
YTLPOWER-C77	0.090	-	-	365,299
MAHSING	1.530	+0.040	+2.68	361,207
MYEG	0.955	-0.005	-0.52	325,760
SET	0.365	-0.015	-3.95	287,776
ALIBABA-C41	0.100	-0.015	-13.04	280,600
SIMEPROP	1.550	-0.030	-1.90	260,884
YTL	2.390	+0.020	+0.84	237,955
TANCO	2.060	-0.090	-4.19	237,408



Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
ALLIANZ-PA	20.260	+0.580	46
BKAWAN	20.400	+0.380	128
UTDPLT	30.900	+0.300	3,099
LADY	31.780	+0.280	103
HIND	13.380	+0.280	669
TENAGA	13.880	+0.200	59,212
AWC	1.060	+0.130	41,098
AMWAY	6.840	+0.120	71
CIMB	8.060	+0.120	111,352
EUROSP	2.780	+0.120	451
KSENG	5.740	+0.110	1,131
KPSCB	0.550	+0.110	1,080
BIPORT	6.100	+0.100	11
CANONE	2.400	+0.100	1,971
SUNWAY	4.560	+0.100	120,347
MNRB	2.270	+0.090	21,099
SUNCON	3.780	+0.090	91,422
KEYFIELD	2.570	+0.080	44,519
KLUANG	5.730	+0.080	20
MAYBANK	10.360	+0.080	89,261

Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
REDTONE-C8	0.045	+800.00	3
CDB-C57	0.060	+140.00	1,000
HONGSENG	0.010	+100.00	34,014
MAHSING-C65	0.010	+100.00	150
MRCB-C1L	0.020	+100.00	5,000
SUNWAY-C37	0.080	+77.78	180
MNRB-CG	0.115	+76.92	2,719
MNRB-CJ	0.035	+75.00	3,700
MYEG-C6Z	0.035	+75.00	395,300
HSI-PWBH	0.025	+66.67	107,227
MAYBANKC1R	0.025	+66.67	40,033
YTL-C94	0.025	+66.67	2,000
SUPERMX-C4G	0.065	+62.50	250
FBMKLCI-CQL	0.015	+50.00	1,150
GDEX-WC	0.045	+50.00	13,293
JAKS-WC	0.015	+50.00	48
MNC-WC	0.030	+50.00	370
MAHSING-C67	0.030	+50.00	158,990
NETX-WD	0.015	+50.00	460
PETGAS-C5	0.015	+50.00	10

World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	44,025.81	537.98	1.24
S&P 500 [US]	6,049.24	52.58	0.88
NASDAQ [US]	19,756.78	126.58	0.64
NYSE [US]	19,893.59	286.22	1.46
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	5,204.87	38.91	0.75
FTSE 100 [UK]	8,575.31	27.02	0.32
DAX [GER]	21,260.36	218.36	1.04
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	39,646.25	618.27	1.58
TOPIX INDEX [JPN]	2,737.19	23.69	0.87
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	19,778.77	-327.78	-1.63
CSI 300 [CHN]	3,797.02	-35.59	-0.93
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	181.3	0.34	0.19
SHANGHAI SE COM [CHN]	3,213.62	-29	-0.89
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	2,547.06	29.03	1.15
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	76,327.38	489.02	0.64
ASX 200 [AUS]	8,429.79	27.4	0.33
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	8,680.53	27.83	0.32
FBM KLCI	1,587.80	7.34	0.46
STRAITS TIMES INDEX [S'PORE]	3,786.95	-8.42	-0.22
WTI [US\$/BBL.]	76.22	0.39	0.51
BRENT [US\$/BBL.]	79.68	0.39	0.49
GOLD [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	2,771.80	12.6	0.46
SILVER [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	31.62	0.12	0.39
PLATINUM [US\$/T OZ]	949.06	1.94	0.2
COPPER [COMEX] [US CENTS/LB.]	432.8	-1.3	-0.3
COPPER 3MO [LME] [US\$/MT]	9,284.50	9.5	0.1
CORN [US CENTS/BU.]	489	-1	-0.2
WHEAT [US CENTS/BU.]	560.5	1.75	0.31
SOYBEAN OIL [CBOT] [US CENTS/LB.]	45.62	-0.15	-0.33
COCOA [ICE] [US\$/MT]	11,559.00	386	3.45
RUBBER [S'PORE] [US CENTS/KG]	197.7	0.8	0.41

As at 5pm, Jan 22

Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
CARLSBG	20.020	-0.260	553
MPI	23.340	-0.260	759
HSI-PWBP	0.625	-0.250	100
PANAMY	17.360	-0.240	71
BURSA	8.400	-0.230	13,388
HSI-CWAK	0.050	-0.195	106,780
PMETAL	5.010	-0.170	33,349
MCEMENT	4.680	-0.120	16,274
NESTLE	91.380	-0.120	291
NIKKEI-HJ	0.810	-0.120	75
PETDAG	19.380	-0.120	1,174
ALLIANZ	19.380	-0.100	652
CIHLDG	2.600	-0.100	18
HSI-CY9	0.105	-0.100	141,802
PIE	5.240	-0.100	1,245
HSI-CWCJ	0.530	-0.090	8,779
IJM	2.660	-0.090	159,739
MBMR	5.990	-0.090	1,684
SPRITZER	2.930	-0.090	1,321
TANCO	2.060	-0.090	237,408

Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-CWAK	0.050	-79.59	106,780
MAHSING-C70	0.010	-75.00	2,000
HSI-CWAL	0.010	-66.67	300
HSI-CWAU	0.005	-66.67	403
HSI-CYY	0.015	-66.67	58,447
BJFOOD-CK	0.005	-50.00	1,800
BORNOIL-WD	0.005	-50.00	10
CHEETAH-WA	0.005	-50.00	377
DIGISTA-WD	0.010	-50.00	2
FBMKLCI-CQJ	0.005	-50.00	2,250
HSI-CYX	0.005	-50.00	11,134
SIMEPROP-C35	0.010	-50.00	1,210
YTL-C92	0.005	-50.00	1
HSI-CY9	0.105	-48.78	141,802
DRBHCOCM31	0.020	-42.86	2,000
ECOWLD-C37	0.040	-42.86	10,000
FBMKLCI-HM8	0.040	-42.86	4,200
HSI-CWAZ	0.025	-37.50	7,966
CME	0.010	-33.33	90
IJM-C95	0.010	-33.33	30,887

MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by SunBiz Team

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Northern Solar's IPO oversubscribed by 73 times

KUALA LUMPUR: ACE Market-bound Northern Solar Holdings Bhd's initial public offering (IPO) for the public portion has been oversubscribed by 73.2 times.

In a statement yesterday, the solar renewable energy company said it received 25,772 applications for 1.47 billion shares valued at RM924.59 million, compared to the 67.3 million shares available for public subscription.

"The bumiputra public portion of shares was oversubscribed by 62.5 times, after a total of 11,865 applications for 628.04 million new shares received.

"For the non-bumiputra public portion, a total of 13,907 applications for 839.56 million new shares were received, which represents an oversubscription rate of 83.89 times," said Northern Solar.

The IPO also included a pink form allocation of 7.9 million shares for eligible directors, employees, and contributors to the company, which was fully subscribed.

Northern Solar managing director Lew Shoong Kai said that with the IPO funds in place, the company is well-positioned to implement its expansion plans and capitalise on the growth opportunities in the solar renewable energy sector.

"It will also support the company's geographical expansion in the northern and southern regions of Malaysia, primarily in Penang, Perak, Kedah, Perlis and Sabah, as well as expand our existing office in Johor," he said.

The company will issue 67.3 million new shares at RM0.63 each, aiming to raise RM42.4 million, while existing shareholders will also sell 35.6 million shares through private placement.

Northern Solar is expected to list on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia on Feb 6. - Bernama

Ringgit rises against dollar as Malaysia's inflation drops

THE ringgit closed higher against the US dollar yesterday, supported by data showing a decline in Malaysia's inflation rate, said an economist.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM), Malaysia's inflation rate for December 2024 moderated to 1.7%, compared to the 2024 annual rate of 1.8%.

At 6pm, the ringgit gained to 4.4340/4400 versus the greenback from Tuesday's closing of 4.4730/4780.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said that domestically, low inflation, at 1.7% in December 2024 and 1.8% for 2024, suggests that the Malaysian economy has been growing decently.

"The economy was able to grow above 5% in 2024, but the inflation rate remained contained. Therefore, fundamentally speaking, the Malaysian economy is in good shape, and it should attract foreign funds to come and invest in Malaysia," he told Bernama.

At the close, the ringgit traded mostly lower against other major currencies.

It rose marginally versus the Japanese yen to 2.8480/8522 from Tuesday's close of 2.8691/8725. However, it depreciated vis-a-vis the euro to 4.6313/6376 from 4.6291/6343 on Tuesday and slid against the British pound to 5.4822/4896 from 5.4781/4842 previously.

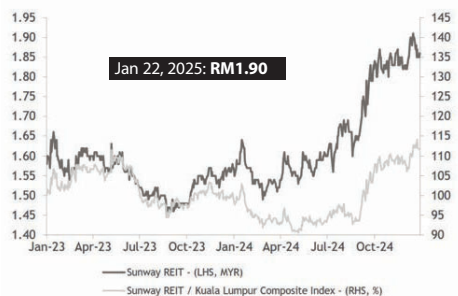
Meanwhile, the local note traded higher against Asean currencies. It gained against the Indonesian rupiah at 272.3/272.8 from 273.6/274.1 on Tuesday, improved against the Philippines' peso to 7.58/7.59 from 7.65/7.66, inched up against the Thai baht to 13.1106/1345 from Tuesday's 13.1123/1347, and appreciated against the Singapore dollar to 3.2781/2828 from 3.2899/2941 previously.

