



**Concerns over proposal for dog island**

Experts warn of ecological consequences and potential risks to both animal welfare and public safety.

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# Aye to 10-year limit for PM

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim also says government committed to implementing reform agenda but wants it to be approached carefully and not rushed.

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Anwar talks with DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke at the party's 18th National Congress yesterday. - BERNAMAPIC

**Call for tougher laws, enforcement to curb underage driving**

Increasing penalties, establishing parental liability, ensuring community involvement and introducing victim compensation necessary to enhance deterrence and accountability: Academic

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**Timber industry faces threats on two fronts**

In addition to impending tariffs, US and EU proposing to classify two species commonly found in Malaysia as being unsustainably harvested.

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# Anwar backs proposal to cap PM's tenure at 10 years

➤ 'Securing two-thirds majority in Parliament next hurdle'

BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI  
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**SHAH ALAM:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim backed a proposal to cap the PM's tenure at 10 years but said he will need to engage with all parties to secure two-thirds majority in Parliament to change the constitution.

"There's a proposal to limit the PM's term to 10 years, something I fully support," said Anwar. "We're working on getting all parties to back this," he said at the 18th DAP National Congress yesterday.

Meanwhile, DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke said in his speech that the party wants the government to amend the Federal Constitution within 24 months to limit the prime minister's tenure to 10 years.

He added that this was part of Pakatan Harapan's manifesto in the last general election and it must be fulfilled.

Anwar said changes must, however, be approached carefully and not rushed.

He added that history and experiences of other countries, including Poland and the Czech Republic, must be studied as there had been instances where rushed reforms led to failure.

"What sets us apart from the previous administration is that we are firm in implementing reforms and committed to reform decisions to the point where some fear they could be detrimental.

"Those who support reform are often seen as impatient to see changes happening. I want to stress that reform is unlikely to succeed if executed hastily or too abruptly.

"History shows that no revolution succeeds if its leaders are reckless in implementing changes."

Anwar also dismissed claims that the government is weak or has been compromised.

He said the current administration's policies are inclusive and aimed at strengthening national institutions.

"On Saturday, I was at a congress organised by Mara to discuss the grievances of the Malay Bumiputera community, and its future.

"Today, I am at a DAP congress and it shows how complex it is to govern a country with diverse races, religions and policies.

"However, one fundamental principle remains - our policies must be consistent. The Madani government must represent the people's aspirations, touching the pulse of all Malaysians."

Anwar also stressed that whoever had benefited from various government programmes should play his part in giving back to the nation and its people.

"This is a new approach (of paying forward), to instil confidence that under the Madani government no one is sidelined.

"I want everyone, including Malays, Chinese and Indians, to understand that our engagement with DAP is about elevating the nation, strengthening institutions of governance and ensuring democratic accountability."

He said in just two years, the government under his leadership had improved financial and economic governance.

He cited the Fiscal Responsibility Act as an example, highlighting that the prime minister must present economic projections in Parliament.

"Any constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority and input from the Council of Rulers before being brought back to Parliament."

He acknowledged that the process takes time but reaffirmed the government's commitment.

"We are not backing down." Anwar said the government had maintained complete non-interference in the judiciary since taking office nearly two years ago.

"Can anyone name a single case where we have meddled? Has there been even one ruling where I pressured a judge? Absolutely not!"

He said while the government does not influence judicial decisions, it is essential to ensure that those appointed to the bench are competent, independent and free from corruption or conflicts of interest.

Anwar added that no one is above the law, including the prime minister, ministers or the chief justice.

He said reforms must be implemented carefully to protect the integrity of the legal system and the nation's constitutional principles.

"As leaders, we will honor the trust placed in us by staying true to our core policies and values, without compromise.

"This nation will continue to uphold democracy and justice, ensuring that no one is marginalised or discriminated against.

"That is our unwavering commitment. The Madani government is here to serve and stand by the people."



**FOR A GOOD CAUSE ...** Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri with children from the *asnaf* group at an event organised by the Sarawak Malay Vehicle Importers and Dealers Association of Malaysia, in Kuching yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIC**

## 'Make use of Ramadan events to foster harmony'

**SIBU:** National Unity Minister Datuk Seri Aaron Ago Dagang has urged Malaysians to make the most of breaking of fast and *bubur lambuk* cooking events to strengthen unity and foster goodwill.

He said such events offer people an opportunity to get to know one another, share experiences and bridge gaps among them.

Aaron said they enable to foster a spirit of love, respect and mutual support to build a better society and a more developed nation.

"National unity is the foundation of our country's stability and prosperity. Ramadan gives us an opportunity to show noble values such as mutual respect, helping others and giving without expecting anything in return."

He was speaking at the *Gerak Rahmah Jom Masak Bubur Lambuk Perpaduan Sarawak* and *Lan Berambah Sungei* 2025 programmes held at Dataran Tun Tanuak Bujang on Saturday, Bernama reported.

Also present was Sarawak Education, Innovation and Talent Development Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Annuar Rapaea.

Aaron said 110,000 packs of *bubur lambuk* were prepared simultaneously by neighbourhood watch areas across Sarawak under a programme organised by his ministry in collaboration with the National Unity and National Integration Department.

The programme is part of the *Gerak Rahmah Jom Masak Bubur Lambuk Perpaduan* and *Iftar Harmoni* initiative being held at over 100 locations nationwide, with a target of preparing 1.3 million packs.

## Vital role of religious teachers

**PENDANG:** Educators at *pondok* schools and religious teachers have been urged to help educate members of society to refrain from committing acts that insult any religion and disrupt harmony.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar said this is because of society's great trust in them.

"If *pondok* teachers can play their role in urging the community to refrain from insulting any religion, *Insha-Allah*, we can have peace in our country," he said after the *Ziarah Santun Du'at Al Falah* programme at Pondok Mustaq Sungai Jagong on Saturday, Bernama reported.

Mohd Na'im said the ministry would continue to cooperate with the police and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to take strict action against those ridiculing Islam.

He urged Muslims and non-Muslims to work together to foster unity and harmony.

## Govt support crucial to accelerate AI, IoT adoption: Expert

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Government support is vital to speed up the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT), said IoT industry expert Dr Mazlan Abbas.

The Favoriot Sdn Bhd co-founder and CEO said this is particularly crucial in developing countries like Malaysia where infrastructure, funding and technical expertise continue to pose significant challenges.

Mazlan said government intervention through tax incentives, subsidies and regulatory frameworks would enable businesses to invest in these technologies and drive long-term digital transformation.

"Providing financial assistance to businesses developing AI and IoT solutions will spur local innovation and reduce reliance on imported

technologies."

He said local startups play a pivotal role in accelerating AI and IoT implementation, particularly in addressing community-specific challenges and driving economic growth.

He added that unlike larger corporations, startups are more agile, innovative and able to respond quickly to local needs.

"Startups develop tailored technology solutions such as AI for crop monitoring or IoT for flood alerts, filling the gaps left by larger corporations that tend to focus on broader markets."

He said startups face significant hurdles, including limited funding, regulatory complexities and a lack of collaboration opportunities.

Mazlan stressed the need for stronger financial support, simplified regulations and greater integration between startups and established corporations to ensure sustained growth.

"Governments can play a key role by providing grants, loans or dedicated startup funds to help founders turn ideas into viable products and solutions."

Mazlan also highlighted the importance of establishing regulatory sandboxes, which provide a controlled environment for companies to test AI and IoT technologies before large-scale deployment.

Citing the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox as an example, he said the facility enables researchers and startups to test

their products, services, business models and delivery mechanisms in a real-world setting.

He also underscored the importance of talent development in AI and IoT and called for greater investment in education and skills training.

Mazlan said universities and vocational training institutions should focus on equipping students with expertise in AI, IoT and data analytics to meet the industry's evolving demands.

"Public-private partnerships can also play a significant role in bridging the skills gap, with established corporations working alongside startups to develop AI-driven solutions for critical sectors such as agriculture, healthcare and urban mobility." - Bernama



## Bidaah producer to edit scenes after Jakim reprimand

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The producer of the drama series *Bidaah* has complied with the reprimand from the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (Jakim) and is ready to cut any scenes deemed unsuitable for public viewing.

Jakim director-general Datuk Dr Sirajuddin Suhaimee said the department, through the Islamic Media Censorship Committee, had summoned and met with the production team of *Bidaah* to review the drama's content.

This included video clips of controversial episodes and unaired episodes to assess their impact and implications.

"Jakim has reprimanded and emphasised to the production team that any artwork produced must align with the principles of faith, syariah and morals, and must not cause defamation to the teachings of Islam," he said in a statement.

He added that Jakim is always ready to work with artists and industry players to produce content that is beneficial and complies with religious guidelines.

Sirajuddin said Jakim also stressed that the Guidelines on the Censorship of Islamic Broadcasting Materials, issued in 2015, serve as the main reference for all parties in the broadcasting industry. – Bernama

# Call for stricter enforcement, laws to curb underage driving

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA  
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➤ Experts urge stricter penalties and parental accountability to tackle rising cases of unlicensed drivers

**PETALING JAYA:** Despite existing measures, Malaysia's efforts to address underage driving remain significantly ineffective in curbing the growing and concerning trend of unlicensed drivers, said experts.

Without stronger laws and enforcement, parents will continue to avoid accountability, victims will remain vulnerable and road safety will be further compromised.

This comes after the tragic incident on March 6, in which an 18-year-old unlicensed driver allegedly ran a red light and collided with two motorcycles, resulting in the deaths of three teenagers.

Universiti Teknologi Mara Faculty of Law senior lecturer Mazlifah Mansoor said underage driving is not merely a traffic offence but also reflects deeper gaps in legal enforcement, parental responsibility and policy implementation.

"Despite existing laws under the Road Transport Act (RTA) 1987 and

the Child Act 2001, enforcement remains weak, penalties are insufficient and victims often lack legal recourse.

"The recent cases highlight the urgent need for reform, particularly in holding parents accountable for their children's unlawful actions on the road," she said.

Mazlifah explained that although the Child Act 2001 was designed to protect children from neglect and abandonment, its application in underage driving cases remains limited.

"Section 31(1)(a) penalises parents or guardians who neglect, abandon or expose a child to danger, leading to physical or emotional harm. Courts typically apply this to cases of severe neglect, such as leaving a child alone for extended periods without care.

"However, allowing a child to drive is not always seen as deliberate endangerment, making prosecution under this section challenging.

"Section 33(1) criminalises leaving a child without reasonable supervision in a way that endangers them. Courts rarely interpret it as covering underage driving unless it results in immediate harm," she said.

Mazlifah pointed out that a major challenge in enforcing parental liability is proving parents were aware their child was driving, which is difficult without clear evidence.

"Malaysia must strengthen the RTA 1987 by introducing tougher legal penalties, increasing fines and imprisonment under Section 39(5) for parents or individuals who allow unlicensed minors to drive," she

said.

Mazlifah suggested that the government implement parental responsibility measures similar to India's Section 199A, holding parents accountable unless they prove they took reasonable steps to prevent underage driving.

"Strengthening the RTA 1987 by enhancing penalties, establishing parental liability, ensuring community involvement and introducing victim compensation is a necessary step towards deterrence and accountability," she said.

Meanwhile, road safety and sustainable transport activist, and former board member of the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research Shahrin Tamrin also acknowledged the alarming rise in cases involving unlicensed drivers and motorcyclists.

He attributed this trend to weak enforcement and stressed that existing laws are inadequate to effectively address the issue.

Shahrin pointed out that many offenders receive only a RM300 compound fine and are not even blacklisted in the offenders' database.

"If we probe further into the insurance industry, it is evident that for some reason, there has been a surge in crashes, fatalities and bodily injury claims involving unlicensed motorcyclists and drivers over the past 18 months," he said.

He noted that in Malaysia, one does not need a valid driving licence to purchase a car or motorcycle.

"In other words, an unlicensed individual can drive or ride their own vehicle as long as they don't get caught by law enforcement officers.

"Even worse, parents without valid licences can buy motorcycles or cars and give them to their underage children to ride or drive. This cycle has persisted for generations," he added.

Shahrin stressed that cases involving unlicensed drivers must be brought to court and authorities should not show leniency by issuing compounds.

He also emphasised the need to revive the *Kejara* demerit system to instil fear among motorists.

"The country urgently needs stricter laws against reckless driving. It is crucial for authorities to bring back the *Kejara* demerit system to curb reckless drivers and repeat traffic offenders."

## PN to announce candidate on March 20

**TAPAH:** Perikatan Nasional (PN) will announce its candidate for the Ayer Kuning state by-election after a special meeting on Thursday, March 20.

PN election director Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor said a list of potential candidates has been compiled, but the final decision will be made during the meeting.

"We have several potential candidates to consider, but no shortlist has been finalised yet. The key factor is that the candidates are local," he said after launching the PN machinery for the Ayer Kuning by-election in Tapah on Saturday night.

The Election Commission has set polling day for the state by-election on April 26, with nomination and early voting set for April 12 and April 22, respectively.

The Ayer Kuning state by-election is being held following the death of incumbent Ishsam Shahrudin on February 22 due to a heart attack after participating in the Four-Corner Football Championship in Penang. – Bernama



Mazlifah said a major challenge in enforcing parental liability is proving parents were aware their child was driving, which is difficult without clear evidence. Picture staged for illustrative purposes. – MASRY CHE ANI/THESUN

## Nurul Izzah to defend VP post in upcoming party polls

**KUALA LUMPUR:** PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar will defend her position in the party elections this May.

Announcing this on Saturday, she said her decision was driven by a desire to nurture talent within the party as part of PKR's regeneration efforts and to strengthen the party in preparation for the upcoming 16th general election.

"I hope party members will give me

the opportunity to shoulder this responsibility in line with the concept of *faru kifayah* (communal obligation). Since the party's early days, I entered politics based on this principle. I also hope this election will be conducted in a spirit of unity and family.

"We want a sense of togetherness in our efforts to unite hearts and ensure the best talents are given space and opportunities – not just to be

candidates but to contribute meaningfully," she said after attending the *Kasih Ramadan* and *Moreh* contribution event at the Zaid bin Thabit Mosque in Desa Tun Razak.

Nurul Izzah said she would not take her re-election bid lightly and would do her utmost to retain the position.

"We understand that within the party and the unity government, there are unique dynamics. However, I believe that for PKR to remain resilient

and future-proof, we must do our best to stay united," she said.

Asked whether her decision had the blessing of her father, Prime Minister and PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and her mother Bandar Tun Razak MP Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Nurul Izzah said she had received their approval and would proceed with the nomination process at the divisional level.

Earlier, Nurul Izzah represented

Wan Azizah in distributing *Kasih Ramadan* and *Moreh* contributions to about 200 recipients, including single mothers and those from the *asnaf* group in the parliamentary constituency.

The event was also attended by China's Ambassador to Malaysia Ouyang Yujing, Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tzin and the prime minister's political secretaries Datuk Azman Abidin and Chan Ming Kai. – Bernama



# Plus-size fashion gaining recognition in Malaysia

➤ Demand for inclusively sized *baju raya* increasing as customers seek comfortable yet exclusive options: Online boutique

BY DEEPALAKSHMI MANICKAM  
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**PETALING JAYA:** As size diversity gains recognition in Malaysia, plus-size fashion is evolving from a niche market into a significant force in the industry.

Online boutique Adnaa, which specialises in ready-to-wear traditional Malay clothing, is committed to redefining plus-size fashion by offering stylish, comfortable and accessible designs.

Its creative director Allan Aelias said the brand is committed to inclusivity, offering sizes from XS to 4XL.

"Everyone can look exclusive and stay authentic," he said, reinforcing the belief that fashion should be for all, regardless of body type.

"The demand for plus-size *baju raya* has been increasing as more customers seek comfortable yet exclusive options for festive occasions."

He said to stay relevant in the ever-evolving fashion industry, Adnaa closely follows market trends and continuously adapts to accommodate a wide range of sizes without compromising modesty or elegance.

While Adnaa is one of the few brands actively catering to plus-size customers, Aelias acknowledged the unique challenges involved in designing for larger sizes.

"Achieving a flattering fit while maintaining modesty and comfort requires thoughtful tailoring, careful fabric selection and structural considerations."

Unlike standard sizes, plus-size garments



Aelias said customer feedback plays a crucial role in Adnaa's design evolution and plus-size shoppers often express the need for better-fitting, more stylish options. – ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

require specific modifications to balance style and functionality.

"We strive to balance customer needs with economic feasibility while ensuring plus-size customers receive the same level of exclusivity in design."

He said despite the increasing demand, plus-size fashion remains an underserved market in Malaysia as many mainstream brands still prioritise standard sizes, leaving customers with limited options.

He also said customer feedback plays a crucial role in Adnaa's design evolution, adding that plus-size shoppers often express the need for better-fitting, more stylish options.

"We take these insights into account when refining our collections."

A common concern in the plus-size fashion industry is pricing disparities.

Larger sizes often cost more due to extra fabric usage, additional production steps and design modifications, he said.

"Adnaa strives to keep prices affordable and

consistent across all sizes while maintaining high-quality standards. Our commitment is to help customers feel confident and exclusive.

"By incorporating diverse fits and stylish options, we ensure everyone can enjoy fashionable Raya attire."

Another boutique, Jasmina also recognises the growing demand for inclusive sizing.

In a statement to *theSun*, it said every year, it launches a plus-size collection, offering sizes up to 8XL, with a strong commitment towards continuously improving designs based on customer feedback and preferences.

"Through trial and error, we identify styles that resonate most with plus-size customers, prioritising materials that drape well without clinging to the body and cuts that create a slimming effect."

Jasmina has built a loyal customer base, with returning buyers who know exactly what sizes to look for each year.

However, it said the market still lacks brands catering to plus-size customers.

## Ministry to promote Iftar@KL as key tourism event

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry will position Iftar@KL as a signature tourism event for Visit Malaysia 2026, highlighting Malaysia's unique Ramadan traditions to domestic and international visitors.

Deputy Minister Khairul Firdaus Akbar Khan said the event is an important attraction as it showcases the variety of Ramadan delicacies and the country's vibrant festive atmosphere.

"Ramadan and Syawal in Malaysia have a distinct charm compared with other countries. The celebrations are not limited to the Muslim community but are embraced by individuals of all religions, races and backgrounds."

"This is a strength we should highlight as it not only reflects the beauty of Malaysia's cultural diversity but also reinforces the country's image

as a Muslim-friendly tourism destination," he said at the Iftar@KL press conference at Dataran Merdeka on Saturday.

He added that the ministry would work with Kuala Lumpur City Hall to develop a contingency plan to ensure the smooth running of the event and enhance visitor experience.

On whether the ministry plans to offer incentives to social media influencers to promote Malaysia's Ramadan delicacies and traditions for Visit Malaysia 2026, Khairul Firdaus said the proposal would be studied further.

"The ministry will take steps to showcase our food, especially from Ramadan bazaars, so that it gains global recognition."

Regarding Iftar@KL, he said more than 35,000 visitors participated despite unfavourable

weather conditions.

The event, organised at Dataran Merdeka on March 15, 16, 22 and 23, aims to enliven the spirit of Ramadan, foster unity and tolerance among communities, and promote Malaysia's Islamic heritage to tourists.

Event highlights include mass *iftar* gatherings, Ramadan talks, food truck offerings, congregational prayers, Tarawih prayers, and donations to *asnaf* and those in need.

Visitor Nur Annisa Nabila Mohd Norman, 26, described Iftar@KL as a memorable experience since it was her first time attending the event.

"Although it rained heavily during *iftar*, the atmosphere remained vibrant and full of spirit. I hope this event continues and improves in the future." – Bernama

## Ramadan programme honours single mothers

**IPOH:** A total of 50 single mothers from Pertubuhan Usaha Niaga Wanita Perak were honoured in the Ramadan Tour Programme held at the Broadcasting Department's Perak compound.

Its state director Karim Sadiran said the programme, themed "Honouring Single Mothers

in the Month of Ramadan", aims to appreciate the resilience and sacrifices of single mothers.

"The sponsors of this programme have contributed hygiene and personal care items worth RM180 per box."

Recipient Tun Syarilla Zainuddin, 50, expressed gratitude for the assistance, adding

that it was her first time being honoured in such a programme.

"It is heartwarming to be celebrated like this. Besides meeting fellow organisation members, we received contributions from the organisers. This assistance will be put to good use," said the Ipoh-born mother of two. – Bernama

## Festive flea market distributes clothes to families in need

**SERI ISKANDAR:** More than 1,000kg of secondhand clothing, including *baju kurung*, *baju Melayu*, t-shirts and children's apparel, were distributed free of charge to those in need during the Aidilfitri Flea Market event at the Bandar Universiti Mosque here.

Project director Noraziah Azizan said all clothing had been carefully selected and each family was allowed to take one item per person based on their needs.

She said the distribution was open to underprivileged individuals in Bandar Universiti and nearby areas, especially those seeking Raya clothing.

"This event is being held for the first time through a collaboration between the Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara Perak branch, Seri Iskandar Campus and the Bandar Universiti Mosque Committee.

"We aim to assist over 400 families. On the first day, we registered 200 families. We also hope to receive continuous donations."

She said the two-day event was held from Saturday until yesterday from 8.30am to 12.30pm at the mosque lobby.

She explained that clothing collection began in mid-February through internal staff announcements and contributions from various donors.

"Alhamdulillah, the response has been encouraging. We have received many clothes, both used and new," she said, adding that they received families from outside Central Perak and even Penang, who learned about the event through social media.

"If all goes well, we plan to continue this event next year and make improvements as the turnout exceeded our expectations."

Bandar Universiti Mosque chairman Azman Zainonabidin said the mosque set up a clothing collection centre to help bring cheer to underprivileged families.

For Zainal Abidin Awang, 67, from Kampung Tengah in Parit, the initiative was a great help as his family received quality secondhand clothes, some even unused.

Faridah Mat Baki, 66, from Ayer Tawar, also appreciated the organisers' efforts, saying the donations have eased the burden of many families. – Bernama

## Aidilfitri bus tickets nearly 80% sold

**SEREMBAN:** Express bus tickets from Seremban to major destinations on the East Coast have been nearly 80% sold since last week, ahead of Aidilfitri celebrations.

A check at Terminal One of the Seremban bus terminal found that tickets to Kuala Terengganu and Kelantan are selling faster than tickets for northern destinations.

According to its counter cashier Edith Patric, 40, a total of 40 express bus companies are operating at Terminal One, with some yet to open sales for Aidilfitri tickets.

"Perhaps additional tickets will be available a week before Hari Raya. Usually, bus companies provide extra buses for trips to the East Coast, depending on demand."

She said bus ticket prices have increased about 25% compared with last year.

Ticketing clerk Rohayu Abdul Manaf, 56, said tickets for the Seremban-Kuala Terengganu route are being sold at between RM88 and RM90 compared with RM67 last year.

"We were told that the price increase may be due to operating and maintenance costs. Most customers purchase their tickets early online as it is more convenient and offers more discounts." – Bernama



# 'Island sanctuary for stray dogs not feasible proposal'

➤ Experts warn of potential risks to animal welfare, public safety and could impact Langkawi's image as luxury tourist destination

BY KIRTINEE RAMESH  
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**PETALING JAYA:** The recent proposal by a lawmaker to designate an island in Langkawi for housing stray dogs has sparked concerns among experts who warn of potential risks to both animal welfare and public safety as well as ecological consequences.

Universiti Teknologi Mara tourism economics lecturer Prof Dr Mohd Hafiz Hanafiah cautioned that while the idea is commendable from an animal welfare perspective, concerns over feasibility, ecological impact and tourism branding present significant challenges.

"The proposal intersects animal welfare, luxury tourism, and sustainable development.

"The idea of an island shelter for stray dogs is commendable but its feasibility is not in Langkawi's favour."

Hafiz said Langkawi, marketed as a luxury, nature-based destination competing with places like Bali, Phuket and the Maldives, could weaken its branding and send mixed signals to tourists if an island for stray dogs is introduced.

"Japan's 'Cat Island' (Tashirojima) successfully turned its stray cat population into an attraction. However, Langkawi's positioning as a high-end destination may not align well with such an initiative," he added.

Recently, Langkawi MP Datuk Mohd Suhaimi Abdullah proposed designating one of the 99 islands in his constituency as a sanctuary for stray dogs.

His suggestion follows an incident in Kampung Dede, Sungai Menghulu on March 1 where a four-year-old boy suffered severe injuries after being attacked by a pack of dogs on the island.

Suhaimi suggested turning the island into a tourist attraction for housing stray dogs, equipping the island with veterinary facilities to provide medical attention and create an attraction for animal lovers visiting Langkawi.

Meanwhile, Universiti Putra Malaysia Faculty of Veterinary Medicine senior veterinary officer Dr Nor-Alimah Rahman raised concerns about the rapid reproduction of stray dogs.

"Without population control measures, the



Hafiz said Langkawi is marketed as a luxury, nature-based destination, competing with places like Bali, Phuket and the Maldives. – COURTESY PIC

number of dogs could spiral out of control, leading to food shortages and environmental pressure," she warned.

In an environment with limited resources, dogs may become aggressive toward each other, leading to fights, injuries, and stress, she said.

Nor-Alimah also pointed out the dangers of disease outbreaks, stressing that without proper vaccination and healthcare, lethal canine diseases such as parvovirus, distemper, and rabies could spread swiftly.

"The presence of parasites like ticks, fleas, and intestinal worms could further compromise the health of both dogs and the island's ecosystem.

"The island's ecosystem may not support the nutritional needs of a large number of dogs. Without a reliable food source, they could suffer from malnutrition, hunger, and competition for limited resources," she added.

Another major challenge is accessibility to veterinary care. Remote locations lack medical infrastructure, making it difficult to provide timely treatment for injuries, illnesses, and vaccinations.

Nor-Alimah also emphasised budget constraints, stating that sustaining a fully operational veterinary station, food supply, and emergency response team, would require significant long-term funding.

Persatuan Haiwan Terbiar Malaysia president Kalaivanan Ravichandran supported the MP's proposal, but stressed that it must be implemented ethically and sustainably.

"Without proper safeguards, the island could become a dumping ground rather than a sanctuary," he cautioned.

He outlined several key measures for the project to succeed including security measures to prevent illegal dog dumping, and cruelty with strict enforcement under the Animal Welfare



Nor-Alimah said without population control measures, the number of dogs could spiral out of control. – BERNAMAPIC

Act 2015.

Additionally, guaranteed accessibility for feeders, rescuers, and NGOs should be established through transport services and emergency response protocols.

"Another critical factor is the presence of permanent on-site veterinary support, including caretakers and a veterinary station for sterilisation, vaccinations, and emergency treatment.

"Sustainable feeding and health management must also be ensured, backed by funding mechanisms and proper nutrition systems."

He said TNVR (Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release) programmes are also essential to prevent uncontrolled breeding and control disease spread.

Environmental impact assessments should be conducted to prevent disruptions to Langkawi's ecosystem, ensuring the initiative does not negatively affect the natural habitat, Kalaivanan added.

"A clear legal framework is necessary to ensure responsible long-term management and prevent abandonment."

## Woman fell to her death, say police

**SHAH ALAM:** Police have confirmed an incident in which a woman is believed to have fallen from an overpass near i-City at Km6.5 of the Federal Highway, heading from Shah Alam to Klang on Saturday evening.

