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## Gold still safe bet

With prices of the precious metal soaring, many Malaysians are turning to it as means of preserving wealth amid inflation and global uncertainty.



As the value of gold surges, alternative forms of the metal – such as gold-plated jewellery – are also gaining popularity in the consumer market. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

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# Nation to bid **goodbye** to Fu Wa, Feng Yi soon

Repatriation of giant pandas to China follows agreement allowing Malaysia to host a new pair for 10 years until 2035, says ministry

**PUTRAJAYA:** Fu Wa and Feng Yi, the giant panda pair housed at the Giant Panda Conservation Centre (GPCC) in Zoo Negara will be sent back to China next month.

The Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Ministry said in a statement yesterday that the repatriation follows a new agreement between Malaysia and China allowing Malaysia to host a new pair of giant pandas for a period of 10 years until 2035.

The agreement was signed during the recent three-day state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Malaysia.

"As part of the preparations, Fu Wa and

Feng Yi began their quarantine on April 18 at the GPCC to ensure they are in optimal health, comply with international permit requirements and undergo crate training to familiarise themselves with the journey from Malaysia to China."

During the quarantine period, visitors will not be able to see them up close but only from the GPCC's learning centre at designated times.

Their three offsprings – Nuan Nuan, Yi Yi and Sheng Yi – have been repatriated to China.

Zoo Negara has planned a variety of programmes during the quarantine period to celebrate Fu Wa and Feng Yi's

presence in Malaysia since their arrival on May 21, 2014.

These include a farewell message board, sessions with panda keepers, documentary screenings, as well as writing and drawing competitions.

More information on these programmes are available on Zoo Negara's official website and social media platforms, Bernama reported.

The zoo will also take the opportunity to upgrade facilities and exhibits at the GPCC in preparation for the arrival of the new panda pair, expected in August.

"The Giant Panda cooperation is a symbol of the strong friendship between Malaysia and China in promoting conservation diplomacy.

"It also reflects the values of Malaysia Madani – sustainability, compassion and cooperation – in striving for a more prosperous and environmentally responsible future."



The giant pandas in Zoo Negara are a symbol of the strong friendship between Malaysia and China in promoting conservation diplomacy. – BERNAMAPI

## Quantum leap needed to attain developed country status: PM

**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia needs to make a quantum leap if it wants to become a developed nation, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Speaking as the moderator at the fifth series of the Malaysia Madani Scholars Forum on Friday, he said in today's context, achieving developed nation status could not be accomplished through the usual pace of change.

"Any rapid change will inevitably bring about issues, whether political or social tension, but if we ask ourselves whether we have a choice, the answer is no. If there is no choice, then brace ourselves and leap."

He said this while concluding the discussion on "The Role of Government-Linked Investment Companies in Transforming Companies: Balancing Profit and Responsibility to Spark a Creative Nation".

The forum also featured Plantation and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani, Khazanah Nasional managing director Datuk Amirul Feisal Wan Zahir and Khazanah Research Institute chairman Dr Nungsari Ahmad Radhi.

Anwar stressed the need to shift public consciousness by encouraging citizens to focus on more important matters necessary for progress, rather than being preoccupied with racial and religious issues.

"I'm not saying race or religion is unimportant, but that narrative tires us out and holds us back.

"Other nations are now talking about energy, artificial intelligence, but when we look at by-election campaigns, we are inundated with claims like selling the state to China, matters that are exhausting. Therefore, the theoretical construct must be corrected.

"We need a new approach and change, and I believe the spirit of change is emerging among the people." – Bernama

## Anwar's visit to Thailand further boosts bilateral ties

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim described his official visit to Thailand as a new chapter in strengthening Malaysia-Thailand bilateral ties, particularly in the areas of trade, investment and border development.

He said he and Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra agreed to boost strategic cooperation for the benefit of both nations.

Anwar said the ongoing crisis in Myanmar was also a key agenda during the two-day visit from April 17.

"I took the opportunity to meet with representatives from both the State Administrative Council and the National Unity Government of Myanmar, as well as the Asean chair's informal advisory group, to hear directly from all parties. The objective was to help facilitate urgent humanitarian access and bring an end to the ongoing violence in a comprehensive manner.

"I also stressed the importance of adopting a principled, inclusive and universal approach to humanitarian efforts," he said in a post on his Facebook page.

Anwar said Malaysia would continue to play a constructive role in seeking a more sustainable and dignified resolution to the crisis in Myanmar, in line with the Asean framework, Bernama reported.

"I also met with major investors and captains of Thai industries to promote Malaysia."

## 'Proposed media council can boost professionalism'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The proposed Malaysian Media Council should consider establishing a dedicated team to monitor and review media errors, said Media and Communication lecturer Yugeetha Balan.

She said this initiative would reinforce consistency and professionalism across the media landscape.

Citing international practices, she said the New Zealand Media Council, for example, emphasises the importance of timely corrections of significant errors to maintain public trust.

"Malaysia could adopt a similar framework," said the Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak academician.

Yugeetha proposed that the media council should introduce regular training sessions for media professionals to reduce the likelihood of technical errors and uphold professional standards.

She said such sessions would ensure that media personnel are kept abreast of best practices, ethical standards and evolving technical requirements within the industry.

"Regular training can help

prevent common mistakes, particularly in high-stakes areas such as the accurate representation of national symbols."

Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil said on Thursday that the council would serve as an ideal platform to address sensitive issues involving media organisations, Bernama reported.

Fahmi, who is also the Madani government spokesperson, cited the incomplete image of the *Jalur Gemilang* recently published in a Chinese-language daily.

The Malaysian Media Council Bill 2024, which was passed by

the Dewan Rakyat in February, aims to establish a self-regulatory body to safeguard the interests of the media and its practitioners.

Malaysian Press Institute president Datuk Yong Soo Heong said the council could assist in matters or investigations concerning the media with the help of members who have the background and skills to discuss media issues.

"When the Malaysian Media Council machinery is established, it will help in providing clarity on certain issues," said the former editor-in-chief of Bernama.



# Govt urged to use AI to empower election governance

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government has been urged to strengthen the country's election management by implementing AI and modern digital systems to help the Election Commission (EC) implement a more efficient, transparent and cost-effective election process.

Malaysia IoT Association treasurer Pathmanathan Muniandy said the use of technologies such as AI, big data analytics, smart logistics systems and electronic voting could change the country's election landscape.

"For example, the government allocated

RM2.5 million to conduct the Ayer Kuning by-election, while a parliamentary by-election such as that in Pulai is estimated to cost RM4.5 million.

"If the use of AI is optimised, such costs can be significantly reduced without affecting the integrity and transparency of the election process," he said in a statement yesterday.

He said that although the initial implementation requires a large allocation, it is a long-term investment that is economical because it can reduce dependence on manual labour, speed up voting and vote counting processes, and reduce the risk of errors and fraud.

Pathmanathan also suggested the use of self-service or vending machines as electronic ballot boxes that can automatically count votes once voting closes.

"This saves time and manpower, and increases transparency. It also reduces the need for physical counting centres. In fact, voter privacy can also be improved."

He added that the use of digital systems can also avoid issues such as power outages or blackouts which often cause speculation when election results are announced late.

However, he said the implementation

needs to be thoroughly examined, especially from aspects of cyber security, digital infrastructure and people's confidence in new technology.

He also recommended that the voter management system be improved with facial recognition and biometric technology to prevent identity fraud and speed up the process of checking the electoral roll.

"Digital transformation in election governance is not intended to replace the role of humans, but to support and strengthen the existing system with more efficient technology." - Bernama

# M'sians turn to gold for wealth security as prices soar

The precious metal is one of few investments that reward fairly and one does not need course to get started, says investor

BY **IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE**  
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**PETALING JAYA:** As gold prices continue their upward trajectory, more Malaysians are turning to the precious metal as a hedge against inflation and a tool for wealth preservation.

The surge in value has also sparked growing interest in alternative forms of gold, such as gold-plated jewellery, which is increasingly popular among everyday consumers for its affordability and attractive designs.

Gold investor-turned-seller Norshida Majid, 46, from Perak, said today's gold-plated jewellery designs are eye-catching and appealing, particularly for daily wear.

"I used to buy them too, because they're stylish and cheap, so you don't worry too much about them getting ruined. But people need to understand that imitation gold doesn't last - sometimes the gold deteriorates six months later," she told *theSun*.

Despite this, she believes gold-plated accessories still hold value - not as investments, but as confidence-boosting fashion items.

"They look great, and that's enough for many people. If you feel good and look good, that's all that matters. Women need that kind of confidence, and accessories can really help," she added.