Exchange Rates

FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.5090	4.3760	4.3660
1 Australian Dollar	2.8410	2.7270	2.7110
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3270	3.2300	3.2220
1 Canadian Dollar	3.1420	3.0590	3.0470
1 Euro	4.7010	4.5500	4.5300
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.5580	2.4650	2.4490
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3270	3.2300	3.2220
1 Sterling Pound	5.5700	5.3930	5.3730
1 Swiss Franc	5.0070	4.7950	4.7800
100 UAE Dirham	124.1900	117.8000	117.6000
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.7720	3.5290	3.3290
100 Chinese Renminbi	62.3500	59.7300	N/A
100 Danish Krone	64.5800	59.4400	59.2400
100 Hongkong Dollar	58.5000	55.6100	55.4100
100 Indian Rupee	5.3000	4.9700	4.7700
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0286	0.0259	0.0209
100 Japanese Yen	2.9000	2.8070	2.7970
100 New Taiwan Dollar	14.9000	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	40.9000	37.6400	37.4400
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6500	1.5400	1.3400
100 Philippine Peso	7.8100	7.3700	7.1700
100 Qatar Riyal	125.0600	118.7200	118.5200
100 Saudi Riyal	121.5400	115.3800	115.1800
100 South Africa Rand	25.2500	22.8100	22.6100
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5600	1.4300	1.2300
100 Swedish Krona	42.3000	38.5400	38.3400
100 Thai Baht	13.8800	12.3100	11.9100

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

Sunway REIT Hold. Target price: RM1.87



Source: Maybank Investment Bank

SREIT has proposed to acquire AEON Mall Seri Manjung in Perak for RM138 million. The proposed acquisition involves a parcel of commercial land with a two-storey retail shopping centre. The vendor Kar Sin Bhd and YNH Hospitality SB are wholly owned subsidiaries of YNH Property. The acquisition price reflects a 4.8% discount to the independent market valuation of RM145 million. The property, with a gross floor area of 681.6k sq ft, is solely tenanted to AEON Co (M) Bhd, ensuring stable rental income for the next 12 years until Dec 2037. The deal is expected to be completed by 2H'25 and will be entirely funded through debt.

The mall reported rental income of RM10.4 million and an estimated net property income (NPI) of RM9 million for FY24 (June), translating to an initial NPI yield of 6.5% for SREIT. We estimate that this acquisition will raise our FY25/26 earnings forecasts by 0.3% and 0.7%, respectively, resulting in similar increases in FY25/26 DPU and EPU. Post-acquisition, gross gearing is estimated to increase slightly to 0.44x from 0.43x as of Sept 2024.

The acquisition of AEON Mall Seri Manjung aligns with SREIT's focus on its core retail sector. In the near term, SREIT's earnings growth will continue to be driven by its retail and hospitality assets, supported by recent acquisitions including Giant Hypermarkets, Sunway 163 Mall, Prai Industrial and Sunway Kluang Mall, as well as recovery in international leisure traffic, corporate travel and MICE activities.

HOLD with RM1.87 TP. - Maybank Investment Bank, Jan 22

Datasonic Group Bhd Buy. Target price: RM0.61



Source: Bloomberg

DSON received the extension from KDN for Malaysian passport document and polycarbonate biodata page supply for an additional third ceiling contract value of RM150.5 million. This extension is for another year from Dec 1, 2024 to Nov 30, 2025. We understand proposals for an improved version of such passport solutions and new printing systems are still being evaluated.

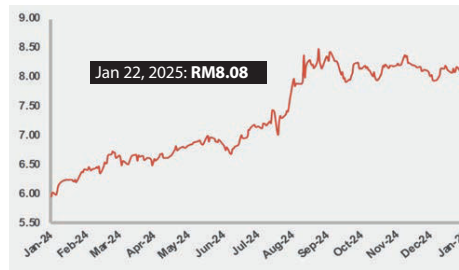
Separately, DSON won the comprehensive maintenance services contract for the FLC image system from the ministry. This RM6.4 million contract includes equipment, software, and application at all Immigration Department of Malaysia issuing and receiving offices for a period of 36 months commencing Feb 25, 2025 to Feb 24, 2028. This contract win is within our order replenishment assumptions.

Following the contract extensions, the current orderbook is in excess of RM260 million. Management also remains committed towards penetrating into more overseas projects, given DSON's cost competitiveness and security documents quality. Locally, more auto gate and IT-related jobs are being targeted.

The group's earnings outlook remains healthy on the back of sustained strong demand for its various government-related solutions and margins expansion stemming from ASP adjustments. The current share price overhang from the absence of long-term contract extensions for both of DSON's MyKad and passport-related solutions should ease with yet another contract extension being secured.

BUY with RM0.61 TP. - RHB Research, Jan 22

CIMB Group Holdings Bhd Market. Target price: RM7.60



Source: Kenanga Research

94.8%-OWNED CIMB Thai reported FY24 net profit of THB2.85 billion, which surged by 78%, translating to RM375 million or 5% of our overall earnings estimate, well within its historical contribution of 3%-6% to the group.

YoY, FY24 net interest income of THB9.47 billion declined by 3% in tandem with softer NIMs at 3.82% (-25 bps) despite loans improving by 3%. Meanwhile, total operating income rose by 10%, supplemented by better net fee-based income (+20%) and investment gains (+72%) amid fewer NPL sales, overall bringing CIR down to 58.7% (-4.0 ppt), and for PPOP to grow by 3%.

Credit cost of the year also improved to 108 bps (-21 bps) supported by a lower NPL of 2.6% (-0.7 ppt) as a result of CIMB Thai's ongoing efforts to tighten its corporate books to focus on better quality consumers portfolio. It continued to top up its loan loss coverage, closing at 137.9% (+13.7 pts). All in, this led to the 78% increase in net earnings.

QoQ, Q4'24 net earnings also reported significant gains (+61%), mainly thanks to the same gains on investments amid NIMs declining by 44 bps, likely from a more competitive year-end season.

The stabilisation of Thailand's political landscape following the recent installation of a new prime minister would support a better operating environment for businesses and investments. While CIMB Thai's earnings improvement appears commendable, there is still more to be desired from its FY24 ROE of 5.8% against its local peer average of 8%. The group continues to deploy more retail-centric strategies to once again minimise its exposure to riskier non-consumer accounts.

MARKET PERFORM with RM7.60 TP. - Kenanga Research, Jan 22



the Sun **LYFE**

THURSDAY | JAN 23, 2025

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Rustic cool

Rattan furniture offers sustainable option - P22

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The abundance of the raw material means it is relatively inexpensive.

Appeal of rattan furniture

➤ Material is eco-friendly option for home furnishings

BY R.BALA

ECO-FRIENDLY and sustainable furniture is gaining popularity as consumers seek options that not only look good but are also sturdy, robust and, most importantly, kind to the environment.

Here is why rattan is the go-to choice for many discerning home owners.

Green option

Rattan grows much faster than trees and harvesting has a low impact on the environment. Compared with timber, rattan is plentiful and does not involve illegal tree-felling or have any other negative impact on the bio-diversity of the plant's surroundings. This factor alone should sway more home dwellers to look at rattan furniture.

Touch of tropics

One immediate appeal of rattan furniture is it lends surroundings a touch of the tropics. Airy, breezy and earthy are the feelings it evokes as the natural tones and hues bring a sense of the great outdoors into a home. Clever placement of plants can

further accentuate this feel.

Ideal for warm weather

The woven nature of rattan allows air to pass through, which helps in preventing it from becoming too hot and uncomfortable during warm weather conditions. The same cannot be said for furniture made from leather or heavy fabrics.

Ease of maintenance

Unlike leather or fabric furniture, no heavy cleaning is required. A wet cloth and a quick wipe is all that is required. When the items need sprucing up, a coat of varnish is all that is needed to give the rattan furniture a fresh veneer.

Relatively cheap

Given the abundance of the raw material, rattan furniture tends to be less expensive than its leather, metal and wood counterparts. Local manufacturers are aplenty, ranging from the cheap-and-cheerful to elite end producers allowing consumers plenty of choice.

Strong and sturdy

Rattan is exceptionally strong and robust, making them ideal for various types of furnishings. While they are usually made into chairs and



Rattan light shade exudes a rustic vibe.

coffee tables, the material can also function as bed frames and heavy duty wardrobes. The fact that it is also lightweight allows for easy moving, which makes cleaning and rearranging of decor a cinch.

Comfortable and ergonomic

Rattan chairs are usually shaped for lazy slouching. But that is not all as the material can be bent into any shape or form – settees, sofas and even gaming chairs can be made suitably ergonomic.

Outdoor use

What makes rattan furniture especially popular is that it is waterproof, making it ideal for outdoor usage. Patios and gardens are greatly enhanced with a select few pieces of rattan furniture to give the area a sense of homeliness and functionality.

Cool aesthetic

Rattan has a natural hue that is earthy and homely, affording the living space a natural sense of cosiness. It is timeless and brings tropical cool into the home. With proper care and maintenance, there is no reason why rattan furniture should not last for many years, allowing home dwellers to focus on what is important – that is to just relax and chill.

Versatility and adaptable

One of the key reasons for rattan furniture's appeal is its adaptability. It can be incorporated into numerous styles as the natural textures and neutral tones make it easy to integrate, be it into existing decor or, when the time comes, to change the look and style of a living space. Its versatility means rattan furniture can be reused post-renovation or restyle.

Evergreen style

Such is the nature and style of rattan furnishing is that it rarely goes out of style. Its appeal and charm lies in its



Rattan furniture brings a sense of the tropics into the home decor.

– ALL PICS BY PEXELS



The robust nature of the raw material allows it to be used even for heavier items such as bed frames.



Simplicity is part of the appeal of rattan furniture.

simplicity and ability to add rustic charm to surroundings. This means rattan furniture is great as a long-term investment for the home.

Buy local

Buying rattan furniture gives home owners the chance to support local industries. There are plenty of manufacturers specialising in rattan furniture in a wide variety of styles as well as price range. Why pay more for

imported furniture, which will cost a bomb as its weight will contribute towards the shipping charges?