North Klang district police chief ACP S. Vijaya Rao said police received a call from a local man at 3.17pm, informing them of the incident.

"A police Mobile Patrol Vehicle unit was immediately dispatched to the scene, where they found an unidentified woman, whose nationality could not be determined, lying on the road.

"The woman was confirmed dead by an assistant medical officer from Shah Alam Hospital," he said in a statement.

Vijaya Rao said initial investigations found that the deceased was believed to have fallen from the overpass onto the road and was subsequently hit by passing vehicles.

He said the case has been classified as sudden death, and an investigation paper has been opened regarding the incident.

The public who have any information regarding the case are urged to contact investigating officer Sergeant Shaharuddin at 013-373 6222 or the nearest police station.

Earlier, a 24-second video of the incident was widely shared on social media, showing a woman lying unconscious on the road. – Bernama

## Husband, wife killed in collision

**BATU PAHAT:** A husband and wife were killed in a car crash at Km128.3 of the North-South Expressway northbound, near Yong Peng, here, when the car they were travelling in collided with a sports utility vehicle (SUV).

Batu Pahat district police chief ACP Shahrulanuar Mushaddat Abdullah Sani said in a statement yesterday that the victims, Mohamad Shahrul Nizam Mohd Ali, 24, and Norsuhada Kartika Razak, 23, died on the spot due to severe head injuries.

He said the 6.30am incident on Saturday was believed to have occurred when the car lost control, crashed into a metal guardrail, and spun before coming to a stop across the road.

"Unable to avoid a collision, the oncoming SUV rammed into the car."

He said the Kota Tinggi residents were pronounced dead at the scene, and the SUV driver is receiving treatment at Sultanah Fatimah Specialist Hospital in Muar.

Shahrulanuar Mushaddat said the case is classified under Section 41(1) of the Road Transport Act 1987. – Bernama

## Use motorcycle lane at bridge, riders urged

**BATU KAWAN:** Motorcyclists using the Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Bridge are urged to use the designated motorcycle lane to prevent crashes.

Jabatan Kedua Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Faisal Shahbudin said monitoring indicates most crashes on the bridge, also known as the Second Penang Bridge, involved motorcyclists who did not use the motorcycle lane.

"Last year, there were fatal crashes involving motorcyclists. I'm not sure of the exact number of crashes, but there have been fatal incidents because riders did not use the motorcycle lane. Although it was open, they chose to ride on the main road instead, resulting in collisions with stationary cars in the emergency lane," he said

after launching the "Jom Selamat Campaign" in conjunction with Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

The event, held at the Toll Plaza Complex on Saturday, was also attended by Penang Road Transport Department (RTD) director Zulkifly Ismail.

Faisal said they are collaborating with RTD to raise awareness on road safety, especially at the bridge during the Hari Raya Aidilfitri festive season.

The campaign is also part of the Sinar Sejahtera safety initiative.

At the campaign launch, windbreaker jackets and reflective stickers were distributed to motorcyclists. Mini fire extinguishers were also provided to Class 1 vehicle users as an added safety measure.

Faisal said the company will continue to advocate for and educate the public on road safety to ensure safe travel, particularly during festive seasons when highway traffic significantly increases.

Zulkifly said the Penang RTD plans to carry out enforcement operations during the Hari Raya Aidilfitri period.

These operations will focus on crash-prone routes, particularly in North Seberang Perai and South Seberang Perai on the mainland, as well as in Southwest Penang Island District.

"The operations will be carried out a week before and after Hari Raya Aidilfitri. It will not only involve private vehicles but also express buses to ensure adherence with safety regulations," he added. – Bernama

## Man reported missing found dead

**IPOH:** A man who was reported missing three days ago was found dead in a drain at Jalan Kampar-Tapah in front of a Christian cemetery early yesterday.

Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department assistant director (Operations) in Perak, Sabarodzi Nor Ahmad said the department was informed about the discovery of the 42-year-old victim at 1.25am.

"The body was found in a 1.2m deep drain together with a motorcycle belonging to the victim," he said in a statement.

The body was handed over to police for further action. – Bernama



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# Composting tackles bazaar food waste

➤ 'Project runs throughout Ramadan to help vendors manage waste responsibly'

BY DEEPALAKSHMI MANICKAM  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** The Bazaar Ramadan Bahagia dan Lestari @ Petaling Jaya 2025 programme, the first of its kind in Malaysia, is leading the way in sustainable waste management by converting food waste into compost.

The compost is then redistributed free of charge to vendors and visitors at Ramadan bazaars. The initiative by Petaling Jaya City Council is managed by Eco Lestari and aims to promote a circular economy by encouraging vendors to segregate waste and repurpose organic materials.

Programme executive Madeline Chong Kah Yee said the project runs throughout Ramadan to help vendors manage waste responsibly, adding that vendors who demonstrate commendable sustainable practices are nominated for the "Bahagia and Lestari Micropreneur" Award.

"From March 2 to March 10, a total of 625.4kg of food waste was collected, including 440.8kg from Kelana Jaya and 75.6kg from Kota Damansara, resulting in the

production of 125.08kg of compost, using a Maeko composting machine.

"The majority of the waste consisted of fruit peels, eggshells, rice and flour-based residues. Stalls selling fruit drinks contributed the most, especially from the large volumes of watermelon and cempedak peels.

"Similarly, vendors selling *Roti John*, bread, egg mixtures and rice dishes disposed of significant waste due to over-preparation."

Chong said while some vendors were initially hesitant, their participation grew once they saw the compost could be used as fertiliser. Visitors have even suggested expanding the initiative to wet and night markets.

She added that Eco Lestari plans to improve vendor incentives and increase public awareness through social media and educational campaigns, while expanding composting efforts.

Zero Waste Malaysia senior programme and communications officer Tasha Sabapathy echoed the need for more robust policies, such as restricting organic waste in

landfills and promoting composting as a mainstream solution.

"Encouraging composting can lower tipping fees and create opportunities in the composting industry," she said, adding that food waste makes up 45% of household waste, with even higher amounts discarded during Ramadan.

"During Ramadan, vendors frequently prepare excess food, while consumers often buy more than they can eat."

Tasha urged Ramadan bazaars to partner with food redistribution organisations to donate surplus food and reduce waste.

She also emphasised the importance of consistent education and accessible composting facilities at household and community levels.

"The government should introduce more composting solutions to make the process easier for everyone. Individuals should also adopt a zero-waste mindset: only buy what you can eat and separate waste properly to support composting initiatives."

She added that while awareness of food waste is increasing in Malaysia, implementation remains a challenge due to limited facilities.

"People are more conscious now, but proper support systems are needed to make composting a norm."



Since the project began, 625.4kg of food waste was collected from Kelana Jaya and Kota Damansara which resulted in the production of 125.08kg of compost. — COURTESY PIC

## Modern Pasar Siti Khadijah retains heritage, tradition

**KOTA BHARU:** The scent of freshly ground spices fills the air as traders call out their best deals, blending tradition with modern comfort at the newly refurbished Pasar Siti Khadijah.

A symbol of Kelantan's vibrant marketplace culture, the market now offers wider spaces, better lighting, and improved ventilation – enhancing both business and visitor experience while preserving its rich heritage.

A check found that the market's façade was repainted with intricate murals of traditional

musical instruments.

New facilities such as designated pathways for persons with disabilities, strategically placed rest areas and an upgraded drainage system further enhanced the shopping experience.

Trader Rohani Mat, 54, who has sold traditional Kelantanese food at the market for over 20 years said the transformation is a game-changer.

"With this new look, the market is more than just a place for trade. It's an economic hub and a cultural attraction that will draw more visitors."

She recalled how the market was once congested and stuffy, making it difficult for traders and shoppers.

"Everything feels more spacious, organised and inviting now. Customers are more at ease, which helps our businesses."

Dry goods and spice trader Mohd Nazri Hassan, 42, said:

"Since the reopening, more visitors are staying longer and that's great for business. The market is cleaner, better structured and more comfortable."

Mohd Farid Rahman, 45, from

Kuala Lumpur, said he has always loved visiting Pasar Siti Khadijah but always found it too hot and cramped.

"Now it's airy and well-lit. I can browse at a relaxed pace, and the variety of local products is amazing. I'll definitely be back," he said.

Apart from being a trading hub, Pasar Siti Khadijah is evolving into a platform for promoting local products, hosting cultural events, supporting entrepreneurship and reinforcing Kelantan's status as a centre for traditional commerce while

embracing modern conveniences.

With over four decades of history, the market remains a symbol of Kelantanese identity and the transformation preserves its heritage while adapting to modern needs, ensuring its legacy continues, Bernama reported.

Last October, the federal government approved RM5.5 million to upgrade the market's infrastructure, recognising its significance to the 1,500 traders who depend on it.

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# Philippine govt steers clear of Duterte defence

➤ Public advised not to believe fake news peddlers

**MANILA:** The Philippine government will not intervene as the camp of former president Rodrigo Duterte begins preparing for his defence against the charges of crimes against humanity before the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Malacañang (Presidential Palace) said on Saturday.

The ICC set the confirmation of charges hearing on Sept 23 to allow Duterte and all involved parties to "adequately prepare" for the pre-trial, as well as to acknowledge his "right to be tried within a reasonable time."

"This is the time when he will really prepare his defence. Maybe if he has witnesses, he can call them, make any statements or affidavits," Philippine News Agency (PNA) reported Palace Press Officer and Presidential Communications

Office Undersecretary Claire Castro as saying in an interview.

Castro reiterated that the Philippine government had given Duterte the necessary assistance, including medical services and "care package", from the time he was arrested at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City on Tuesday until he was sent to The Hague, Netherlands.

She said the government would not shoulder the travel expenses of the witnesses of the Duterte camp.

Castro said Duterte's camp is capable of sending its own team to The Hague, since some of his allies, including former presidential spokesperson Harry Roque and Senator Robin Padilla, went there using their own money.

"I think they can do that. They will be the ones to prepare for that. The government will not interfere in anything they do in their preparations for his defence," she said.

According to PNA, Castro said Duterte's

case was not discussed during a meeting with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr on Friday.

She said the assistance that the Philippine embassy in the Netherlands may extend to Duterte would not be mandatory.

Nevertheless, she said the government would continue monitoring developments to keep the public updated.

"But of course, we will still monitor so that the people are aware of what is happening at the hearing," Castro said.

Castro advised the public not to believe fake news peddlers who are spreading false information after Duterte's arrest.

Duterte is facing charges before the ICC for the crime against humanity of murder of 19 alleged drug offenders between 2011 and 2016 when he was still the mayor of Davao City.

He is also a suspect in the murder of another 245 drug suspects when he was the president, starting in 2016 and until before the country withdrew from the ICC effective March 17, 2018. – Bernama

## UN mulls Dhaka, Yangon aid channel

**DHAKA:** UN chief Antonio Guterres said on Saturday the organisation is exploring the possibility of a humanitarian aid channel from Bangladesh to Myanmar.

Guterres is on a four-day visit to Bangladesh that saw him meet on Friday Rohingya refugees, threatened by looming humanitarian aid cuts.

Around a million members of the minority live in squalid relief camps in Bangladesh, most of whom arrived after fleeing the 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar.

"We need to intensify humanitarian aid inside Myanmar to create a condition for that return (of the Rohingyas) to be successful," Guterres said during a press briefing.

Guterres suggested that under the right circumstances, having a "humanitarian channel" from Bangladesh would facilitate the return of the Rohingya community, but said it would require "authorisation and cooperation".

Asked if dialogue with the Arakan Army (AA), a rebel group in Myanmar, was essential for the repatriation of Rohingyas, Guterres said: "The Arakan Army is a reality in which we live."

He acknowledged that in the past relations with the AA have been difficult but said, "Necessary dialogue must take place."

Guterres said engaging with the AA was important as sanctions against the group would require the UN Security Council's approval, which could prove difficult to obtain.

"It's essential to increase pressure from all the neighbours to guarantee that fighting ends and the way towards democracy finally established," Guterres said.

The UN chief's remarks came after human rights group Fortify Rights issued a statement urging the Bangladesh government to facilitate humanitarian aid and cross border trade to reach war-affected civilians in Myanmar's Rakhine state. – AFP



Duterte supporters rally in Manila on Saturday. – REUTERS/SPIC

## Xi declines EU invitation to summit

**BEIJING:** Chinese President Xi Jinping has declined an invitation to visit Brussels for a summit to mark the 50th anniversary of EU-China diplomatic ties, the *Financial Times* reported yesterday.

Beijing told EU officials that Premier Li Qiang would meet the presidents of the European Council and Commission instead of Xi, the FT said, citing two people familiar with the matter whom it did not identify.

The Chinese premier usually attends the summit when it is held in Brussels, while the president hosts it in Beijing, but the EU wants Xi to attend to commemorate half a century of relations between Beijing and the bloc, the newspaper said.

Tensions between Brussels and Beijing have grown since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with the EU accusing China of backing the Kremlin, the FT said. Last year, the European Union also imposed tariffs on Chinese electric vehicle imports.

China's Foreign Ministry and the EU did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.

"Informal discussions are ongoing, both about setting the date for the EU-China summit this year and the level of representation," an EU official told the newspaper, while the Chinese ministry was quoted as saying it did not have any information to provide on the matter.

China, the EU's second-biggest economy, and the EU, its third-largest, spent most of 2024 exchanging barbs over allegations of overcapacity, illegal subsidies and dumping in each other's markets.

In October, the EU imposed double-digit tariffs on China-made electric vehicles after an anti-subsidy investigation, in addition to its standard car import duty of 10%. The move drew loud protests from Beijing, which in return, raised market entry barriers for certain EU products such as brandy. – Reuters

## Myanmar airstrike kills at least 12 villagers

**LETPANHLA:** An airstrike on a village held by rebels killed at least 12 people, according to a local administrative official, who said the bombardment targeted civilian areas.

The Friday afternoon strike hit the village of Letpanhla around 60km north of the country's second biggest city of Mandalay.

The village in Singu township is held by the People's Defence Forces (PDF) – rebels who took up arms after the military toppled the country's civilian government four years ago.

"A lot of people were killed because they dropped bombs on crowded areas," said the local administrative official, who asked to remain anonymous. "It happened at the time people were going to the market."

"We're making a list and have registered 12 people killed," he said on Saturday.

Government spokesmen could not be reached for comment and AFP could not independently verify the death toll. The local PDF unit reported there had been 27 fatalities.

Myint Soe, 62, said he tried to hide as an aircraft came in for a bombing run.

"I heard huge blast sounds as I was hiding," he said. "When I came out and looked at the market area I saw it was on fire."

The number of military air strikes on civilians has risen year on year, according to non-profit organisation Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, with nearly 800 last year.

That figure was more than triple the previous year. – AFP

## New South Wales sweats through heatwave

**SYDNEY:** New South Wales yesterday sweated in a heat wave that raised the risk of bushfires and prompted authorities to issue a total fire ban for state capital Sydney.

New South Wales, coming to the end of a high risk bushfire season that runs until the end of March, was a focus of a catastrophic 2019-

2020 "Black Summer" of wildfires that destroyed an area the size of Turkey and killed 33 people.

Weather forecasts yesterday indicated temperatures would be up to 12°C above average in some areas of the state, with temperatures in Sydney set to hit 37°C.

At Sydney Airport, the temperature was

already 29.3°C in the morning, more than three degrees above the March mean maximum temperature, according to forecast data.

In Victoria state, a home was destroyed in a bushfire on the outskirts of Melbourne, Country Fire Authority official Bernard Barbetti said yesterday. – Reuters





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**HOUSTON:** At least 33 people were killed and dozens more injured on Saturday when tornadoes and violent storms raked across the central United States.

Eight people died in Kansas in a crash involving more than 50 vehicles, caused by low visibility during a "severe dust storm".

Missouri State Highway Patrol confirmed 12 storm-related fatalities and shared images of boats piled on top of one another at a marina destroyed by the weather.

The state police reported downed trees and power lines, as well as damage to buildings, with some areas severely impacted by "tornadoes, thunderstorms and large hail".

"It was the scariest thing I've ever been through, it was so fast, our ears were all about to burst," said Alicia Wilson, who was evacuated from her home in Missouri.

Further south in Mississippi, the state's governor said six deaths were reported and that three people were missing late on Saturday.

In Texas, local authorities said four people had died in vehicle accidents linked to dust storms and fires that reduced visibility on the roads.

In the neighbouring state of Arkansas, officials said three people had died and 29 had been injured in the storm.

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders declared a state of emergency and said she had spoken with President Donald Trump.

"He said to tell the people of Arkansas he loves them and he and his administration are here to help with whatever we need following last night's tornadoes," Sanders wrote on X.

At least 200,000 homes and businesses across the central United States were without power by Saturday evening, according to tracking site [poweroutage.us](https://poweroutage.us).

More tornadoes were forecast on Saturday in the central Gulf Coast states including Mississippi and Tennessee.

"Numerous significant tornadoes, some of which may be long-track and potentially violent, should continue into this evening," the



Resident Stevie Kara searches for personal items after her home was destroyed on Saturday in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. - AFP/IC

# Tornadoes ravage central US

➤ At least 33 reported dead

National Weather Service said.

Tornadoes are spinning columns of air that touch the ground from massive cumulonimbus thunderstorm clouds.

The central and southern American states of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas get the most

violent ones due to unique geographical and meteorological conditions.

Dubbed "Tornado Alley", this is where winds of widely varying temperatures meet in volatile, potent storm clouds, with most storms occurring from May to June.

Last year, 54 people died in tornado-related incidents in the United States, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. - AFP

## Judge blocks use of wartime powers

**WASHINGTON:** A federal judge on Saturday temporarily blocked any deportations that would occur under President Donald Trump's use of a little-used wartime law to expedite the expulsion of alleged members of the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua.

Hours earlier, Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 against the group, saying the United States was facing an "invasion" from a criminal organisation that has been linked to kidnapping, extortion, organised crime and contract killings.

Judge James Boasberg issued a restraining order for 14 days. Boasberg said the act "does not provide a basis for the proclamation given that the terms invasion, predatory incursion relate to hostile acts perpetrated by any nation and commensurate to war".

In invoking the act, Trump said members of the gang were "conducting irregular warfare and undertaking hostile actions against the United States" with the goal of destabilising the nation.

Attorney General Pam Bondi said Boasberg "had supported terrorists over the safety of Americans" in his ruling. "This order disregards well-established authority and it puts the public and law enforcement at risk," she said. - Reuters

## Voice of America staff put on leave

**WASHINGTON:** More than 1,300 Voice of America employees were placed on leave on Saturday and funding for two US news services that broadcast to authoritarian regimes was terminated, one day after President Donald Trump ordered the gutting of the government-funded media outlet's parent and six other federal agencies.

Michael Abramowitz, Voice of America's director, said nearly his entire staff of 1,300 journalists, producers and assistants had been put on administrative leave, crippling a media broadcaster that operates in almost 50 languages.

"I am deeply saddened that for the first time in 83 years, the storied Voice of America is being silenced," Abramowitz said.

VOA's parent agency, the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), also terminated its grants to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which broadcasts to countries in Eastern Europe, including Russia and Ukraine, as well as to Radio Free Asia.

USAGM employs roughly 3,500 workers with a US\$886 million (RM3.9 billion) budget last year, according to its latest report to Congress. - Reuters

## Nightclub fire leaves 51 dead, over 100 hurt

**SKOPIJE:** Fifty-one people were killed and more than 100 injured when a fire broke out in a nightclub early yesterday in the North Macedonian town of Kocani, Interior Minister Pance Toskovski said.

The fire was caused by "pyrotechnic devices" used during a concert, Toskovski said.

"Sparks caused fire ... and fire spread through the discotheque," he said.

A video from the event, verified by Reuters, shows a band playing on stage flanked by two flares firing white sparks into the air. The sparks set the ceiling alight above the band, who appear to step away as the video cuts.

Firefighters doused the charred and smoking entrance to the club, named Pulse, TV footage from a local broadcaster showed.

North Macedonia's MRT public broadcaster reported that 27 people were hospitalised at the Skopje City Hospital, and another 23 were being treated at the Clinical Centre. - Reuters



(From left, front row) Wilmore, Onishi, McClain, Peskov, Ayers, Alexey Ochinin and Ivan Vagner. The three at the back are (from left) Don Pettit, Gorbunov and Williams. - AFP/IC

## Stranded astronauts prepare to return home

**KENNEDY SPACE CENTER:** A pair of astronauts stranded for more than nine months on the International Space Station (ISS) were set to return home yesterday after a replacement crew docked with the outpost.

Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams have been stuck aboard the ISS since June after the Boeing Starliner they were testing suffered propulsion issues and was deemed unfit to fly them back to Earth.

Williams said it was a "wonderful day" and "great to see our friends arrive".

The Nasa duo's prolonged stay was significantly longer than the standard ISS

rotation for astronauts of roughly six months.

But it is much shorter than the US space record of 371 days set by Frank Rubio aboard the ISS in 2023, or the world record held by Russian Valeri Polyakov, who spent 437 continuous days aboard the Mir space station.

Still, the unexpected nature of their stint away from their families - they had to receive additional clothing and personal care items because they hadn't packed enough - garnered interest and sympathy around the world.

Wilmore and Williams will now begin preparing for departure and their ocean

splashdown off the Florida coast, no sooner than March 19.

Along with the pair, Nasa astronaut Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov will also be aboard the returning Dragon capsule.

The replacement Crew-10 team had blasted off on Friday from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The team consists of Nasa astronauts Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, Japan's Takuya Onishi, and Russia's Kirill Peskov.

The new crew will conduct scientific experiments during their mission. - AFP



# US bombs Yemen, 31 dead

▶ Trump vows to end Houthi attacks

**SANAA:** The first US strikes against Yemen's Houthis since President Donald Trump took office in January killed at least 31 people, the rebels said yesterday, as Washington warned Iran to stop backing the group.

The Houthis said children were among those killed by the intense barrage of strikes.

Attacks on the rebel-held capital Sanaa, as well as on areas in Saada, Al Bayda and Radaa killed 31 people and wounded 101, "most of whom were children and women", Health Ministry spokesperson Anis Al-Asbahi said in a statement.

Trump, in a post on social media, vowed to "use overwhelming lethal force" and ordered Iran to "immediately" cut its support.

The Houthis warned that the strikes "will not pass without response", while Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi condemned the deaths and said Washington had "no authority" to dictate its foreign policy.

The Houthi Ansarollah website slammed what it called "US-British aggression" and Washington's "criminal brutality".

The US Central Command (Centcom), which posted images of fighters and a bomb demolishing a building compound, said "precision strikes" were launched to "defend American interests, deter enemies, and restore freedom of navigation".

There was no immediate comment from British authorities.

"Our Yemeni armed forces are fully prepared to confront escalation with escalation," the rebels' political bureau said in a statement on their Al-Masirah TV station.

The rebels, who have controlled much of Yemen for more than a decade, are part of an alliance of



Rescuers searching amid the rubble of a house hit by a US strike in Saada, Yemen on Saturday. — REUTERSPIC

pro-Iran groups staunchly opposed to Israel and the United States.

They have launched scores of drone and missile attacks at ships passing Yemen in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden during the Gaza war, claiming solidarity with the Palestinians.

Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said the Houthis had "attacked US warships 174 times and commercial vessels 145 times since 2023".

The campaign crippled the vital route, which normally carries about 12% of world shipping traffic, forcing many companies into a costly detour around southern Africa.

Hamas hit out on Saturday at the US strikes, branding them "a stark violation of international law and

an assault on the country's sovereignty and stability".

The United States has launched several rounds of strikes on Houthi targets, some with British support.

After halting their attacks when Gaza's ceasefire took effect in January, the Houthis announced on Tuesday that they would resume them until Israel lifts its blockade of aid to the shattered Palestinian territory.

Trump's statement did not reference the dispute over Israel, but focused on previous Houthi attacks on merchant shipping.

Earlier this month, the United States reclassified the Houthi movement as a "foreign terrorist organisation", banning any US interaction with it.

US Secretary of State Marco

Rubio also spoke to his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. Moscow is close to Tehran, which supports the Houthis.

"Continued Houthi attacks on US military and commercial shipping vessels in the Red Sea will not be tolerated," Rubio told Lavrov on Saturday, according to the State Department.

The Houthis captured Sanaa in 2014 and were poised to overrun the rest of the country before a Saudi-led coalition intervened.

The war devastated the already impoverished nation.

Fighting has largely been on hold since a 2022 ceasefire, but the promised peace process has stalled in the face of Houthi attacks on Israel and Israel-linked shipping. — AFP

## Lawyers for detained student ask for bail

**NEW YORK:** A Columbia University student detained over his pro-Palestinian activism is not a flight risk and should be allowed to return home for the birth of his first child, his lawyers argued in a motion for bail on Saturday.

Mahmoud Khalil, a 30-year-old permanent US resident of Palestinian descent, was arrested a week ago at his university residence. He has not been charged with a crime and is being held in immigration custody in Louisiana.

His wife, an American citizen, is due to give birth next month. The case has become a flashpoint for President Donald Trump's vow to deport activists who took part in protests on college campuses against Israel's war on Gaza.

Khalil was a prominent member of the protest movement at Columbia University. His arrest sparked protests.

Justice Department lawyers have argued the government is seeking Khalil's removal because Secretary of State Marco Rubio has reasonable grounds to believe his activities or presence in the country could have "serious adverse foreign policy consequences".

The US will likely revoke visas of more students in the coming days, Rubio said on Friday.

Under a provision of the US Immigration and Nationality Act, a law passed in 1952, any immigrant may be deported if the secretary of state deems their presence in the country potentially adverse to American foreign policy.

Legal experts have said that provision is rarely invoked, and Khalil's lawyers have said it was not intended to silence dissent.

"His detention unquestionably chills his speech, as the federal government monitors and controls his ability to communicate with the outside world and has complete power over all of the decisions that impact his daily life inside a remote private prison," his lawyers argued in the motion for bail.

They said if released, Khalil would return home to help his wife prepare for the birth of their child and start a job at a human rights organisation in New York. — Reuters

## Israeli airstrike kills nine in Gaza

**CAIRO:** At least nine Palestinians including three local journalists were killed on Saturday in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza's northern Beit Lahiya town, the Health Ministry said, as Hamas leaders held ceasefire talks with mediators in Cairo.

Several were critically injured as the strike hit a car, with casualties inside and outside the vehicle, health officials said.

Witnesses and fellow journalists said the people in the car were on a mission for a charity called Al-Khair Foundation in Beit Lahiya, and they were accompanied by journalists and photographers when the strike hit them. At least three local journalists were among the dead, according to Palestinian media.

The Israeli military initially said it had struck two "terrorists" operating a drone that posed a threat to its forces and several people who collected the drone equipment.

In another statement, the military named six men that it said were members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad



Demonstrators in a curragh boat waving Palestinian and Irish flags during a black shamrock demonstration on Saturday in support of Palestinians and against Premier Micheal Martin's visit to the White House. — REUTERSPIC

who had been killed in the incident. Some of the gunmen had operated "under the cover of journalists", it said.

The incident underscores the fragility of the Jan 19 ceasefire agreement that halted large-scale

fighting in the Gaza Strip. Health officials say dozens of people have been killed by Israeli fire despite the truce.