However, Norshida cautioned that gold-plated pieces are not suitable for investment purposes, as they lack real gold content.

"Investment-grade jewellery is typically made from 916 gold (22K). Serious investors prefer pure 999 gold (24K), usually in the form of solid bars or chains."

Having started her collection in her teenage years, Norshida now focuses on acquiring gold bars and chains, viewing them as long-term assets.

"True investors don't liquidate their gold collections on a whim. It takes discipline. I keep adding to mine whenever I can because I believe the price will keep rising."

Another gold enthusiast Amir Kamal Hamidon, 34, from Seremban, began collecting gold in 2020 when prices were around RM275 per gram.

"Back then I bought gold bars, but now I prefer using bank schemes where I can accumulate gold by the gram and store it safely at the bank," he said. "Once I reach 50 grams, I'll be able to withdraw the whole chunk and keep it with me."

Despite the rising cost, Amir remains optimistic.

"The price has definitely gone up, but that shouldn't discourage people. Gold is one of few investments that reward you fairly, and you don't need a course to get started."

For mother of three, 57-year-old Zaleha Yahya from Johor, gold is both a passion and financial strategy. She said she has been collecting for 15 years and sees the price hike as good news.

"Yes, I would definitely add more bars to my collection. It gives me peace of mind. I'm passionate about investing, and gold is something I'm naturally drawn to," she said.

Global gold prices hit a new high last week, trading at more than \$3,350 (RM14,765) an ounce, creating a buzz online and reinforcing gold's enduring appeal among collectors and investors alike.

## RM3 million to upgrade Sarawak General Hospital: DPM

**KUCHING:** The federal government has approved an allocation of RM3 million to upgrade and improve Sarawak General Hospital, says Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

He said the allocation covered the upgrading of hospital facilities and procurement of new assets.

"The effort to enhance the hospital is not only for the comfort of hospital staff, but also for the benefit of patients."

"After discussions with the Implementation Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister's Department, we agreed to provide the allocation," he said in his speech during the 'Speta Beraya' event at the general hospital on Friday night.

Sarawak Deputy Premier Datuk Amar Dr Sim Kui Hian was also present. - Bernama

## UiTM urged to review teaching approach

**PETALING JAYA:** The Higher Education Ministry (MOHE) has called on Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) to review its pedagogical approaches following the recent widespread issue of students dressed in costumes that resembled those worn by members of the Ku Klux Klan.

Its minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir said pedagogy in learning must consider related matters and maintain certain sensitivities.

"UiTM has already clarified the matter and outlined the steps they will take," he told reporters on Friday after the fifth series of the Malaysia Madani Scholars Forum on Friday night.

He also said there was no need for him as a minister to intervene in every issue that involved students and higher educational institutions.

"I believe it is immature to demand that we intervene in everything. However, what's most important is that when an issue like this arises, UiTM has taken responsibility to explain it to the public."

UiTM, in a statement on Wednesday, clarified that the costumes were part of an academic assignment by students of the UiTM Foundation Centre for a presentation in the Contemporary Global and Legal Issues course.

UiTM said the assignment was to encourage critical thinking and raise student awareness of international human rights' issues.

It added that lecturers and the faculty involved had ensured that the presentation was conducted in a controlled manner based on academic principles without touching on religious, cultural or racial sensitivities. - Bernama

## 'State govts have authority to ban vape, e-cigarettes'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** State governments have the authority to ban the sale of vape or e-cigarettes through their local councils, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said states are empowered by local regulations to control the sale of such devices within their jurisdictions.

"We've seen several states withholding licences from vape traders. This is within their rights. They have the legal space to act based on local policies and by-laws."

Dzulkefly said this at a press conference after the pre-launch of the Malaysia International Healthcare Megatrends 2025 Conference on Friday.

He was responding to Deputy IGP Datuk Seri Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay, who recently said state governments could ban the sale of e-cigarettes or vape, which are increasingly linked to synthetic drug abuse.

He added that at the federal level, the sale of vape products is governed under the Control of Smoking Products for Public



State governments are empowered by local regulations to control the sale of devices such as vape and e-cigarettes within their jurisdictions. - ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

Health Act 2024 (Act 852), which came into force in phases beginning Oct 1 last year.

Currently, the Act is in the advocacy

phase to allow traders time to comply with the regulations before it is fully enforced in October this year. - Bernama



# Campaign launched to boost ties with Thailand

Initiative promotes lesser-known attractions, such as art spaces, wellness retreats, cycling holidays

BY **T.C. KHOR**  
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**GEORGE TOWN:** The Penang government has launched its latest tourism initiative in Southern Thailand to deepen tourism and cultural ties with its Thai partners and promote Penang as a premier travel destination.

The campaign “Not the Penang You Know” was unveiled during the Experience Penang Networking Session held in Hatyai, Thailand.

The event was organised by Penang Global Tourism and brought together key Thai and Malaysian tourism stakeholders.

“This campaign is the first of its kind as we want to reconnect to our traditional market. We see the opportunity of the MySawasdee train service that is going to be launched later this year between Hatyai and Penang,” state Tourism and Creative Economy Committee chairman Wong Hon Wai told *theSun*.

The campaign invites travellers to discover lesser-known facets of the state, going beyond George Town’s heritage sites and famed street food to highlight new attractions and immersive experiences.

These include art spaces, wellness retreats, cycling holidays and traditional crafts, such as rattan weaving and Nyonya *kebaya* making.

Wong highlighted several new destinations, including the Bertam Resort and Water Park, recently recognised by the Malaysia Book of Records for having the biggest en suite swimming pool in a resort, and Design Village, Malaysia’s largest outlet mall located on the mainland.

Another highlight is the Penang History Gallery, which offers a walk through Penang’s diverse historical narratives.

The networking session saw participation from 24 Penang-based tourism operators, including hotels, travel agencies, colleges and wedding planners, engaged in building partnerships and fostering cross-border collaboration.

“Tourism business is based on contacts and relationships. By cementing a good relationship between the state government and the commerce sector of Southern Thailand, tourism business will be driven forward,” said Wong.

On April 13, Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad announced that a regular direct train service from Hatyai to Butterworth would begin operations in the third quarter of this year.

Wong anticipated that this move would significantly boost cross-border tourist flows.

He said Penang and Southern Thailand share more than just geographi-

cal proximity.

“We are close friends, economic partners and neighbours with shared cultural and tourism potential.”

He added that Penang International Airport saw a 41% increase in Thai arrivals last year compared with 2023, making Thailand one of the top five source markets for inbound tourism to Penang.

This trend is supported by direct air connectivity, with 40 weekly flights between Penang and three Thai airports, including Bangkok and Phuket, he said.

Road and rail links are also available, connecting Thai travellers to Penang.

“We hope that visitors to Hatyai would extend their stay to include a trip to Penang by road or railway.”

Citing Tourism Malaysia, he highlighted that of the 1.6 million Thai tourists that entered Malaysia last year, 80% did so via land or train routes.

He paid tribute to the shared historical and cultural heritage between Penang and Thailand, referencing landmarks such as Wat Chaiyamangkalaram and figures such as Khaw Sim Bee Na Ranong, a Penang-born nobleman who played an important role in the development of Southern Thailand.

Wong informed his counterparts that Penang is promoting itself as an emerging hub for education and meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions.

He said regional institutions such as Sentral College and IPK College are popular with students from Thailand.

## New Ipoh mayor to focus on facilities

**IPOH:** The issues of the people and the maintenance of public facilities will be the main focus in ensuring the vision of making Ipoh a ‘Smart and Prosperous City’ can be realised, said the 13th Mayor of Ipoh Zamakhshari Hanipah.

“I will ensure issues relating to garbage, drains and grass, as well as the maintenance of public facilities are given priority. This is to make Ipoh a cheerful, clean and environmentally friendly city.”

“We must realise that this duty entrusted to us (the city council) is for the wellbeing of Ipoh’s residents,” he said during the swearing-in ceremony of Ipoh City Council councillors at its meeting hall on Friday.

Earlier, Zamakhshari took the oath as mayor, witnessed by state Housing and Local Government Committee chairman Sandra Ng.

Zamakhshari, the former National Disaster Management Agency Planning and Disaster Preparedness (Policy) deputy director-general, has replaced Datuk Rumaizi Baharin @ Md Daud, who ended his tenure as mayor on March 31.

He said the various recognitions and achievements previously attained by the council would continue to be upheld with the support of its staff.

“I will ensure initiatives towards ‘Ipoh Bestari Sejahtera’, which are being implemented and have received national and international recognition, such as the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award for the Doughnut Economics Programme and the Outstanding Planning Achievement in the Commonwealth 2023 (for sustainability, liveability), can be continued.”