These reasons highlight why rattan furniture is an excellent option. Do make a point to visit a rattan furniture specialist the next time you are looking to add to your home furnishings. Rattan furniture is sturdy, relatively inexpensive and, best of all, eco-friendly.



The durability of rattan means it works well for outdoor furnishings.

Loh (fifth from left), Hoh (fifth from right) and celebrities at the launch of Watsons's #Happy Beautiful Year 2025 *Sim Leng Gor Leng Nin*.



WATSONS Malaysia has launched its #HappyBeautifulYear 2025 campaign with the Watsons #HappyBeautifulYear2025 *Sim Leng Gor Leng Nin* video, an original production designed to inspire unity, positivity and festive cheer through captivating tunes and dance moves.

"This Chinese New Year (CNY), we aimed to create a memorable and one-of-a-kind experience that resonates with everyone. The video serves as a heartfelt invitation to celebrate the new year with open hearts, boundless enthusiasm and a strong sense of unity and togetherness within our community," shared Watsons Malaysia managing director and AS Watson Group COO of health & beauty (Asia) Caryn Loh.

The video, starring Watsons ambassador Chan Phei Yong alongside celebrity friends Amber Chia, the Kuan Family with Perry Kuan, Mskuan and Jestinna Kuan and Danny Lee, brings vibrant moments to life. The video highlights Watsons embracing new beginnings, spreading happiness, creating your unique style and championing sustainability.

"CNY would not be complete without music, and we introduced a signature dance and tune to connect with our customers, encouraging people of all ages to join in to sing and dance along. Watsons is excited to promote our mission of Look Good, Do Good, Feel Great, inspiring everyone to capture the essence of celebration with their loved ones this CNY."

Hong Kong renowned star Wayne Lai also attended the event as a surprise guest, much to

Watsons celebrates #HappyBeautifulYear 2025

▶ Latest CNY campaign introduces festive *Sim Leng Gor Leng Nin* music video

the delight of the crowd during the national launch of Watsons's #HappyBeautifulYear 2025.

"During this festive season, Watsons Malaysia is also at the forefront of giving back to the community. This year, we partnered with DeafBeat to support their work within the Deaf community. DeafBeat is a community of deaf musicians who use arts and music to showcase their incredible talent and inspire others. The contributions include refurbishing equipment and providing essential items for performances," added Loh.

On top of that, Watsons also reaches out to orphanages and homes across Malaysia with essential items and festive cheer.

Not forgetting, the CNY season is also filled with promotions, exclusive products and deals for all members and customers.

"As part of the #HappyBeautifulYear2025 celebration, Watsons is offering for the first

time, a sale at 50% on selected products and a contest exclusively for Watsons Club members. Members will stand a chance to win daily cash prizes of RM8,888 and other prizes totalling up to RM1.89 million! To participate, members would need to spend a minimum of RM80 with any Visa card, in-store or online from now until Jan 31," said Watsons Malaysia COO Danny Hoh.

Watsons is also offering a range of free gifts for members during the #HappyBeautifulYear2025 campaign. These gifts include *angpao* packets, Happy Beautiful Bag and a free Dessini non-stick casserole pot (20cm). The Happy Beautiful Bag is a special highlight of this campaign, exclusively designed for Watsons Club members. It comes in two colours and is reusable, durable and promotes sustainability.

In addition to these giveaways, enjoy RM18

instant off on cosmetics, bath, oral care, haircare, skincare and health supplements products with minimum purchase. These additional savings make it the time to stock up on your favourite products. Not only that, enjoy up to 50% off selected Bountiful Lifestyle items with Purchase with Purchase offers with beauty tools, exclusive Unik collections, portable karaoke sets and more.

"I am thrilled to be part of Watsons's *Sim Leng Gor Leng Nin* music video for Watsons #HappyBeautifulYear 2025! As Watsons Ambassador for two years, this year's video is packed with fun, energy and meaningful moments that beautifully capture the festive spirit with a signature catchy tune and memorable dance moves," said Chan.

Watch Watsons's first music video this year on Watsons Malaysia's official account on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok.

Get outdoors for improved well-being

BY R.BALA

FIND yourself glued to mobile devices or computer screen all day? Need some respite from work emails and colleague's always-urgent WhatsApp messages? Take a break by incorporating an active and outdoor lifestyle into your daily routine. There are a number of reasons how such a move can benefit your overall well-being.

Improved respiration

Air pollution can trigger allergies, asthma and other respiratory diseases. It might surprise people to learn that the concentration of air pollutants indoors is usually many times higher than outdoors. Hence spending more time in natural green spaces could help lower your risk of respiratory problems.

Quality snooze time

A person's biological clock follows the

sun. Hence consistent exposure to natural sunlight will greatly improve your snooze time. It is important to note that light needs to enter your eyes to affect your circadian rhythm. Doing so regularly will improve the quality of your rest time as such a routine will make a person feel more tired at night. It will also reduce sleeplessness as it shortens the time taken to fall asleep. The best thing about this remedy is that it does not cost a thing. A person just needs to step outdoors for a dose of natural sunlight.

Better state of mind

Modern life exposes us to a whole array of intrusive stimuli, from flashing screens to vibrating phones. These come alongside conventional air pollution that many have grown accustomed to but are harmful nonetheless. Such exposure can lead to stress as a person's senses are overloaded.

Taking refuge in the outdoors allows a person to switch off from such distractions, if only for a little while. Daily short but regular breaks will definitely help a person recharge their batteries.

Morning glory

It is a known fact morning sunlight can boost vitamin D levels, which can strengthen the immune system. Outdoor plants also produce phytoncides and other organic compounds that can boost immune function. This means a better, healthier you.

Stress relief

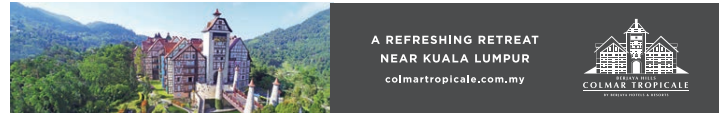
Just stepping away from the cubicle or study desk for a brief walk outdoors can alleviate stress. The change of scenery alone can boost your mood. Much better if it is a pre-arranged activity with friends, making it a social event that you look forward to.



Being outdoors will allow a person to switch off from the daily grind.

— PEXELSPIC

BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR



STEP into the future of home innovation as leading brands unveil their latest technological marvels designed to transform daily living. From entertainment systems and bathroom fixtures to advanced water heating solutions and sophisticated water purification systems, these cutting-edge products represent the pinnacle of modern home technology. These are some of the most intriguing options available by brand:

Hisense

Designed to transform home entertainment with stunning picture quality, cutting-edge technology and exceptional performance, Hisense's new 4K Laser Cinema PX3-Pro promises an immersive cinematic experience like never before.

The PX3-Pro brings together advanced laser projection, Dolby Atmos sound and a host of smart features to deliver an advanced viewing experience. Whether hosting a movie night or gaming with friends, the PX3-Pro offers an ultra-large screen experience without the hassle of traditional projectors or large televisions.

Experience vibrant, lifelike colours and sharp details with 4K resolution, powered by a laser light source. The PX3-Pro's advanced technology ensures a brighter, clearer and more immersive picture.

In terms of projection, it can project a stunning screen size of up to 150 inches, offering a cinematic viewing experience. Additionally, despite its large projection size, the compact design of the unit makes it easy to place in any room, creating a versatile solution for home entertainment setups.

Complementing the stunning visuals is the built-in Dolby Atmos sound system, delivering room-filling audio that enhances every movie, show or game. With spatial audio technology, the PX3-Pro creates a 3D sound experience that places the



Toto Neorest NX represents the pinnacle of luxury, with an award-winning sculptural design by Yoshioka.

Smart living redefined

Tech to transform your home

audience in the middle of the action.

Like most modern technology, the PX3-Pro is packed with smart capabilities, including built-in

Android TV, voice control via Google Assistant and access to popular streaming apps such as Netflix, YouTube and Disney+ Hotstar.

Toto

Malaysians can now transform their bathroom experience with Toto's latest Neorest smart toilet series, setting a new standard in modern bathroom luxury. The collection combines sleek design and cutting-edge technology, featuring conveniences such as automatic flushing, hands-free lid operation, adjustable heated seats and Toto's exclusive eWater+ technology. This innovative feature electrolyses water to create a mist that naturally sanitises the bowl after each use.

Each model in the series - RS, AS, LS and the flagship NX - delivers a sophisticated, fully integrated smart toilet experience that is designed to elevate daily routines with precision engineering and award-winning design.

Furthermore, the Neorest model also supports eco-friendly water savings through dual-flush options, which allow users to select full or half flushes, minimising water usage without compromising performance. Additionally, the Energy-Saving mode enables users to optimise energy use during periods of low activity, enhancing overall sustainability.

The series offers a range of smart toilet models that blend advanced hygiene technology with thoughtful design, each tailored for different preferences and spaces, such as the Neorest RS offering essential features such as automatic lid and flush, a heated seat and Toto's Tornado Flush and eWater+ cleaning technology.

Meanwhile, the Neorest AS model incorporates ergonomic enhancements and a clean,

sophisticated aesthetic. The Neorest LS is more luxurious with premium finishes and an advanced remote for custom comfort settings.

Finally, as the flagship, the Neorest NX represents the pinnacle of luxury, with an award-winning sculptural design by Yuji Yoshioka that adds artistic elegance to any bathroom. Recognised with a Red Dot Design Award in 2022, the NX integrates all the series' smart features, plus exclusive sensors that allow precise temperature and airflow control, delivering a fully immersive experience.

Toshiba

Toshiba has kicked off 2025 with the roll-out of its latest innovation, the SensTemp Stable Temperature Water Heater, to offer Malaysians a smarter, safer and more eco-friendly home solution.

At the heart of SensTemp is Toshiba's advanced Stable Temp Smart technology, which supplies shower water at a consistent temperature and allows users to shower at their desired temperature without any fluctuations.