Salama Marouf, the head of the Gaza government media office, denied the army's allegations.

"The team was made of civilians and worked in an area near a shelter on a mission sponsored by a charity. They were not in a prohibited area and didn't pose any danger of any kind to the occupation army," Marouf said in a statement.

Later on Saturday, Gaza medics said another Israeli air strike in the town of Juhr Eldeek in the central Gaza Strip killed two Palestinians. The Israeli military said it was unaware of the incident.

Hamas accused Israel in a statement of attempting to renege on the ceasefire agreement, putting the number of Palestinians killed since Jan 19 at 150.

It urged mediators to compel Israel to move ahead with the implementation of the phased ceasefire deal. — Reuters

## BRIEFS CEASE FIRE, KREMLIN URGES WASHINGTON

**MOSCOW:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov urged the United States to cease strikes against Yemen's Houthis, the Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

Lavrov spoke to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio by telephone, the ministry said. "In response to the American representative's arguments, Sergei Lavrov stressed the need for an immediate cessation of the use of force and the importance for all sides to engage in political dialogue in order to find a solution that would prevent further bloodshed," the ministry said. — Reuters

## DRONE ATTACK KILLS ONE IN SOUTH LEBANON

**BEIRUT:** An Israeli drone strike in southern Lebanon yesterday killed one person, the Health Ministry said, the latest attack more than three months into a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. The strike, which also wounded one person, targeted a four-wheel-drive vehicle near Yater in Bint Jbeil district, the National News Agency reported. It comes a day after the ministry said one person was killed in an Israeli strike on a vehicle in the southern border town of Burj al-Muluk. — AFP

# Building our own silicon vision

**COMMENT**  
by Ahmad Faiz Yazid

**M**ALAYSIA is at a pivotal crossroads in its technological evolution.

The recent launch of Malaysia's Silicon Vision, a bold initiative unveiled by the Economy Ministry in collaboration with the architect behind the world's most complex chips, signals a new era in semiconductor and AI chip-manufacturing.

This event is not merely a product launch; it represents a strategic pivot toward building an end-to-end ecosystem that encompasses intellectual property (IP) creation, advanced integrated circuit design and full-cycle manufacturing.

By owning the critical IP for AI innovation, Malaysia not only secures strategic control over its technological future but also positions itself to serve high-demand sectors such as data centres, autonomous vehicles, robotics and healthcare.

The initiative reflects a radical reimagination of Malaysia's potential, promising quality, cost efficiency and an innovation-driven supply chain.

This new vision for Malaysia's semiconductor landscape is underpinned by a comprehensive strategic framework detailed in the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP) 2030.

The NIMP 2030 for the electrical and electronics industry outlines bold missions and action plans aimed at moving the country up the value chain, from basic assembly and test operations to advanced research and development and system-on-chip design.

The policy emphasises nurturing indigenous capabilities and establishing collaborative industrial clusters that can catalyse domestic innovation, ensuring that Malaysia captures more value locally rather than relying solely on foreign expertise.

The urgency to develop domestic capabilities is heightened by the evolving global trade landscape, particularly in light of the recent US export controls on the AI diffusion framework that was announced on Jan 13.

These controls restrict the free flow of critical AI technologies, placing pressure on nations to seek alternative, homegrown solutions.

Against this backdrop, Malaysia's push towards building its own AI chip infrastructure is not only a strategic response to external pressures but also a proactive move to diversify revenue streams and mitigate vulnerabilities inherent in heavy reliance on imported technology.

Trade data from 2023 provides deeper insight into Malaysia's position within the regional semiconductor landscape. While its semiconductor-manufacturing equipment trade with China (exports:

US\$23.14 million/RM102.86 million; imports: US\$58.73 million) and the US (exports: US\$117.23 million; imports: US\$162.35 million) remains modest compared to regional leaders like Singapore, Malaysia's active engagement in both markets signals its potential for growth.

The country's strong exports of IC and related components to China (US\$13.28 billion) and the US (US\$6.79 billion), alongside significant imports from China (US\$7.31 billion) and the US (US\$4.79 billion), further reinforce its role as a key player in the global electronics supply chain.

However, this also highlights a reliance on external markets, emphasising the urgent need to develop domestic capabilities and reduce dependency on foreign technology.

Beyond trade figures, the revenue distribution of majority Malaysia's semiconductor and tech-related companies reveals a nuanced picture.

While these firms benefit from a diversified market presence across key regions such as Singapore, the US and China, a significant share of their earnings remains tied to external demand.

This reliance exposes them to global economic shifts and supply chain disruptions, underscoring the importance of strengthening local AI and semiconductor firms.

To mitigate these risks, Malaysia must accelerate efforts to cultivate and scale homegrown AI firms,



A worker inspects semiconductor chips at a chip packaging firm in Ipoh, Malaysia. — REUTERS/SPIC

ensuring that local players are not just participants in the supply chain but also innovators in chip design, fabrication and AI-driven applications.

This requires targeted investments in research, talent development and infrastructure, alongside stronger collaboration between the government, industry and academia.

By fostering a dynamic AI ecosystem, Malaysia can reduce its dependency on foreign technology, create new revenue streams and establish itself as a formidable player in the global AI and semiconductor landscape.

Ultimately, the convergence of Malaysia's Silicon Vision, the strategic direction outlined in NIMP 2030, and the current global trade challenges, such as US export controls, forms a

compelling case for a radical reimagination of the country's semiconductor industry.

By accelerating local research and development, fostering public-private collaborations and developing specialised industrial clusters, Malaysia can transition from being a key player in assembly and test operations to a leader in high-value semiconductor and AI chip design and manufacturing.

In doing so, Malaysia will not only bolster its technological sovereignty but also chart a resilient and diversified economic future — a future truly "Made in Malaysia".

*Ahmad Faiz Yazid is a*

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# Leading with integrity for progress

COMMENT  
By Sheila Ramalingam

**A**LLEXANDER the Great of Macedonia, who reigned from 356 to 323 BC, was known to have said: "I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion".

From ancient times, through the wisdom of Plato to Sun Tzu, the importance of leadership has been widely acknowledged.

In today's modern world, leadership is no longer confined to government institutions or political figures. It permeates every level of society, from corporate boardrooms to academic institutions, from grassroots organisations to small teams working on a shared goal.

Leadership is the ability to guide, inspire and make decisions that impact others. Whether it is a CEO determining a company's future, a community leader advocating for change or a project manager steering a team towards success, leadership is universal.

It is not about titles or positions but rather about the values and principles that guide a person's actions. One crucial element that distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective ones is integrity.

Integrity in leadership is deeply intertwined with morality and accountability. It is the ability to do what is right, even in the absence of oversight. A person is not born with an unshakeable moral compass; instead, ethical leadership is cultivated through learning, mentorship and experience. Without integrity, leadership becomes self-serving, leading to broken trust, corruption and long-term damage to

organisations and societies.

Strong leadership is essential in both the private and public sectors. A leader who upholds principles and purpose fosters trust, encourages collaboration and ensures sustainable success. Without these qualities, businesses, institutions and even entire industries can fall prey to unethical practices, damaging reputations and economic stability.

Leaders who prioritise ethical values contribute not only to the growth of their organisations but also to the well-being of the communities they serve. The benefits of such leadership include:

➤ **Ethical decision-making:** Leaders who act with integrity ensure that their decisions reflect ethical standards, fostering trust among employees, customers and stakeholders.

➤ **Long-term success:** Ethical leaders prioritise sustainable growth over short-term gains, focusing on long-term strategies that benefit employees, the environment and society.

➤ **Employee engagement and retention:** People are more committed when they work for leaders who demonstrate fairness, respect and consistency, leading to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

➤ **Reputation management:** In an era of increasing transparency, businesses and institutions must be held accountable for their actions. Ethical leadership helps prevent scandals, legal issues and public backlash.

➤ **Attracting investment:** Investors and stakeholders are more likely to support entities led by trustworthy leaders who uphold ethical governance and responsible management practices.

➤ **Adaptability and resilience:** Leaders who foster a culture of accountability and problem-solving build organisations that can withstand

*"It is not about titles or positions but rather about the values and principles that guide a person's actions. One crucial element that distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective ones is integrity."*



Ethical leadership encourages organisations to take responsibility for their social and environmental impact, strengthening relationships with communities. – SUNPIC

crises and maintain a competitive edge.

➤ **Corporate social responsibility:** Ethical leadership encourages organisations to take responsibility for their social and environmental impact, strengthening relationships with communities and driving positive societal change.

Leadership is not about power; it is about influence. True leaders uplift those around them, create opportunities for growth and build environments where integrity thrives. In every sphere of life, from businesses to communities, ethical leadership is the driving force behind meaningful progress.

By nurturing principled leaders, we create stronger, more resilient organisations and, ultimately, a better society for all.

As the world evolves, the demand for leaders who act with purpose and integrity will only grow because true leadership is not about holding power but about leaving behind a legacy that uplifts, inspires and endures.

**Sheila Ramalingam** is the deputy executive director at Universiti Malaya Centre of Leadership and Professional Development and senior lecturer at the Faculty of Law, Universiti Malaya. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

## Remembering Datuk Dr A. Jai Mohan, eminent paediatrician

LETTERS  
letters@thesundaily.com

**DATUK** Dr A. Jai Mohan, a dear friend and colleague, passed away in the early hours of March 13, in the presence of those who loved him.

This tribute honours his extraordinary life and work, highlighting his profound influence on countless lives and his pivotal role in shaping our health services.

Dr Jai, MBBS (Mal), MRCP (UK), FRCP (Lon), FAMM, served in the Health Ministry for 30 years (1971-2001), where he was a consultant paediatrician and led paediatrics at Hospitals Seremban, Ipoh and Selayang. His remarkable contributions continue to impact the nation.

From 2005 to 2018, Dr Jai served as a professor of health informatics and paediatrics at the International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur, where he was also the director of the Learning Resources Division.

He also held several leadership roles, including as past president of the Malaysian Paediatric Association (1991-1992) and Malaysian Health Informatics Association (2011-2016).

Dr Jai continued to teach health informatics part-time at the International Medical University and Quest International University Perak, where he was an adjunct professor.

He also served as an advisor to the Nichi-Asia Centre for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine. Additionally, he worked as a

temporary consultant for the World Health Organisation, providing expertise on telematics and advising on telemedicine development in developing countries.

Dr Jai published numerous research reports on paediatrics, health informatics and health policy, with special interests in paediatrics, digital health, e-learning, stem cell and exosome therapy.

This brief list of his life's work and roles reflects his brilliance, sharp intellect and profound insights – whether diagnosing complex illnesses in children or advancing health services in the country.

His achievements are a testament to his exceptional mind and lasting impact.

Dr Jai was frequently consulted by the Health Ministry to help plan and develop services, serving as a key think-tank for the nation's health sector, not just in paediatrics but across the entire system.

Despite not always receiving the recognition he deserved for his groundbreaking ideas, he never sought personal reward. His focus was always on advancing concepts for the betterment of the nation, rather than seeking credit for himself.

He was a brilliant teacher and trainer, known for his ability to articulate difficult concepts in an easily understandable way.

Once, despite having a packed schedule and no time to prepare, he delivered one of the

most insightful sessions I have ever attended, using just a whiteboard to articulate his ideas. Such was his gift for eloquence in words and ideas.



Beyond his sharp intellect, those of us who knew him well remember him most for his kind heart and willingness to help clarify issues and share valuable insights.

Dr Jai was a generous and patient man, always willing to support those in need. Even when betrayed or taken advantage of, he rarely spoke ill of others. He showed his love by creating opportunities for others and speaking highly of them.

He treated junior colleagues as equals, respecting their opinions and fostering an environment of mutual respect.

Dr Jai was deeply loved by the children and families he cared for, known for his patience, kindness and expertise as a paediatrician. He inspired many of us with his enthusiasm for paediatrics and his passion for helping children.

Beyond his medical work, he was also a social activist, frequently engaging with politicians and influencers to drive positive change in society.

Dr Jai recognised early on, long before the term was coined, that social determinants of health are crucial for improving the well-being of children and society.

As a paediatrician, he was exceptional – one of a kind, with few peers before or likely to

come after him. Yet, many of us carry a piece of his wisdom and strive to reach the greatness he achieved.

Dr Jai must have been immensely proud that one of his children chose to become a paediatrician. It is impossible to speak of him without mentioning his wonderful wife, Datin Pearl Jai Mohan, recipient of the prestigious Margarette Golding Award (2019).

I fondly remember how, in the early days when there was only one Health Ministry paediatrician per state, Dr Jai would invite us to his home for training sessions for the MRCP UK examination. While he taught us, Datin Pearl graciously offered us the hospitality of their home.

We grieve his loss but we also celebrate his life, his work and all he has contributed to our lives and this country.

While the nation may not know him well, those of us in the medical fraternity know that he was one of our nation's greatest paediatricians. He shaped the field of paediatrics and child health for many decades.

As the philosopher and author Alfred Armand Montapert said: "The monument of a great man is not of granite or marble or bronze. It consists of his goodness, his deeds, his love and his compassion."

This truly is the monument that Dr Jai leaves behind for us; he leaves behind a legacy of hope and compassion in our lives and that of the nation.

**Datuk Dr Amar-Singh HSS**  
Consultant Paediatrician

# Maybank deepens commitment to net zero

➤ Group expands white paper series on decarbonisation to include automotive and commercial real estate

**PETALING JAYA:** Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank) has released an updated version of its net zero white paper series titled "Banking on A Better Tomorrow: Our Commitment to Net Zero", first published in May 2024.

The latest version, unveiled last month, expands Maybank's decarbonisation roadmap to include two additional key sectors - automotive and commercial real estate - outlining the group's science-based interim targets and decarbonisation strategies.

The update builds on the white paper's initial focus on the power and palm oil sectors, as well as its November 2024 expansion into steel and aluminium.

President and group CEO Datuk Khairussaleh Ramli (*pic*) said the expansion of decarbonisation strategies into automotive and commercial real estate is the most challenging yet crucial aspects of Maybank's net zero journey.

"The white paper now addresses

six hard-to-abate sectors, providing a holistic approach to decarbonisation. This expansion reinforces our long-term commitment to reducing emissions in critical industries, driving meaningful climate actions across high-emitting sectors, vital for achieving our net zero goals."

In December 2023, Maybank set its baseline financed emissions intensity for the automotive portfolio at 138 gCO<sub>2</sub>/vkm, which is 15% below the International Energy Agency's net zero emissions passenger cars pathway of 162 gCO<sub>2</sub>/vkm. This demonstrates the significant strides Maybank and its clients have taken towards reducing emissions.

The gCO<sub>2</sub>/vkm is unit of measurement that represents the amount of carbon dioxide emitted by a vehicle per kilometre driven.

Khairussaleh said, "As the first commercial bank outside Europe to set a retail automotive decarbonisation target, we are leading the charge in reducing emissions

from passenger vehicle financing and promoting the adoption of electric vehicles. Aligning with the IEA NZE passenger cars pathway's glidepath requires reducing emissions to 94 gCO<sub>2</sub>/vkm by 2030 - a target that underscores the need for significant effort, collaboration and commitment."

He added that achieving this ambitious goal will rely on key enablers, such as supportive policies and shifts in consumer preferences.

"Policymakers and automotive industry leaders must continue to work hand-in-hand to scale solutions and accelerate the transition to low-carbon mobility. Equally important is the growing consumer enthusiasm and preference for EVs, which will be instrumental in driving this transition," he said.

For the commercial real estate portfolio, Maybank's baseline financed emissions intensity as of December 2023 was 80.5 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>. This aligns with the

December 2023 benchmark of 81 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> set by the sector's reference pathway - regionalised hybrid net zero aligned Carbon Risk Real Estate Monitor and International Energy Agency's announced pledges scenario.



KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> is a unit of measurement for carbon emissions that is used to calculate the amount of carbon dioxide equivalent per square metre.

Khairussaleh said, "A reduction of emission intensity to 56kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> by 2030 as recommended by the reference pathway is feasible, influenced

by supportive policies promoting energy-efficient buildings, decarbonisation strategies of power generation companies within our footprint, alongside the commitment of our real estate clients are pivotal in driving progress toward our decarbonisation goals in this sector. We remain dedicated to collaborating with diverse stakeholders to tackle challenges and accelerate the transition in this space."

## Mastercard tool 'TRACES' financial crimes across payment networks in Asia-Pacific

**PETALING JAYA:** Mastercard recently launched TRACE (Trace Financial Crime) in the Asia-Pacific, a sophisticated network-level solution that harnesses artificial intelligence to identify and prevent money laundering and financial crime.

Powered by timely and large-scale payments data from multiple financial institutions, TRACE provides holistic intelligence beyond an individual financial institution's siloed view, enabling tracing of financial crime across a payments network.

In recent years, real-time payments (RTP) have seen a rapid rise in use among individuals and businesses across the Asia-Pacific, allowing transactions to be settled between accounts at different financial institutions within seconds - something which in the past often took a matter of days.

However, this speed has also made it a target for money launderers and "mules", who try to evade detection by moving funds rapidly between multiple accounts. Often, criminals also involve the accounts of unwitting civilians through methods such as romance and investment scams.

Financial institutions have largely relied on semi-manual methods or in-house AI solutions to detect these illicit patterns, but these typically rely on their own data and lack the holistic, network-level perspective needed to trace such far-reaching criminal activity. Often, investigations take weeks to complete.

To address this, Mastercard developed TRACE, which uses cutting-edge data science techniques to trace potentially fraudulent transaction patterns across a payments network, as well as providing proactive alerts to banks about suspicious accounts. TRACE incorporates critical data points across an entire domestic network to identify money mules involved in financial crime (such as frauds, scams, etc), giving financial institutions a network-level perspective they wouldn't otherwise have.

Mastercard's first Asia-Pacific rollout of TRACE was in the Philippines in collaboration with local interbank network BancNet (the switch operator of local RTP service InstaPay), with BancNet having already onboarded 36 domestic banks.

The solution allows participating financial institutions to quickly and extensively trace dispersed illicit funds across the RTP system, identify money mule activity throughout the network, and proactively highlight suspected money laundering accounts - all of which will allow them to better adhere to the country's new Anti-Financial Account Scamming Act.

"The launch of TRACE in Asia-Pacific marks a transformative step toward safeguarding the integrity of real-time payments while combatting the corrosive effects of financial crime," said Matthew Driver, executive vice-president, services, Asia Pacific, Mastercard.

## MBSB Group sets up centre at Matrade to support SMEs

**PETALING JAYA:** MBSB Group recently launched its commercial banking centre at Wisma Matrade in Kuala Lumpur, strengthening its commitment to supporting SMEs and mid-sized companies, particularly those expanding into international markets.

Located within Matrade, Malaysia's national trade promotion agency, the centre provides businesses with seamless access to financial solutions, trade advisory and strategic insights to strengthen their global competitiveness.

"The establishment of this centre within Matrade is a key step in enabling SMEs and mid-sized companies to scale internationally. Businesses need more than financing. They require strategic support, industry insights and seamless access to trade advisory," said Matrade chairman Datuk Seri Reezal Merican.

The centre offers trade financing, working capital solutions, capital expenditure financing and cash management services tailored to the needs of SMEs and mid-sized companies. By embedding financial expertise within Matrade, MBSB Group aims to support businesses in leveraging new market opportunities and strengthening their financial resilience.

MBSB Group chairman Datuk Wan Kamaruzaman Wan Ahmad said the launch of the centre is a game changer for SMEs and mid-sized



From left: Mohd Mustafa, Wan Kamaruzaman and Rafe at the launch of MBSB's commercial banking centre at Matrade's premises. - MATRADE PIC

companies aspiring to grow beyond Malaysia.

MBSB Group's expansion strategy includes commercial banking centres across Malaysia, with locations in PJ Sentral, Penang, Seberang Jaya, Johor Bahru, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, as well as new centres in Putrajaya, Shah Alam, Ipoh and Kuala Terengganu.

"With Malaysia's strong focus on growing high-value industries and increasing export competitiveness under NIMP 2030, this centre in Matrade is our way of ensuring that SMEs and mid-sized companies have easy access to the capital, advisory services and digital banking tools needed to succeed in today's dynamic global marketplace," said

MBSB Group CEO Rafe Haneef.

"I am pleased to welcome MBSB Group's Commercial Banking Centre to Matrade's premises. This is part of our transformation into a dynamic business hub, enhancing the services available to our tenants, domestic companies as well as international business community," said Matrade CEO Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz.





# Double trouble for Malaysian timber

BY **JOHN GILBERT**  
[sunbiz@thesundaily.com](mailto:sunbiz@thesundaily.com)

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The proposed classification of two timber species commonly found in Malaysia as unsustainable by the United States and the European Union (EU) under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will result in the cancellation of Malaysian timber exports to the US and the EU.

The Timber Exporters' Association of Malaysia (TEAM) treasurer Wong Kar Wai said that in addition to impending tariffs, the US and the EU are proposing to classify certain timber species common to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia – namely Shorea, locally known as Meranti, and Apitong, known as Keruing – under CITES despite their being sustainably harvested and processed.

"Keruing is a special type of timber primarily used for floorboards, with the US being its main market. A major

➤ There will be severe consequences on exporters if Meranti and Apitong are listed in CITES, besides impact from US tariffs

buyer is the US military, which uses Keruing for the flooring of trucks and tanks due to its durability and strength.

"However, the US is now looking to rely more on its local timber, particularly Red Oak.

"As a result, there are discussions about placing Keruing under CITES, which could further restrict its trade and impact exporters, particularly from Malaysia," he told *SunBiz* at the Export Furniture Exhibition 2025 held recently.

Wong said Keruing is native to Malaysia and Indonesia, making these countries the primary sources for this species.

"Although it is certified as

sustainable, it now faces two major challenges – one being the new US tariff and the other the possibility of being listed under CITES, which could further restrict its trade," he said.

In a letter to its members, seen by *SunBiz*, TEAM president Chua Song Fong noted that the European Commission and the US have proposed the inclusion of Shorea (such as Balau, Red Meranti, Yellow Meranti and White Meranti) and Apitong in the CITES appendices.

If approved, he said, the listing would impose strict trade restrictions on these timber species, significantly impacting the domestic industry.

A vote on Shorea's inclusion is

scheduled for the CITES CoP20 Conference in Uzbekistan to be held from Nov 24 to Dec 5.

TEAM's memo noted that the domestic timber industry has expressed deep concerns over the severe consequences if the proposals are adopted.

Recognising the potential economic and operational impact, TEAM and the Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) convened a meeting on Feb 27 to assess the situation and formulate a response.

Following discussions, MTIB has committed to escalating the matter to the Ministry of Plantation and Commodities and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES). The aim is to highlight the significant risks posed to the country's economy and the survival of the domestic timber industry should the proposal be accepted.

Additionally, TEAM has called for an urgent meeting with key stakeholders, including MTIB, NRES and industry associations such as the Malaysian Timber Industry Forum Association and the Malaysian Timber Association. The meeting will focus on countering allegations that these species are endangered and developing a strategy to prevent their inclusion in the CITES list.

Wong said the proposal to list Shorea (Meranti) and Apitong (Keruing) under CITES seems driven by external interests that are looking to promote their own country's timber species.

"Despite being sustainably harvested and certified, Shorea and Apitong face potential trade restrictions under the guise of conservation. The timber sector now faces two major threats – tariffs and the potential CITES listing – which could severely impact trade.

"Since these species are naturally found in Malaysia and Indonesia, industry stakeholders must counter these

claims and ensure that sustainable practices are recognised," Wong said.

In a letter dated Jan 27 to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US-based Hardwood Federation urged the agency to amend CITES to classify Apitong as an endangered species.

The letter, reviewed by *SunBiz*, stated that the Hardwood Federation's push for Apitong's inclusion in CITES aims to prevent unsustainable harvesting. The push also aligns with concerns raised by the White House Council on Environmental Quality and the General Services Administration.

"Protecting Apitong is crucial for environmental conservation and maintaining international trade sustainability," the letter stated.

Wong said the US has been importing Apitong hardwood for use as trailer beds and vehicle floorboards for the military.

The Hardwood Federation's letter stated that the push to list Apitong into CITES is aimed at promoting Red Oak found in the US to replace Apitong hardwood imports.

The letter further noted that the Department of Defense is developing a Red Oak-based trailer decking prototype as part of its mass timber initiative in collaboration with Michigan Technological University, the USDA Forest Products Laboratory, the Hardwood Federation and other partners.

The new Red Oak prototype lasts five times longer than Apitong, reducing replacement needs and lowering the agency's carbon footprint while supporting domestic forestry and sustainable practices.

"As part of this shift, the National Defense Authorization Act now classifies Apitong as endangered and calls for a transition to domestically sourced Red Oak for trailer beds and vehicle floorboards.

"Congress emphasised that



TEAM notes that the domestic timber industry has expressed deep concerns over the severe consequences of the US' and the EU's proposals. – **BERNAMAPIC**

See page 15

## US tariffs will make a bad situation worse, says TEAM

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Impending US tariffs on timber imports will have a significant impact on Malaysian exporters of the product, many of whom are already grappling with rising operational costs and weakening global demand.

The additional trade barrier is expected to erode profit margins, disrupt supply chains and diminish the competitiveness of Malaysian timber in the US market.

Industry players warn that the tariffs could accelerate business closures, as some companies have already begun scaling down operations in anticipation of the policy's impact.

The Timber Exporters' Association of Malaysia (TEAM) treasurer Wong Kar Wai (pic) said some domestic timber exporters, particularly in Perak, have already exited the business.

"The US plans to implement a 25% tariff on all timber products. So, how are we going to penetrate that market?"

"I have heard that many of our exporters have recently faced order cancellations from US buyers," he told *SunBiz* at the Export Furniture Exhibition 2025 held recently.

On March 1, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing an investigation into whether timber, lumber and related imports posed a threat to US national security.

The order tasks the commerce secretary with assessing the risks of import dependency and issuing a report within 270 days after consulting key government agencies.

Timber and lumber are essential to US manufacturing, particularly in construction and other downstream industries.

Despite having sufficient timber resources and a softwood lumber industry capable of supplying 95% of domestic demand in 2024, the US has been a net importer of raw materials since 2016.

The executive order raises concerns that reliance on imports could weaken supply chain stability and create security vulnerabilities.

When asked to comment, Wong said exporters are now looking at other markets, but this will be challenging as many other countries already have their own import markets for many years.

When it comes to timber, Wong said, different regions demand



different grades of wood.

Higher-grade timber, which comes from the best parts of a tree, is usually sent to markets in Europe and the US, where there is strong demand for premium-quality wood. Lower-grade timber is more commonly exported to countries in the Middle East, South Africa and India.

Wong said these markets rely on this type of wood for various uses that do not require top-quality material. This global distribution reflects how different regions have unique needs and preferences for timber, he added.

Wong noted that Malaysia and Indonesia are expected to feel the biggest impact from the market downturn, especially with the new

tariff adding pressure on exporters.

To counter this, he said, there is hope that Asean countries can unite under Malaysia's Asean chairmanship and cast a single vote to push back against these challenges. "Without regional co-operation, Malaysia alone may struggle to make a significant impact, given its relatively small market size."

He reiterated that the situation has already forced some exporters to exit the market, with several companies shutting down due to declining demand and rising costs.