He mentioned that his team would strengthen relationships with the palace, the federal government and the state government in efforts to enhance progress and development in the city. – Bernama

## M’sians urged to prioritise travel insurance for future trips

BY **KIRTINEE RAMESH**  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysians gearing up for their next holiday are advised to make travel insurance a top priority.

The General Insurance Association of Malaysia said travel insurance provides financial protection against unexpected disruptions, such as flight delays, baggage loss, trip cancellations and medical emergencies.

“It plays a crucial role in ensuring peace of mind throughout the journey. Travel insurance is a small investment that could make a big difference when you are far from home and facing unexpected situations,” said its CEO Chua Kim Soon.

He said travel insurance is designed to protect against a wide range of incidents, from major emergencies such as medical evacuations to covering home contents in the event of a fire or burglary while the traveller is away.

Travellers can visit any association member’s website, enter their travel details and receive a quotation instantly, even on the day of departure. Some providers also offer online rebates of up to 25% for digital purchases.

“For those who travel frequently,

we recommend an annual travel insurance policy. It offers better value and convenience by covering multiple trips throughout the year.”

To ensure a safe and smooth journey, the association shared a few essential travel safety tips, such as keeping both digital and physical copies of important documents, including passports, insurance policies and travel tickets.

It is also important to check travel advisories and destination-specific safety information before departure.

Securing belongings during transit, using luggage tags with minimal contact details, informing family or friends of one’s itinerary and saving local emergency numbers, including the insurer’s 24/7 helpline, are steps that could help manage emergencies efficiently.

The association also addressed frequently asked questions from travellers. One of the most common questions was: “Why is travel insurance important?”

“Travel insurance is designed to protect travellers and their families from various inconveniences, such as medical expenses incurred while travelling. However, it typically excludes pre-existing medical conditions,” said Chua.

Another frequent query is



The Matta Fair at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur offers various travel packages at great prices. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

whether travel insurance can be purchased on the day of departure. The answer is yes as long as it is done before the traveller leaves.

The association recommended purchasing the policy at least 14 days before the trip to enjoy benefits such as trip cancellation coverage.

Chua advised travellers to read the product disclosure sheet and policy wording carefully before making a purchase.

“This ensures you understand exactly what is covered. For example, if you plan to engage in extreme sports during your trip, you may need to add the optional

Adventurous Activities benefit to your policy.”

As Malaysians explore travel deals at the Matta Fair this weekend, the association said a well-prepared trip includes securing comprehensive travel insurance for a safer, more enjoyable and worry-free holiday experience.



## Foreign workers arrested during raid on Arab eateries

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A total of 45 foreign workers were detained in a raid conducted by the Kuala Lumpur Immigration Department on eight popular Arab eateries in Bukit Bintang on Friday night.

Its director Wan Mohammed Saupee Wan Yusoff said the operation, which began at 10.40pm, resulted in the arrest of 40 men and five women, aged between 21 and 45, who were employed at the restaurants.

He said the detainees were of various nationalities, comprising 14 Yemenis, seven Syrians, four Pakistanis, 10 Bangladeshis, four Egyptians, three Indonesians, one Afghan, one Filipino and a Myanmar national.

"They were found to have committed various immigration offences, including misuse of passes, lacking valid work permits, and possessing expired documents," he said.

Wan Mohammed Saupee added that the one-hour operation, involving 35 officers and personnel from the Immigration Department, was conducted following public complaints about the employment of foreign workers at the restaurants.

"Preliminary surveillance and intelligence gathering by the department also thwarted attempts by some foreign workers to disguise themselves as customers during the raid," he said.

Detainees were taken to the Bukit Jalil Immigration Depot for further action. The case is being investigated under Regulation 39(b) of the Immigration Regulations 1963 and Section 6(1)(c) of the Immigration Act 1959/63. – Bernama

## Two killed in 4WD-car collision

**BINTULU:** Two people were killed and two others seriously injured in a road crash involving a four-wheel-drive (4WD) vehicle and a car in front of the Paragon traffic lights on Friday.

A Sarawak Fire and Rescue Department Operations Centre spokesman said the department received an emergency call at 11.57pm.

An operational response team from the Bintulu Fire and Rescue Station was immediately sent to the scene.

"The driver of the Toyota Hilux escaped unhurt, while two in the Proton Saga were killed. They were identified as Yiu Siew Lee, 34, and Janam Ampar, 44," he said in a statement yesterday.

Two other car passengers, identified as Wilson Tawi, 24, and Indonesian Anis Sintiabella, 19, were seriously injured, he added.

He also said the two injured passengers were rescued by the public and were sent to Bintulu Hospital for further treatment. – Bernama

## Teenager found drowned in river

**BATU KAWAN:** The body of a teenage boy who was feared drowned while fishing with his brother and cousin in a river along Jalan Batu Kawan on Friday was found yesterday morning.

Penang Fire and Rescue Department director Mohd Shoki Hamzah said the body of 15-year-old G. Yagesh was discovered

floating at 5.45am, approximately 10m from the spot where he was believed to have fallen into the river.

"The victim's body was discovered by the search and rescue team using the surface search method. The body was handed to police for further action," he told Bernama yesterday.

Mohd Shoki said the operation involved 15 personnel from the Batu Kawan Fire and Rescue Station, with assistance from the Water Rescue Team of the Butterworth station.

The operation was divided into six search sectors, using two fibre boat units led by the water rescue team.

# Toxic side of 'harmless' social media content

Long-term exposure to success-saturated posts fuel comparison, chips away at self-worth, could lead to mental health issues for Gen Z and millennials: Academic

BY DEEPAKASHMI MANICKAM  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Scrolling through Instagram or TikTok might seem like a harmless daily habit.

But for many young Malaysians, the constant stream of friends landing promotions, jetting off on holidays, showing off toned physiques or hustling on the side can spark something darker – a slow-burning spiral of self-doubt, anxiety, and depression.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia psychology professor Dr Siti Aisyah Panatik said long-term exposure to this kind of success-saturated content fuels toxic comparison, chips away at self-worth and breeds a sense of never being enough.

"Clinical and academic studies increasingly point to social media as a powerful

amplifier of mental health issues, especially for Gen Z and millennials," she said.

"Psychologists are witnessing a rise in low self-esteem, anxiety, depressive symptoms, and even existential angst among young adults constantly bombarded with curated highlights of other people's lives."

She stressed this isn't imagined. It's rooted in well-established psychological theories.

"One is 'social comparison' theory – the idea that we gauge our own value by how we measure up to others.

"The other theory is 'self-discrepancy', which explains how distress arises when there's a gap between who we are and who we believe we should be – often shaped by what we consume online.

"Algorithms reinforce this by feeding

users more of the same glossy, aspirational content, driving chronic dissatisfaction."

Siti Aisyah also noted that imposter syndrome is becoming increasingly common, particularly among students and young professionals constantly comparing themselves with polished online personas.

"I've had students tell me, 'when I see my friends always achieving online, I start doubting whether I even deserve the success I have'."

She cited Malaysian studies that draw a clear line between social media exposure, declining self-esteem, and rising imposter syndrome – especially among high-performing youth.

Warning signs, she said, include obsessive scrolling, disrupted sleep, social withdrawal and spiralling thoughts.

"When these behaviours start interfering with daily life or are paired with mood swings, it may signal an underlying condition linked to social media overuse."

Efforts like the #Letstalkmind campaign and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation's Digital Citizenship Education initiative exist, but Siti Aisyah said they fall short of addressing the emotional impact of online life.

"They focus on cybersecurity but neglect how constant comparison online can quietly erode emotional well-being," she said, adding that access to mental health support remains patchy, especially in rural areas.

She called for urgent implementation of the long-delayed Psychology Act to regulate services and ensure qualified care is available to all.

She also urged schools to weave digital well-being into the curriculum and pressed social media platforms to lift the lid on how their algorithms influence what users see.

"We must normalise talking about comparison-fuelled distress and expand youth counselling to include therapy specifically tailored to the effects of social media," she said, emphasising the vital role families and communities play in modelling healthier digital habits.



When behaviours start interfering with daily life or are paired with mood swings, it may signal an underlying condition linked to social media overuse. – ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

## Arrest of two men leads to RM13.6m drug seizure

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Bukit Aman narcotics team seized 269kg of various drugs worth RM13.6 million after inspecting a house in the Bandar Baru Sri Petaling area on Monday.

Bukit Aman Narcotics Crime Investigation Department acting director DCP Mat Zani @ Mohd Salahuddin Che Ali said the raid was carried out following the arrest

of two local men suspected of playing the roles of storekeepers and drug runners.