The water heater also adjusts heating power in real-time to maintain stable water temperatures and ensure reliability even during high-demand periods. This innovation not only ensures peace of mind but also supports sustainable living by reducing energy waste.

Additionally, features such as the Hall-Effect Flow Sensor and Water Temperature Sensor detect changes in water pressure and temperature in real time. These sensors work alongside a smart chip that calculates the required heating power accurately, ensuring stable water temperatures and reducing energy waste. For eco-conscious users, the system will intelligently optimise

power usage to minimise environmental impact while delivering high-performance heating.

Safety and sustainability are further prioritised with the Water-Electricity Separated Heater. This technology ensures water never comes into contact with electrical components and the innovative safeguard thoroughly isolates water flow from electric circuitry, reducing risks associated with leakage or electrical faults.

Enhancing everyday convenience, the SensTemp also provides personalisation through versatile multi-mode options such as the Relax mode to create a spa-like experience, the Sport mode for muscle recovery and the iTemp mode.

Coway

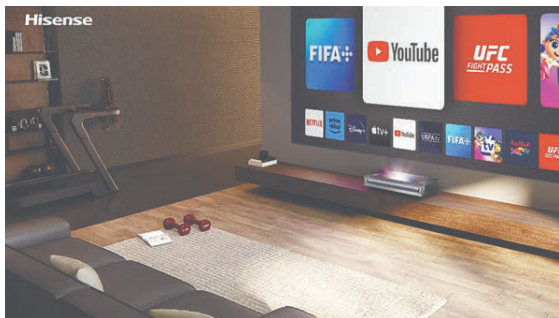
The third generation of Coway's Villaem water purifier has been introduced with the Villaem III, which has a slimmer design and digital panel display that replaces classic knobs.

Designed for large households and families with young children, the Villaem III comes with additional enhanced features, including 48 customisable settings, combining six temperature options and eight volume levels to suit any cup, container or pot. Additionally, it has a larger hot water tank capacity of 2.7 litres, eliminating the waiting time for the water to heat up.

Its advanced filtration system, including the Plus Neo-Sense, RO Membrane and Plus Inno-Sense filters, effectively removes particles, residual chlorides, water contaminants, odours and fine dust.

For added protection, Villaem III's new UV tank sterilisation system operates for three hours every 12 hours, eliminating bacteria such as E.coli, S.aureus and Paeruginosa from the ambient water tank and ensuring optimal water quality at all times.

Upgraded from its predecessors, the Villaem III also features a Dual Lock mode, ensuring safety by locking all buttons and protecting toddlers from accidental spills.



Hisense's 4K Laser Cinema PX3-Pro can project a screen size of up to 150 inches.



Coway Villaem III has 48 customisable settings.

NEW year, new healthier, fitter you. For those looking to stay active in 2025, there are plenty of ways by which you can blend fun, fitness and social connection.

Picking up a new fitness activity does not have to be intimidating or costly. With the right gear, you can dive into the action confidently.

Thanks to online marketplaces, finding affordable and high-quality equipment for your chosen workout has never been simpler.

Looking to adopt a new hobby, achieve your fitness goals and make new friends all at the same time? These trending activities will help you kick-start an active and fulfilling year:

Pickleball: Fast-growing sport for all ages

Once considered a sport for seniors, pickleball has become



Revive your competitive spirit with pickleball, a sport combining elements of table tennis, badminton and tennis.



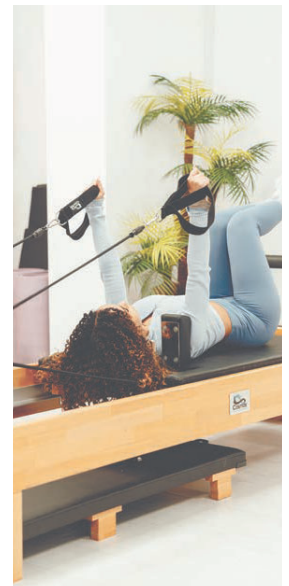
Frisbee's popularity in Southeast Asia is soaring. – ALL PICS BY PEXELS



Working out in a gym is great, but is not the only way to maintain your health and fitness.



Blending tennis and squash, padel is gaining popularity in Malaysia.



Be ready with a good yoga mat and a pair of grippy socks to embark on your pilates journey.

Trending ways to stay fit in 2025

▶ Make spending time with friends complementary with healthy living

the unexpected star of Asia's fitness scene.

Blending elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis, this paddle sport is sweeping the younger generation off its feet.

Southeast Asia has seen a growing appetite for pickleball, with more specialised courts sprouting up and players of all ages embracing the game.

Even outside of competitive pickleball, word about the sport has spread rapidly after celebrities such as Taylor Swift were spotted playing it.

Padel: Tennis's cool, laid-back cousin

Padel, a blend of tennis and squash, combines social interaction with competitive fun. Played as a doubles game, it fosters camaraderie among players.

The game is expected to see significant growth in Southeast Asia, driven by a mix of expats and local communities eager to try something new. Originating in Mexico, padel has become a favourite among celebrities, including Formula 1 athletes Max Verstappen, George Russell and Lando Norris.

Frisbee: Fun for friends, family, pets

Frisbee is soaring in popularity in Southeast Asia, celebrated for its inclusive, mixed-gender appeal. Whether a lively group outing with friends or a playful game with your dog, this versatile activity deftly combines fun, fitness and companionship.

Pilates: Fitness through grace

Looking for something a little more slow-paced? Pilates is renowned for its low-impact nature, making it suitable for people with joint pain

or injuries. Despite its gentle approach, it delivers significant results in terms of enhancing strength, flexibility and posture.

Whether you are stepping onto the pickleball court, tossing a frisbee at the park or rolling out your yoga mat, online marketplaces such as Temu offer everything you need to stay motivated.

But ultimately, it is up to you to choose how you want to remain active and fit – and in 2025, you are certainly spoiled for choice.



BY YASMIN ZULRAEZ

Terrifying tale of lycanthropy

➤ *Wolf Man* is gripping take on lupine nightmare with stunning visuals

FROM the creative force behind *The Invisible Man* (director Leigh Whannell and Blumhouse Productions) come *Wolf Man*, a thriller that breathes new life into the werewolf genre. Starring Christopher Abbott as Blake, a man grappling with familial fractures and supernatural forces, the film delivers a moody, visceral experience. While its storyline follows familiar beats, the sharp visuals and tense direction make this a worthwhile venture into the dark woods.

Family drama cloaked in terror

At its core, *Wolf Man* explores the disintegration of family bonds against the backdrop of an unrelenting supernatural threat. Blake (Abbott) invites his wife, Charlotte (Julia Garner) and their young daughter Ginger (Matilda Firth) to his remote childhood home in rural Oregon. Their arrival sets the stage for the chaos to come as an unseen predator lurks in the shadows, trapping the family in a house that quickly turns into a prison.

The premise feels like classic horror fare: a family isolated, a predator stalking them, but Whannell injects the narrative with subtle layers of emotional tension. Charlotte, a high-powered professional, struggles to reconcile her crumbling marriage with her instinct to protect her daughter, while Blake's transformation, metaphorical and physical becomes the central mystery.

Predictable plot with exceptional visuals

It is no surprise *Wolf Man* leans heavily on genre conventions. The storyline unfolds in a way seasoned horror fans might find predictable. However, the execution makes it stand out. The film's real star is its cinematography, particularly the sequences from Blake's transformed perspective.

When the audience is treated to the *Wolf Man*'s point of view, the visuals become an exhilarating, almost hypnotic blend of heightened senses and predatory instincts. The distorted angles, heightened auditory effects and kinetic movement create a visceral experience that pulls viewers into the beast's mind. These moments are where the film shines and it is a shame they were not utilised more often.



Blake's (Abbott) unsettling transformation begins as he struggles with his past and a sinister inheritance.

The cast elevates the material with grounded performances that keep the horror personal. Abbott delivers a haunting portrayal of a man losing control, his quiet descent into something primal is chilling and heartbreaking. Garner is exceptional as Charlotte, balancing vulnerability and resolve as she faces increasingly impossible choices.

Young newcomer Firth holds her own amid the chaos and her presence adds an emotional weight that heightens the stakes. Supporting players such as Sam Jaeger and Ben Prendergast add depth to the small-town mystery, while Benedict Hardie's role, though limited, leaves an impact.

Masterclass in atmosphere

Whannell proves once again he knows how to build tension. The rural Oregon setting is used to full effect, with dense forests, creaking floorboards and eerie moonlit nights amplifying the film's ominous tone. Whannell masterfully uses silence and sound design to keep audiences on edge, punctuating quiet moments with sudden bursts of terror.

The creature design, while not groundbreaking, is effectively unsettling. The *Wolf Man*'s



The family's escape to rural Oregon turns into a chilling nightmare they never saw coming.

appearance straddles the line between animalistic and human, reflecting Blake's internal struggle. It is a haunting reminder of how thin the line between man and beast can be.

Despite its strengths, *Wolf Man* is not without its flaws. The plot's

predictability limits its impact and some viewers may find themselves a step ahead of the story. The film's ending, while satisfying in some respects, feels rushed and lacks the emotional punch it aims for.

The biggest missed opportunity lies in the *Wolf Man*'s perspective.



Wolf Man brings fresh terror to the screen with gripping visuals and a spine-tingling tale of survival.

The POV sequences are stunning, offering a fresh take on the genre, but they are few and far between. Had the film leaned more heavily into this unique visual storytelling, it could have elevated the experience from good to exceptional.

Howling good time

Wolf Man might not reinvent the werewolf genre, but it does enough to stand out. Its combination of strong performances, atmospheric direction and breathtaking visuals makes it a compelling watch, even if the story itself feels familiar.

The film works best when viewed with tempered expectations. It is not trying to be a groundbreaking masterpiece but rather a solid entry in the horror-thriller genre. Fans of Whannell's previous work and those looking for a fresh twist on werewolf lore will find plenty to appreciate.