"The industry was already struggling after Covid-19, with freight charges increasing sharply, and now the tariff is making things even worse. Many suppliers have been unable to sustain operations, and the number of businesses closing down continues to grow, painting a bleak outlook for the sector," Wong said. – **JOHN GILBERT**



# IRB's efforts pay off in increased collections

**T**HE Inland Revenue Board (IRB) increased its tax collection for 2024 to RM184.8 billion, a rise of RM1.5 billion compared to RM183.3 billion in 2023.

The prime minister commended the IRB for its good efforts on March 10. He said: "I am optimistic. First, I was very impressed with the performance of the IRB over the last few years, particularly last year. I think this is more organised and structured, and new instruments have been introduced like the e-invoice, which has helped."

The IRB has adopted the "carrot and stick" method, with the "carrot" being given greater importance through an informal encouragement of voluntary compliance to bring errant taxpayers into the net, and gently coaxing taxpayers who have underdeclared or non-filers into the system by leveraging information submitted by taxpayers for different purposes.

A simple example would be where an agreement is sent for stamping, and the information contained therein triggers the IRB to nudge the taxpayer to come clean on either the income or real property gains which may not have been declared in the past. With the gradual introduction of e-invoicing, more information will be available which will force taxpayers to become more tax compliant.

The non-confrontational approach adopted by the IRB using emails and letters to ask taxpayers to check their position and to revert if

there are unpaid taxes is commendable as it is only using tax audits or investigations on a selective basis. This is a good way of building a relationship with taxpayers.

The IRB has also been carrying out various operations - such as Ops Metro, Ops Kosmo and Ops Dagang - which involve visiting taxpayers to build relationships and to remind them of their tax compliance responsibilities. However, for taxpayers who have been suspected of carrying out fraudulent activities or intentionally underreporting their taxes, the "big stick" is being used through surprise tax investigations with raids on business premises and personal premises of business owners. The latter is only used on hardcore non-compliant taxpayers.

## Areas for improvement

Operationally, improvements can be made in responding to customer enquiries, especially in taking calls from taxpayers. Calls to the IRB go unanswered, and this is a simple area that can be improved quickly by monitoring and ensuring that the calls are attended to.

Another area that causes some concern to taxpayers is the IRB's strict enforcement of the deadline to provide information. The IRB should reciprocate on the same basis in replying to taxpayers within this time frame. It is timely for the IRB to have an internal protocol to have a self-imposed deadline to reply. It must not be one-sided.

Quicker refunds by the IRB will be welcomed by taxpayers and will greatly enhance the board's relationship with taxpayers. The IRB should eradicate the perception that if you ask for refunds, you are likely to be audited. If possible, the IRB should come and openly state that this is not the case.

If there are technical issues where the IRB and the taxpayer have good reasons to hold their positions, there must be increased time and effort spent within the IRB system to find amicable solutions and avoid the matters being taken to court as it will be time consuming to both taxpayer and the authority. Although there is an appeal system and a dispute resolution panel to resolve such issues internally, more time and discussion should be spent at the assessment level and at the policy level to exhaust all avenues of discussion before the matter escalates upwards. Settling through negotiations and understanding one another's positions will be beneficial to both parties.

The current trend appears to be using technology and other soft approaches to increase compliance without abandoning the selective use of stricter enforcement methods. With the increase of artificial intelligence, the opportunity for the IRB to widen the tax net is forthcoming.

*This article is contributed by Thannees Tax Consulting Services Sdn Bhd managing director SM Thanneermalai (www.thannees.com).*



**TAX MATTERS**  
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## M'sian mission calls on WTO to play crucial role amid global trade challenges

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the World Trade Organization (WTO) has called on the WTO to play a crucial role and "show its ability and readiness" to address global trade challenges, such as "unilateral actions by certain countries that lead to (a) trade war".

The mission said in a statement that as one of the founding members, Malaysia will continue to engage constructively with other WTO members, as well as provide its leadership "to strengthen and uphold the rules-based multilateral trading system".

Meanwhile, citing WTO statistics, the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the WTO, Ambassador Syahril Syazli Ghazali, noted that the global services trade posted a strong 10% year-on-year increase in the third quarter of 2024, building on solid growth in the first half of the year. He said the rise in services exports and growth in imports across regions reflected high demand for diverse services.

"Specifically, in the third quarter of 2024, transport saw a 14% rise, international travellers' expenditure in foreign economies increased by 10% and other commercial services (accounting for some 60% of total services trade) expanded by 8%.

"I urge members to intensify engagement in addressing outstanding issues, as well as exploring flexibilities to achieve potential deliverables for the upcoming Ministerial Conference in Younde, Cameroon," he said in a statement in conjunction with the first meeting of the Council for Trade in Services (CTS) this year held on Thursday in Geneva, Switzerland.

This was Syahril Syazli's final meeting as chairman, and he officially handed over the chairmanship to the Permanent Representative of Nepal to the WTO, Ambassador Ram Prasad Subedi.

The CTS meeting discussed and addressed key outcomes emanating from the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi last year. The meeting also endorsed the framework of a questionnaire developed by the least-developed countries (LDC) to facilitate the implementation of the "LDC services waiver", which aimed to provide preferential treatment to LDC services and service suppliers, as mandated by WTO ministers in Nairobi in 2015.

The CTS is one of the WTO's tier-1 subsidiary bodies that oversees the implementation of the General Agreement for Trade in Services (GATS) and reports directly to the General Council.

The GATS provides a legal framework for addressing barriers to trade and investment in services. It includes specific commitments by WTO members to restrict their use of those barriers and provides a forum for further negotiations to open and facilitate services markets. These commitments are contained in member schedules, similar to the member schedules for tariffs. - Bernama

## KJTS-Stonepeak joint venture to invest in cooling assets in Malaysia

**PETALING JAYA:** KJTS Group Bhd, a provider of energy-efficient cooling solutions has formed a joint venture with Stonepeak, an alternative investment firm specialising in infrastructure and real assets, through wholly owned subsidiary KJ Technical Services Sdn Bhd (KJTS SB).

Stonepeak will hold 90% equity interest in the partnership, and KJTS SB the remainder. The joint venture entity will target investments of up to RM1.5 billion in cooling infrastructure assets to support Malaysia's growing energy demand and accelerate the transition towards more sustainable cooling solutions.

The joint venture will be structured through a newly established entity (JV company), which will focus on developing and investing in and/or owning district cooling assets in Malaysia. With increasing urbanisation and potential rising energy costs, the demand for efficient cooling solutions is expected to grow significantly. By leveraging innovative technology, predictive maintenance, and data-driven optimisation, the JV company aims to enhance efficiency, reduce energy consumption, and support Malaysia's net-zero ambitions.

The two companies said in a joint statement that they believe the investment aligns with Malaysia's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2024, the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2016-2025, and the Green Technology Master Plan 2021-2030.

"It also complements the Asean Cool Initiative, positioning Malaysia as a leader in regional cooling infrastructure advancements. We believe the JV company provides a strong platform for expanding cooling solutions that reduce reliance on traditional energy-intensive cooling methods," they added.

KJTS SB will lead asset identification and acquisition while ensuring alignment with the energy transition strategy. In providing engineering, procurement, construction and



From left: KJTS Group executive director Sheldon Wee, independent non-executive director Elaine Law Soh Ying, Azura, Stonepeak investment team managing director Zach Ennis, KJTS Group independent non-executive director Ng Kok Ken and group managing director Lee Kok Choon at the signing event.

maintenance services, KJTS SB will apply its engineering expertise to deliver high-efficiency cooling solutions. Additionally, as provider of operation and maintenance services, KJTS SB will implement performance-based guarantees to maximise efficiency, reliability, and cost savings for end users.

Stonepeak will contribute financial capital and strategic oversight, guiding the JV company's investment strategy and portfolio expansion. With extensive experience in global infrastructure investments, Stonepeak brings valuable industry relationships and expertise in scaling high-impact energy transition projects. The JV company is structured to balance financial leadership with operational expertise, ensuring a sustainable and scalable model for long-term success.

Both parties have agreed on clear governance protocols, including structured decision-making, financial reporting, and

compliance with international regulatory standards. KJTS SB will also deploy advanced real-time system monitoring, predictive maintenance, and data-driven optimisation techniques to enhance the operational efficiency of cooling assets.

"Our partnership with Stonepeak is an important step in expanding our cooling infrastructure footprint. As demand for sustainable cooling grows, this joint venture strengthens our ability to deliver efficient, scalable solutions that support Malaysia's energy transition and economic growth," said independent non-executive chairman Azura Azman.

With an investment target of up to RM1.5 billion, this initiative underscores the long-term potential of Malaysia's cooling sector. By modernising infrastructure and scaling up high-efficiency cooling assets, the JV company aims to set a new standard for energy-efficient cooling solutions in the region.



# Chemlite Innovation's IPO oversubscribed

➤ Strong investor demand signals confidence in company's growth potential, says executive director

**PETALING JAYA:** Chemlite Innovation Bhd, a specialist in surface finishing treatment services, recently completed the balloting process for its initial public offering (IPO) in conjunction with its listing on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities.

The IPO involves a public issue of 120 million new shares at 25 sen per share - with 30 million issue shares made available for application by the Malaysian public; 21 million issue shares reserved for application by eligible directors and employees as well as persons who have contributed to the success of Chemlite Innovation and its subsidiary (eligible persons); 54 million issue shares by way of private placement to identified institutional and/or selected investors; and 15 million issue shares by way of private placement to identified Bumiputera investors approved by the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (Miti) - and an offer for sale of 60 million existing shares by way of private placement to identified

Bumiputera investors approved by Miti.

Chemlite Innovation said in a statement that 30 million issue shares are offered to the Malaysian public through a balloting process, of which 15 million, representing 2.5% of the enlarged issued share capital of the company, are set aside for Bumiputera investors.

A total of 9,288 applications for 882.279 million issue shares with a total value of RM220.569 million were received from the Malaysian public, representing an overall oversubscription rate of 28.41 times. For the Bumiputera portion, a total of 4,843 applications for 381.162 million issue shares were received, representing an oversubscription rate of 24.41 times. Meanwhile, for the public portion, a total of 4,445 applications for 501.116 million issue shares were received, representing an oversubscription rate of 32.41 times.

In addition, the 21 million issue shares made



available for application by eligible persons have been fully subscribed.

The placement agent has confirmed that the 54 million issue shares made available by way of private placement to identified institutional and/or selected investors have been fully placed out. Similarly, the 75 million IPO shares (comprising 15 million issue shares and 60 million offer shares) made available by way of private placement to identified Bumiputera investors

approved by Miti have been fully subscribed.

Chemlite Innovation executive director Chong Yuen Fong (*pic*) said the strong demand for their shares is a testament to investor confidence in the company's business model, technical capabilities and growth potential.

"With the funds raised, we are well positioned to enhance our production capabilities, invest in research and development as well as expand our service offerings to better cater to our customers across various industries," he added.

UOB Kay Hian Securities (M) Sdn Bhd is the principal adviser, sponsor, underwriter and placement agent for Chemlite Innovation.

## EU seeking feedback from timber producers

Apitong, sourced from tropical rainforests, is unsustainable, and a bipartisan group of senators has urged the DOD to accelerate the switch, citing Red Oak's environmental benefits," the letter stated.

Meanwhile, the EU is also getting ready for the CITES CoP20 Conference in Uzbekistan.

As part of its preparation, the EU's Scientific Review Group is studying the conservation status of important timber species, such as Balau, Red Meranti, Yellow Meranti and White Meranti.

The EU Director-General for Environment Office stated in a letter that these species are widely traded, and the EU is considering whether they should be added to CITES Appendix II, which would introduce stricter trade rules to help protect them from over-use.

CITES Appendix II includes species that are not currently threatened with extinction but may become endangered if trade is not properly regulated.

The EU said there is growing concern that these timber species are disappearing fast.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, 65% of these species are threatened, and 86% are seeing a decline in numbers. The main reason for this is overharvesting due to high global demand, it said.

Trade data from UN Comtrade (2014-2023) shows that at least 5.3 million tonnes of Meranti timber products were traded worldwide, with the EU being a major buyer.

This raises serious questions about the future availability of these species and the need for stronger trade controls, it said.

To make a well-informed decision, the EU asked for feedback from timber-producing countries, including Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. These countries were invited to answer six key questions about trade levels, population monitoring, laws, sustainable forest management, plantations and illegal trade.

It is unclear if Malaysia had submitted any proposal before the deadline, which was Nov 29, 2024.

## Khazanah Nasional to acquire INCJ's stake in Edotco Group

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Khazanah Nasional Bhd will acquire Innovation Network Corporation of Japan's (INCJ) stake in Edotco Group, reflecting the strong relationship between Malaysia and Japan.

Khazanah, which announced this in a statement, however did not disclose the acquisition amount.

The sovereign wealth fund said it values its partnership with INCJ since its entry in 2017 and

appreciates the collaboration over the years as INCJ reaches the end of its investment mandate.

"This transaction reflects the shared commitment of Malaysia and Japan to fostering strategic partnerships. It also reinforces Khazanah's commitment to drive the domestic investment agenda in the digital infrastructure space, contributing to Malaysia's economic growth.

"Khazanah remains committed to Edotcos

growth and success, reaffirming confidence in its strong fundamentals and future potential," it added.

It was reported that INCJ owned about 21% in Edotco.

According to its website, Edotco Group has a portfolio of over 55,000 towers across nine countries, namely Malaysia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Laos. - Bernama

## CPO expected to trade lower this week amid escalating trade war

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The crude palm oil (CPO) futures contract on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives is expected to trade lower this week, ranging between RM4,000 and RM4,200 per tonne, said Interbank Group of Companies senior palm oil trader Jim Teh.

He said this is due to the escalating global

trade war started by the United States.

"Market players are staying cautious and will remain on the sidelines as more trade war using tariffs are expected in the coming weeks," he told Bernama.

In terms of physical demand, Teh said China, India, Pakistan, and some countries from the

Middle East and European Union remain as buyers.

Meanwhile, palm oil trade David Ng said the market could trade on a stable mode backed by strong fundamentals. "We expect prices to be between RM4,400 and RM4,650 per tonne this week." - Bernama

# EDUCATION

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# Eight startups shortlisted to drive fintech innovation

➤ TeXnovasi Accelerator Programme aims to empower those selected through mentorship and resources

**PETALING JAYA:** GXBank and Grab Malaysia recently announced the inaugural top eight fintech startups shortlisted to be part of the six-month long TeXnovasi Accelerator Programme. Supported by Cradle Fund and 1337 Ventures, TeXnovasi aims to empower local fintech startups through mentorship and resources towards building a tech-driven, financially empowered nation, and position Malaysia as a key player in revolutionising the digital finance landscape.

The eight shortlisted startups are Cashku, Du-it, Enprivacy, FinDoctor.my, Finory.tech, Kapitani, PulseLink and Swipey.

Each startup focuses on different aspects of financial inclusion such as protection and detection of digital fraud and scams, and helping MSME improve financial access and operations through a sustainable social protection/assistance structure that encourages MSME to thrive.

GXBank chief technology officer, Fadrizul Hasani said these startups were selected based on their potential innovation to solve three areas crucial to Malaysia's financial landscape - accessibility, security and experience.

"Our nation's startup ecosystem is brimming



GXBank with representatives from the eight local startups selected for TeXnovasi.

with potential especially in the fintech space.

"However many often face obstacles when trying to scale such as regulations, balancing the complexity of data, tech and compliance, and also lack of funding.

"I am cognisant of the support we received in our early years, and even today, as a pioneering digital-only bank. Having the right guidance has helped shape my path as well as the organisation's," he added.

"While GXBank aims to address Malaysia's financial inclusion and resilience through technology-driven solutions, together with Grab Malaysia, we want to nurture these like-minded innovators to solve financial challenges of Malaysians.

"This is part of both Grab Malaysia and

GXBank's commitment to nurturing our entrepreneurial ecosystem and drive meaningful impact to help Malaysia become a thriving tech hub,"

1337 Ventures CEO Bikes Lakhmichand said: "Through the mentoring sessions, we aim to equip startups with the critical skills and insights needed to scale their business within Malaysia's financial sector.

"Exclusive workshops will cover key areas such as market entry, innovation, and scaling, providing startups with the essential tools for growth.

"They will also gain access to a vast network of public and private investors, corporate partners, and experienced professionals, fostering opportunities for accelerated success."

## Hextar World at Empire City secures major tenants

**PETALING JAYA:** Hextar World at Empire City is slated to launch in fourth quarter 2025, marking a major milestone in Malaysia's retail and lifestyle scene.

The recent tenant signing ceremony at Empire City brought together key executives, major retailers and business partners to celebrate this development.

Managed by Alliance Empire Sdn Bhd, this project is a collaboration between Alliance Premier Sdn Bhd, Exsim Holdings Sdn Bhd, JT Momentum Sdn Bhd, and Hextar Healthcare Berhad.

Among the key anchor tenants announced is the Malaysia National Ice Skating Stadium by Koperasi Industri Sukan Atlet Malaysia Bhd, an Olympic-sized venue set to elevate the nation's winter sports scene. Adding to it is Malaysia's largest indoor water park, featuring a first-of-its-kind concept, along with Slope Master, the country's largest indoor ski training facility.

Hextar Group CEO Datuk Eddie Ong said that as they move closer to their soft opening in Q4 2025, they look forward to unveiling more exciting brands and experiences that will make Hextar World an iconic destination for locals and visitors alike.

Hextar World at Empire City is designed as an all-encapsulating lifestyle hub, offering a diverse mix of shopping, dining, and entertainment experiences.

Spanning 1.8 million square feet of net lettable area, it is divided into six distinct zones, each catering to a myriad of visitor interests.

The development boasts over 600 retail, entertainment, and dining options, including a 28,000 sq ft supermarket for daily essentials and more than 450,000 sq ft entertainment space filled with attractions.

With 9,100 parking bays, visitors can enjoy a hassle-free experience, ensuring convenience from arrival to departure.

Hextar World at Empire City is backed by industry leaders, each bringing expertise to this landmark development.

Hextar Healthcare Bhd drives advancements in diagnostics and wellness solutions, while Exsim Holdings is wholly owned by Lim Aik Hoe, Lim Aik Kiat, and Lim Aik Fu, who are also shareholders of Exsim Development Sdn Bhd.

## UWC reports 143.7% profit after tax growth for Q2'25

**PENANG:** UWC Bhd, an integrated engineering supporting services provider, reported revenue of RM92.4 million, reflecting a year-on-year growth of 51.2% in the second quarter results for its financial year ending July 31, 2025 (Q2'25) compared to RM61.1 million in Q2'24.

This increase was driven by increasing orders from the recovering semiconductor industry.

The group's profit before tax (PBT) and profit after tax (PAT) increased by 164.7% and 143.7%, reaching RM14 million and RM10.1 million respectively.

For the cumulative six-month period (H1'25), UWC recorded revenue of RM181.8 million, representing 70.6% increase compared to H1'24.

PBT and PAT rose by 120.5% and 100.7% to RM22.4 million and RM16.4 million respectively.

UWC executive director and group CEO Datuk Ng Chai Eng said: "This quarter's performance highlights the resilience of our business and the strength of our strategic initiatives.

"With the semiconductor industry showing

strong signs of recovery, we are well-positioned to meet increasing demand through our advanced engineering capabilities and capacity expansion efforts.

"The completion of our three-storey cleanroom facility by end of March 2025 will further strengthen our ability to support front-end semiconductor customers.

"Looking ahead, we anticipate continued industry recovery, as we have received multiple inquiries and secured several projects within the semiconductor sector."

## HSI in spotlight, trading activity in issues over M'sian stocks declines

### WARRANTS WATCH

**FOR** the week ended March 14, warrants trading activity saw an uptick, rising by 8.5% to RM622.4 million. This growth was primarily driven by a jump in trading turnover for the Hang Seng Index (HSI) warrants, which reached RM550.4 million - a 16.9% increase compared to RM470.7 million in the previous week. HSI warrants accounted for 88.4% of the total weekly warrants turnover.

In contrast, trading activity in warrants over local stocks declined, with turnover dropping 36.2% week-on-week (w-o-w) to RM55.2 million, down from RM86.5 million the previous week.

The HSI saw notable volatility during the week, with prices declining for four consecutive days from

Monday through Thursday. However, on Friday, prices posted a strong 2.1% rally, snapping the five-day losing streak and trimming its weekly losses.

The rebound came as investors resumed buying interest in tech companies on the back of optimism that the developments in artificial intelligence will sustain a bull run for the year.

The moves led to active trading in mostly the put warrants with HSI-PWD2, HSI-PWD4 and HSI-PWDN topping the chart with up to 951.6 million, 350.1 million and 274.1 million units changing hands.

Meanwhile, the call warrants HSI-CWCD and HSI-CWCF were the most actively traded call warrants by volume traded for the week at 602.5 million and 571.3 million units. Investors should take note that among the top traded warrants, call

### Top HSI warrants by volume traded

Warrant name	Volume (mil)	Issuer	Exercise price	Expiry date
HSI-PWD2	951.6	Kenanga	19,000	29 May 2025
HSI-CWCD	602.5	Kenanga	25,000	28 Mar 2025
HSI-CWCF	571.3	Macquarie	26,000	28 Mar 2025
HSI-PWD4	350.1	Macquarie	18,000	30 Jun 2025
HSI-PWDN	274.1	Kenanga	19,000	29 Apr 2025

warrants HSI-CWCD and HSI-CWCF will be expiring on March 28, 2025; their last trading date is on March 26, 2025, which is the last date to buy or sell these warrants.

On the local front, warrants over the local benchmark FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) saw some trading activities as the index posted four consecutive weeks of losses with the 2.3% w-o-w decline last

week. Call warrant FBMKLCI-CQR took the centre stage, recording 7.9 million units changing hands.

Meanwhile, warrants over local stocks that were popular among investors include GAMUDA-C2R, YTLPOWR-C77 and YTL-C1F with 97.5 million, 94.4 million and 90.9 million units traded, respectively. The shares of Gamuda Berhad (GAMUDA) extended

their decline for a third straight week to close 1.0% lower w-o-w at RM4.04. On the other hand, the shares of YTL Power International (YTLPOWR) and YTL Corporation (YTL) gained 1.6% and 6.6% w-o-w, respectively, seeing some respite after declining for several consecutive weeks.

To view the full list of structured warrants available on Bursa Malaysia, kindly visit [malaysiawarrants.com.my](http://malaysiawarrants.com.my).

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



## India's Zetwerk mulls listing within two years

**CHENNAI:** India's Zetwerk is considering a stock market listing within 24 months, at a time when the contract manufacturer is ramping up electronics production, its CEO and co-founder said on Saturday.

"Global companies are moving production to India. This is happening today; this will happen once in our lives probably," Amrit Acharya, CEO and co-founder of Zetwerk, told reporters.

Electronics manufacturing has gained momentum in India over the last few years as global technology giants, including Alphabet's Google and Apple diversify their supply chain away from China.

"India is going to be a long-term bet for any global supply chains," Josh Foulger, electronics president at Zetwerk, told Reuters.

Zetwerk, which raised roughly US\$90 million (RM400 million) at a valuation of US\$3.1 billion last year, has room to invest in its electronics business, Acharya said, adding it plans to go public in the next 15 to 24 months.

The upstart's peer Dixon Technologies went public in 2017, a year before Acharya co-founded Zetwerk.

On Saturday, Zetwerk opened its seventh Indian factory in Chennai, aiming to make it an export hub, including for the United States.

The move comes at a time when US President Donald Trump has hit China with extra tariffs, sparking a trade war.

Trump's policies are expected to boost production in India, but with potential tariffs on India, Acharya said Zetwerk had fast-tracked its European entry by up to four years, signing up a few customers.

Electronics currently account for 15% of revenue at Zetwerk.

In the year ended March 2024, Zetwerk's sales climbed 26% to 144.36 billion rupees (RM7.38 billion), while its net loss widened to 9.19 billion rupees, from 1.09 billion rupees a year earlier. - Reuters

## China cracks down on stock market fake news

**SHANGHAI:** China's securities watchdog will step up monitoring fake information in the stock market and work with the police and cyberspace regulators to crack down on those who disseminate false news, which is being made easier by AI, official media reported on Saturday.

Regulators will "hit early, hit hard, and hit at the heart" of the issue, the *Securities Times* said.

Artificial intelligence has become a new tool for creating and spreading misleading information to con investors or manipulate stocks, luring investors with the prospect of getting rich quickly, the *Shanghai Securities News* said in a separate article.

The rise of Chinese AI company DeepSeek has driven retail investors and fund managers to embrace AI to help them evaluate companies and invest, but their adoption of the technology also raises risks they will become vulnerable to fake news created by artificial intelligence.

The *Securities Times* said the China Securities Regulatory Commission would be more proactive in dispelling stock market rumours by issuing clarifications and would strengthen investor education and guidance to "enhance investors' ability to spot" fake information.

The reports coincide with the March 15 annual World Consumer Rights Day, which has become a major television and social media event in China to promote consumer protection. - Reuters

# Shein: US tariffs will not stop fast-fashion flood

► Online platform has 'zero tolerance policy' on forced labour, says chairman

**PARIS:** Tariffs imposed by Donald Trump's administration will not eject fast-fashion juggernaut Shein from the US market, its executive chairman Donald Tang has told AFP.

The head of the online platform, which has come in for scrutiny over its environmental footprint and allegations of human rights violations, also insisted that the company does not use forced labour.

"We're not focusing on customs policy," Tang said about the new US import levies, speaking during a visit to France.

"We will find a way to deliver the goods," he added, saying that Shein's "business model" had seen the company through other global trade upsets like the coronavirus pandemic.

This time, however, China is directly in Washington's crosshairs, with 20% additional tariffs levied on products imported from the country.

The Trump administration has also cast doubt on whether imported packages worth less than US\$800 (RM3,550) will continue to enjoy duty-free status.

Shein - a firm founded in China but now

headquartered in Singapore - and Temu have for years surfed on that practice to send tens of billions of dollars worth of product into the US from their network of Chinese factories.

Tang said that whatever happens, "we will do our best to make sure the customers' interest and customers' experience is not affected" - without detailing any specifics.

Like other major players in the textile sector, Shein has come in for regular allegations of exploiting members of the Uighur minority in the cotton fields and factories of western Chinese province Xinjiang.

"The policy is zero tolerance" on forced labour, Tang told AFP.

"We don't tolerate it at all, no questions asked."

He added that the company had a code of conduct "totally, 100% aligned with the International Labour Organisation Convention" that it required suppliers to sign.

And once deals are in place, "we have international renowned auditors come into the factories with unannounced visits", Tang said.

David Hachfeld of campaign group Public Eye, which has published an investigation into Shein, said the group's measures had not been enough.

"In manufacturing, 75 hours a week was typical for most workers," Hachfeld said, with "one and a half free days per month".

Amnesty International has also called for Shein to be more transparent.

Any company with operations in Xinjiang

should set up human rights checks, the campaign group has argued.

"If Shein has not undertaken this crucial step, it should pause its operations in Xinjiang," Amnesty told AFP by e-mail.

"Conversely, if the company is confident it has eliminated such risks, it should publicly disclose how this has been verified."

Many investors expect Shein to float on a major global stock market sometime this year, with London seen as the most likely venue.