He said the two suspects, aged 42 and 43, were arrested at a restaurant and would be remanded for five days starting Tuesday.

"As a result of the arrest, police inspected a house rented by the two suspects and found 269 packages of drugs (one package

estimated at one kg) labelled as herbal tea packets.

"A total of 210 packages contained ketamine-type drugs, 55 packages of *syabu* and four packages of ecstasy. It is estimated that all these drugs can harm about a million users," he said in Bukit Aman yesterday.

Mat Zani said the two-storey terrace house, rented by the suspect

in November last year, was used to store drugs before being distributed to local and foreign markets such as Hong Kong and Indonesia.

"The two suspects received a payment of RM26,900 to keep and deliver these drugs. Urine screening found both were positive for methamphetamine.

"The 43-year-old main suspect

has 17 criminal records such as robbery and burglary, while the second suspect has three records including two for drug-related offence," he said.

The case is being investigated under Section 39B of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952.

Mat Zani advised homeowners to be careful before renting out their homes. – Bernama



BY T.C. KHOR  
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**NIBONG TEBAL:** Kampung Bagan Buaya residents in Jawi can now enjoy playing *sepak takraw* without worrying about the weather as both of their indoor courts are covered. Previously, only one of two courts had a roof.

Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the covered indoor *sepak takraw* courts, as well as a children's playground, were developed for recreational activities of the local residents," he said at a Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house held here recently.

Jawi state assemblyman Jason H'ng Mooi Lye said he had submitted a request to the Housing and Local Government Ministry through the ministry's village development officer Ong Hong Boon for funding to build a roof at one of the courts.

He added that RM161,550 was approved for the construction of the roof, as well as for wiring installation and repainting of the court's floor.

"Now, the local community no longer needs to worry about the hot weather or rain while engaging in activities here," said H'ng, who is also the local government, and town and country planning committee chairman.

Meanwhile, Chow said the Changkat Fishermen's Jetty is also receiving increasing attention from tourists.

Chow is confident that it will become a tourist attraction as basic facilities in the area have been improved. This would benefit the local economy.

"I am also told that the construction of food and beverage stalls and other facilities is being carried out, which will certainly draw residents and visitors,"

# Newly covered courts win for *sepak takraw* enthusiasts

Come rain or shine, Kampung Bagan Buaya residents can now enjoy activities in comfort

he said.

He added that another proud achievement for the state government was the construction of the Nibong Tebal Arena at Jalan Bukit Panchor.

"This hall is equipped with various world-class facilities, which not only provide space for young athletes to train but, more importantly, serve the needs of the local community as well," he said.

The Nibong Tebal Arena was officiated on Jan 25, during which Chow also confirmed that it would be part of a larger project known as the Sports City.

Chow said the Sports City would include the area around the Batu Kawan Stadium.

This project will also include various sports facilities, such as an aquatic centre, a racetrack, an academy and commercial components, he said.

He mentioned that it would be challenging for the private sector to finance



Sepak takraw players at the new covered indoor court. – MASRY CHE ANI /THESUN

a project of such scale without incorporating components that help offset the investment costs.

Therefore, commercial and residential elements could be included.

A request for proposal for the development of Sports City in Batu Kawan

was issued by the Penang Stadium Corporation and Open Spaces on Nov 21 last year and closed on April 7.

"This is a private initiative, and we hope the private sector will view this as a viable project," said Chow who is the MP for Batu Kawan.

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# Afghan expulsions rise

Pakistan foreign minister arrives in Kabul

**KABUL:** Pakistan's foreign minister arrived yesterday in Afghanistan to meet Afghan officials after his country expelled more than 85,000 Afghans, mostly children, in just over two weeks.

Islamabad has launched a strict campaign to evict by the end of this month more than 800,000 Afghans who have had their residence permits cancelled, including some who were born in Pakistan or lived there for decades.

Convoys of Afghan families have been heading to border crossings each day fearing raids, arrests or being separated from family members.

Pakistan's foreign office said its top diplomat, Ishaq Dar, along with his delegation of ministers, will hold meetings during the one-day visit with senior Afghan officials, including Prime Minister Hasan Akhund.

Dar was greeted warmly off the plane in the Afghan capital by the Foreign Ministry's deputy minister for financial and administrative affairs, Mohammad Naeem.

"There will not be any extension in the deadline," Deputy Interior Minister Tallal Chaudhry told a news conference on Friday.

"When you arrive without any documents, it only deepens the uncertainty of whether you're involved in narcotics trafficking, supporting terrorism, or committing other crimes."

He has previously accused Afghans of being "terrorists and criminals", but analysts say it is a politically motivated strategy to put pressure on Afghanistan over escalating security concerns.

Chaudhry said on Friday that nearly 85,000 Afghans have crossed into Afghanistan since the start of

April, the majority of them undocumented.

The UN refugee agency said on Friday more than half of them were children.

On Saturday, Afghanistan's Refugees Ministry spokesman said the authorities had recorded some 71,000 Afghan returnees through the two main border points with Pakistan between April 1 and 18.

In the first phase of returns in 2023, hundreds of thousands of undocumented Afghans were forced across the border in the space of a few weeks.

In the second phase announced in March, the Pakistan government cancelled the residence permits of more than 800,000 Afghans, warning those in Pakistan awaiting relocation to other countries to leave by the end of this month.

More than 1.3 million who hold Proof of Registration cards issued by the UN refugee agency have been told to leave Pakistan. – AFP

## Planting mangroves to fend off rising tides

**DEMAK:** Pasijah, a 55-year-old housewife in Central Java province, wakes up daily to the sound of the sea.

Her home is the only one remaining in this part of Rejosari Senik, a small village on Java's northern coast that was once on dry land but is now submerged by water.

Over the past few years, Pasijah's neighbours have abandoned their homes, vegetable plots and rice fields to the advancing sea and land subsidence, but she and her family have no plans to leave.

"I do have every intention to stay here and my feelings for this house remain," she said.

Water laps around the walls of Pasijah's house, where she has lived for 35 years, soaking her feet when she steps outside.

Fenced by haphazard rows of bamboo and a broken power pole,

inside the floor has been raised to keep it above the sea.

The nearest land is 2km away and the closest city, Demak, further still at 19km. The only way to get there is by boat.

Sea levels on Indonesia's coasts rose an average of 4.25mm annually from 1992 to last year, but the rate has accelerated, said Kadarsah, a Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysical Agency official.

He said increased pumping of groundwater has exacerbated land subsidence along Java's northern coast. The problem is bad in Jakarta, which is home to 10 million people.

Authorities have turned to mega projects for a solution, including a 700km sea wall that would run along the northern coast between Banten and East Java provinces.

Pasijah and her family, meanwhile,

have turned to nature.

She has planted some 15,000 mangrove trees a year over the past two decades. Every day, she paddles out in a boat made from a blue plastic barrel to tend to the bushes and plant saplings, lowering herself into the blue-grey water, which can be as high as her chest.

"The flood waters come in waves, gradually, not all at once," Pasijah said. "I realised that after the waters began rising, I needed to plant mangrove trees so that they could spread and protect the house, from the wind and the waves."

She and her family survive by selling fish caught by her sons. They say they will stay as long as they can.

"I'm no longer concerned about how I feel about the isolation here since I decided to stay, so we'll take it one hurdle at a time." – Reuters



Pasijah checks mangrove seedlings after they were planted in the hamlet of Rejosari Senik. – REUTERS/SPIC

## Gunman fires at Sri Lanka church

**COLOMBO:** A gunman fired at a church in Sri Lanka, police said yesterday, with the country on high alert six years since Easter Sunday bombings killed hundreds.

The gunman opened fire on Friday at a church in Manampitiya, 160km northeast of the capital Colombo.

The shooting damaged windows and no one was hurt, while a suspect has been arrested, police said.

"Initial investigations suggest that the suspect had targeted the church due to a personal enmity with the pastor," the statement said.

Armed police and troops have been deployed to nearly all

churches during Easter celebrations, with security heightened following the 2019 attack.

Suicide bombers in 2019 killed 279 people, including 45 foreigners, at three churches and three hotels.

More than 500 people were wounded in the attack blamed on a home-grown group. – AFP



Tiangong Ultra runs across the finish line. – REUTERS/SPIC

## China pits humanoid robots against humans in race

**BEIJING:** Twenty-one humanoid robots joined thousands of runners at the Yizhuang half-marathon in Beijing yesterday, the first time these machines have raced alongside humans over a 21km course.