The film is a visual triumph that delivers thrills and chills, even as it treads familiar territory. While it could have pushed its boundaries further, it remains a solid, entertaining film that showcases Whannell's talent for creating tension and atmosphere.

Come for the stellar performances and atmospheric thrills, stay for the breathtaking *Wolf Man* POV sequences and leave with a newfound appreciation for the werewolf genre. It is not perfect, but it is a wild ride worth taking.



As Blake's (Abbott) behaviour grows increasingly erratic, Charlotte (Garner) faces impossible choices to protect their family.

➤ **DIRECTOR:**
Leigh Whannell
➤ **CAST:**
Christopher Abbott, Julia Garner, Sam Jaeger, Matilda Firth, Benedict Hardie
E-VALUE 7
PLOT 5
ACTING 6



Charlotte (Garner) and Ginger (Firth) find their bond tested as they navigate a forest filled with fear and secrets.

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DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI DI JORHOR BAHRU DALAM NEGERI JORHOR DARUL TAKZIM GUAMIAN SIVIL NO: JA-22NCC-65-09/2024

NOTIS PENYAMPAILAN GANTI TAI SHENG CHEW (NO. K/P: 640629-07-5225) ...DEFENDAN

AMBILO PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Tinggi Johor Bahru dalam Guamian Sivil No. JA-22NCC-65/09/2024 oleh pihak Plaintiff, Ang Poh Loon (No. K/P: 741020-07-5113) yang beramatkan di No. 2, Jalan Indah 1/6, Taman Bukit Indah, 81200 Johor Bahru, Johor dan Mahkamah peritahkannya bahawa Writ bermeterai bertarikh 24.09.2024 diserahkan kepada kamu secara Penyampailan Ganti dengan menampalkan sebarang tuntutan yang berkaitan dengan Perintah untuk Penyampailan Ganti bertarikh 11.12.2024 di Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi Johor Bahru serta menampalkan sebarang tuntutan yang berkaitan dengan perintah tersebut diangap sebagai penyampailan yang memuaskan dan memadai ke atas kamu selepas empat belas (14) hari selepas tarikh akhir penampalan dan pengiklanan tersebut.

322 Notices PERSTIHARAN JULIAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PELAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1338-12/2024

322 Notices

PERSTIHARAN JULIAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PELAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1338-12/2024

PERSTIHARAN JULIAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PELAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1338-12/2024

PERSTIHARAN JULIAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PELAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1338-12/2024

PERSTIHARAN JULIAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PELAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1338-12/2024

322 Notices

DALAM PERKARA AKTA SYARIKAT 2016 DAN DALAM PERKARA CYCLOGY SDN BHD (Syarikat No: 1217589-H) (PENGKULILANGAN SYARIKAT SECARA SUKARELA AHLI)

NOTIS adalah diberikan bahawa anggota-anggota CYCLOGY SDN BHD 201701003439 (Co no 1217589-H) telah meluluskan Resolusi Khas seperti yang berikht di Mesyuarat Agung Syarikat bertarikh di A-3-9, 8 Avenue Business Centre, Jln 8/1, 46050 Petaling Jaya, pada 23 JANUARI 2025-...

BAHAWA Syarikat ini digulungan menurut Seksyen 439 (1) (b) Akta Syarikat 2016, dan telah meluluskan Resolusi Khas seperti yang berikht di Mesyuarat Agung Syarikat bertarikh di A-3-9, 8 Avenue Business Centre, Jln 8/1, 46050 Petaling Jaya, pada 23 JANUARI 2025-...

322 Notices NOTIS PENYAMPAILAN AKHIR DSAMPAKAN BAHAWA menurut Seksyen 450 (2) Akta Syarikat 2016, Mesyuarat Akhir Ahli-Ahli Syarikat yang dinamakan di atas akan diadakan bertarikh di A-3-9, 8 Avenue Business Centre, Jln 8/1, 46050 Petaling Jaya, pada 10 pagi 24 FEBRUARI 2025 untuk tujuan berikut-...

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF APAC COSMETICAL INDUSTRIES SDN. BHD. 2001011739 (547495-H) (In Members' Voluntary Winding Up)

At a General Meeting of the Members of the abovementioned Company, duly convened and held at 3326, Jalan Tanjung Barar, Indahpura, 81000 Kulai, Johor Darul Takzim, on 20 January 2025, the following Special Resolution was duly passed-...

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF APAC COSMETICAL INDUSTRIES SDN. BHD. 2001011739 (547495-H) (In Members' Voluntary Winding Up)

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF APAC COSMETICAL INDUSTRIES SDN. BHD. 2001011739 (547495-H) (In Members' Voluntary Winding Up)

Hamilton's hidden message

BY KIERAN JACKSON
LEWIS HAMILTON has started life at Ferrari with his unveiling sparking excitement among Formula 1 supporters due to a reported hidden message.

Seven-time world champion pictured at Ferrari for first time
Ferrari driver, is one of those days,' Hamilton said.
'I've been lucky enough to have achieved things in my career I never thought possible, but part of me has always held on to that dream of racing in red. I couldn't be happier to realise that dream today.

NOTICES

PERYSTITIHAN JULIANN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: KB-38-988-09/2024
Dalam perkara mengenal Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

NOTICES

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND THE LIQUIDATOR OF VONZA GALLERY SDN BHD COMPANY NO. 20071008378 (766380 - X) (MEMBER'S VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 459 of the Companies Act, 2016 that a Final meeting of the Company will be held at Suite B, S-00-17, Sutramas Avenue, Bandar Puchong Jaya, 47170 Puchong, Selangor on 22.02.2025 at 10.00am for the following purposes:-

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
PENGULANGAN SYARIKAT NO.WA-28NOC-71-81/2025
Dalam perkara Seksyen 465 (1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

NOTICES

Firma Guaman : WONG-CHOOI & MOHD NOR
Alamat : NO. 27, 1ST & 2ND FLOOR
JALAN MAJU JAYA
PUSAT PERNIAGAAN MAJU JAYA, 14000, PG, MY
No. Telefon : 04-3398855
No. Faks : 04-3398855
No. Rujukan : WCMN(BM)/PBB-18/2023-062/0P/SR(S/)

NOTICES

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LIQUIDATOR OF TECH NUA ENTERPRISE SDN BHD (INCORPORATED IN MALAYSIA) (20080107125) (80237-P)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that the Liquidator has been wound up and subsequently Mr Choon Jin was duly appointed as Liquidator of the above-named Company pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Malaya at Singapore.

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA
DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR (BAHAGIAN DAGANG)
PENGULANGAN SYARIKAT
NO.WA-28NOC-652-07/2024
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (e) dan 466 Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah Syarikat (Penggunaan) 1972

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISSTRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGHER SELANGOR DARUL EBAN
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

NOTICES

PERYSTITIHAN JULIANN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1251-11/2024
Dalam perkara mengenal Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

NOTICES

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LIQUIDATOR OF THE CREATOR OF THE OVERSEA-CHINESE COMPANY
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that the Liquidator has been wound up and subsequently Mr Choon Jin was duly appointed as Liquidator of the above-named Company pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Malaya at Singapore.

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISSTRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGHER SELANGOR DARUL EBAN
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISSTRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGHER SELANGOR DARUL EBAN
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

NOTICES

PERYSTITIHAN JULIANN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1251-11/2024
Dalam perkara mengenal Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

NOTICES

CHANGE OF NAME
We, Mr. Vijaykumar Iyer and Mrs. Karuna Iyer want to change the name of our minor son Virajaj (Old name) to Virajaj (new name - inclusion of Surname) and want to be reflected in the passport.
Resident of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-59200 with permanent address of Sindagi-596128, Dist: Vijayapur, Karnataka, India.

NOTICES

BP ENGINEERING SDN BHD
(dahulu dikenali sebagai TYKB ENGINEERING SDN BHD) (No. Syarikat: 721322-P)
...PEMPETISYEN
DALAM perkara Nizra Po Edar Sdn Bhd (No. Syarikat: 275306-T) ... RESPONDEN

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISSTRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGHER SELANGOR DARUL EBAN
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

NOTICES

PERYSTITIHAN JULIANN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1251-11/2024
Dalam perkara mengenal Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

NOTICES

NOTICE OF CONVERSION FROM A PRIVATE COMPANY TO A LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP
(Section 31(2)(a)(v) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012)
Notice is hereby given that HEXAGON CHOICE SDN BHD (196601019397 (391749-T)) a Private Company incorporated under the Companies Act 1965 will be making an application to convert from a Private Company to a Limited Liability Partnership pursuant to Section 30 of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012 within fourteen (14) days after the publication of this notice.

NOTICES

BP ENGINEERING SDN BHD
(dahulu dikenali sebagai TYKB ENGINEERING SDN BHD) (No. Syarikat: 721322-P)
...PEMPETISYEN
DALAM perkara Nizra Po Edar Sdn Bhd (No. Syarikat: 275306-T) ... RESPONDEN

NOTICES

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISSTRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGHER SELANGOR DARUL EBAN
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM perkara Seksyen 465(1) (f) dan (h) Akta Syarikat 2016, penubuhan-perubahan dalam Akta Syarikat 2016 dan Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggunaan Syarikat 1972)

Sublime Sinner

World No. 1 downs De Minaur to set up Melbourne semi with Shelton



DEFENDING CHAMPION Jannik Sinner dismissed eighth seed Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-2, 6-1 to reach the Australian Open semifinals and extend the country's decades-long wait for another homegrown singles winner at the Grand Slam yesterday.

Italian Sinner, whose Grand Slam breakthrough came in last year's tournament at Melbourne Park, will take on American 21st seed Ben Shelton with his sights set on a third major trophy after also lifting the US Open title in September.

Defeat extinguished local favourite De Minaur's ambitious bid to end Australia's 49-year wait for a men's champion since Mark Edmondson's triumph but fans at a packed Rod Laver Arena gave

him a standing ovation for his valiant effort.