But Tang was not giving away any hints about the plans - beyond saying that a listing would reinforce trust.

"We wanted to embrace the universal mechanism for accountability and transparency, to have transparency as a requirement, not optionality," he told AFP, hoping to stoke "public trust, which is crucial for our long-term growth".

The head of the British Parliament's business and trade committee said in January he and other members were "horrified" by Shein's lack of transparency about where its products come from.

Tang said that the company has since responded to MPs' questions.

The brand recently announced it will pump €200 million (RM978 million) into European circular-economy and recycling projects, in a bid to polish its image.

"We have been meeting different companies in Paris and other cities in France and talking to the technology leaders" in the sector, Tang said, without naming the prospective partners. - AFP



People walking past a Baidu logo outside the company headquarters in Beijing. - AFP/IC

## Baidu launches two new AI models as competition heats up

**HONG KONG:** China's Baidu said yesterday it has launched two new artificial intelligence models, including a new reasoning-focused model that it said rivalled DeepSeek's model, as it vies to stand out in a fiercely competitive AI race.

Chinese AI startup DeepSeek's roll-out of AI models which it says is on par with, or even better than, industry-leading models in the United States at a fraction of the cost, has roiled the industry and re-energised the global AI race.

"ERNIE X1 delivers performance on par with

DeepSeek R1 at only half the price," Baidu said of one of the new models.

The X1 has "stronger understanding, planning, reflection, and evolution capabilities", Baidu said, adding that it is the first deep thinking model that uses tools autonomously.

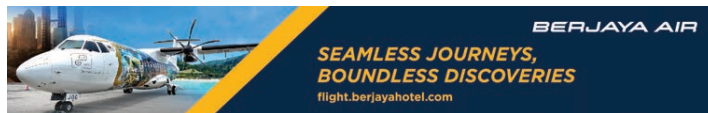
Baidu said its latest foundation model ERNIE 4.5 has "excellent multimodal understanding ability".

"It has more advanced language ability, and its understanding, generation, logic, and memory abilities are comprehensively improved."

It also has "high EQ", and it is easy to understand network memes and satirical cartoons, Baidu said.

One of China's earliest tech giants to launch a ChatGPT-style chatbot, Baidu has struggled to gain widespread adoption for its Ernie large language model, despite claiming performance comparable to OpenAI's GPT-4, amid fierce competition.

Multimodal AI systems are capable of processing and integrating various types of data including text, video, images and audio - Reuters



# Trump's bitcoin reserve a 'digital Fort Knox'

➤ Governments around the world are partaking in cryptocurrency activity

**LONDON:** The creation of a "Strategic Bitcoin Reserve" in the United States is further proof of President Donald Trump's support for the cryptocurrency sector.

Trump earlier this month signed an executive order establishing the reserve, which White House crypto chief David Sacks has likened to "a digital Fort Knox", comparing it to the stockpiling of gold bars at the US military base.

Gold is held in reserves by countries worldwide as the metal is seen as a safe-haven asset, protecting against financial instability such as high inflation.

The metal on Friday surpassed US\$3,000 per ounce for the first time, boosted by an uncertain economic outlook amid Trump's tariffs.

Gold reserves can help also stabilise a country's currency, while bars are used as collateral for loans and transactions.

The crypto reserve to be funded by about 200,000 bitcoins, worth around US\$17 billion in total, that have been seized in the United States as a result of civil and criminal cases.

The reserve will be virtually secured for an indefinite time.

Additional bitcoin can be added to the

reserve as long as such action is "budget-neutral", thus not costing the taxpayer.

The price of bitcoin initially slid after Trump signed the executive order but has since stabilised.

Analysts have blamed the lack of support on a failure to immediately buy more bitcoin.

Dessislava Aubert, an analyst at crypto data provider Kaiko, told AFP that "legally" the US government must return bitcoin to all victims identified as suffering from a hack.

According to Aubert, "a big chunk" of the bitcoin held by the United States - estimated at around 198,000 tokens - would have to be returned to victims of a hack at crypto exchange Bitfinex in 2016.

Sector watchers are also waiting to see if other digital tokens will be added to the reserve, which is possible according to the executive order.

Trump has said that bitcoin's nearest rival, ether, along with three other tokens - XRP, Solana and Cardano - could be added.

Critics of the US bitcoin reserve point out that, unlike gold, cryptocurrencies are risky assets and have no intrinsic value.

However, Sacks believes that by storing bitcoin over time, the government would protect itself from the cryptocurrency's massive short-term volatility.

Meanwhile, Stéphane Ibrah, an investment director at crypto platform Coinhouse, said that bitcoin, like gold, can profit from its rarity thanks to a limited 21 million tokens.

An advantage of the bitcoin reserve is its transparency, since the level of tokens will be

known at all times - unlike the amount of gold placed in Fort Knox.

Additionally, with the bitcoin reserve, "we're dealing with a rare asset that's much more suited to today's world", Ibrah told AFP.

Prominent cryptocurrency critic Molly White believes the "true reason" for the reserve "is a way to drive interest in the crypto industry", which could financially benefit investors.

Trump has been accused by some of showing a conflict of interest, having vowed ahead of being elected to make the United States the "bitcoin and cryptocurrency capital of the world".

The *Financial Times* reported that Trump earned US\$350 million from launching a meme coin, STRUMP, to coincide with his inauguration.

The *Wall Street Journal* has reported that the Trump family discussed acquiring a possible stake in the Binance platform - a report denied by the crypto exchange's founder.

Brazil is also considering the creation of a cryptocurrency reserve, an idea recently ruled out by the Swiss central bank.

Governments around the world are partaking in cryptocurrency activity, notably by selling digital assets seized in court cases, as was the case in Germany last year with 50,000 bitcoins.

El Salvador made bitcoin one of its official currencies, reversing the decision this year owing to a lack of take-up by citizens.

Bhutan holds nearly US\$900 million worth of bitcoin, equivalent to nearly 30% of the kingdom's gross domestic product. - AFP

## US breweries buffeted by tariffs

**WASHINGTON:** For US craft brewer Bill Butcher, President Donald Trump's expanding range of tariffs have sparked an unexpected impact - a shortage of bottles to package his beer - while uncertainty looms over his business costs.

From Canadian malted barley to aluminum beer cans, Trump's tariffs have hit multiple products that American craft breweries need, buffeting businesses in the world's biggest economy.

Turbulence in supplies could ultimately translate to higher beer prices for consumers, brewers warn, even as importers and breweries try to absorb additional costs triggered by the levies and their consequent supply shocks.

Similar conditions are playing out in various industries across the country, including construction and appliance production.

In Trump's latest salvo, 25% levies on US steel and aluminum imports took effect last week.

"As the aluminum tariffs have kicked in, the major beer suppliers in the country are switching a lot of their production back to bottles," said Butcher, founder of Port City Brewing Company in the state of Virginia.

As a result, his provider can no longer supply bottles to him after shipments through March.

Aluminum levies also raise the cost of producing cans, threatening higher prices down the line.

"There's a lot of uncertainty. There's a lot of chaos that's been injected into our supply chain," Butcher told AFP.

Atlas Brew Works founder Justin Cox, who packages his beers in aluminum cans, estimates their price from about a third of the total cost for a case of 24 beers.

Aluminum tariffs add to packaging costs "in what's already a small-margin product going into the wholesale market", Cox said.

"All of this ends up with a higher price of our beer on the shelf," added Cox, who has facilities in Washington and Virginia.

"On average, about 10% of every can in the US is Canadian aluminum," said Bart Watson, president of the Brewers Association. - AFP



A Boeing 737 MAX aircraft being assembled at the Boeing Renton Factory in Renton. - AFP/PPIC

## Boeing lost trust of Americans, needs strict oversight: Official

**SEATTLE:** US planemaker Boeing lost its way and also lost the trust of the American people after a January 2024 mid-air emergency involving a new Boeing 737 MAX and two fatal crashes in 2018 and 2019, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said last week.

Duffy also said the Federal Aviation Administration is not yet ready to lift a 38-plane per month production cap on the 737 MAX.

"When you breach the trust of the American

people with that safety and with your manufacturing, we're going to put the screws to you to make sure you change your ways and start doing things right," Duffy told Fox News Channel's *The Faulkner Focus* after a visit to the Boeing 737 factory in Renton, Washington.

"They've lost trust."

Duffy travelled to Washington and met with Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg, along with acting FAA Administrator Chris Rocheleau, following last

year's mid-air panel blowout on a new Alaska Airlines 737 MAX 9 airplane that was missing four key bolts.

Ortberg will testify April 2 before Congress.

In a statement, Boeing said it was pleased to show Duffy and Rocheleau "the progress we're making to further strengthen safety and quality".

"Our team continues to work on improving our culture and rebuilding trust." - Reuters

## Greek premier hails Moody's upgrade

**ATHENS:** Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Saturday hailed his country's credit rating upgrade by Moody's as a result of "significant" economic progress.

During a decade of economic crisis between 2008 and 2018, public debt and deficit exploded leading to soaring interest rates and ratings agencies progressively downgraded Greece's credit rating.

With Athens on the brink of default, the Greek government got emergency loans totalling €289 billion from the European Union, World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

In exchange, the so-called "troika" demanded across-the-board reforms including deep state spending and salary cuts, tax hikes, privatisations and other sweeping measures.

The economy contracted by more than a quarter, unemployment spiked to 28% and skilled professionals emigrated in droves.

But Moody's last week upgraded Greece's credit rating, pulling the country out of junk territory.

"Moody's upgrade of Greece to Baa3 marks the final step in restoring our investment grade by all major rating agencies, highlighting Greece's significant progress," Mitsotakis said on X.

Along with the ratings elevation from Ba1 to Baa3, Moody's changed its outlook for Greece from positive to stable. - AFP



# MARKET ROUND-UP: MARCH 14

## Bursa Trade Statistic

14 MAR 2025

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

Participation

Retail (16.83%)	Institution (44.13%)	Foreign (39.04%)
Net (in RM mil.)	Net (in RM mil.)	Net (in RM mil.)
<b>-41.57</b>	<b>+327.47</b>	<b>-285.90</b>
Bought (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)
400.02	1266.75	832.98
Sold (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)
441.59	939.28	1118.87

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

**iPacOnline** | **Inter-Pacific Securities**

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

**DISCLAIMER:** The data and reports are provided as a service to investors. Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

## Bursa Indices

INDEX	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	11,300.10 +49.59
FBMKLCI	1,512.15 +2.12
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	475.87 +1.59
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	153.73 +1.40
CONSTRUCTION	258.40 +6.42
FINANCIAL SERVICES	18,522.80 -49.36
ENERGY	718.73 +13.16
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	474.82 -2.40
HEALTH CARE	1,874.98 +27.46
TRANSPORTATION	1,005.50 +1.74
PROPERTY	988.27 +12.77
PLANTATION	7,369.75 +38.10
FBMSHA	10,989.50 +83.80
FBMACE	4,677.68 +147.14
TECHNOLOGY	48.65 +0.97

**TURNOVER: 3.241 bil**      **VALUE: RM2,499 bil**

## Bursa Malaysia likely to trade within narrow range

BURSA Malaysia is expected to trade within a narrow range this week as market participants adopt a cautious stance without resorting to immediate knee-jerk reactions, which should help limit short-term volatility.

UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors Sdn Bhd head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan said this week will see a shortened trading period due to tomorrow's Nuzul Al-Quran holiday.

As US retail sales data will be released only after local market hours today, Bursa Malaysia's reaction may be delayed until Wednesday, he said.

"This delay could provide a stabilising effect, allowing investors more time to assess Wall Street's response and adjust their strategies accordingly," he told Bernama.

Mohd Sedek said that while a market rebound is possible following the recent sell-off, investor sentiment is expected to remain cautious due to the persistent risk of further tariff announcements by US President Donald Trump.

Despite signs of easing inflation, he said, the upcoming February retail sales data for China and the US - set for release today - will be closely monitored for insights into consumer spending trends and broader economic resilience.

A key global event this week will be the Federal Reserve's (Fed) Federal Open Market Committee meeting tomorrow and Wednesday. "While no rate cut is expected, the Fed will update its Summary of Economic Projections, including the latest 'dot plot,' which outlines policymakers' expectations for future rate moves," Mohd Sedek said.

For the week just ended, the FBM KLCI declined by 2.16%. On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the key index fell 35.12 points to 1,512.15 compared with 1,547.27 a week earlier.

## Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-PWD2	0.080	-0.020	-20.00	2,824,855
HSI-PWD4	0.115	-0.025	-17.86	2,140,631
HSI-CWCD	0.125	+0.045	+56.25	1,947,258
HSI-CWCF	0.095	+0.030	+46.15	1,286,682
HSI-PWDN	0.045	-0.015	-25.00	533,346
NATGATE	1.360	+0.050	+3.82	487,802
KNM	0.045	+0.005	+12.50	443,410
NEXG	0.255	-	-	428,340
HSI-CWCA	0.170	+0.050	+41.67	419,373
SAPNRG	0.050	+0.005	+11.11	413,989
SG	0.010	-0.005	-33.33	398,677
VELESTO	0.160	+0.005	+3.23	388,032
OPPSTAR	0.610	+0.065	+11.93	386,504
HSI-CWCM	0.275	+0.060	+27.91	383,167
SRIDGE	0.225	+0.020	+9.76	362,418
YTL-CIF	0.025	-	-	298,769
TTVHB	0.725	+0.185	+34.26	286,194
HSI-PWD5	0.100	-0.040	-28.57	289,805
MYEG	0.930	+0.005	+0.54	276,234
SALIRAN	0.225	+0.015	+7.14	270,434



## Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
ALLIANZ	18.100	+0.480	2,039
KLK	21.000	+0.400	7,865
HSI-CWCJ	1.930	+0.290	11
HSI-CWA8	1.470	+0.270	310
AJI	14.440	+0.260	157
LEBTECH	0.800	+0.250	466
HSI-CWCI	1.020	+0.225	301
ALLIANZ-PA	18.480	+0.220	15
TTVHB	0.725	+0.185	296,194
AEOOCR	6.150	+0.180	5,118
CANONE	2.300	+0.180	1
HSI-CWAS	0.620	+0.180	1,260
PETDAG	17.200	+0.180	3,759
CHINAETF-MYR	5.600	+0.170	2,089
HSI-CWCN	0.920	+0.160	87,833
MASTER	3.150	+0.160	306
THETA	1.290	+0.160	6,770
VITROX	2.750	+0.160	20,177
HSI-CWAG	0.625	+0.150	510
MFCB	4.200	+0.150	13,158

## Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
OWG-WB	0.040	+300.00	1,573
BINACOM-WA	0.015	+200.00	5,220
JCY-C18	0.025	+150.00	500
ECOWLD-C36	0.040	+100.00	1
EKOVEST-C64	0.010	+100.00	2,010
GREATC-C13	0.010	+100.00	10
HARTA-C2K	0.010	+100.00	1
MNC-WC	0.010	+100.00	101
NATGATE-CD	0.010	+100.00	2,416
PETGAS-C5	0.010	+100.00	10
SNS-CD	0.010	+100.00	1,345
UWC-C8	0.010	+100.00	220
WCT-C29	0.010	+100.00	1,710
ZENTECH	0.010	+100.00	24,499
ARMADA-C97	0.035	+75.00	10
FRONTKN-C36	0.025	+66.67	1,300
HIBISCS-C75	0.075	+66.67	3,761
UWC-C9	0.040	+60.00	23,040
SUNWAY-C35	0.055	+57.14	1
HSI-CWCG	0.180	+56.52	52,088

## World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA (US)	41,488.19	+674.62	+1.65
S&P 500 (US)	5,638.94	+117.42	+2.13
NASDAQ (US)	17,754.09	+451.08	+2.61
NYSE (US)	19,231.35	+355.82	+1.89
EURO STOXX 50 (EUR)	5,404.18	+75.79	+1.42
FTSE 100 (UK)	8,632.33	+89.77	+1.05
DAX (GER)	22,986.82	+419.68	+1.86
NIKKEI 225 (JPN)	37,053.10	+263.07	+0.72
TOPIX (JPN)	2,715.85	+17.49	+0.65
HANG SENG INDEX (HK)	23,959.98	+497.33	+2.12
CSI 300 (CHN)	4,006.56	+94.98	+1.71
SH SE COM (CHN)	3,419.56	+60.83	+1.81
KOSPI INDEX (SK)	2,566.36	-7.28	-0.28
ASX 200 (AUS)	7,789.68	+40.61	+0.52
ALL ORDINARIES INDX (AUS)	8,013.35	+46.78	+0.59
SENSEX INDEX (IND)	73,828.91	-200.85	-0.27
FBM KLCI	1,512.15	+2.12	+0.14
STRAITS TIMES INDEX (S'PORE)	3,836.02	-1.50	-0.04
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	185.71	+1.24	+0.67
WTI (US\$/BBL)	67.18	+0.63	+0.95
BRENT (US\$/BBL)	70.58	+0.70	+1.00
GOLD (COMEX) (US\$/T OZ)	3,001.10	+9.80	+0.33
SILVER (COMEX) (US\$/T OZ)	34.43	+0.13	+0.37
PLATINUM (US\$/T OZ)	996.67	-2.95	-0.30
COPPER (COMEX) (US CENTS/LB.)	489.60	-2.95	-0.60
COPPER 3MO (LME) (US\$/MT)	9,780.50	-3.00	-0.03
CORN (US CENTS/BU.)	458.50	-6.75	-1.45
WHEAT (US CENTS/BU.)	557.00	-5.50	-0.98
SOYBEAN OIL (CBOT) (US CENTS/LB.)	41.59	+0.31	+0.75
COCOA (ICE) (US\$/MT)	7,867.00	-305.00	-3.73
RUBBER (S'PORE) (US CENTS/KG)	196.30	+1.30	+0.67

Closing, Mar 14

## Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
NESTLE	67.920	-1.080	1,835
PANAMY	14.300	-0.440	766
HEIM	26.460	-0.240	416
DLADY	27.000	-0.160	58
HLIND	13.220	-0.160	805
APOLLO	6.630	-0.130	176
AMWAY	5.700	-0.120	811
CARLSBG	18.140	-0.120	1,676
UTDPLT	21.100	-0.120	7,513
ARMADA-C1A	0.035	-0.115	2,010
GESHEN	4.290	-0.110	117
UCHTECH	3.490	-0.110	6,091
HSI-PWFF	0.690	-0.105	9,300
MAYBANKCIV	0.045	-0.105	10,000
HSI-PWFA	0.690	-0.095	1,036
AXIATA-C1L	0.060	-0.090	2,888
MAYBANKCIW	0.065	-0.085	900
EMICO	0.200	-0.080	150
GENM-C3I	0.070	-0.080	7,800
HSI-PWFB	0.490	-0.080	600

## Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
ARMADA-C1A	0.035	-76.67	2,010
ALIBABA-H1D	0.005	-75.00	204
EKOVEST-C65	0.005	-75.00	1,000
SUPERMX-C4J	0.005	-75.00	23
MAYBANKCIV	0.045	-70.00	10,000
PBBANK-C1H	0.005	-66.67	2,950
AXIATA-C1L	0.060	-60.00	2,888
MAYBANKCIW	0.065	-56.67	900
HEXRTL-WA	0.055	-56.00	85
GENM-C3I	0.070	-53.33	7,800
HSI-PWD9	0.040	-52.94	400
MALAKOFCS8	0.005	-50.00	2,410
MAXLAND-WB	0.005	-50.00	4,749
PHB	0.005	-50.00	7,890
YTL-C99	0.005	-50.00	200
UEMS-C10	0.085	-43.33	3,710
KOSSAN-C72	0.020	-42.86	300
APPLE-C18	0.035	-41.67	1,000
AIM-WA	0.010	-33.33	2,401
G3	0.010	-33.33	1,510

# 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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## Aznan Abdul Aziz appointed deputy Bank Negara governor

**PETALING JAYA:** Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) announced that the minister of finance has approved the appointment of Aznan Abdul Aziz as deputy governor for a three-year term effective April 1, 2025.

Aznan will oversee the supervision and regulation sector. He will be a member of BNM's board of directors and monetary policy committee.

He is currently the chairman of the board audit committee of International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation, a member of the board of directors and board audit and risk committee of the Labuan Financial Services Authority, a member of the executive committee of the International Association of Insurance Supervisors and an ex-officio member of the Financial Reporting Foundation.

Meanwhile, BNM has appointed Datuk Jessica Chew Cheng Lian as a technical adviser on financial stability matters following her retirement from BNM.

BNM Governor Datuk Seri Abdul Rasheed Ghaffour thanked Chew for her immense contributions to BNM and the nation as she has been a continuous source of wisdom and support over the last 34 years in achieving BNM's strategic mandates and organisational excellence.

He also appreciated her willingness to continue supporting BNM in the technical work relating to financial stability.

BNM also announced the appointment of Cindy Siah Hoon as assistant governor.

Siah will be responsible for financial conglomerates supervision, banking supervision, insurance and takaful supervision as well as risk specialist and technology supervision.

## Ringgit to remain defensive against US dollar this week

**THE** ringgit is expected to remain defensive within the 4.43-4.44 range against the US dollar this week, as cautious investor sentiment continues to strengthen demand for the greenback as a safe-haven currency, said an analyst.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid noted that the next trend in the currency market will be predicated on the upcoming Federal Open Market Committee meeting tomorrow and Wednesday.

"While economists are mostly pencilling in no change in the US Federal Funds Rate, the Federal Reserve's staff quarterly forecast will be closely scrutinised by traders and investors. This is especially true when calls for a US recession have been widely shared by the major investment banks," he told Bernama.

Additionally, the Bank of Japan and Sweden's Sveriges Riksbank are set to hold their monetary policy meeting this week, with both central banks expected to maintain their policy rate steady at 0.50% and 2.25%, respectively.

SPI Asset Management managing partner Stephen Innes expects the ringgit to weaken further in the coming months as markets transition from tariff-related caution to dealing with their full impact.

"I anticipate a drift higher, with the ringgit likely trading closer to RM4.46 as sentiment continues to sour. Therefore, the ringgit is likely to trade in the range of RM4.43 to RM4.46, with a clear bearish bias."

The local currency ended the week at 4.4410/4455 against the greenback, easing from 4.4110/4145 the previous week.

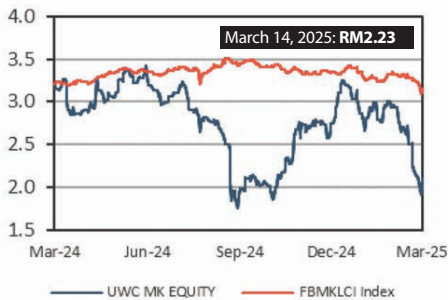
The ringgit rose versus the Japanese yen to 2.9809/9842 from 2.9909/9935 last week but dipped against the British pound to 5.7404/7463 from 5.7070/7115 and declined vis-a-vis the euro to 4.8194/8243 from 4.7903/7941, previously.

## Exchange Rates

FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.5125	4.3785	4.3685
1 Australian Dollar	2.8500	2.7350	2.7190
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3750	3.2770	3.2690
1 Canadian Dollar	3.1230	3.0390	3.0270
1 Euro	4.9030	4.7450	4.7250
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.5810	2.4860	2.4700
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3750	3.2770	3.2690
1 Sterling Pound	5.8520	5.6660	5.6460
1 Swiss Franc	5.1460	4.9260	4.9110
100 UAE Dirham	124.3000	117.8600	117.660
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.7910	3.5310	3.3310
100 Chinese Renminbi	62.7100	60.0700	N/A
100 Danish Krone	67.3600	61.9900	61.7900
100 Hongkong Dollar	58.6800	55.7700	55.5700
100 Indian Rupee	5.2800	4.9500	4.7500
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0284	0.0257	0.0207
100 Japanese Yen	3.0510	2.9540	2.9440
100 New Taiwan Dollar	14.7000	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	43.4400	39.7900	39.5900
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6400	1.5400	1.3400
100 Philippine Peso	7.9900	7.5300	7.3300
100 Qatar Riyal	125.1800	118.8400	118.6400
100 Saudi Riyal	121.6500	115.4800	115.2800
100 South Africa Rand	25.5400	23.0700	22.8700
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5700	1.4400	1.2400
100 Swedish Krona	45.6700	41.5800	41.3800
100 Thai Baht	13.9900	12.4100	12.0100

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

### UWC Bhd Buy. Target price: RM2.60



Source: Bloomberg

**AS** an integrated engineering supporting services provider, UWC provides fabrication services involving various processes of working with metal such as cutting, forming, joining and other associated processes to produce intermediate metal products, ranging from metal piece-parts to precision machined components. They also collaborate with customers in the initial designs and development of their products to achieve cost reduction and improve production cycle time.

UWC's 2QFY25 core net profit of RM14m (+57% QoQ, +3.1-fold YoY) brought 6MFY25 core net profit to RM23m (+3.6-fold YoY). Overall results accounted for 28% of our and the street's estimates, with the shortfall primarily due to weaker-than-expected margins. 6MFY25 revenue of RM182m (+71% YoY) was driven by broad-based recovery in the semiconductor business. EBITDA margin improved by 7ppts to 21.1% on the back of higher revenue and better operational efficiency in the front-end segment.

Sequentially, 2QFY25 revenue grew 3% QoQ to RM92m on the back of higher customer volumes in the semiconductor (+6% QoQ) and life science (+5% QoQ) segments. The higher proportion of front-end revenue (from 22-23% in 1QFY25 to 25-26% in 2QFY25), coupled with better operational efficiency led to a 7ppts increase in EBITDA margin. Orderbook remain unchanged from previous quarter at RM160m, with c.40% attributed to the front-end business.

We lower our earnings forecasts by 7-36% to reflect the weaker operating margins.

BUY with RM2.60 TP. – Phillip Capital Research, March 14

### Kerjaya Prospek Group Bhd Buy. Target price: RM2.60



Source: Bloomberg

**KERJAYA** Prospek has accepted a RM11.4m construction contract from Tanjung Pinang Development Sdn Bhd, an indirect subsidiary of E&O, for the completion of basic infrastructure works including a Gurney pedestrian ramp, access to Gurney and all associated works at Andaman Island. The contract is slated to commence on Mar25 and is targeted to be completed within 15 months.

With this latest award, the group's outstanding order book stands at RM4.1bn, translating to 2.4x 2024 construction revenue cover ratio and providing revenue visibility until 2027. Assuming a group blended 10% PAT margin, we estimate this project to contribute RM1.1m PATAMI over 2025-26E. This contract brings year-to-date wins to RM318m, accounting for 20% of our RM1.6bn full-year 2025E order book replenishment assumption. Going forward, we expect contract flows to remain robust, underpinned by contracts from both E&O and KPPROP. Near-term prospects include KPPROP's upcoming projects at Shah Alam (RM250m estimated GDV), Damansara Damai (RM430m estimated GDV) and E&O's Maris (RM690m estimated GDV).

We make no changes to our earnings as this contract falls under our replenishment assumption. We remain optimistic about Kerjaya's earnings prospects, which are underpinned by its robust contract flows from E&O and KPPROP. Key downside risks include lower-than-expected order book replenishment and project margin deterioration.