The robots from Chinese manufacturers such as DroidVP and Noetix Robotics came in all shapes and sizes, some shorter than 120cm, others as tall as 1.8m. One company boasted that its robot looked almost human, with feminine features and the ability to wink and smile.

Some firms tested their robots for weeks before the race. Beijing officials have described the event as more akin to a race car competition, given the need for engineering and navigation teams.

"The robots are running very well, very stable ... I feel I'm witnessing the evolution of robots and AI," said spectator He Sishu, who works in artificial intelligence.

The robots were accompanied by human trainers, some of whom had to physically support the machines during the race.

A few of the robots wore running shoes, with one donning boxing gloves and another wearing a red headband with the words "Bound to Win" in Chinese.

Some robots completed the race, while others struggled from the beginning. One robot fell at the start and lay flat for a few

minutes before getting up and taking off. One crashed into a railing after running a few metres, causing its human operator to fall over.

Although humanoid robots have made appearances at marathons in China over the past year, this is the first time they have raced alongside humans.

China is hoping that investment in frontier industries like robotics can help create new engines of economic growth. Some analysts, though, question whether having robots enter marathons is a reliable indicator of their industrial potential.

Alan Fern, professor of computer science, artificial intelligence and robotics at Oregon State University, said contrary to claims from Beijing officials that such a race requires "AI breakthroughs", the software enabling humanoid robots to run was developed and demonstrated more than five years ago.

"(The robot half-marathon) is more of a hardware endurance demonstration," he said.

Chinese companies have really focused on showing off walking, running, dancing and other feats of agility.

"Generally, these are interesting demonstrations, but they don't demonstrate much regarding the utility of useful work or any type of basic intelligence," Fern said. – Reuters



# US Supreme Court pauses deportation of Venezuelans

## Trump resists court orders

**NEW YORK:** The US Supreme Court yesterday ordered the Trump administration to temporarily halt the deportation of Venezuelan men in immigration custody after their lawyers said they were at imminent risk of removal without the judicial review previously mandated by the justices.

"The government is directed not to remove any member of the putative class of detainees from the United States until further order of this court," the justices said in an unsigned brief.

Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito publicly dissented from the decision.

The dispute centres on dozens of Venezuelans held at the Bluebonnet Detention Facility in Anson, Texas. Lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union filed urgent requests on Friday in courts, including the Supreme Court, urging immediate action after reporting that some of the men had already been loaded onto buses and were told they were to be deported.

The ACLU said the rapid developments were not affording the men a realistic opportunity to contest their removal as the court had required.

During a hearing on Friday, a government lawyer said he was unaware of plans by the

Department of Homeland Security to deport the men on Friday.

"I've spoken with DHS. They are not aware of any plans for flights tomorrow but I have also been told to say they reserve the right to remove people," Justice Department attorney Drew Ensign told a district court in a separate but related case.

Elected last year on a promise to crack down on migrants, Trump invoked the 1798 Alien Enemies Act in an attempt to swiftly deport accused members of Tren de Aragua, a criminal gang from Venezuelan prisons that his administration labels a terrorist group.

The president and his senior aides have asserted their executive power grants them wide

authority on immigration, testing the balance of power between branches of government.

Trump scored one victory on Friday when an appeals court put on hold a threat by District Judge James Boasberg of contempt charges.

Boasberg also denied an ACLU request to block Trump from deporting suspected members of Tren de Aragua, citing an April 7 Supreme Court ruling that allowed Trump to use the Alien Enemies Act with certain limits.

Boasberg said he was concerned the government would deport additional people. "But at this point I just don't think I have the power to do anything about it." – Reuters

## Macron invites scientists to work in France

**PARIS:** French President Emmanuel Macron invited scientists from all over the world to come work in France or Europe, as US President Donald Trump's administration has started slashing funding for universities and research bodies.

Macron did not mention the US, where hundreds of scientists have been dismissed in cutbacks to research.

"In France, research is a priority, innovation a culture, science a limitless horizon. Researchers from all over the world, choose France, choose Europe!" Macron said on X.

The threat to academics' livelihoods at US universities has given Europe's political leaders hope they could reap an intellectual windfall.

France on Friday launched the "Choose France for Science" platform, operated by the French National Research Agency (ANR), which enables universities, schools and research organisations to apply for co-funding from the government to host researchers.

"France is committed to standing up to attacks on academic freedom across the globe," ANR said in a statement.

It said "the international context" was creating the conditions for an unprecedented wave of mobility among researchers worldwide, and that France intends to position itself as a welcoming place for those wishing to pursue their work in Europe. – Reuters

## Russia jails 19-year-old for condemning Ukraine conflict

**ST PETERSBURG:** A Russian court handed down a prison sentence of nearly three years to Darya Kozyreva, a young activist who used 19th century poetry and graffiti to protest the conflict in Ukraine.

A witness in the court on Friday said Kozyreva, 19, was found guilty of repeatedly "discrediting" the Russian army after she put up a poster with lines of Ukrainian verse on a public square and gave an interview to Sever.Realii, a Russian-language service of Radio Free Europe.

She pleaded not guilty, calling the case against her "one big fabrication", according to a trial transcript compiled by Mediazona, an independent news outlet.

She was sentenced to two years and eight months in prison.

Kozyreva is one of an estimated 234 people imprisoned in Russia for their anti-war position, according to a tally by Memorial, a Russian human rights group.

In December 2022, Kozyreva sprayed "Murderers, you bombed it. Judases" in black paint on a sculpture of two intertwined hearts, erected outside St Petersburg's Hermitage Museum and representing the city's links



Kozyreva delivering a speech in court on Friday. – REUTERSPIIC

with Mariupol, a Ukrainian city largely razed to the ground.

In early 2024, after being fined 30,000 roubles (RM1,631) for posting about Ukraine online, Kozyreva was expelled from the medical faculty of St Petersburg State University.

A month later, on the conflict's two-year anniversary, she taped a piece of paper containing a frag-

ment of verse by Taras Shevchenko, a father of modern Ukrainian literature, onto a statue of him in a St Petersburg park:

*Oh bury me, then rise ye up  
And break your heavy chains  
And water with the tyrants' blood*

*The freedom you have gained.*  
Kozyreva was swiftly arrested and held in pre-trial detention for

nearly a year, until she was released this February to house arrest.

Addressing the court on Friday, Kozyreva said she believed she had committed no crime.

"I have no guilt, my conscience is clear," she said, according to Mediazona's transcript.

"Because the truth is never guilty." – Reuters

## Heavy metals contaminate 17% of arable land

**WASHINGTON:** Up to 17% of cropland is contaminated with at least one type of toxic heavy metal, posing health risks to up to 1.4 billion people.

A study published in the journal *Science* presents an overview of heavy metal contamination in soils, based on a meta-analysis, an approach drawing on data from many previous studies, of almost 800,000 samples.

After ensuring the reliability and representativeness of the data, for example by ruling out samples taken purposefully at contaminated sites, the researchers used machine-learning algorithms to identify the worst-affected areas.

The team led by environmental specialist Deyi Hou of Tsinghua University focused on areas where concentrations of at

least one of seven metals – arsenic, cadmium, cobalt, chromium, copper, nickel and lead – were above recommended safe limits.

Metals can be toxic to people, animals and plants at different doses, spreading into different ecosystems through food chains and water.

By running their samples through artificial intelligence-assisted analysis, the research-

ers found that between 14% and 17% of arable land is contaminated by at least one of the metals.

"The actual extent of global soil pollution may far exceed what is presented by the authors, due to limited data availability and likely underestimation," said Wakene Negassa, a soil chemist at the James Hutton Institute. – AFP

## At least 143 dead in Congo boat fire

**KINSHASA:** At least 143 people died and dozens more went missing after a boat carrying fuel caught fire and capsized in the Democratic Republic of Congo, officials said on Friday.

Hundreds of passengers were crowded onto a wooden boat on the Congo River in northwest DRC on Tuesday when the blaze broke out, according to Josephine-Pacifique Lokumu, head of a delegation of national deputies from the region.

The disaster occurred near Mbandaka, capital of Equateur Province, at the confluence of the Ruki and the vast Congo river, the world's deepest.

"A first group of 131 bodies were found on Wednesday, with a further 12 fished out on Thursday and Friday. Several of them are charred," Lokumu said.

Joseph Lokondo, a local civil society leader who said he helped bury the bodies, put the "provisional death toll at 145".

Lokumu said the blaze was caused by a fuel explosion ignited by an onboard cooking fire.

"A woman lit the embers for cooking. The fuel, which was not far away, exploded, killing many children and women," he said.