"I feel like today I was feeling everything," Sinner said.

"When you break so early in each set it's a bit easier. But he's a tough competitor, an amazing player. So many people came here for him tonight, but it was an amazing atmosphere.

"We know each other quite well. We played so many times, we know each other's game so we try to prepare in the best possible way. These matches can go quickly, but

things can change fast."

Earlier, all-action Shelton battled past stubborn

Italian Lorenzo Sonego 6-4, 7-5, 4-6, 7-6 (7-4) to reach his first Australian Open semifinal.

The big-serving American had the edge over his unseeded Italian

opponent for the first two sets.

The world No. 55 refused to lie down however and took the third, before Shelton reassessed himself to win an attritional fourth set on a tiebreak.

"I'm relieved right now," said the 22-year-old Shelton, who unleashed the joint-fastest serve of the tournament, clocked at 232kph.

"Shout-out to Lorenzo because that was some ridiculous tennis," added Shelton, who reached only his second Grand Slam semifinal.

His first came at the 2023 US Open, where he was beaten by eventual champion Novak Djokovic.

"I'm just really happy to be through, getting my first win here on Rod Laver," added the left-hander. - AFP/Reuters



Jannik Sinner in action during his quarterfinal match against Alex de Minaur (not pictured). - REUTERS/SPIC

322 Notices

DALAM MAHKAMAH SESEYEN DI KAJANG DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN, MALAYSIA
GUMAHAN SVK NO. BH-AS220x-C-54-98/2024

ANTARA

1. PARWATHY A/P SUBRAMANIAM (NO K/P: 740615-05-5184)

2. VASANTHI A/P RAMAN (NO K/P: 660116-05-5518)

- PLAINTIFF-PLAINTIFF

(menyaman sebagai Pendaftar-Pendaftar bagi harta pusaka, RAJEANTERAN A/L MARIMUTHU, si mati)

DAN

DEVARAJOO A/L RENGASAMY (NO. K/P: 610817-08-5415)

- DEFENDAN

NOTIS PENGIKLAMAN

(Dalam Perkarā mengahai Penyempulan Bagi Writ Saman dan Permyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 20 Ogos 2024 melalui Perintah Mahkamah bertarikh 25 November 2024)

Kepada:

DEVARAJOO A/L RENGASAMY

No 10 Blok A Lorong Jati 1

Sungei Chua 43000 Kajang

Selangor

DAN/ATAU

DEVARAJOO A/L RENGASAMY

No 10 Blok A Lorong Jati 1

Sungei Chua 43000 Kajang

Selangor

AMBIL PERHATIAN SELAMATUTUVA

bagi pihak Plaintiff-Plaintiff yang mempunyai almat penyempulan di Unit K/01, Tingkat 7 Blok A, Phileo Damansara 1, Seksyen 16, 46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Notis ini adalah terbitan sebagai pengiklaman dan pengiklaman tersebut.

Seselatan Writ Saman dan Permyataan Tuntutan tersebut dan Perintah tersebut boleh dipertika oleh kamu atau permyataan di Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh pada 23 hbariban Januari, 2025.

l.t.

Pegawacara Plaintiff-Plaintiff

NOTIS PENGIKLAMAN ini telah dikeluarkan

di Mahkamah Negeri Selangor Darul Ehsan, Seksyen 16, Phileo Damansara 1, Seksyen 16, 46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

No. Tel: 03 67315773

Email: kohwela.partners@gmail.com

Swiatek locks in Keys semifinal

A ruthless Iga Swiatek said yesterday her confidence was soaring and she was starting to believe she can go all the way at the Australian Open after years of early exits.

The five-time Grand Slam champion swept past Emma Navarro 6-1, 6-2 into a semifinal against Madison Keys to match her best performance in Melbourne.

"This is something that I always wanted to improve," she said of her Australian struggles.

"For sure this year I felt like I should just focus on work and kind of have the same mindset as in practices, just improving point by point. It has been working.

"I mean, it's not like I need to prove

it to other people. It's more that I need to kind of believe. I feel I believe more now.

"Last two years my journey here finished at fourth and third round, so for sure I feel more confident now," she added.

Keys is her next hurdle after the American 19th seed sent Ukraine's Elina Svitolina packing 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to be on a career-best 10-match win streak.

But she will have her work cut out with Swiatek yet to drop a set and giving up only 14 games so far in her five matches.

"I think the biggest thing that makes her so difficult to beat is because since she moves so well, if you

miss your spot just slightly, she has enough time to recover, and then the point goes back to neutral," said Keys.

"So I think it's really hard to ever really get ahead in a point."

Swiatek has gone about her business with an air of calmness, totally focused on the end goal.

One of the those goals is retaking the No. 1 world ranking she lost last year to Aryna Sabalenka when slapped with a one-month doping ban.

If Sabalenka falls in her semifinal against Paula Badosa today, the Pole will again rise to the top.

Should Swiatek and Sabalenka meet in the final, the winner would leave Australia with the No. 1 ranking. - AFP

Alcaraz regrets taking foot off gas

BY JAMIE BRAIDWOOD

CARLOS ALCARAZ admitted that he made a "big mistake" in his Australian Open quarterfinal defeat to Novak Djokovic when he saw his opponent was struggling with injury during the second set.

Djokovic managed to battle from a set down to reach a 12th Australian Open in a vintage display from the 37-year-old, but Alcaraz said he let the Serbian back into the match by taking his foot off the gas in the second set.

Djokovic took a medical timeout late in the first set, leaving the court before returning with strapping around his left leg, and Alcaraz said he thought the match against the 24-

time grand slam champion would be "easier" from there.

Djokovic admitted he would have retired from the match had he gone two sets down to Alcaraz, but he started to play more aggressively in the rallies and survived to level the match before the painkillers kicked in at the start of the third set.

Alcaraz congratulated his opponent but regretted that he did not put the match away.

"Honestly, I felt like I was controlling the match, and I let him get into the match again. I'm going to say that was the biggest mistake that I made," Alcaraz said in his post-match press conference.

"In the second set I had to play

better to push him even more to the limit. He had issues moving a little bit in the second set. I had to push him to the limit and I didn't.

"After that, I think he started to feel better and he started playing at such a great level. Obviously when Novak is at this level, it's really difficult. I think I had my chances. It was a really close match.

"When you are seeing someone that is struggling physically a little bit, it's kind of you not playing the same level. It seems like, okay, it's going to be easier.

"Probably you're not hitting the ball the same way that you're hitting before. I think that's it." - The Independent

TRAMLINES

Djokovic roar at Murray 'gesture of appreciation'

NOVAK DJOKOVIC said he chose to turn to Andy Murray after beating Carlos Alcaraz in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open as a "gesture of appreciation" for his coach. After winning match point, Djokovic turned to his coaching box and roared directly at Murray before shaking hands with Alcaraz at the net. "I feel more and more connected with Andy every day," Djokovic said after the 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 win. "We face challenges every single day. People don't see that obviously. We try to make the most out of every day and grow together. He's been as committed to my career and this tournament as he can be. So it was kind of a gesture of appreciation, respect for him, and the fact that he's out there, and he doesn't need to be. He accepted to work with me. He's giving all his support to me, to the whole team, and trying to make it work. This was a huge win for all of us, including Andy and myself." - AFP/Reuters

Novak 'concerned' by injury

THE clock is ticking for Novak Djokovic and what appears to be a groin or hamstring strain sustained during his quarterfinal victory after he expressed fears the injury could hinder his pursuit of an 11th Australian Open and 25th grand slam title. Djokovic overpowered Carlos Alcaraz in four sets on Wednesday, fighting back after losing a first set when he received medical treatment on his upper thigh. The former world No. 1 declined to elaborate on the injury, saying only that it was similar to one he managed during his 2023 run to the Australian Open title. That was described as a 3cm tear in his hamstring at the time. He faces the No. 2 seed, Alexander Zverev, in a semifinal tomorrow, offering a period of close to three days' rest. "I'm concerned, physically," Djokovic said. "But if I manage somehow to be physically good enough, mentally, emotionally, I'm as motivated as I can be." - AFP

Navarro calls for video review rule change

EMMA NAVARRO'S split-second decision not to halt play after a double bounce in her Australian Open quarterfinal loss to Iga Swiatek yesterday cost her a vital point and the American called for changes to the rules on the use of video reviews. Navarro lost the match 6-1 6-2, with her fightback fading following a controversial moment at 2-2 in the second set, when Swiatek ran to the net and returned a low shot after the ball had bounced twice. The incident was missed by the chair umpire and while the 23-year-old Navarro sought a video review immediately after losing the point she was informed by the official that it was too late as she had continued the rally. "I think it (a video review) should be allowed after the point even if you play. It happened so fast. You hit the shot, and she hits it back, and you're just like 'Oh, I guess I'm playing,'" Navarro told reporters. In the back of your head you're like, 'Okay, maybe I can still win the point even though it wasn't called.' It's going to be a downer if I stop the point and it turns out it wasn't a double bounce. Yeah, it's tough. I think we should be able to see it afterwards and make that call." - AFP

RAPHINHA struck a dramatic winner in stoppage time as Barcelona came from behind to beat Benfica 5-4 in a wild match yesterday and ensure direct qualification to the Champions League last 16.

Benfica were leading 4-2 with under 15 minutes remaining but Barcelona mounted a stunning late comeback to stay three points behind leaders Liverpool.

Vangelis Pavlidis hit a first half hatrick for the hosts, in part thanks to two big errors by Barcelona goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny.

However a Robert Lewandowski double from the penalty spot, Eric Garcia's header and a brace for Raphinha helped Barcelona claim a stunning last-gasp triumph in Lisbon.

"It was a crazy game... Benfica did well in the first

Wild comeback

Barcelona leave it late to reach Champions League last 16

half but we made a lot of mistakes," said Barcelona coach Hansi Flick.