BUY with RM2.60 TP. – Phillip Capital Research, March 14

### MN Holdings Bhd Buy. Target price: RM1.60



Source: Bloomberg

**MN** Holdings has been awarded a RM169m contract from a US-based data centre operator to design and build a 275/33 kV substation in the Southern Region. The contract duration is 12 months, with works expected to commence in Mar25 and be completed by Mar26.

MN's success in securing this new DC customer further solidifies its track record in executing DC-related utility infrastructure projects, positioning the group favourably to benefit from the client's future expansion.

This latest contract win raises MN's outstanding order book to a record high of RM892m (equivalent to 3.5x FY24 revenue cover ratio), providing strong revenue visibility until FY27E. We project this project to contribute RM14m PATAMI over FY25-26E, assuming 8% PAT margin for DC-related win. Inclusive of this win, the YTD contract wins totalled RM705m, meeting our RM700m order book replenishment assumption for FY25E.

The tender pipeline remains strong at RM1.5bn across sectors including TNB/Sarawak Energy (43%), DC (34%), solar (9%), water sewerage (3%), and others (11%). Exclusive bids with key clients could contribute an additional c.RM200mn or 13% to its tender book providing strong support for FY26E contract replenishment.

We make no changes to our earnings forecast as this contract falls under our replenishment assumption. We continue to like MN as a proxy for Malaysia's expanding power infrastructure and strategic exposure in the rapidly growing DC and solar sectors.

BUY with RM1.60 TP. – Phillip Capital Research, March 14





# the Sun **LYFE**

MONDAY | MAR 17, 2025

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# Guide to *digital world* for seniors

Simple tips to get started, avoid risks  
- P22

## WEEKLY FOCUS

**MONDAY**  
Technology and social media

**TUESDAY**  
Travel and leisure

**WEDNESDAY**  
Fashion and beauty

**THURSDAY**  
Home and living

**FRIDAY**  
Food and beverage



-PEXELS/PC

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BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

**N**AVIGATING today's digital world for senior citizens must seem helplessly daunting with the blistering speed of technological change and the rise of cybersecurity threats.

In 2025, particularly after the pandemic, technology is more integrated into daily life than ever before. For many seniors, learning to use smartphones, social media and online banking is without a doubt overwhelming.

However, with the right guidance and taking a few simple precautions, using technology can be an enjoyable and empowering experience. Here is a senior-friendly guide to embracing the digital age while staying safe online.

**Getting started with smartphones**

A smartphone is a powerful tool that allows you to make calls, send messages, browse the internet and access various applications, better known as apps. If you are new to smartphones, here are some tips on getting started:

➔ Choose a user-friendly device: Look for a phone with a large screen, clear icons and simple navigation, such as the iPhone or Samsung Galaxy models that are designed for ease of use.

➔ Learn basic functions: Get comfortable with turning the phone on and off, adjusting the volume and charging the battery. More importantly, explore the "Settings" app, which allows you to customise text size and brightness for convenience and legibility.

➔ Use voice commands: Digital assistants such as Apple's Siri or Google Assistant can help you send texts, set reminders or even make phone calls if you simply tell them to do so by voice.

➔ Install essentials: Some helpful apps include messaging ones such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger for staying in touch with your contacts, e-finance ones such as Touch 'n Go eWallet and MAE for making payments and news apps such as *theSun* for staying informed on current events.

**Exploring social media safety**

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube



Age is no barrier to the digital world, especially if simple precautions are taken. — ALL PICS FROM FREEPIK

# Tech tips for boomers

## ➔ Senior-friendly guide to safely navigating digital world

offer a great way to connect with loved ones and explore hobbies. However, it is important to use them safely to avoid falling victim to unscrupulous individuals.

➔ Create a strong password: Use a combination of letters, numbers and special characters to make your account secure. Avoid using easily guessed items such as birthdays or names. Most social media apps often force users into enabling two-factor authentication (2FA) or even three-factor authentication. Do it, as it is equivalent to adding a lock to your house door after closing and securing the outer grill.

➔ Adjust privacy settings: Each platform allows you to control who sees your posts. Set your profile to

private so only trusted friends and family can view your information. Data, such as birthday dates and images, can be misused by others. So, it never hurts to be extra careful.

➔ Be alert against scams: If you receive messages from unknown people asking for personal details or money, block or report them through features that are usually built into the phone or app. Scammers often pose as friends or relatives in distress.

➔ Avoid oversharing: Refrain from posting sensitive personal information such as your home address, phone number or travel plans to protect yourself from potential risks.

➔ Join senior-friendly groups: Many

platforms have groups tailored for seniors where you can share experiences, find advice and make new friends in a safe environment, but it is still recommended to be cautious in these groups.

**Using online banking securely**

Online banking can help you manage your finances from the comfort of your home but security is key. Follow these tips to make online transactions with confidence:

➔ Use official bank apps: Download your bank's official app from the Apple App Store or Google Play to ensure secure access to your accounts.

➔ Enable 2FA: Same as before. Many banks offer this feature, which

requires a code sent to your phone or email to verify your identity before logging in.

➔ Avoid using public Wi-Fi: Public networks, such as those in coffee shops, may not be secure. Use your home Wi-Fi or a mobile data connection when accessing sensitive financial information.

➔ Beware of phishing scams: If you receive an email or message that claims to be from your bank, the police, courier companies and so on asking for personal details, do not respond. Instead, contact the company or authorities directly using their official phone number.

➔ Set up alerts: Many banks offer notification services that can alert users to transactions and account activity, helping them detect any suspicious behaviour quickly.

Adapting to new technology may take time, but with patience and practice, it can enhance daily life in many ways. By following these steps, you can enjoy the benefits of smartphones, social media and online banking while minimising risks.



The ease of using today's banking and e-wallet apps can make physical transactions seem tedious.



2FA and 3FA are mandatory as online account breaches are increasingly commonplace.



BY JOHN TAN

**L**IGHTING plays a crucial role in determining the quality of photos or videos. With good lighting, one can accurately capture the intended image or scene properly. Investing in a ring light, therefore, is advisable as it can drastically improve your photos and videos.

However, deciding on one can be daunting, especially for non-tech experts, given the variety of options. To combat this, *theSun* has compiled a list of factors for you to consider when buying a ring light for optimal results.

#### Purpose

Before venturing into any physical outlets, it is advisable to understand the purpose of your purchase beforehand.

Are you looking to purchase a ring light to improve the quality of your photos? Or are you looking to get one to enhance the lighting in your videos? This is because each model has a specific purpose.

If you are looking for general photography or vlogging, for instance, the 10-inch foldable ring light would be an appropriate choice. It offers focused illumination that is suitable for close-up shots, selfies and live streaming.

But if you are looking to shoot products, you should opt for the 14-inch ring light. The 14-inch provides a richer amount of light, minimising shadows and effectively highlighting the details of the product.

#### Budget

Once you have decided on the purpose, you can move on with deciding the budget you are willing to set aside for a ring light. Doing this will help you avoid unnecessary splurging as you get to narrow down your options.

Expensive items do not always guarantee effectiveness. Many more affordable models can still offer the same level of quality. That said, it is important to not compromise on essential features.

Though it is tempting to want to save, it is still important to invest in core necessities for the best results.

#### Brilliance

One should consider the range of the ring light's brilliance as it is a crucial aspect.

The wider the range, the more likely your pictures and videos will turn out great. A broad range allows you to adapt to various circumstances.

For example, you will be able to adapt to different weather conditions while shooting. Whether the sky is gloomy or sunny, you can ensure your photos and videos are properly lit.

Additionally, it gives you more room for exploration. A generous range allows you to play around with new moods and themes, keeping things fresh creatively.

#### Size, portability

Size matters when it comes to buying a ring light. Each equipment size is meant for different lifestyles and environments.

If you are a content creator who is always travelling, for instance, the 10-inch foldable ring light would be the right pick as it suits your lifestyle. Its petite and foldable nature allows you to easily take it on your many journeys.

Whereas, a SM1888-II 18-inch ring light or 14-inch ring light would not be able to offer the same comfort.

Considering their large size and weight, mobility is not their strongest suit. Their large light diameter takes up considerable space, which makes it difficult to fit them into a bag or carry them around.

Their stands are also not easily foldable. However, these models provide more stability and



Some ring lights have an attached mount for phones.



A wide brightness range allows for more creative expressions.



A 10-inch foldable ring light is made for vlogging and general photography. – ALL PICS FROM FREEPIK

## Radial illumination

### ➤ Guide to picking ring lights for photos, videos

light power.

Aside from providing a greater amount of light, the 14-inch ring light is easy to set up and position in a studio environment without taking up too much space.

As for the SM1888-II 18-inch ring light, it produces more consistent and diffused light, suitable for business shoots.

#### Support choices

Quality photos and videos require good support options for your equipment. Be it in the form of a tabletop tripod or light stand, the right support will ensure stability while shooting.

Instead of being worried about your phone or camera falling, you can focus on achieving the best photo or video.

For close-up shots or simple video calls, a tabletop tripod would suffice as it can be easily placed wherever you like. All that matters is its surface is flat.

A light stand, on the other hand, is specifically designed for mounting lighting equipment such as ring lights. Compared with tabletop tripods, they offer far more stability and height adjustability.

They allow you to tweak the distance, height and angles, enabling you to get the most flattering light while you are shooting.

#### Additional accessories

If you are looking for enhanced capabilities beyond these core areas, consider optional accessories to your ring light. After all, these can further enhance the quality and experience of your shoot.

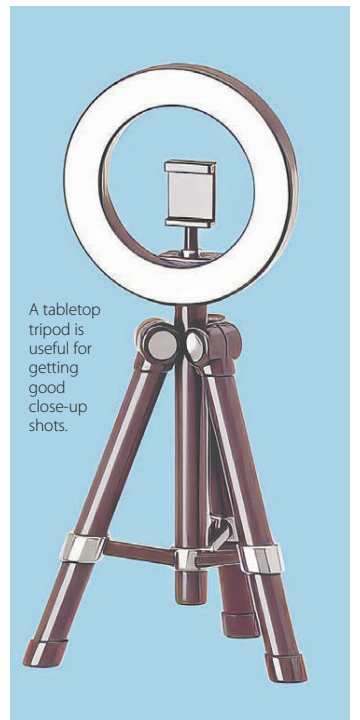
For instance, using a remote control, you will be able to control the ring light's settings from a distance.

Using a mount for your phone, you will be able to multitask and plan better. Also, a ring light with Bluetooth or Wi-Fi capabilities will allow you to adjust the settings without interrupting your workflow.

These additional features can certainly do wonders. But be sure to only spend on them if you have extra cash to splurge. The core aspects of brilliance, size, portability and supports are ultimately more important.



A 14-inch ring light offers greater illumination but less flexibility than a 10-inch foldable ring light.



A tabletop tripod is useful for getting good close-up shots.





BY VERONICA ELANKOVAN

**W**HILE the city sang symphonies of tyre screeches and car honks, inside Kuala Lumpur's oldest shopping centre Sungai Wang Plaza, over 2,000 music aficionados were serenaded to melodies that overshadowed the booming thunder and warmed the chilly night.

Croatian pianist Maksim Mrvica (Maksim) brought the house down with a comprehensive setlist of dynamic arrangements that was exhilarating, leaving the audience with major post-concert depression.

The show opened with *New World Concerto*, a rendition of Antonin Dvorak's *Symphony No.9 in E Minor "From the New World" Op. 95: Allegro con fuoco*, which showed off Maksim's expertise as a 49-year-old pianist.

Followed by *Glorietta*, a collaboration between Czech composer Tonci Huljic, the track's intricate melodies and dynamic rhythms transported the audience to a world where classical and modern music coexist harmoniously.

Maksim further flaunted his skilful piano playing as he tackled Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev with a medley that included the famed *Dance of the Knights*.

It was at this point when the audience got to see the maestro in his element as his fingers danced through the keys tackling one of the most prolific composers, who is famous for his difficult compositions.

After the electrifying performance, Maksim took a break from the spotlight to shine it on the band that has been the heartbeat of the show.

With a three-song segue set (*Victory, Asturias and Fiesta*), the mood shifted from Maksim's intense set to a lighthearted, party atmosphere that is only missing some sangria and nachos with guacamole.

The set gave the audience a breather before returning to Maksim's dynamic performance with *The Mountain King*, originally *In the Hall of the Mountain King* by Norwegian composer and pianist Edvard Grieg.

It beckoned the return to a familiar mystique-filled night brimming with notes of fantasy - it was as if the audience were sucked in



# Maksim - um talent

Croatian pianist prodigy brings house down

Maksim's red-hot intense sets are testaments to his skills.



The Croatian pianist tackles each song with ease. - ALL PICS COURTESY OF LO-FI ENTERTAINMENT

the mood of the night into a lighter set, invoking feelings of nostalgia with profound melodrama.

Notes that are normally played using an *erhu* - a Chinese two-stringed bowed musical instrument - were masterfully emulated by Maksim's violinists.

After the emotional set, Maksim tackled three of pop culture's defining soundtracks and songs, Ramin Djavadi's *Game of Thrones*, Hans Zimmer's *Pirates of the Caribbean* and Abba's *Dancing Queen*, showcasing his range - from playing classical pieces to modern music. This set definitely was the most popular among the audience, as they cheered to familiar sounds.

Closing the night with the encore *Corrida*, which means bullfight in Spanish, Maksim sent off the audience with a sensual, fiery set that left the languorous audience on an adrenaline high.

Accentuated by visuals, even with limited space and access to better



Maksim's performance is elevated by clever lighting.

surround sound technology, Maksim's concerto was made special by lighting - for instance, red lighting for intense sets and blue lighting for sombre ones. For a theatre or musical nerd, the clever use of lighting to compensate for an otherwise minimalist stage is a treat

to watch. All in all, Maksim's concerto is a demonstration of his talent as a musical prodigy who has been in the scene for many years. Audiences that came expecting a dynamic show left satisfied after an exhilarating experience.

## From ChatGPT to DeepSeek: Generative AI rivals racing to future

**SINCE** ChatGPT burst onto the scene in late 2022, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) models have been vying for the lead - with the US and China hotbeds for the technology.

GenAI tools are able to create images, videos or written works as well as answer questions or tend to online tasks based on simple prompts. These AI assistants stand out for their popularity and sophistication.

### ChatGPT

AI existed before ChatGPT, but it was first to make GenAI freely available for people to use as a dedicated application.

San Francisco-based OpenAI has made ChatGPT more powerful and capable with each update, the most recent being GPT 4.5.

One version of ChatGPT released

late last year, called o1, was touted as a new-generation that takes time to ponder answers, providing comprehensive results and less inclined to err.

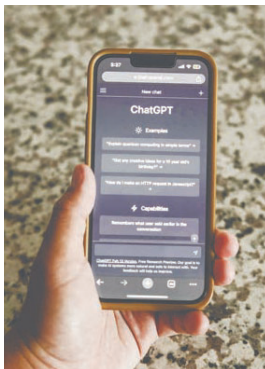
Instead of instantly cranking out results, the model shares its "chain of thought".

OpenAI has imbued ChatGPT with the ability to act as a digital "agent" capable of browsing the internet, compiling information and using computers the way people do when working on tasks.

### Google Gemini

Google has long put AI to work behind the scenes at its platform but cranked out Bard to take on ChatGPT in March 2023.

Bard was gradually replaced by a more advanced Gemini model built into Pixel phones and more.



OpenAI has imbued ChatGPT with the ability to act as a digital 'agent'.

- PEXELSPIC

The Internet giant integrated Gemini into its famous search engine to display results summaries called "AI overviews" along with links in response to queries.

Google also put AI to work letting people search using pictures, video, or sound instead of just typed words.

Such "multimodal" input capability has become common in GenAI tools.

A Gemini 2.0 model capable of "step-by-step" reasoning made its debut in February this year.

### Grok

A co-founder of OpenAI, Elon Musk cut ties with the startup in 2018. Since ChatGPT took the lead in the GenAI race, Musk has sued OpenAI, offered to buy it and launched a rival named xAI.

Musk's chatbot Grok has the advantage of being able to use the trove of posts at X, formerly Twitter, for

training the AI model.

The Tesla tycoon bought Twitter in late 2022.

Musk made up for lost time by spending billions of dollars on high-end Nvidia chips for powering AI datacentres.

He promotes Grok as a chatbot with personality, humour and fewer constraints on what it produces.

### DeepSeek

DeepSeek was founded in 2023 by Chinese investment fund High-Flyer. In January this year, the Hangzhou-based start-up turned the world of generative AI upside down with its R1 model.

DeepSeek claims the AI tool was built using less sophisticated chips than its competitors, slashing the cost.

The application was downloaded tens of millions of times in just a few weeks. - AFP



BY YASMIN ZULRAEZ

**T**HERE are horror films that aim to terrify, thrillers that keep audiences on edge and then there is *The Monkey*, a film that gleefully bludgeons, dismembers and obliterates its characters with a level of nonchalance that can only be described as artful madness. Osgood Perkins, known for crafting eerie atmospheres (*Longlegs*), takes a sharp left turn into absurdist horror-comedy territory, blending extreme gore with an almost playful detachment.

Based on Stephen King's short story, *The Monkey* is a film that does not simply depict death, it celebrates it, parades it around like a carnival attraction and invites the audience to laugh at its sheer unpredictability. Yet, beneath the blood-soaked spectacle lies a surprisingly charming tale of brotherhood, trauma and fate, making it more than just an exercise in gory excess.

#### Monkey, curse and trail of carnage

The story follows twin brothers who stumble upon a seemingly innocuous toy monkey from their past, only to realise it has a knack for triggering a spectacular series of bizarre and fatal "accidents" whenever its key is wound. As the deaths pile up in increasingly outrageous fashion, the brothers attempt to rid themselves of the cursed toy, but fate and perhaps something more sinister keeps pulling them back.

The first half of the film thrives on its sharp pacing and unrelenting sense of dark humour. Perkins wastes no time setting the tone: absurd, grotesque and hilarious all at once. Each death is crafted with such over-the-top creativity that it becomes impossible not to admire the sheer audacity of it all. The film does not hold back and in fact, it revels in pushing the boundaries of good taste, making each shocking moment feel like a well-timed punchline.



A simple monkey toy with a sinister secret.

**DIRECTOR:** Osgood Perkins  
**CAST:** Theo James, Tatiana Maslany, Elijah Wood, Christian Convery, Colin O'Brien

E-VALUE

8

ACTING

6

PLOT

7

## Gory monkey business

➤ Stephen King's short story takes screen violence to new levels of absurdity

#### Comedy of horrors

Despite its relentless body count, *The Monkey* is shockingly funny. Perkins does not just insert comedic moments, he weaves humour into

the very fabric of the film. The absurdity of each death is matched by the characters' reactions, which range from bewildered resignation to outright denial as if they too are aware of just how ridiculous their situation has become.

The script's humour is refreshingly unobvious, often leaning into the kind of dark comedy that makes audiences gasp before bursting into laughter. This is a film where the joke is not just in the punchline, it is in the setup, the timing and the sheer absurdity of the execution (sometimes quite literally). It is horror with a wink, the kind that embraces its lunacy without hesitation.

#### Tale of two halves

While the film starts strong, maintaining a near-perfect balance of horror and humour, the second half slightly loses its footing. The narrative momentum slows as the film shifts its focus toward the deeper implications of the monkey's curse,

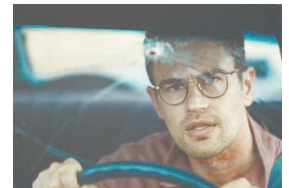
leaning more into psychological tension than the gleeful chaos that defined the first act. It is not a deal-breaker, there is still plenty of carnage to go around but the earlier pacing and comedic energy are not quite sustained.

Fortunately, the cast keeps things engaging. Theo James delivers a dual performance that manages to ground the absurdity with genuine emotion, while the supporting cast, including Elijah Wood and Tatiana Maslany, adds layers of eccentricity to the madness. The performances help smooth over the pacing hiccups, keeping the film entertaining even when the chaos takes a backseat.

#### Beautifully macabre spectacle

Visually, *The Monkey* leans into its nightmarish aesthetic, with exaggerated lighting, surreal set pieces and gore effects that are as grotesque as they are comedic. The cinematography amplifies the absurdity, treating each gruesome death with the reverence of a dramatic set piece, making it impossible to look away, even when logic suggests otherwise.

The score adds another layer of charm, using whimsical undertones to contrast the carnage on screen. It



James (Hal) is a man haunted by his past, a cursed monkey and an increasing body count.



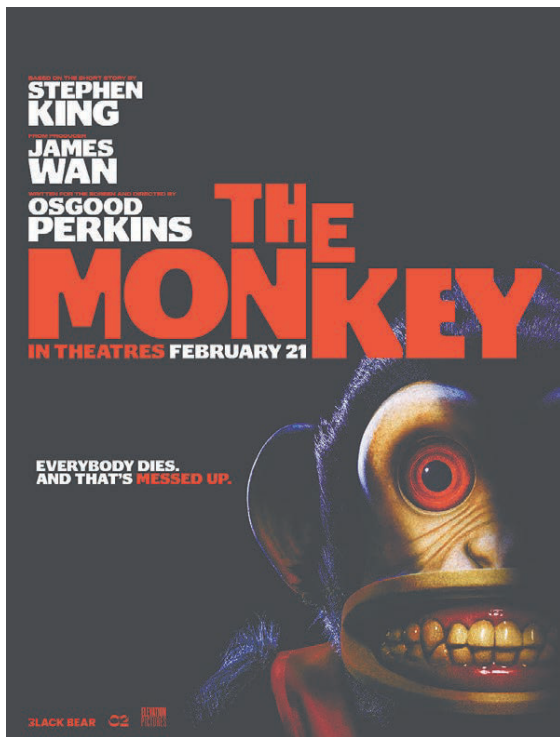
A well-meaning priest steps in to help but divine intervention might not be enough.

is a film that fully understands its insanity and is not afraid to double down on it. Every creative choice, from the exaggerated death scenes to the playfully eerie soundtrack, contributes to a sense of gleeful anarchy that makes the film as entertaining as it is unsettling.

#### For the bold and twisted

*The Monkey* is not a film for the faint of heart, but for those willing to embrace its brand of unhinged horror-comedy, it is an absolute treat. It demands to be watched with an open mind, preferably one prepared to be repeatedly assaulted by a relentless barrage of increasingly deranged death scenes.

For fans of over-the-top horror, dark humour and films that dare to blend the macabre with the ridiculous, *The Monkey* is an absolute must-see. It is the kind of film that lingers, not because of its scares, but because of the sheer audacity of its execution. Love it or be horrified by it, one thing is certain: it is impossible to forget.



The Monkey is pure chaos wrapped in comedy and horror.



An awkward family reunion takes a backseat to a much bigger problem.





# King Charles picks Siti Nurhaliza song

➤ British monarch includes Malaysian artiste's 2018 track *Anta Permana* in playlist

**B**RITISH monarch King Charles III has selected Datuk Seri Siti Nurhaliza's song *Anta Permana* to be included in his personal playlist. This is part of the king's celebration of music across the UK Commonwealth in the Apple Music show *The King's Music Room*.

Malaysia's Siti is among several legendary artists across the globe highlighted by the king, including Bob Marley, Kylie Minogue and Grace Jones. Reflecting his personal taste, His Majesty's eclectic playlist includes 1930s crooners, Afrobeats stars, disco divas, reggae icons as well as contemporary talent such as Davido and Raye.

*The King's Music Room* was recorded at Buckingham Palace in His Majesty's office and is a musical journey shaped by the king's experiences from around the world. In the broadcast, which the monarch recorded to mark this year's Commonwealth Day, the king also shared anecdotes about his encounters with some of the artistes featured and revealed why the songs help form the soundtrack to

his life.

In his introductory remarks for the broadcast, the king said: "Throughout my life, music has meant a great deal to me. I know that is also the case for so many others. It has that remarkable ability to bring happy memories flooding back from the deepest recesses of our memory, to comfort us in times of sadness and to take us to distant places. But perhaps, above all, it can lift our spirits to such a degree and all the more so when it brings us together in celebration. In other words, it brings us joy."

"The show is set to surprise and delight music fans everywhere, revealing a more personal side to His Majesty.

"Human curation has always been a key pillar of our unique editorial approach. Apple Music Radio is where culture is happening worldwide and we are honoured that King Charles III chose to share his personal playlist with us and with music fans around the world," said Apple Music content and editorial global head Rachel Newman.



Other artistes highlighted by King Charles III include Bob Marley, Kylie Minogue and Grace Jones.

## Same tunes used in movies, TV shows

**WHAT** do Etta James's *At Last*, Marvin Gaye's *Let's Get It On* and Montell Jordan's *This Is How We Do It* have in common? It turns out that these songs are among the most frequently used in movies and TV shows, according to a recent study. More than just a soundtrack, these songs become emotional shortcuts and powerful narrative tools.

Certain songs have become veritable stars of the big and small screens. According to a study conducted by Chartmetric and TuneFinder, a number of songs are regularly featured in movie and TV productions. Based on an analysis of music credits from hundreds of movies and TV shows, the study revealed Jordan's *This Is How We Do It* tops the list of most frequently used music, with 52 occurrences since its release in 1995.

Salt-N-Pepa's *Push It* takes second place with 50 uses, followed by Etta James's *At Last*, used in 49 films or shows.

So why do filmmakers keep coming back to the same tracks? According to the analysis, it is because they function as instant cues for the viewer. When a director inserts *Fix You* into a scene, they know in advance Coldplay's chords will unleash a torrent of emotion. Similarly, *At Last* immediately evokes a moving romance without the need for further contextualisation.

This recurrence transforms these tracks into veritable "audio memes", the research explained. Their mere appearance is enough to trigger an emotional response conditioned by decades of on-screen use. But while this technique is effective, it can also lead to a feeling of excessive repetition or even lazy storytelling, the study



Jordan's 1995 tune *This Is How We Do It* has been used on screen 52 times.

—PIC FROM FACEBOOK @MONTELLJORDAN

pointed out.

Yet there is another beneficial effect to this practice: musical rediscovery. If these songs are often considered clichés, their repeated use has the unexpected effect of helping new generations discover musical works. For example, Kate Bush's *Running Up That Hill* enjoyed a spectacular resurgence in popularity after its use in *Stranger Things*, leading to a surge in listens on music streaming platforms. Other tracks have followed the same trajectory: Nirvana's *Something in the Way*, for example, was revived thanks to the film, *The Batman*.