The total number of passengers on board the vessel was not known but Lokumu said it was in the "hundreds". – AFP



# the **Sunday** Special

APRIL 20, 2025



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## The sustainability deadline

Malaysia's future depends on what we do today



**E**VERY year, as April rolls around and Earth Day appears on the horizon, we're nudged – ever so gently, sometimes urgently – into reflecting on our relationship with the environment. Posters go up. Talks are held. Hashtags start circulating. For a few days, the planet becomes the main character. But in a world teetering on the edge of environmental tipping points, perhaps the real question we should ask is: Can Malaysia afford to wait for Earth Day to remind us of our responsibilities?

The idea of sustainability may have sounded like a distant concept or a trendy buzzword reserved for eco-enthusiasts. Not anymore. As the climate shifts and floods become more frequent, even in our own backyards, the concept has taken on a much more tangible, immediate form. It's not about saving the whales or hugging trees (though those are important too); it's about whether our children will have clean air, safe water or even a decent patch of green to sit under in the next few decades.

In Malaysia, the signs are already here. You don't need a scientific paper to tell you the weather's gone rogue. From flash floods in downtown Kuala Lumpur to extended dry spells in the north, climate unpredictability is the new normal. Add to that vanishing forests, choking rivers and wildlife caught in an ever-tightening squeeze and the picture begins to blur into one of quiet urgency.

"Sustainability is about ensuring a vibrant and healthy Malaysia, for people, nature and our shared future," says Dr Henry Chan, WWF-Malaysia's director of conservation and acting CEO. And he's right. It's not about choosing between development and the environment. It's about recognising that our well-being is intertwined with the health of the planet. When our rivers are polluted, not just fish suffer – farmers, households and entire ecosystems are also impacted. When forests disappear, so do the cooling canopies that regulate temperatures and provide water sources, not to mention the homes of endangered species like the Malayan tiger and orangutan.

UEM Lestra Berhad, established in 2023 as a wholly owned subsidiary and green industries arm of UEM Group Berhad, recognises this interconnectedness. "We are committed to supporting government initiatives that establish Malaysia as a regional leader in renewable energy," says CEO Harman Faiz Habib Muhamad. "Through strategic partnerships with local and international stakeholders, we're enhancing domestic green capabilities and nurturing local talent."



Sustainability cannot be achieved through isolated efforts alone, it's a collective performance.

## Can Malaysia afford to wait?

*Sustainability efforts are becoming increasingly crucial as the nation grapples with climate change, pollution and deforestation*



**This is about ensuring a vibrant and healthy Malaysia, for people, nature and our shared future."**

Chan, director of conservation and acting CEO of WWF-Malaysia



**Through strategic partnerships with local and international stakeholders, we're enhancing domestic green capabilities and nurturing local talent."**

Harman, CEO of UEM Lestra Berhad





The company recently announced ambitious investments, including RM1.5 billion allocated to decarbonise industrial parks within the next two years. This move is expected to stimulate domestic direct investment, generate high-quality employment and attract foreign investors. Developing a significant 1GW hybrid solar photovoltaic power plant integrated with a renewable energy industrial park is a cornerstone of their sustainability agenda. This flagship initiative underpins Malaysia's National Energy Transition Roadmap and signals a strong push towards greener industrialisation.

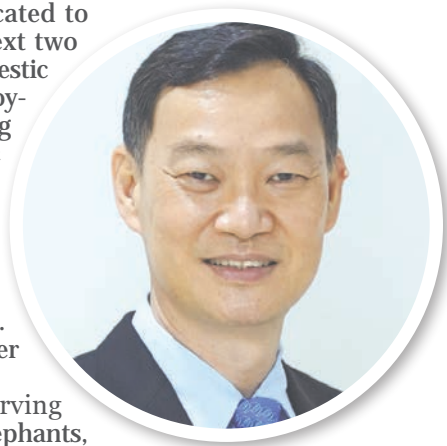
Chan paints a picture that is equally sober and hopeful.

"WWF-Malaysia is committed to conserving iconic wildlife such as tigers, orangutans, elephants, marine turtles and sharks and protecting ecosystems vital to our well-being, including forests, oceans, rivers and wetlands," he says.

"Our work is grounded in critical pillars, safeguarding wildlife, conserving forests, protecting oceans and freshwater ecosystems, promoting sustainable food systems and addressing climate and energy challenges."

Yet, sustainability cannot be achieved through isolated efforts alone, it's a collective performance. Everyone plays a part, from government ministers signing off on green policies to corporations rethinking their supply chains and even down to the everyday choices made by individuals.

Top Glove, Malaysia's prominent glove manufacturer, exemplifies this integrated approach. "Businesses must proactively integrate sustainability into operations – not just for compliance, but as a strategic imperative," says Top Glove managing director Lim Cheong Guan. "A strong ESG foundation fosters trust, enhances efficiency and creates a workplace that attracts top talent."



**We recognise that to achieve sustainability requires collaboration. The collective support of all stakeholders is essential in driving meaningful progress."**

Lim, managing director of Top Glove

Top Glove's commitment to the Ten Zero initiative emphasises its ambitious sustainability targets, including net-zero carbon emissions, zero waste, zero deforestation and zero reliance on municipal water. The company notably achieved an 11.6% reduction in carbon emission intensity in FY2024 alone, reflecting its substantial investment in green practices. Top Glove expanded solar energy capacity significantly to 11.2 MWp from the previous 7.74 MWp, a 45% increase within one year. Additionally, it has embraced a circular economy approach, recycling waste generated from glove production and significantly reducing municipal water use by 29%.

Local businesses and individual actions amplify these larger corporate and governmental initiatives. For instance, community-driven enterprises like The Hive Bulk Foods encourage sustainable consumption habits through plastic-free shopping and promote environmentally friendly lifestyles. Similarly, the Biji-Biji Initiative inspires innovation through repurposing

waste materials and fostering community-based eco-education programmes. Even our daily routines, such as commuting, can move the sustainability needle. With Kuala Lumpur's expanding MRT and LRT networks, more Malaysians are encouraged to ditch cars in favour of cleaner, public transport alternatives. Every individual who opts for a train ride over driving alone contributes incrementally but meaningfully toward reducing urban air pollution and carbon emissions. Malaysia's Low Carbon Cities Framework furthers this, guiding urban development towards greener, more liveable cities.

Government commitments also reinforce these grassroots and corporate efforts. Malaysia's National Energy Transition Roadmap ambitiously targets generating 31% of the nation's energy from renewable sources by 2025 and 40% by 2035. While solar, hydroelectric and net energy metering programmes are scaling up to achieve these goals, ongoing fossil fuel dependence and enforcing environmental regulations still present significant hurdles.

Nowhere is the urgency clearer than with water. Despite abundant rainfall, water shortages are increasingly common due to inefficient usage and polluted rivers. Agencies like Lembaga Urus Air Selangor actively advocate water conservation, highlighting simple measures households can adopt – such as fixing leaks, installing efficient water fixtures, or collecting rainwater – to make significant cumulative impacts.

Education is another critical component. Environmental awareness must start early. Children who learn sustainable practices in schools, like recycling, composting and conservation, carry these habits into adulthood, cultivating lasting impacts on communities. Schools across Malaysia are increasingly integrating sustainability lessons into curriculums, setting the stage for a more environmentally conscious generation.

The private sector's role remains crucial and transparency in sustainability reporting helps hold companies accountable. Public scrutiny of ESG commitments, backed by independent audits and international benchmarks, pushes companies toward genuine rather than superficial changes. More Malaysian firms recognise sustainability as an integral part of their identity, not merely a marketing tactic.

So, where does that leave us?

"This Earth Day, we invite everyone – individuals, businesses and policymakers to join this crucial effort actively," Chan urges.

"By taking meaningful action today, we collectively shape a resilient and sustainable Malaysia for future generations."

It's tempting to see sustainability as someone else's responsibility, distant from our daily lives. But the haze drifting into our living rooms, rising electricity bills during prolonged heatwaves, and increasingly expensive vegetables due to poor soil health and water scarcity are stark reminders that sustainability is personal. Ignoring these issues won't make them vanish – they'll only intensify.

Yet, despite the challenges, hope abounds. It exists in schoolchildren enthusiastically participating in community clean-ups, companies genuinely rethinking their business models towards sustainable production and families turning small apartment balconies into flourishing edible gardens. Sustainability is built into the choices we make daily, the habits we cultivate and the uncomfortable questions we dare to ask ourselves and one another.

Earth Day shouldn't be seen merely as a day of celebration but rather as a crucial annual moment for honest reflection: How are we doing, individually and collectively?

Because the undeniable truth remains: Malaysia cannot afford to wait. Not anymore.