Barca showed grit to keep fighting after going in 3-1 down at halftime and swiftly conceding again after Raphinha pulled one back.

"The mentality of the team, they always believe in themselves and this was unbelievable to see," said Flick.

"In the second half we created more chances than them and we deserved it."

Benfica opened the scoring in the second minute, when Pavlidis escaped Pau Cubarsi and fired home from Alvaro Carreras' low cross.

Barcelona responded swiftly with Lewandowski scoring from the penalty spot after Alejandro Balde was brought down by Benfica defender Tomas Araujo.

The hosts nosed back ahead through a stroke of luck, when Szczesny raced out of his goal to try and cut out a through-ball, but crashed into Balde.

Greece international Pavlidis gleefully collected the loose ball and rolled his second into the empty net.

Barcelona, who lured Szczesny out of retirement to replace the injured Marc-Andre ter Stegen in October, soon fell further behind. Pavlidis completed his half-hour hatrick with a penalty after another Szczesny mistake, with the goalkeeper flying in to try and dispossess Kerem Akturkoglu but bringing him down.

Raphinha pulled one back for Barcelona in bizarre fashion as a clearance by goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin struck his head on the edge of the area and flew back into the net.

However, Benfica soon struck again, with Ronald Araujo nudging past Szczesny into his own net as he tried to cut out a cross.

Barcelona kept pushing and Lewandowski converted another penalty and the Catalan giants pulled level when substitute Garcia headed home from Pedri's inviting cross.

Szczesny saved former Real Madrid star Angel Di Maria's low shot before Raphinha's dramatic winner.

"We knew how hard it would be here, in front of their fans, and they know how to play really well, they have top level players," Raphinha told *Movistar*.

"We didn't let ourselves sink at 3-1 down, we were focussed on what we needed to do to try and change the game.

"It was a spectacular game for everyone. They could have won, or us, but we managed to take it." - AFP



Barcelona's Raphinha (left) fights for the ball with Benfica's Florentino Luis during their Champions League match. - AFP/PPIC

Villans top-eight chance in jeopardy

ASTON VILLA boss Unai Emery thinks his side could have blown their chances of earning automatic qualification to the last 16 of the Champions League.

Villa could have put one foot in the next round had they beaten Ligue 1 side Monaco, but they succumbed to Wilfried Singo's early goal and could not find a way back.

The 1-0 defeat, just the second from seven matches in an impressive debut season, means they will more than likely have to win the "Battle of Britain" against Celtic next week to have any chance of finishing in the top eight and earning direct qualification to the last 16.

They are already assured of a spot in the playoff round and Emery thinks that is where they could be heading.

"When we are playing games like today, it's important to get three points because I think we lost the opportunity to get in the top eight," he told reporters in Monaco. "Today was the key."

Emery was also reminded why he chooses not to play strikers Ollie Watkins and Jhon Duran together.

Duran, who has been the subject of a bid by West Ham during the transfer window, came on as an early second-

half substitute to play alongside Watkins and Villa lost all their fluidity.

Emery added: "The last 20 or 25 minutes, when we played with two strikers, we lost our positioning. This is the first part of my summary. Then it is about building a team in the mentality I want.

"We are being demanding with the players we have and some are not following the plan we are doing. This is the objective I have now, trying to build the team as strong as possible with a mentality we are building progressively.

"It was my mistake when we played with two strikers because we lost positioning.

"We have two good strikers. Playing with two strikers is my challenge. Both are very good players, but today it didn't work well," Emery said.

"I think we played 70 minutes like I wanted. The opponent, of course, have a gameplan as well. They were good in transition," Emery said.

"We created three or four good chances to score. Of course, if we want to be at this level, we have to take the chances we had. But despite that, I was more or less positive." - The Independent/Agencies

TOTO SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5914/2025 DATE: 22/01/2025 (WED)

STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD. 196901000990 (84208)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize **8379**

2nd Prize **6785**

3rd Prize **3020**

Special	Consolation
5363 8173	6546 8031
1674 2276	4683 3668
7547 3298	5600 7504
3415 0721	8965 7605
0721 9855	5276 1334

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 17,927,589.70**

8379 6785	6785 8379
8379 3020	3020 8379
6785 3020	3020 6785

Jackpot 2 **RM 556,194.41**

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize **8379** + DRAGON

2nd Prize **6785** +

3rd Prize **3020** +

4th Prize **Special Prize** +

5th Prize **Consolation Prize** +

6th Prize **Any 4D drawn number**

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D 1ST **7 8 1 1 2**

2ND **3 5 8 3 4** 4TH **8 1 1 2**

3RD **4 3 6 0 4** 5TH **1 1 2** 6TH **1 1 2**

6D 1ST **9 9 5 9 8 3**

2ND **9 9 5 9 8** or **9 5 9 8 3**

3RD **9 9 5 9** or **5 9 8 3**

4TH **9 9 5** or **9 8 3**

5TH **9 9** or **8 3**

TOTO GAMES GIVES YOU MORE WINNING CHANCES!

SUPREME 7/38 **6 10 22 48 49 50**

Jackpot **RM 14,720,766.91**

POWER 6/49 **5 8 11 22 44 51**

Jackpot **RM 6,978,062.01**

STAR 6/49 **27 31 32 40 49 50 + 46**

Jackpot 1 **RM 2,823,864.20**

Jackpot 2 **RM 296,895.61**

Toto 4D Jackpot 1 (i-System)

RM 726,577

won on 19/01/2025!

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WINNING NUMBERS

PAYMENT GUARANTEED IN FULL

Draw Date: 22/01/25 (Wed) Draw No: 5861/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER1+3D

1st Prize **2749**

2nd Prize **0377**

3rd Prize **4344**

Starters	Consolation
1023 3230	1602 7897
7345 0085	4599 8924
5894 7712	3115 7405
1909 0708	1095 8521
1822 1733	1721 0412

1+3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM8,501,382.20**

2749 + 0377	0377 + 2749
2749 + 4344	4344 + 2749
0377 + 4344	4344 + 0377

Jackpot 2 **RM127,149.90**

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
462 749 + MONKEY		RM140,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
580 377 + RABBIT		RM1,135,904.60
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
854 344 + TIGER		RM1,631,506.00

Starters	Consolation
981 023 523 230	881 602 487 897
757 345 850 085	254 599 168 924
255 894 697 712	033 115 807 405
941 909 780 708	501 095 218 521
611 822 571 733	641 721 030 412

3D

1st Prize **749** 2nd Prize **377** 3rd Prize **344**

3D Jackpot

Jackpot **RM611,422.20**

749 + 377 + 344	377 + 344 + 749
749 + 344 + 377	344 + 749 + 377
377 + 749 + 344	344 + 377 + 749

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

1+3D J2 RM129,061 and 3DJ RM1706,482 won on 19/1/2025!

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RESULTS & STANDINGS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Atalanta 5 (Retegui 12, Pasalic 58, De Ketelaere 63, Lookman 90, Brescianini 90+5) **Sturm Graz 0, Monaco 1** (Singo 8) **Aston Villa 0, Slovan Bratislava 1** (Metsoko 85) **Stuttgart 3** (Lewelling 11, 36, Rieder 87), **Club Brugge 0 Juventus 0, Atletico Madrid 2** (Alvarez 52, 90) **Bayer Leverkusen 1** (Hincapie 45+1), **Benfica 4** (Pavlidis 2, 22, 30-pen, Araujo 68-og) **Barcelona 5** (Lewandowski 13-pen, 78-pen, Raphinha 64, 90+6, Garcia 87), **Liverpool 2** (Salah 34, Elliott 67) **Lille 1** (David 62), **Bologna 2** (Dallinga 71, Iling-Junior 72) **Borussia Dortmund 1** (Guirassy 15-pen), **Red Star Belgrade 2** (Ndiaye 71, Djiga 77) **PSV Eindhoven 3** (de Jong 17, 24, Flamingo 43).

TOP 10	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	7	7	0	0	15	2	21
Barcelona	7	6	0	1	26	11	18
A. Madrid	7	5	0	2	16	11	15
Atalanta	7	4	2	1	18	4	14
Arsenal	6	4	1	1	11	2	13
Leverkusen	7	4	1	2	13	7	13
Inter Milan	6	4	1	1	7	1	13
Aston Villa	7	4	1	2	9	4	13
Brest	6	4	1	1	10	6	13
Monaco	7	4	1	2	13	10	13

QUALIFIED

EUROPA LEAGUE: Galatasaray 3 (Sanchez 6, Bardakci 21, Osimhen 53-pen) **Dynamo Kyiv 3** (Vanat 44, Yarmolenko 68, 81).

ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP: Blackburn 0 Coventry 2, Derby 0 Sunderland 1, Watford 1 Preston 2, Swansea 1 Sheffield United 2, Oxford United 3 Luton Town 2, Middlesbrough 2 West Brom 0, Hull 1 QPR 2, Millwall 2 Cardiff 2.

TOP 8	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sheff United	28	18	6	4	40	18	58
Leeds	27	16	8	3	51	19	56
Sunderland	28	15	9	4	40	22	54
Burnley	27	14	11	2	31	9	53
Mid'boro	28	12	8	8	46	34	44
Blackburn	28	12	6	10	31	26	42
West Brom	28	9	14	5	33	24	41
Watford	28	12	5	11	39	39	41

'NSAs must meet KDN's conditions'

ANY National Sports Association (NSA) wishing to use naturalised players must adhere to the conditions set by the Home Ministry (KDN), said Youth and Sports Minister, Hannah Yeoh.

She said failure to comply with these requirements would prevent NSAs from using "imported players" to strengthen their teams.

"As I have mentioned, there are conditions that the players may not be able to meet. It is not because KDN does not want to assist, but because some conditions have not been fulfilled.

"These conditions are something the associations need to understand as they are based on KDN's request, and anything that requires coordination, we will try our best to assist. However, the final decision is with the Home Minister," Yeoh said.