According to data gathered by Chartmetric, productions rely most heavily on songs from the 1980s (23%), 2010s (19.2%), 1970s (17.5%) and 1990s (16.2%). According to the study, directors tend to favour songs from their own youth, creating an effect of shared nostalgia with the audience. —ETX Studio

### MOST FREQUENTLY FEATURED SONGS IN MOVIES, TV SHOWS

- 1) *This Is How We Do It* - Montell Jordan (Hip-hop & Rap, 1995): 52 appearances
- 2) *Push It* - Salt-N-Pepa (Hip-hop & Rap, 1986): 50 appearances
- 3) *At Last* - Etta James (Pop standard, 1960): 49 appearances
- 4) *Fix You* - Coldplay (Alternative, 2005): 42 appearances
- 5) *Fade into You* - Mazzy Star (Alternative, 1993): 41 appearances
- 6) *September* - Earth, Wind & Fire (Disco & Dance, 1978): 39 appearances
- 7) *Tubthumping* - Chumbawamba (Pop, 1997): 39 appearances
- 8) *Walking On Sunshine* - Katrina & The Waves (Pop, 1983): 38 appearances
- 9) *Let's Get It On* - Marvin Gaye (R&B & Soul, 1973): 38 appearances
- 10) *Escape (The Piña Colada Song)* - Rupert Holmes (Pop, 1979): 36 appearances



Movie directors know in advance Coldplay's chords to *Fix You* will unleash a torrent of emotion. —PIC FROM FACEBOOK @COLDPLAY





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Pajak Gadai Sing Lee Seng Sdn Bhd  
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LC 1203 Jalan Baling 09400 Padang Serai  
23-B Main Road 06300 Kuala Neraing  
5 Jalan Semiling 08100 Bedong  
526 Jalan Kuala Kedah Taman Gunung Indah 05400 Alor Setar  
174 Jalan Kuala Ketai 08000 Sungai Petani

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SUIT NO.: WA-BS3C7-17-12/2024

**BETWEEN**  
SHALINI A/P PERIASAMY ...PLAINTIFF  
AND  
PANIMALAR A/P KARUNAKARAN ...DEFENDANT

**NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTED SERVICE**  
IN ADVERTISEMENT FORM  
(Writ dated 3.12.2024 and Statement of Claim dated 3.12.2024)

To: (1) PANIMALAR A/P KARUNAKARAN (NRIC No: 870120-10-5018) 6-7-2 Arata 01 Tjani, Jalan Syers, Bukit Tunku, 50480 Kuala Lumpur.

TAKE NOTICE that a Writ dated 3.12.2024 and Statement of Claim dated 3.12.2024 have been issued against you in the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court in the affidavit action by the Plaintiff, Shalini A/P Periasamy, having its registered address at 14, Jalan Tasik Indah 4, Taman Tasik Indah, Off Jalan both, 51200, Kuala Lumpur Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur and the Court has directed that the Writ dated 3.12.2024 and Statement of Claim dated 3.12.2024 issued by this Honourable Court to be served upon you by advertising a copy of the Writ dated 3.12.2024 and Statement of Claim dated 3.12.2024 and a copy of the Order for Substituted Service dated 10.2.2025 in the local daily newspaper, 'The Sun' and that such service is deemed to be enough and sufficient on the defendant after the expiry of fourteen (14) days from the last date of such service.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the affidavit action has been fixed for Case Management at Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court on 25.3.2025 at 9.00am via e-Review whereby you are required to appear on the said date, failing which the Court may enter a judgment in default against you. You may apply to this Court to examine the Writ dated 3.12.2024 and Statement of Claim dated 3.12.2024.

Dated this 12th day of March 2025

Deputy Registrar  
Sessions Court  
Shah Alam

This NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTED SERVICE IN ADVERTISEMENT FORM is prepared by Messrs. Haniff Khatib, solicitors for the abovesaid Plaintiff with an address for service at No.26, Tingkat Atas, Jalan Camar 4/3, Seksyen 4, Kota Damansara, 47800 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.  
(Tel: 03-6141 4792  
Fax: 03-6141 4793  
Reg. No: HKL1469SP/2/24)

**322 Notices**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF SYARIKAT PERNIAGAAN BAN KIAN SDN. BHD. (19011002752 (68966-T) (Members' Voluntary Winding-Up))**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Creditors of the abovesaid Company which is being voluntarily wound-up, are required on or before the 17th day of April 2025 to send in their names and addresses with particulars of their debts and claims, and of any security held by them, and the names and addresses of their Solicitors (if any) to the undersigned Liquidator at Suite D23, 2nd Floor, Plaza Pekeliling, No. 2 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400 Kuala Lumpur and if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are by their Solicitors or personally required to write in and prove their said debts and claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notices or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts and claims are proved.

Kuala Lumpur  
Dated this 17th day of March 2025

Yap Siew Cheng  
Liquidator

Note:  
This notice is purely formal.  
All known creditors have or will be paid in full.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF SYARIKAT PERNIAGAAN BAN KIAN SDN. BHD. (19011002752 (68966-T) (Members' Voluntary Winding-Up))**

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of SYARIKAT PERNIAGAAN BAN KIAN SDN. BHD. duly convened and held at Suite D23, 2nd Floor, Plaza Pekeliling, No. 2 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400 Kuala Lumpur on the 7th day of March 2025 the following special resolutions were duly passed:-

That the Company be wound up voluntarily and that Yap Siew Cheng Liquidator of the Company.

That the said Liquidator be authorised to distribute either in cash, specie or in kind amongst the contributors of the Company in accordance with their respective rights and interests therein.

That the Liquidator be indemnified by the Company against all costs, charges, losses, expenses and liabilities incurred in or sustained by her in the execution and discharge of her duties as Liquidator and in relation thereto.

Low Tee Kian  
Director

**322 Notices**

**To the biological mother of a child born on 25 May 2015 at 11.09 am in Hospital Bersalin Kuala Lumpur.**

This is with regards to a matter which has been fixed for Hearing on 20th March 2025 at Sepang Sessions Court.

Kindly contact our firm, Messrs Ruby Anthoa & Partners at No. 12, Jalan Anggerik Vanilla 31/100C, Kota Kemuning, 40460 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan at 03-51318106 for more information.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 POTENSI GEMILANG DEVELOPMENT SDN. BHD. (Company No. 201201025693 (1010183-H) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION))**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 459 & 518 of the Companies Act 2016, that a Final Meeting of the Members of the above-mentioned company will be held at Unit B-03-06, Kompleks Perindustrian Embuh, Persiaran Surian, Seksyen 3, Taman Sains Selangor, Kota Damansara, 47810 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan on 17th April, 2025 at 11.00 a.m. for the following purposes :-

- 1) To receive an account from the Liquidator showing the manner in which the winding-up has been conducted and the property of the Company disposed of and hearing any explanation that may be given by the Liquidator.
- 2) To determine by ordinary resolution, that the books, accounts or any other documents of the company be kept by the Liquidator for a period of 6 months after the company has been dissolved, and that thereafter such book, accounts and documents may be destroyed by the Liquidator.

Dated this 17th day of March, 2025.  
KUALA LUMPUR  
LIN MING YEN  
Liquidator

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF P.L.E. SDN. BHD. (Company No. 19011004308 (70423-H) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP))**

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of P.L.E. Sdn. Bhd. duly convened at 14th March, 2025 at 2:00pm, the following Resolutions were duly passed:-

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION - VOLUNTARY WINDING UP**  
That the Company be wound up voluntarily pursuant to Section 499(1)(b) of the Companies Act, 2016.

**ORDINARY RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF LIQUIDATOR**  
That Mr. Lim Ming Yen of J.S. Lim & Co. of Unit B-03-06, Kompleks Perindustrian Embuh, Persiaran Surian, Seksyen 3, Taman Sains Selangor, Kota Damansara, 47810 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan be and is hereby appointed Liquidator of the Company.

Petaling Jaya, 17th March, 2025  
Loo Ping Kuan  
Director

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF P.L.E. SDN. BHD. (Company No. 19011004308 (70423-H) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP))**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Creditors of P.L.E. Sdn. Bhd. which is being voluntarily wound up, are required on or before the 17th April, 2025 to send in their names and addresses and particulars of their debts or claims and of any security held by them, and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned Liquidator, and if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally to come and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notices, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts or claims are proved, or such priority is established, or as the case may be, from objecting to such distribution.

Dated this 17th March, 2025  
LIN MING YEN  
Liquidator  
Unit B-03-06, Kompleks Perindustrian Embuh, Persiaran Surian, Seksyen 3, Taman Sains Selangor, Kota Damansara, 47810 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan

**302 Jobs**

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**HR & ADMIN POSITIONS : (Executive/Senior/Assistant Manager)**

**Job Description**

- Maintain HR records, including employee files, salaries and benefits information.
- Handle employee attendance records, payroll and claims.
- Handle employee relations and resolve any workplace conflicts or issues.
- Provide HR support and guidance to managers and employees.
- Ensure compliance with all employment laws and regulations.
- Stay updated on changes in work legislation and industry standards.
- Handle employee training and development programmes.
- Manage employee benefits programmes and ensure compliance with regulations.
- Stay updated on current industry trends and best practices in HR management.
- For Senior/Assistant Manager – with supervisor skills.
- Handle recruitment matters.
- Experience in payroll system would be advantageous.
- Handle General Admin and other HR duties.

**Requirements**

- Diploma/Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management or related field.
- Executive: 1+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Senior: 3+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Asst Manager: 5+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply for Executive/Assistant post.
- Basic HR knowledge and proficiency in Microsoft Office.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

**SAFETY & BUILDING MAINTENANCE ( Executive )**

**Job Description**

- Perform routine and preventive maintenance on factory & office building systems, including HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems.
- Conduct regular inspections of the factory & office building to identify and address maintenance issues.
- Respond promptly to emergency maintenance requests and ensure timely resolution.
- Maintain accurate records of maintenance activities, including work orders, inspections, and repairs.
- Ensure all maintenance activities comply with relevant health, safety, and environmental regulations.
- Coordinate with external contractors and vendors for specialized maintenance and repair works.
- Monitor and optimize energy usage to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Assist in the preparation and management of the maintenance budget.
- Carry out audits and put up recommendations on effectiveness of Health and Safety systems and procedures for Safety & Health Officer's consideration for further improvement. Assist in the preparation, maintenance and distribution of Health and Safety documents for audit certification purposes.
- Ensure the respective department managers comply with current health and safety legislations such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994, FMA1967, EQA1974, BOMBA Act 1988 and other approved codes of practice related to HSSE only.
- Carry out rectification action to mitigate the impact and likelihood of health and safety risks
- Assist on any ad-hoc operations and admin task assigned by Management from time to time.

**Requirement**

- Diploma/Degree in Building or Facilities Management, Safety & Health or a related field.
- Additional Certificate: Electrical Chargehand, preferably A4 or minimum A1 will be an added advantage
- Minimum of 1 year of experience in Building Maintenance or Safety & Health.
- Adequate technical knowledge of building systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing, etc.).
- Excellent problem-solving and troubleshooting skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work flexi hours.
- Able to handle urgent and last-minute job request.

**Send in your CV with your photo via email to: thesun.hr2@gmail.com (Closing Date: 31st March 2025)**

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WHATSAPP: 018 261 6626

**MALACCA | SEREMBAN MR. Rajah**

TEL: 012-628 2844  
FAX: 06-764 2051

**JOHOR BAHRU MS. Anne Lim**

TEL: 013-770 6699  
FAX: 07-355 5549

**322 Notices**

**FOCAL PARK SDN BHD (358698-H)**

NOTIS LELONG AWAM KENDERAAN UNTUK DILELONG SEPERTI SEDIA ADA TEMPAT & TARIKH LELONG : Northern Region (Akar Salar, Butterworth & Ipoh) 20-03-2025 (Khamis) Pukul 11:00pagi

TARIKH MELIHAT : SEBELUM TIGA HARI LELONG (Pukul 9:00pagi - 4:00ptang)

PERTANYAAN (Tel): Butterworth 04-3567972, Alor Setar 04-787 7972, Ipoh 05-5233971

FPAC - PELELONG BERLESEN : a) Mr. Chew Wook Kok, b) Mr. Steven Lim Peng Seng (02097), c) Ph Hoonza Binli Abu Samah (01036)

Alamat : 352, Permatang Tok Jaya Maklom Sg Dua 13800 Butterworth. : Lot 138-A, Batu 5, Jalan Langgar 05460 Alor Setar : PT51683, Jalan Jelapang, Kiri Perindustrian Trm Meru 30020 Ipoh

SILA LAYARI LAMAN WEB KAMI : <http://www.focalpark.com.my>

Item	Reg No	Janis & Model	Tahun
AM1	AKJ3714	HYUNDAI SONATA 2.0	2013
AM2	AHV7829	PERODUA MYVI 1.3	2012
AM3	WXM5008	PROTON EXORA 1.6	2012
AM4	PATRI076825	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2017
AM5	AKX5908	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2018
AM6	AK71904	PROTON PREVE 1.6 (A)	2017
AM7	WMG9822	TOYOTA COROLLA 1.8	2005
AM8	AJV4973	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2014
AM9	PNQ1140	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2018

(Pernyataan: Kenderaan-kenderaan diatas yang tidak dibida dalam perletangan akan dilelong semula pada 27-03-2025)

# Norris wins wild Aussie GP

## McLaren's British driver holds off Verstappen in treacherous conditions Down Under

**M**CLAREN'S Lando Norris swept to victory in a wet and wild Australian Grand Prix yesterday, holding off defending champion Max Verstappen in a white-knuckle finish to a Formula One season-opener littered with crashes and safety cars.

Mercedes' George Russell was third on the slippery Albert Park circuit where only 14 of the 20 cars finished in the treacherous conditions.

Norris, the pre-season favourite for the drivers' title, started the Formula One season as he finished the last at Abu Dhabi, with victory on pole.

The win ended Verstappen's long run at the top of the championship standings dating back to May 2022.

Norris's teammate Oscar Piastri started second on the grid but finished ninth, his dreams of becoming the first home driver to claim victory or a consolation podium ending with a skid into the grass.

Norris claimed his first win in Melbourne and the fifth of his career, saying it was difficult with Verstappen breathing down his neck.

"It was amazing. Tough race, especially with Max behind me," he added.

"I was pushing, especially in the last two laps. It was a little bit stressful, not going to lie.

"We got it wrong a lot last year so I guess we learned from our mistakes," said the Briton after laying down a marker for the 24-race season.

"We lost out in Silverstone and Canada

in similar conditions.

"Dealing with the pressure, dealing with Max, with Oscar (Piastri) behind me. I was pushing the whole way through.

"A challenging race but for McLaren I need to give thanks as they have given me a brilliant car," added Norris.

Red Bull kept Verstappen out on worn tyres hoping for a break in the rain but he was ultimately forced to pit, potentially costing him a better shot at taking out Norris.

Verstappen said it was "worth the gamble."

"It was quite spicy on the slick tyres. It was alright in the end," he said.

"This is where I expected to be. In the first stint we were lacking a bit of pace to the McLaren."



McLaren's Lando Norris celebrates with the trophy after winning the Australian Grand Prix. - REUTERS/SPIC

Lewis Hamilton's debut for Ferrari proved a damp squib with the Briton finishing 10th, two places behind teammate Charles Leclerc.

But it was an encouraging day for Williams, with Alex Albon finishing fourth after Mercedes' 18-year-old rookie Andrea Kimi Antonelli was demoted to fifth due to a five-second penalty for an unsafe release from the pit.

Lance Stroll was sixth for Aston Martin, while Sauber also celebrated points for seventh-placed Nico Hulkenberg. - Reuters

### 322 Notices

**NOTIS JUALAN SECARA LELONG ANAM**  
Aka Pemegang Pajak-Gadai (61) 1972  
Sandaran-sandaran yang tidak dibayar Pemegang Pajak Gadai yang teresebut dibawah ini  
Akan Di-Jual Dengan Lelong Umum

NAMA PAJAK GADAI	ALAMAT PAJAK GADAI
Pajak Gadai Emas Jaya Sdn Bhd	29 Jalan Ushahwan 4 Pusat Perniagaan 13000 Kepala Batas.
Pajak Gadai YS Sdn Bhd	442 Jalan Penang 10000 Penang
Pajak Gadai Kah Hin Sdn Bhd	6688 Jalan Bagan Ajam 13000 Butterworth
YMC Capital Sdn Bhd	47 Jalan Permatang Rawa Bandar Perda 14000 Bukit Mertajam
Shun Chang Sdn Bhd	228 Jalan Pasar 14000 Bukit Mertajam
Sing Tai Foh Sdn Bhd	716 Jalan Raya 14200 Sungai Bakap
Pajak Gadai Lian Hin Sdn Bhd	1078 Jalan Che Ahmad 14300Nibong Tbal
Pajak Gadai Sun Heng	16 Jalan Keruing Kawasan Perniagaan Simpang Ampat 14100 Simpang Ampat
Yong Chang Dang Sdn Bhd	293 Jalan Burmah 10350 Penang
Sing Yee Li Sdn Bhd	46 Jalan Tockak 2 Pusat Bandar Seberang Jaya 13700 Perai
Lee Thong Sang Sdn Bhd	167 Medan Kikik 1 Taman Indrawasih 13600 Perai
Pajak Gadai Butterworth Sdn Bhd	776 G Taman Kakaya Jalan Bagan Ajam 13000 Butterworth
Pajak Gadai MVJ Sdn Bhd	6679 Jalan Baru 14100 Simpang Ampat

Sandaran-sandaran tersebut boleh diperaikan dengan Pemegang Pajak Gadai berkenaan diatas 18hb MAC 2025 sehingga 20hb MAC 2025, pukul 10.00 pagi sehingga 4.00 petang sebelum tarikh jualan lelong ini.

Klian Bertarik 17-03-2025

CHONG WM KEAT  
Peladang Bersemas  
01140382589

### 322 Notices

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT SHAH ALAM**  
IN THE STATE OF SELANGOR  
**DARUL EHSAN, MALAYSIA COMPANIES (WINDING UP) NO. BA-290C-11-02/2025**

In the matter of Section 464(1)(b) and Section 465(1)(e) of the Companies Act 2016

And

In the matter of TOP BUILDERS CAPITAL BERHAD (Company No.: 201301043050 (1072872-D))

BETWEEN

**THINKAT ADVISORY SDN BHD** (Company No.: 201701005337 (121502-A))  
...PETITIONER

AND

**TOP BUILDERS CAPITAL BERHAD** (Company No.: 201301043050 (1072872-D))  
...RESPONDENT

**ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION**

NOTICE is hereby given that a Petition for the Winding-Up of the above-named Company by the High Court was made on the 17th day of February, 2025 presented by Thinkat Advisory Sdn Bhd. And that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at Shah Alam on the 21st day of May, 2025 at 9.00 a.m. and any creditor or contributory of the said Company desiring to oppose or support the making of an order on the said Petition may appear at the time of hearing by himself or his Counsel for the purpose and a copy of the Petition will be furnished to any creditor or contributory of the said Company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's address is C-2-4, Plaza Damas, 60, Jalan Sri Hartamas 1, Sri Hartamas, 50480 Kuala Lumpur.

The Petitioner's solicitors is Messrs Yusuf Khan & Fong No. 97B, Jalan Gasing, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Messrs Yusuf Khan & Fong  
Solicitors for the above-named Petitioner

NOTE - Any person who intends to appear on the hearing of the said Petition must serve on or send by post to the above-named Messrs Yusuf Khan & Fong, Advocates & Solicitors, No. 97B, Jalan Gasing, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan notice in writing of his intention to do so. The Notice must state the name and address of the person or, if a firm, the name and address of the firm and must be signed by the person or firm or his or their solicitor (if any) and must be served, or if posted, must be sent by post in sufficient time to reach the abovesigned not later than twelve (12) o'clock noon of the 20th day of May, 2025.

This Advertisement of Petition is issued by Messrs. Yusuf Khan & Fong, solicitors for the above-named Petitioner whose address for service is at No. 97B, Jalan Gasing, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. Tel : 79561900 & Email : yusufkhanfongkhan@yahoo.com (Ref. : TBSB/SK/SL/24/1418)

### 322 Notices

## Pickles Auctions

Bank Repossessed bikes and cars for sale by auction. Auctions are conducted via eBidding on **Wednesday - 19th March** from 9.35am onwards. Viewing inspection on every **Monday - 17th March** at 9.30am - 5.30pm. All are invited to join our PUBLIC AUCTION. All unsold bank repossessed vehicles will be re-auctioned on the following Wednesday until the vehicles are sold. Download Pickles Auctions app to view all auction listings or visit [www.pickles.my](http://www.pickles.my)

Reg no	Description	Reg no	Description
DCF7888	2008 HONDA CITY 1.5 I - DS1 (A)	PKP5562	2012 PERODUA WIA 1.0 E2 (A)
WRW3394	2008 PROTON SAGA 1.3 (M)	WXM6512	2012 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.8L (A)
OCC7272	2014 NISSAN SYLPHY	ALB2006	2018 PROTON PERSONA 1.6L CVT
WYB669	2012 VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.8	WY57080	2013 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 E2 (A)
VAL6522	2017 PROTON ERTIGA	JPS8784	2013 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 E2 (A)
VAT6288	2017 PEUGEOT 3008 P84 A	W2090J	2013 HONDA CITY E 1.5L I-VTEC
BNJ4597	2015 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 (M)	VBT1843	2018 PERODUA BEZZA 1.3 X (A)
VMC9562	2024 PROTON SAGA 1.3 (A) PREMIUM S	WC7485J	2015 PERODUA MYVI 1.5 SE (A)
RAT832	2018 VOLVO XC60 T8	DCU1628	2015 HONDA CITY E 1.5L I-VTEC
BPX1144	2019 PERODUA MYVI 1.5 AV (A)	WVG2288 / Y18786	2011 TOYOTA CAMRY 2.0G (A)
VJRI376	2022 YAMAHA LAGENDA 115Z	WB8610A	2015 HONDA CITY E 1.5L I-VTEC
SWG2658	2023 YAMAHA 135LC	BNM7128	2015 HONDA HR-V 1.8L E
JWV5830	2024 HONDA VARIO 160	VCA5312	2018 PERODUA MYVI 1.5 AV (A)
CES755	2022 AVITA SVR180	VBG5571	2018 PERODUA MYVI 1.3 X (A)
VFU6757	2021 YAMAHA Y1ZR	W274P	2014 TOYOTA INNOVA 2.0 G (A)
JMP7070	2022 HONDA RS150R	WBS398M	2015 TOYOTA INNOVA 2.0E (A)
JWV5993	2023 YAMAHA 135LC	TCR941	2023 YAMAHA Y16ZR
TCV8031	2024 YAMAHA Y16ZR	NEA2217	2023 YAMAHA NVX ABS
SMN4714	2024 YAMAHA Y1ZR	AMW6346	2023 HONDA VARIO 125
JU02555	2021 HONDA WAVE 125I	PRB7571	2024 YAMAHA Y16ZR
QS2276R	2022 YAMAHA MT-15	KFT1670	2024 YAMAHA NVX V2
WN4937	2023 YAMAHA 135LC	AMW8630	2023 HONDA RS-X FS150FA ABS
VJA1848	2022 YAMAHA Y16ZR	DE01930	2023 YAMAHA Y1ZR
JWU1769	2024 YAMAHA Y15ZR	WC4295D	2015 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT
VLC6040	2023 YAMAHA 135LC	W7358A	2015 PERODUA MYVI 1.5 SE (A)
SJ8502	2023 YAMAHA Y16ZR	WC4601B	2015 PROTON INSPIRA 2.0L CVT
RAJ3703	2021 HONDA WAVE 125I	BNM8892	2015 MITSUBISHI AXIS 2WD
BRE 2981	2022 YAMAHA Y15ZR	VFU1628	2021 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 E2 (A)
POR8845	2023 HONDA RS-X	VDB708	2019 MAZDA 2 1.5SDN HI SKYACTIV (A)
JXC7709	2024 YAMAHA NVX	VJY4418	2022 HONDA CITY 1.5L V
VJF6330	2022 HONDA VARIO 150	VGY5455	2017 TOYOTA VELLFIRE Z-52G
TCY4159	2024 YAMAHA Y15ZR	BRG1133	2023 MITSUBISHI XPANDER 1.5
SDB370T	2022 HONDA VARIO 150	BRJ3000	2015 MINI COOPER S 2.0
SKB729E	2024 YAMAHA Y16ZR	BMH9417	2013 PROTON EXORA 1.6 (A)
PKV5077	2012 PROTON PERSONA 1.6L (A)	BMS136	2014 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 SE (A)
WU1199V	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	OPC6626	2015 MERCEDES-BENZ C200 W205
MCK3413	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	BPV6647	2016 HONDA CITY 1.5 V
WYV5476	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	VMU1771	2016 FORD RANGER XLT 2.2 (A)
NCN6664	2011 SUZUKI SWIFT 1.5L (A)	W4679L	2013 LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER EVOQUE
PKN7479	2012 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 SXI (M)	BRJ6583	2023 PROTON SAGA

For more information  
Call 016-6999170, (WhatsApp) 012-5553727 or email [info@pickles.my](mailto:info@pickles.my)

**PICKLES ASIA SDN BHD**  
Lot 19391, Batu 8 1/2, Jalan Klang Lama, Taman Desaria, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

Download Pickles Auctions App

## Draper ready for big challenge after Alcaraz win

**JACK DRAPER** said finding consistency can help him challenge the best players in the world after the Briton reached back-to-back ATP finals and marked his entry into the top 10 for the first time.

Draper lifted titles in Stuttgart and Vienna and reached the US Open semifinals during his breakthrough campaign last year but had to skip the 2025 season-opening United Cup in Australia due to a nigging hip problem.

He described the tendonitis as a "ticking time bomb" after retiring in the fourth round at the Australian Open against world No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz but showed glimpses of his best form in a 6-1, 0-6, 6-4 win over the Spaniard at Indian Wells yesterday.

"Relief, joy, just a huge feeling

of big emotion," said Draper, who lost the Qatar Open final to Andy Rublev.

"I've been through a lot in my few years with playing and especially the last ones with some injuries and a lot of hard work to always try and get back to a decent level.

"It was my goal at the end of last year that I obviously had some good results, but I want to really achieve some consistency and get to the point where I'm pushing these top players in the world in the biggest tournaments.

"That's the goal. So to obviously come through the match today, that means so much to me, especially against a player of Carlos' calibre." - Reuters

## Carlos blames nerves for loss

**CARLOS ALCAZAR'S** hopes of capturing a third successive Indian Wells title went up in smoke yesterday and the Spaniard said his inability to tame his nerves was more of a disappointment than the stunning semifinal defeat by Jack Draper.

The 21-year-old was gunning for a rare "three-peat" in the California desert tournament, a feat achieved by Roger Federer (2004-06) and Novak Djokovic (2014-16), but he crashed 6-1, 0-6, 6-4 against Draper.

"Obviously I wanted to win the third in a row, but I can't pretend to win every match. I'm not as upset about not getting the third one in a row," Alcaraz told reporters.

"I'm upset about myself, about the way that I approached the match, the way that I felt during the whole day, that I couldn't calm myself down.

"It was probably one of the worst sets I've played in my whole career, the first set. That means how nervous I was before the match, during the whole day. It's really disappointing."

Alcaraz said he was too focused on Draper's game and that led to a second defeat by the Briton in five meetings.

"When you're thinking more about the opponent than yourself, then it's a big problem... he's really tough, really solid, and it was going to be a really physical match," he added. - Reuters





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SHORTS

Pereira enjoying Wolves challenge

VITOR PEREIRA said he is feeling the challenge of keeping Wolves in the Premier League "with my heart" after they took a significant step towards survival with a 2-1 victory at rock-bottom Southampton.

Jorgen Strand Larsen's brace moved Wanderers nine points clear of third-bottom Ipswich, with Paul Onuachu pulling a goal back for Southampton, who are now without a win since the start of February.

"It was very important for us in this moment in the season," Pereira said. "I think it was difficult for sure, we suffered a bit in the last 10 because we wanted to keep the three points."

"I think in this moment it was important to make the difference and have the difference to the other teams."