**T**HERE was a time when a great cup of coffee meant a pilgrimage to your favourite cafe, where expert baristas crafted velvety espressos and cloud-like cappuccinos. But today, coffee culture has evolved and so has the technology that brings the perfect brew into your home. The love for coffee is undeniable in Malaysia, with the average Malaysian consuming approximately 2.38 cups daily.

Research also shows that many Malaysians, particularly millennials, are willing to spend between RM70 to RM100 weekly on coffee. With consumption on the rise and spending habits reflecting a deep appreciation for quality brews, investing in a coffee machine is becoming less of a luxury and more of a practical choice. It enhances your morning ritual and allows coffee lovers to enjoy their favourite drinks from the comfort of home while saving money in the long run.

Whether you're a hardcore espresso purist, a frothy latte devotee or a connoisseur of slow-drip indulgence, these chic coffee machines make all the difference. So, which coffee machines are truly worth the splurge? We've rounded up the best in the business where design meets innovation and every sip feels like a five-star experience.

#### Pantone x Nespresso Vertuo Pop Mandarin Orange

An icon in colour, a revolution in coffee. The Nespresso Vertuo Pop in Pantone Mandarin Orange is inspired by the Mediterranean Riviera, bringing a bold, vibrant touch to your space while delivering exceptional coffee at the touch of a button.

Thoughtfully crafted with 35% recycled plastic, this limited-edition machine embodies sustainability without compromise. An energy-saving auto-off function ensures efficiency while a 30-second heat-up time instantly prepares your coffee. The 0.6-litre water tank keeps maintenance minimal, making the Vertuo Pop ideal for those who see their morning ritual as an experience.



#### Nespresso Vertuo Pop Candy Pink

Pink is still in its moment and is brewing in style. The latest Nespresso Vertuo Pop in Candy Pink redefines modern coffee culture, bringing both style and performance to your daily ritual. Its sleek, compact form is designed for those who appreciate aesthetics and precision.

Powered by Nespresso's patented Centrifusion™ technology, it reads each capsule's barcode, adjusting brewing parameters for a consistently perfect cup. With a 0.6-litre water tank and a 30-second heat-up time, the machine delivers effortless convenience without compromising quality. Offering four cup sizes, from a rich espresso to a full-bodied mug, the Vertuo Pop adapts seamlessly to your coffee preferences.



#### illy X7.1 Iperespresso machine

Drenched in a striking statement red, the illy X7.1 Iperespresso machine is designed for the style-conscious. Its retro-inspired silhouette and bold colour bring a touch of vintage glamour to any space, effortlessly complementing those with a keen eye for aesthetics.

Beyond its distinctive design, the X7.1 is built for a flawless coffee experience. Powered by illy's Iperespresso capsule system, it delivers a rich, aromatic espresso with a smooth, long-lasting crema at the touch of a button. The 15-bar pressure pump ensures barista-quality extraction, while programmable volume control and an auto-stop function guarantee every cup is made just the way you like it.

## Style so good, even your latte might blush

*Turn sleepy mornings into steamy little rituals with machines that serve bold looks and even bolder brews*

#### Russell Taylors 19-Bar Espresso machine

Turn your kitchen into a style statement with the Russell Taylors 19-Bar Espresso Coffee machine EM-10, dressed in the ever-trendy pistachio green. Beneath its sleek design lies a powerhouse built for barista-level brewing. The 19-bar high-pressure pump extracts deep, aromatic espresso with a rich, velvety crema, while the advanced thermoblock heating system ensures precision with every cup.

The intuitive controls make brewing effortless, while the 1.5-litre removable water tank and easy-to-clean components keep maintenance minimal. Whether you prefer a bold shot or a silky latte, the dual-shot function and integrated steam wand give you complete control over your perfect brew.



#### De'Longhi Stilosa

The perfect espresso is bold, smooth and effortlessly refined, and the De'Longhi Stilosa EC230 delivers just that. Wrapped in a sleek matte black design, it easily brings barista-quality coffee into your home. A 15-bar professional pump and stainless steel boiler ensure rich, aromatic espresso topped with a velvety crema every time.

With the manual milk frother, you have complete control over texture, whether crafting a frothy cappuccino or a silky latte. Thoughtfully designed, the two-level cup holder accommodates everything from espresso cups to tall mugs, adapting to your coffee ritual. The Stilosa EC230 is all about simplicity, elegance and the perfect brew.



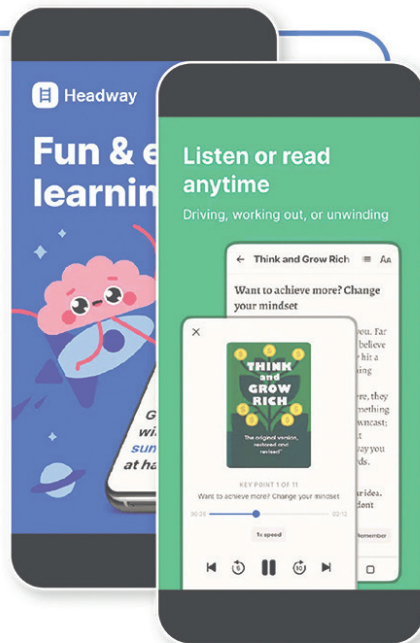
# There is an app for that mess

*Why struggle when you can automate, streamline and simplify with a tap?*

BY ASHRAF WAHAB

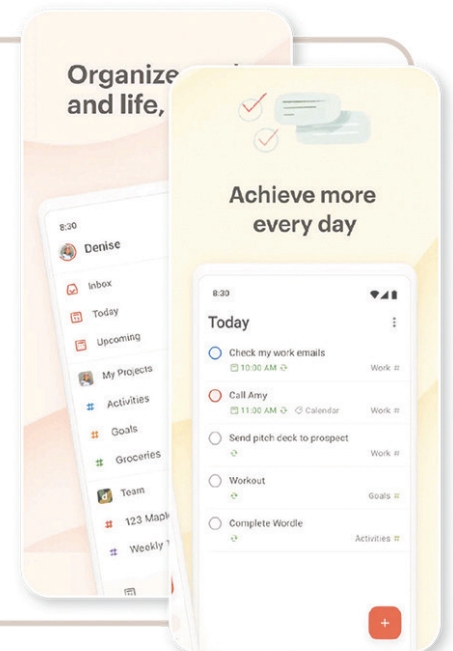
## Headway: Elevate your learning game

If you're looking to prioritise personal development without spending hours buried in books, Headway is the go-to app for bite-sized learning. This nifty app offers summaries of popular nonfiction books, transforming them into engaging, digestible formats. In a world where time is precious and we all have busy schedules, Headway lets you absorb crucial insights in just 15 minutes daily. Imagine waking up to a new topic – whether it's mastering negotiation tactics, learning the importance of emotional intelligence or uncovering productivity hacks. You can even access audio versions when you're commuting or enjoying a morning coffee. Headway makes knowledge accessible, ensuring you're not just keeping up with the world but staying ahead of it.



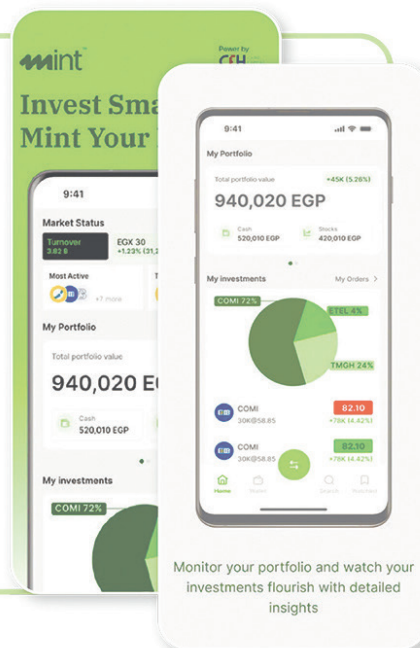
## Todoist: Tame the chaos

Let's face it. Life in the city can feel like a whirlwind. From balancing work deadlines to social engagements, we've all experienced that "where did the day go?" feeling. Enter Todoist, your new personal organiser and productivity powerhouse. Todoist helps you manage tasks, set reminders and prioritise effectively. Its clean interface displays tasks in an easy-to-navigate format and its collaboration features allow you to share task lists with colleagues or family members. Whether you're breaking down a big project at work or coordinating dinner plans with friends, Todoist keeps you accountable. Plus, what is the satisfaction of checking off completed tasks? Pure bliss.