Previously, the Malaysian Basketball Association (Maba) expressed interest in acquiring naturalised players in preparation for the SEA Games in Thailand later this year.

Its president, Datuk Seri Lee Tian Hock said the association is seeking approval to naturalise two male players and one female player for the 3X3 and 5X5 basketball teams. - Bernama

'Send strongest team'

THE Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) has been urged to field their best lineup for the 2025 Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championship (BAMTC) in Qingdao, China, next month.

National badminton legend Datuk Razif Sidek said that if Malaysia send their top squad, the BAMTC 2025 could serve as a platform to assess the players' readiness ahead of the Sudirman Cup 2025, to be held in Xiamen, China, from April 27 to May 4.

"If you ask for my opinion, they have to pick the best who are ready for the tournament. With the current lineup, I don't see it as a burden or an issue (to compete in BAMTC 2025).

"However, all of this depends on the Badminton Association of Malaysia on how serious this tournament is for them, whether BAMTC 2025 is

Razif says BAM have picked the best line-up for BAMTC 2025

part of their targets or not," he told *Bernama*.

The men's doubles bronze medalist at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics said Malaysia have strength in four categories - men's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles.

However, Razif noted that Malaysia's weakness in BAMTC, which has been contested since 2017, lies mainly in the women's singles category, with the shuttlers still struggling to compete with other world-class players.

Malaysia face a tough challenge after being drawn in Group B alongside neighbouring Indonesia, Hong Kong, and Kazakhstan.

Although Indonesia and Hong Kong have never won the BAMTC, both countries have clinched

bronze medals, whereas Malaysia have yet to reach the semifinals.

Host and defending champion China are in Group A alongside Taiwan and Singapore.

Group C features 2017 champions Japan, who will compete against Thailand and the Philippines, while two-time runners-up South Korea will face India and Macau in Group D.

Only the top two teams from each group will qualify for the quarterfinals in the tournament, which will run from Feb 11-16.

In the previous edition held in Dubai, Malaysia sent their strongest lineup, including professional men's singles player Lee Zii Jia, but lost 2-3 to China in the quarterfinals. - Bernama

Ziyad to skip 2025 SEA Games

NATIONAL para shot put champion, Muhammad Ziyad Zolkefli will not be participating in the upcoming 2025 SEA Games in Thailand.

Ziyad, who has represented Malaysia in the biennial Games for four consecutive editions, from the 2017 SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur to the 2023 edition in Cambodia, said that this decision was made due to his busy competition schedule this year.

However, he confirmed that he would compete in the 2025 Asean Para Games (APG),

scheduled to take place in January next year.

"For this year's SEA Games, to be honest, I will not participate because it has become too much, and I've already competed in four editions.

"I will participate in the APG, but for the SEA Games, definitely not," he told reporters recently. When asked about his plans for this year, Ziyad said that he will be competing in several major events, including the World Para Athletics Grand Prix in Marrakesh, Morocco, in April and the World Para Athletics Championship in New Delhi in September.

Ziyad added that he will be training in Malaysia to prepare for these two major competitions.

"For this year, we will train only in Malaysia and will not go abroad. For me, the facilities provided by the National Sports Council (MSN) are already excellent.

"It is not necessarily better to train abroad; training in our own country can also be great," he said. - Bernama



Muhammad Ziyad Zolkefli. - BERNAMAPIC

Massive Malaysian challenge at PKNS Selangor Masters

THIS week's PKNS Selangor Masters will see a huge local presence, with 55 Malaysians teeing up at Seri Selangor Golf Club in the season-opener of the 2025 Asian Development Tour (ADT).

Co-sanctioned with the Professional Golf of Malaysia (PGM) Tour, the much-anticipated 12th edition offers a handsome total purse of US\$200,000 (RM900,000).

The field of 144 players is made up of 80 from the ADT, 40 from the PGM, and 24 tournament invitations.

The leading Malaysian professional this week will pocket a RM10,000 bonus on top of the regular prize money, an added incentive that was introduced in 2023.

Four Malaysian professionals earned their starts through the ADT, namely Shahriffuddin Ariffin who won this event in 2022, Paul San, and two Seri Selangor ambassadors, Marcus Lim and Amir Nazrin.

Lim finished third at last year's championship in his maiden professional start, picking up the RM10,000 bonus as best Malaysian, along with US\$11,025 (RM50,000) from the regular prize pool. The 23-year-old talent is looking forward to another good week on his home course.

"This PKNS Selangor Masters kick started my professional career last year and I'll always be grateful to this event. It's played at my home course, Seri Selangor, and I'm very comfortable playing here.

"The course is challenging and you've got to hit the right shots, make sure you don't miss too big because it's going to be punishing. I'm just excited for the event to start tomorrow," said Lim.

Shahriffuddin is not the only former champion in the field, with his successor Ho Yu-Cheng of Chinese Taipei also hoping to bag a second PKNS Selangor Masters title this week.

Starting out as favourite will be 2024 ADT Order of Merit winner Itthipat Buranatanayarat of Thailand, who triumphed in last year's season-ending Aramco Invitational Tournament to pick up his fourth ADT title. He finished tied 19th in the 2024 PKNS Selangor Masters.

Six stalwarts of the game are teeing it up this week, namely Bangladeshi legend Siddikur Rahman, Juvic Pagunsan of the Philippines, the American duo of Anthony Kang and Berry Henson, Lu Wei-chih of Chinese Taipei, and Malaysia's own Danny Chia.

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Draw No: 151/25 Date: 22/01/2025

4D Classic

1st Prize **8444**
 2nd Prize **5825**
 3rd Prize **1909**



SPECIAL	CONSOLATION
6865 3546	2665 1799
8264 5863	1611 8097
2031 6148	6811 2897
3240 7287	7737 6849
1223 8313	5839 0490

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM2,748,268.84**

8444 + 5825	8444 + 1909
5825 + 8444	5825 + 1909
1909 + 8444	1909 + 5825

Jackpot 2 **RM136,048.88**
 PARTIALLY WON
 Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

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8 17 18 20 22 32 34 36
 +
 11 12
Grand Prize
 RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 20 years
2nd Prize **WON**
 RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 100 days

Jackpot Gold

Jackpot 1 **RM10,647,197.06**
 Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number
 Jackpot 2 **RM119,242.31** **PARTIALLY WON**
 Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	4 4 2 5 0 9
GROUP 2	4 4 2 5 0 OR 4 2 5 0 9
GROUP 3	4 4 2 5 OR 2 5 0 9
GROUP 4	4 4 2 OR 5 0 9
GROUP 5	4 4 OR 0 9
	OR 2 5
GOLDEN NUMBER	1 4

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to www.magnum4d.my for more info. THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY.



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SCAN ME



Harvey Elliott (right) celebrates after scoring Liverpool's second goal during yesterday's Champions League match against Lille at Anfield. - AFP/IC

Delighted Slot

Liverpool seal top-two spot and maintain Champions League perfection



LIVERPOOL head coach Arne Slot was not too downbeat at not locking down top spot in the Champions League with a match to spare as his priority was to secure direct passage to the last 16. The 2-1 win over Lille, extending their 100% record to seven matches, looked like giving them an unassailable lead at the top of the table to render next week's trip to PSV Eindhoven academic.

However, second-placed Barcelona's dramatic 5-4 comeback win over Benfica, scoring twice after the 86th minute, means Slot's side have to get a point in his homeland to guarantee top spot.

"I think 18 points would have been enough to finish top eight but with 21 there is no discussion," said Slot.

"If in tennis you are the No. 1 seed it is better to face the No. 24 than the No. 12 but it is a ranking based on years.

"Now we are in a format when some teams have a lucky draw and some have an unlucky draw. It might be an advantage, it might be a disadvantage.

"For me the most important thing is we have been able to skip a (playoff) round."

Mohamed Salah opened the scoring to become the first Liverpool player to score 50 European goals.

"Special, that is the word to describe Mo's performance at this club, he has been outstanding at this club for so many years," added Slot.

"Today a great goal. When Mo goes on a one-vs-one there is a great chance he will score.

"But this goal tells you so much about the work rate of the players who won the ball back before Curtis (Jones)

passes to Mo."

Lille equalised through Jonathan David with their only shot on target, which ended Liverpool's run without conceding in the competition at a club-record nine hours and 59 minutes, before Harvey Elliott struck the winner.

"Very pleased," said Slot on surpassing the record of Rafael Benitez's side of 2005-06.

"I put everything down to first of all quality of the players and second, these players have a quality work rate.

"If you combine those two things it is very difficult to score against the team. Apart from that, there are also games, when I look back at Girona for example, they created quite a lot of chances and Alisson (Becker) was fantastic back then.

"So the nice thing for me is we keep clean sheets not by defending a lot, we keep clean sheets by attacking a lot. I prefer it like this and I think the fans prefer it like this as well."

After the match, goalscorer Elliott reiterated his desire to fight for his place at the club and dispelled transfer links to Borussia Dortmund and Brighton.

"Liverpool is my club. Liverpool is my team. We're in a great position so far this season. I want to fight for my place, fight for my position in the team," Elliott said.

"It's down to me to put in the effort, the hard work, the desire to make that achievement. I am not going to give up. I am going to keep fighting.

And he echoed that sentiment after scoring by gesturing that he was silencing those speculating about his future.

"I think it's pretty clear (what the celebration meant), to be honest. I'm not leaving," Elliott told Prime Video.

"To be honest, I didn't see all the stuff. It's just a few things my friends have said to me - calling me up left, right, and centre saying where are you going? It's the first I've heard of that.

"It's always going to happen in January, especially since I've been out for a long time and have not really played as much as I want to. But that's football."

Lille boss Bruno Genesio saw his side's 21-match unbeaten run ended but he was pleased with the performance.

"I am proud of my team and what they showed in terms of discipline in particular. We could have left with a point. We fought for more," he said. - The Independent/Express Newspapers



Hamilton's hidden message

Story on page 28



Sublime Sinner

Story on page 29



Wild comeback

Story on page 30