"Nine points is better than six (the gap to the bottom three). We can keep the nine points and try to be consistent."

"In this League we can't sleep, we can't go into games thinking that we can wait for results, we must fight, we must deserve the victory."

"This club doesn't deserve relegation, the people of this club don't deserve it. I'm feeling this with my heart and it's a project I want to take with both hands."

Leeds hit back in QPR draw

LEEDS fought back from two goals down to draw 2-2 against QPR yesterday as the Championship leaders kept their promotion push on track.

Koki Saito and Steve Cook struck in the first half to put QPR in control against the run of play at Loftus Road.

But a Morgan Fox own goal and Jayden Bogle's second half equaliser ensured Daniel Farke's side left west London unscathed.

QPR's Saito was sent off in the closing stages but Leeds couldn't clinch a second win in their last four league games.

Second-placed Burnley are in hot pursuit of Leeds after a 2-0 win at Swansea.

Josh Brownhill's 13th goal of the season and Jaidon Anthony's strike moved Scott Parker's team within two points of Leeds as the race for automatic promotion to the Premier League heats up.

Fifth-placed Coventry underlined their playoff credentials with an 3-0 win over fourth-placed Sunderland thanks to a Haji Wright hat-trick.

West Bromwich Albion hold the final playoff berth after Abu Kamara's goal gave Hull a 1-1 draw at the Hawthorns.

Third-bottom Derby are just one point from safety, although their survival bid was not helped by fourth-bottom Cardiff's 2-1 at Blackburn.

BY ELEANOR CROOKS

DAVID MOYES rekindled his bond with West Ham's players and fans after watching his Everton side deny his former team victory at Goodison Park.

Moyes took some time on the pitch after the 1-1 draw with the Hammers players before applauding the supporters in a mutual show of respect for the club he left at the end of last season.

"I've had so many moments with the players over the years, obviously the biggest thing was winning in Europe but I think you build bonds," he said.

"I brought the majority of them in. Tomas

# Nuno not getting carried away

... as Forest strengthen grip on Champions League spot

BY GEORGE SESSIONS

NUNO ESPIRITO Santo warned Nottingham Forest there is a long way to go after a 4-2 win at Ipswich opened up a six-point gap to Manchester City in the race for Champions League qualification.

Third-placed Forest had boosted their unexpected top-four charge with a late victory over City the previous week and followed it up with a comprehensive display in Suffolk where three goals in six first half minutes settled the contest.

After Nikola Milenkovic broke the deadlock in the 35th minute, Anthony Elanga twice punished slack Town defending before Jota Silva added a fourth late on.

Jens Cajuste and George Hirst hit consolations for Ipswich, who are now nine points from safety, but Forest made the most of Man City being held to a 2-2 home

draw with Brighton to move further clear of Pep Guardiola's fifth-placed team with nine matches left.

"You know what I think about the table," Nuno said. "What we have is to focus on ourselves, focus on ourselves."

"Work as much as we can because there is a lot of football to be played yet."

"There is a good spell in the first half that really changed the game for six minutes."

"Second half, we started well. There is a moment where Ipswich score, the team shakes a little bit but fortunately and luckily we achieve the fourth goal. Overall, a good performance."

Ipswich had arguably been the better side until they gifted away a corner kick and while they dealt with the initial delivery, Liam Delap's miscued clearance allowed Milenkovic to fire into the roof of the net after 35 minutes.

Two minutes later it was 2-0 after Elliot Anderson found Elanga, who raced away down the right before he curled home with his left foot.

Elanga doubled his tally in the 41st minute when he latched onto Milenkovic's lofted pass and scored in

simple fashion.

Cajuste curled home with eight minutes left to reduce the deficit, but Morgan Gibbs-White brushed off his England snub with an assist for Silva before Hirst headed in a stoppage-time consolation for the hosts.

The decision of new England boss Thomas Tuchel to leave out Gibbs-White along with Anderson and Callum Hudson-Odoi raised eyebrows, but Nuno told the trio to not lose focus.

Nuno added: "A huge talent. Morgan has so much talent, so much. What they have to do is what they did today. Work, play good."

"What they have to do is stay focused, stay humble and for sure Thomas Tuchel will look at our players and take them because they have talent. They are talented players and can help England."

Ipswich's eighth League defeat from their last nine matches was compounded by Wolves' win at Southampton.

"A very disappointing day," Town boss Kieran McKenna said. "Three really bad goals from our point of view, especially the first and the third goals in a six-minute spell that turns a stable game, an even game into an impossible task at 3-0 down at halftime."

"It took away the opportunity for us to compete in the game and try to get a result." - The Independent



Brentford's Yoane Wissa (top) scores their first goal against Bournemouth. - REUTERS/SPIC

## Frank hails Bees 'fantastic record'

THOMAS FRANK praised Brentford's "fantastic record" as they won a fifth away League game in succession for the first time since 2010 in a 2-1 Premier League comeback win at Bournemouth.

After Vitaly Janelt's own goal had given Bournemouth the lead, the Bees hit back through Yoane Wissa in the first half before captain Christian Norgaard netted the winner in the second.

"I thought it was a very good game, especially in the first half. Second half I thought Bournemouth started better. We scored a great, ugly goal from a long throw that won us the game," Frank said.

"It's a fantastic record, unbelievable. Now we just need to keep the away record and hopefully

add five home wins."

Bournemouth's previous record against Brentford was not a cause for optimism. The last time they beat yesterday's opponents was in August 2014 in the Championship with Frank's side unbeaten in all five of the top-flight games played between the clubs since then.

The result meant it was four defeats in six League games for the Cherries, who have otherwise enjoyed a fine season and manager Andoni Iraola struggled to disguise his frustration at the recent form.

"At the end I think it's another of these games where we are not efficient. I think we are doing a lot

of good things but the most important things, other teams are doing much better than us," said Iraola.

"We've created more chances, we will check the stats and we will have more than everything."

"If it happens only today, you could say 'bad luck' but it is happening every game. We must be better in both boxes."

"It's a shame because we are now in a bad run of results but I see the team doing very good things."

"I would like to have arrived in the international break with a better run of results." - The Independent

## Toffees boss Moyes applauds West Ham fans after draw

(Soucek) scores again today, which was a blow to me but it's no surprise.

"You see the form of (Jarrod) Bowen, what (Mohammed) Kudus can do and (Lucas) Paqueta, they're all incredibly talented players."

"Great to see James Ward-Prowse back as well because of what he can do. The West Ham supporters have been really, really good to me over the years, many times we've been in Europe where they were fantastic, and I wanted to show my respect to them."

"They gave me a great send-off when I left West Ham so they deserved to be acknowledged."

It appeared that Soucek would bring Everton's unbeaten run in the Premier League to an end when he scored a fine goal in the 67th minute but Jake O'Brien headed the equaliser in added time.

Moyes added: "Tough game, very close, probably a draw the right result in the end."

"I think once they scored we started to come back into the game, maybe a bit unlucky not to get a win right at the death."

There were mixed feelings for Moyes' opposite number Graham Potter, who said: "It's always a feeling when you concede late of disappointment but I think the bigger context of the game is we did a lot well."

"We had a good couple of opportunities in the first half, restricted Everton to not too much."

"But at Everton, when you're 1-0 with the crowd and the atmosphere here, it's not easy. One lapse and you concede but overall we have to stick to the positives and accept the point." - The Independent

SHORTS

Reijnders saves Milan as Alli sees red

**TIJANI REIJNDERS** saved AC Milan's skin in yesterday's 2-1 win against Serie A upstarts Como, who gave Dele Alli his debut from the bench only for the former England international to be sent off moments later.

Netherlands midfielder Reijnders struck in the 76th minute after a brilliant Tammy Abraham pass as Milan came from behind to placate angry home fans and move up to seventh in Italy's top flight.

Sergio Conceicao's side are three points from the European places in large thanks to Reijnders who also slipped in Christian Pulisic to level the scores

seven minutes after the break.

The 26-year-old also hit the bar shortly before rolling home his 13th goal of the season in all competitions, and went close to netting again with five minutes remaining.

"I always try my best for the team, to be important with goals and assists. Luckily today I could do it for the team," Reijnders told DAZN.

Defeat was harsh on Como who performed well on one of

football's biggest stages and stay safely nestled in 13th place, seven points above the relegation zone.

"I think we played incredibly well... if I have to lose, let me lose like that because it's so enjoyable to see players play like that," said Como coach Cesc Fabregas.

Bayern draw keeps door open

**BAYERN MUNICH** were held to a 1-1 draw at Union Berlin yesterday, giving defending champions Bayer Leverkusen an outside chance of

dragging themselves back into the Bundesliga title race.

Bayern, who also dropped points in a surprise loss at home to Bochum the previous week, could be just six points ahead if Leverkusen win at Stuttgart overnight.

"It was a game of two stories: the performance and the result," said Bayern coach Vincent Kompany. "I've been in football long enough to know this wasn't a bad performance away from home.

"Sometimes when you don't score it's not because the strikers don't put it in, it's because the defenders and the keepers do a lot of things right."

Leroy Sane put the visitors ahead after 75 minutes but the hosts levelled through Benedict Hollerbach.

Champions League finalists in June, Borussia Dortmund's chances of reaching the competition next season look over after a 2-0 loss at RB Leipzig left them in 11th spot.

"You can't lose a game like that - we beat ourselves, that's what happened today," said Dortmund coach Niko Kovac.



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe (top) runs past Villarreal's Pape Gueye during their La Liga match. - AFP/PICT

# Real overcome fatigue

**KYLIAN MBAPPE'S** brace helped Real Madrid climb top of La Liga with a 2-1 win at Villarreal yesterday despite coach Carlo Ancelotti's complaints that his team was "exhausted".

*Los Blancos* moved three points clear of rivals Barcelona, having played two extra games, with the Catalans visiting third place Atletico Madrid overnight in a key clash in the Spanish title race.

Madrid were unhappy the game was taking place fewer than 72 hours after their Champions League win on penalties against Atletico on Wednesday.

"The team has something special, character, commitment," Ancelotti told reporters, insisting Madrid would refuse to play without "72 hours of rest" between matches as recommended by world football governing body Fifa.

However despite their complaints they had enough in the tank to beat their opponents, fifth, at the Estadio de la Ceramica.

"We kept going on a physical level, above all in the second half, the team ended up exhausted, but that was to be expected," said Ancelotti.

"It's a win that says a lot about this team and the ability this squad has.

"I think today is the last time we will play a game before 72 hours (of rest)," Ancelotti told reporters.

"We will never play another game (without) 72 hours of rest.

"We asked La Liga twice to change the time of the game and they did not do anything, this is the last time.

"It was a potential banana skin, above all for what has happened, the (few) hours of rest, and the strength of the opponent."

Ancelotti has regularly complained about the packed football calendar, with

...as Mbappe double at Villarreal takes 'exhausted' Madrid top

Madrid one of the clubs who will also be involved at the expanded Club World Cup this year in the United States.

"Everyone saw the game against Atletico, 120 minutes, a very intense match, it's hard to play after two days... but we have to respect the club badge and fight until the end, and we did that today and we were able to win," Mbappe told *Real Madrid TV*.

Goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois said the scheduling of the game was disrespectful to Madrid.

"We don't want to look for excuses, I'm happy to say we did not lose or draw because of the tiredness, but it's not normal playing (at this time) today," said Courtois.

"The start wasn't the best but that's normal with little rest that it's hard on the legs, but then we came back quickly, we defended well, we were very tired but the commitment we showed was important," Courtois told *Real Madrid TV*.

"I know La Liga don't like to put (the three biggest teams) on the same day, but sometimes it's what you have to do... it was a lack of respect to the team and our players, because we could have left here with someone injured."

Earlier Mallorca beat Espanyol 2-1 with a late Vedat Muriqi penalty, with the target man making amends after scoring an own goal and missing another spot-kick.

Celta Vigo beat bottom of the table Valladolid 1-0, inflicting their 20th defeat of the season. - AFP

**TOTO SPORTS TOTO RESULTS**

Draw No: 5940/2025 DATE: 16/03/2025 (SUN)  
STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.  
196901000090 (84202)

**TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL**

1st Prize	6816
2nd Prize	0932
3rd Prize	2943

Special	Consolation
9800 5040	9982 7426
9653 3982	7026 9221
5295 4668	8149 9227
0901 7576	0692 5064
5602 7648	0738 0520

**4D JACKPOT**  
Jackpot 1 **RM 7,645,282.25**

6816 0932	0932 6816
6816 2943	2943 6816
0932 2943	2943 0932

Jackpot 2 **RM 156,073.39**  
Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

**4D Zodiac**

1st Prize	6816	+	TIGER
2nd Prize	0932	+	
3rd Prize	2943	+	
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

**TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL**

**5D**

1ST	0 4 6 1 5
2ND	2 3 7 0 8
3RD	4 8 9 8 3
4TH	4 6 1 5
5TH	6 1 5
6TH	1 5

**6D**

1ST	7 9 8 4 3 1
2ND	7 9 8 4 3 or 9 8 4 3 1
3RD	7 9 8 4 or 8 4 3 1
4TH	7 9 8 or 4 3 1
5TH	7 9 or 3 1

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**POWER 7/36** 8 14 27 34 36 40  
Jackpot **RM 10,103,637.69**

**STAR 7/36** 13 37 41 46 47 48 + 2  
Jackpot 1 **RM 4,347,915.08**

Jackpot 2 **RM 100,000.00**

Toto 4D Jackpot 2 **RM 564,462**

Toto 4D Jackpot 2 (i-System) **RM 24,020**  
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Draw Date: 16/03/25 (Sun) Draw No: 5887/25 Venue: PERAK TURF CLUB

**1+3D SUPER1+3D**

1st Prize	5133
2nd Prize	5678
3rd Prize	3636
Starters	Consolation
9677 7560	8780 3138
9195 4754	1872 6590
8572 2732	6285 7924
2034 8357	7228 8452
4012 3277	6614 3840

**3+3D**

Jackpot 1	RM9,143,173.80
5133 + 5678	5678 + 5133
5133 + 3636	3636 + 5133
5678 + 3636	3636 + 5678
Jackpot 2	RM227,090.50

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

**3+3D Bonus**

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
415 133 +	TIGER	RM380,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
135 678 +	OX	RM1,375,904.60
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
833 636 +	HORSE	RM1,871,506.00
Starters	Consolation	
139 677 457 560	328 780 293 138	
649 195 764 754	211 872 856 590	
038 572 692 732	216 285 817 924	
392 034 868 357	717 228 678 452	
984 012 433 277	526 614 003 840	

**3D**

1st Prize	133
2nd Prize	678
3rd Prize	636

**3D Jackpot**

Jackpot	RM911,728.60
133 + 678 + 636	678 + 636 + 133
133 + 636 + 678	636 + 133 + 678
678 + 133 + 636	636 + 678 + 133

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

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RESULTS & STANDINGS

**ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE:** Bournemouth 1 (Janelt 17-og) Brentford 2 (Wissa 30, Norgaard 71), Everton 1 (O'Brien 90+1) West Ham 1 (Soucek 67), Ipswich 2 (Cajuste 82, Hirst 90+3) Nottingham Forest 4 (Milenkovic 35, Elanga 37, 41, Jota 87), Manchester City 2 (Haaland 11-pen, Marmoush 39) Brighton 2 (Estupinan 21, Khusanov 48-og), Southampton 1 (Onuachu 75) Wolves 2 (Strand Larsen 19, 47).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	29	21	7	1	69	27	70
Arsenal	28	15	10	3	52	24	55
Nottm Forest	29	16	6	7	49	35	54
Chelsea	28	14	7	7	53	36	49
Man City	29	14	6	9	55	40	48
Newcastle	28	14	5	9	47	38	47
Brighton	29	12	11	6	48	42	47
Aston Villa	29	12	9	8	41	45	45
Bournemouth	29	12	8	9	48	36	44
Fulham	28	11	9	8	41	38	42
Brentford	29	12	5	12	50	45	41
Crystal Palace	28	10	9	9	36	33	39
Tottenham	28	10	4	14	55	41	34
Everton	29	7	13	9	32	36	34
Man Utd	28	9	7	12	34	40	34
West Ham	29	9	7	13	33	49	34
Wolves	29	7	5	17	40	58	26
Ipswich	29	3	8	18	28	62	17
Leicester	28	4	5	19	25	62	17
Southampton	29	2	3	24	21	70	9

**CHAMPIONSHIP:** Millwall 1 Stoke 0, QPR 2 Leeds 2, Blackburn 1 Cardiff 2, Coventry 3 Sunderland 0, Luton 0 Middlesbrough 0, Oxford 1 Watford 0, Plymouth 2 Derby 3, Preston 2 Portsmouth 1, Swansea 0 Burnley 2, West Brom 1 Hull 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	38	23	11	4	76	25	80
Burnley	38	21	15	2	52	11	78
Sheff Utd	37	24	7	6	52	28	77
Sunderland	38	19	12	7	55	37	69
Coventry	38	17	8	13	55	48	59
West Brom	38	13	18	7	48	34	57

**LA LIGA:** Valladolid 0 Celta Vigo 1 (Alonso 83-pen), Mallorca 2 (Asano 65, Muriqi 90+7-pen) Espanyol 1 (Muriqi 53-og), Villarreal 1 (Foyth 7) Real Madrid 2 (Mbappe 17, 23), Girona 1 (Stuani 64) Valencia 1 (Diego Lopez 58).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	28	18	6	4	59	27	60
Barcelona	26	18	3	5	71	25	57
A. Madrid	27	16	8	3	44	18	56
A. Bilbao	27	13	10	4	45	24	49
Villarreal	27	12	8	7	49	38	44
Real Betis	27	11	8	8	35	33	41

**SERIE A:** AC Milan 2 (Pulisic 53, Reijnders 76) Como 1 (Da Cunha 33), Monza 1 (Izzo 60) Parma 1 (Bonny 84), Udinese 0 Verona 1 (Duda 72), Torino 1 (Vlasic 70) Empoli 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter Milan	28	18	7	3	63	27	61
Napoli	28	18	6	4	45	23	60
Atalanta	28	17	7	4	63	26	58
Juventus	28	13	13	2	45	25	52
Lazio	28	15	6	7	50	36	51
Bologna	28	13	11	4	44	34	50

**BUNDESLIGA:** RB Leipzig 2 Borussia Dortmund 0, Werder Bremen 2 Borussia Moenchengladbach 4, Augsburg 1 Wolfsburg 0, Mainz 2 Freiburg 2, Union Berlin 1 Bayern Munich 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B. Munich	26	19	5	2	75	24	62
B. Leverkusen	25	15	8	2	55	30	53
Mainz	26	13	6	7	44	28	45
E. Frankfurt	25	12	6	7	51	39	42
RB Leipzig	26	11	9	6	41	33	42
Freiburg	26	12	6	8	36	38	42

**FRENCH LIGUE 1:** Nantes 1 Lille 0, Angers 0 Monaco 2, Lens 1 Rennes 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	25	20	5	0	70	24	65
Marseille	25	15	4	6	52	30	49
Monaco	26	14	5	7	51	32	47
Nice	26	13	8	5	50	31	47
Lille	26	12	8	6	40	28	44
Lyon	25	12	6	7	46	31	42

# Proud and disappointed

Sports Minister Yeoh applauds lawn bowls athletes but wants shuttlers to step up

**Y**OUTH and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh expressed pride in the achievements of the national lawn bowls athletes, who have brought recognition to Malaysia on the international stage.

She highlighted their outstanding ranking, which has caught the attention of the National Sports Council (MSN), leading to the inclusion of lawn bowls athletes in the Podium Programme.

"I am extremely proud of our lawn bowls athletes and their achievements. Their strong ranking is a testament to the hard work of their coaches, who have successfully developed many talented players," she said.

"MSN has agreed to include lawn bowls athletes in the Podium Programme, fulfilling the aspirations of the Malaysian Lawn Bowls Federation (PLBM) to secure continuous support for their athletes," she said during the PLBM's breaking of fast event at the Bukit Kiara Lawn Bowls Arena on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Yeoh reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to supporting PLBM in acquiring new equipment in preparation for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

She also urged corporate sponsors to consider backing the sport, highlighting PLBM's strong track record.

At the event, Yeoh also urged national badminton players to focus on early preparation and continuous improvement following their early exit from the All England tournament.

Acknowledging the disappointment, she pointed out the increasing competitiveness of the sport, where even top-ranked players struggled to progress beyond the early rounds.

"Badminton is getting more competitive, and we saw that even some of the world's best players were eliminated early.

"Our athletes cannot afford to be complacent, they must train harder and prepare earlier," she said. - Bernama

BRIEFS



PDRM's Bruno Suzuki and Negeri Sembilan's Zainal Abidin Jamil (left) in action during the Malaysia Super League match. - BERNAMA/PI

PDRM end losing streak

PDRM FC ended their four-match losing streak when they came from behind to beat Negeri Sembilan FC 2-1 in a Super League action at the Selayang Municipal Council Stadium on Saturday night. The visiting team, coached by K. Nantha Kumar, opened the scoring first through Myanmar national striker Hein Htet Aung in the seventh minute. However, two penalties were awarded by referee Muhammad Munir Mohd Izam in the second half of the match - in the 72nd and 86th minutes - to enable PDRM to walk away with all three points. Brazilian import striker Bruno Suzuki calmly completed the responsibility by putting away both spot kicks. After 21 matches, PDRM, who are the runners-up in this season's Challenge Cup, are currently in eighth position with 24 points, sharing points with Perak FC in seventh place. Meanwhile, Negeri Sembilan remained second last in the league table with

13 points.

Shah Firdaus grabs keirin gold

NATIONAL track cyclist, Muhammad Shah Firdaus Sahrom, made waves by winning the men's keirin gold medal at the UCI Nations Cup championships, in Konya, Turkey, early yesterday morning. The 29-year-old cyclist showcased his skills, manoeuvring through a tight pack of four riders, before powering into the final corner to claim the title at the Konya Velodrome. The victory also marked the first gold medal for the cyclist nicknamed "The Terminator" at the UCI Track Nations Cup campaign, highlighting a significant milestone in his career. Olympic bronze medalist Sebastien Vigier from France claimed the silver medal, while Japan's Shinji Nakano, the Asian champion in the keirin event at the 2025 Asian Track Cycling Championships (ATC) campaign last month, took home the bronze.

TOUCHLINES

LIVERPOOL are set to beat Chelsea and Newcastle United to the summer signing of Crystal Palace's Marc Guehi, 24, with Anfield the preferred destination for the England defender.

THE agent of Argentina striker Julian Alvarez says Liverpool were interested in the 25-year-old before he joined Atletico Madrid from Manchester City last summer.

THE REDS might consider selling Uruguay striker Darwin Nunez in the summer, with Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta believed to be interested in the 25-year-old.

REAL MADRID will make a concrete attempt to sign Arsenal's France defender William Saliba, 23, in

the summer.

MANCHESTER UNITED, Liverpool and West Ham are interested in Lille's 25-year-old Canada forward Jonathan David, who is out of contract in the summer. But the Premier League clubs face competition from Barcelona, Juventus and Inter Milan.

NEWCASTLE and Aston Villa are leading the race for the transfer of highly-rated 19-year-old Besiktas striker Semih Kilicsoy, who has also interested Fulham, Everton and Nottingham Forest.

PARIS ST-GERMAIN'S 26-year-old France forward Randal Kolo Muani, who is on loan at Juventus, is on Newcastle's shortlist as a replacement if Alexander Isak leaves this summer.

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CONSOLATION	2346	5322	6588	4396	4942	3841	9229
	0786	8864					

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# Sports

MONDAY | MAR 17, 2025



ABOVE: Man City manager Pep Guardiola reacts during the match. - AFP/IC

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# I am a master!

## Guardiola confident of Man City's Champions League place despite draw with Brighton



**P**EP GUARDIOLA enjoyed a rare midweek in front of the television watching the Champions League, marvelling at the action at Anfield and the drama in Madrid. The problem for the Manchester City manager is that it may be an unwanted glimpse of his immediate future.

He could have too many free Tuesday and Wednesday nights next season. For the first time in 15 years, the Champions League may not contain City.

A six-pointer for qualification ended as it began, with City one point ahead of Brighton, clinging on to fifth place.

Which – thanks more to the European exploits of others than City themselves – will almost certainly be enough.

And yet, with City lacking conviction and consistency, there is precious little certainty they will stay there.

Guardiola admitted he could feel the anxiety in the Etihad Stadium – but remains confident City will qualify for European football.

The champions missed the chance to return to the Premier League top four yesterday as they were held to a 2-2 draw by fellow European challengers Brighton after twice surrendering the lead.

The result gives fourth-placed Chelsea an opportunity to pull further away, and for others below them to make up ground.

After four consecutive titles, it is an unfamiliar position for City and their fans and Guardiola could sense a nervousness in the crowd.

“Yes definitely,” said the City manager. “Everybody feels the pressure. But it is what it is. We have to play better and after they will be back.”

“In the good moments they are there but, of course, they feel it when it is not good.”

Guardiola remains optimistic that City, who have nine games remaining, will win their fight to qualify.

He said: “I’m always confident – in that I am a master. I do have moments (when) I can doubt but I find the right way, the positiveness in everything.”

“I know it will be difficult for many reasons but we have nine games, nine finals.”

Guardiola had no complaints about the result after Erling Haaland’s penalty and an Omar Marmoush strike were cancelled out by Pervis Estupinan’s freekick and Abdoukodie Khusanov’s own goal.

He said: “The performance was much, much, much better than the Nottingham Forest (defeat). “We made good moments but they have fantastic players and they controlled us really well.”

Haaland goal in the 11th minute was his 84th League goal since joining City from Borussia Dortmund in 2022.

That, added to his 16 Premier League assists, saw Haaland become the first player to be directly involved in 100 goals before reaching 100 appearances.

Prior to yesterday, Alan Shearer held the record for being the fastest player to reach 100 Premier League goals and assists combined, having reached the landmark on his 100th appearance in the competition back in 1994.

Speaking to *BBC Match of the Day* after the game, Guardiola said: “The players gave everything – we take the point and we keep going.”

Guardiola’s one moment of serious frustration was a second-half booking for Jeremy Doku for diving when the City winger had been jumping out of the way of a Jan Paul van Hecke challenge.

“If he doesn’t jump, he can break his leg,” said Guardiola, who also confirmed goalkeeper Ederson missed the game with an abdominal injury.

“Jeremy is not a diving player. They should know it but we didn’t win or lose for those decisions.”

Nico Gonzalez hit the post late on for City but Carlos Baleba could have won it for Brighton when he fired over in the closing moments.

Seagulls boss Fabian Hurlzeler, whose side remain a point behind City, did not dwell on that miss.

Hurlzeler said: “The ball wasn’t in so I didn’t think about that. It was one of two or three really big chances in the second half when we could go for the winner.”

“But we don’t complain. It is about reflecting and analysing the small margins we have to improve. Then we have to do it next time.”

“We showed an impressive performance and showed we can compete with any team in the league.” – *The Independent*

Man City’s Omar Marmoush (right) tackles Brighton’s Pervis Estupinan during the English Premier League match on Saturday. - AFP/IC



Norris wins wild Aussie GP

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Nuno not getting carried away

Story on page 29



Real overcome fatigue

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