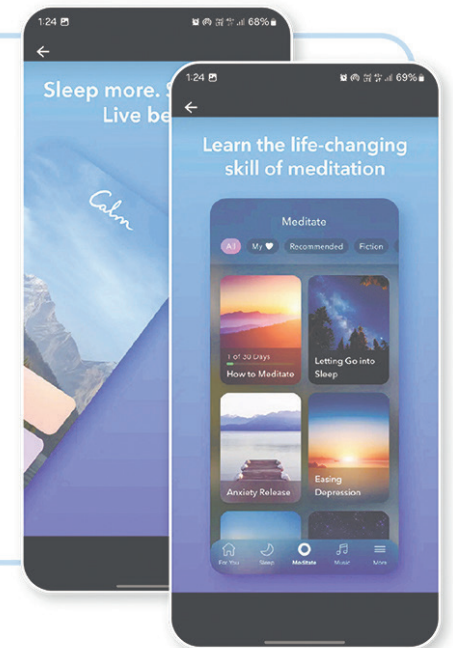
## Mint: Take control of your finances

Managing your finances can be daunting, but Mint makes it a walk in the park. This comprehensive budgeting app helps you track your spending and savings effortlessly. With Mint, you can connect multiple bank accounts and credit cards to keep all your financial information in one place. Its intuitive dashboard lets you visualise your spending habits and offers personalised insights to help you make smarter financial decisions. You can create budgets tailored to different categories, set savings goals and even receive reminders for bill payments. Mint is your trusted financial assistant, empowering you to confidently take control of your money and achieve your financial goals.



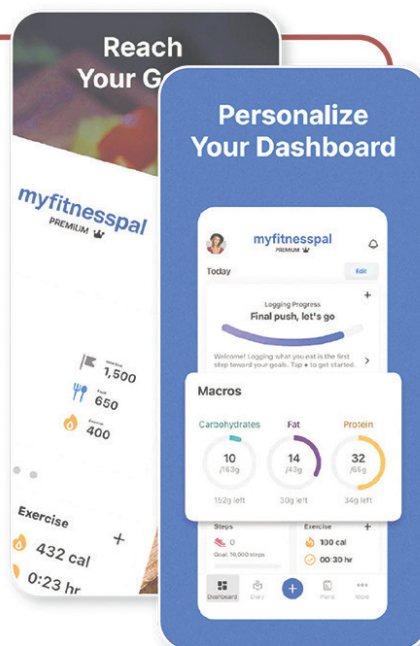
## Calm: Your sanctuary in the storm

Life can get hectic and finding peace amid the chaos is essential for our well-being. If you've been seeking a way to de-stress and unwind, Calm is an app worth your attention. Calm provides guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing exercises and soothing music to help users escape the daily grind. Whether you're a seasoned pro at meditation or just starting, the app caters to all experience levels with a range of sessions that fit perfectly into your busy schedule. Ten minutes daily can drastically improve your mental health, reduce anxiety and set you up for a productive day. Having an oasis of tranquillity in your pocket? Yes, please!



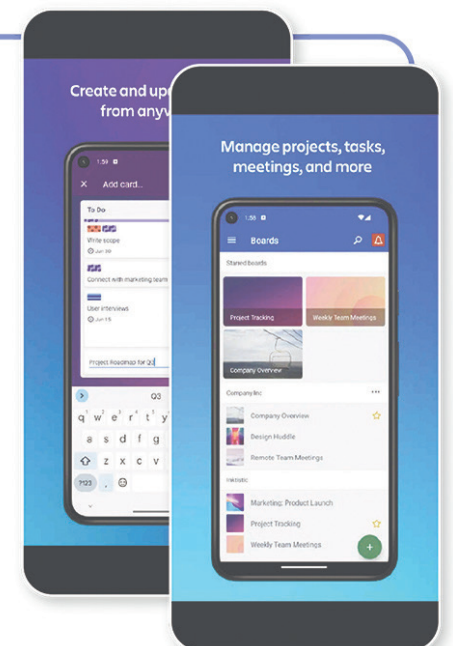
## MyFitnessPal: Your health companion

Eating healthy amidst the delicious temptations of urban life can be a real challenge. That's where MyFitnessPal steps in as your trusty nutrition partner. This app tracks your food intake, exercise and water consumption, giving you a comprehensive view of your diet and fitness goals. With an extensive database of foods and barcode scanning capabilities, logging your meals becomes a breeze, helping you stay accountable. Furthermore, MyFitnessPal calculates your calorie intake and sets personalised goals based on your body metrics. Whether you're looking to lose weight, maintain your weight or gain muscle, this app equips you with the knowledge you need to make healthier choices. It's like having a nutritionist right in your pocket!



## Trello: Organise your projects visually

Trello is a game-changer for anyone who thrives on organisation – be it personal projects or team collaborations. This app uses a card and board system to help you visually manage tasks and projects, making it a fantastic choice for work and life organisation. Trello allows you to create boards for different projects, add cards for individual tasks and organise them into lists. You can track progress, set due dates, attach files and even collaborate with others by inviting team members to your boards. Its visual layout makes it easy to see what's in progress and what needs attention, which is ideal for busy professionals and multitaskers. With Trello, you'll never lose sight of your goals; organising becomes a fun, interactive experience.







# Future of globalisation: Has the tidal wave receded?

**F**OR years, globalisation was seen as an unstoppable force. Borders blurred as companies expanded across continents, supply chains stretched across multiple time zones and talent was sourced from every corner of the planet. Economic integration was not just an ideal – it was the defining reality of the modern world. Then, something changed.

Political shifts, trade wars and a global pandemic forced businesses and governments to rethink their dependence on far-flung markets. Suddenly, globalisation – the engine that powered economic expansion for decades, appeared to be slowing.

But has it truly receded, or is it simply evolving into something new?

*Why the world isn't as interconnected as we once believed and what that means for us today*

BY BOBBY VARANASI

## Illusion of an unstoppable wave

For much of the late 20th and early 21st century, globalisation was viewed as inevitable. It was fuelled by two powerful forces: technology and policy. The internet and digital connectivity have erased traditional barriers, allowing businesses to operate across borders easily. Meanwhile, governments largely embraced open markets, creating free trade agreements and removing restrictions on foreign investment.

“Political shifts, trade wars and a global pandemic forced businesses and governments to rethink their dependence on far-flung markets.”

The benefits were clear. Companies gained access to cheaper labour, expanded customer bases and reduced production costs. Consumers, in turn, enjoyed a greater variety of goods at lower prices.

But globalisation was never a one-size-fits-all success story. While multinational corporations thrived, local industries in many regions struggled to compete. Wage stagnation, job losses in traditional sectors and environmental concerns have led to growing resentment. The idea that globalisation lifted all boats began to face serious scrutiny.

For all its advantages, globalisation has had unintended consequences. Entire industries in developed nations were hollowed out as businesses relocated manufacturing to lower-cost regions. Local businesses in developing countries often find themselves unable to compete with the influx of foreign corporations. Meanwhile, income inequality widened, with the benefits of globalisation disproportionately favouring large corporations and wealthy investors.

While some governments sought to mitigate these effects through policy interventions, others fuelled the shift towards nationalism and protectionism. The idea that globalisation was the only viable economic model started to crumble.

“Globalisation was never a one-size-fits-all success story. While multinational corporations thrived, local industries in many regions struggled to compete.”





“The assumption that ‘global is always better’ no longer holds. Instead, businesses must strike a balance between international expansion and local resilience.”

### The great retrenchment

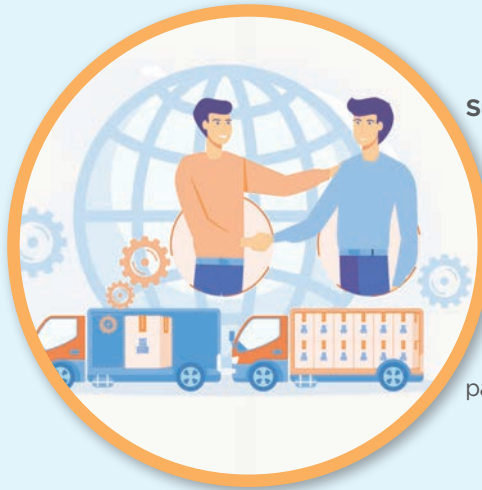
The past decade has seen a series of events that have forced a re-evaluation of globalisation’s trajectory.

- **Trade wars and nationalism:** Countries that once championed free trade, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, have pivoted towards economic self-reliance. Tariffs, sanctions and protectionist policies have become tools to safeguard domestic industries. “Made at home” has become a political slogan rather than an economic afterthought. Governments across Europe and Asia have similarly begun prioritising local industries, sometimes at the expense of global trade.
- **Supply chain shocks:** The Covid-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of global supply chains. When factories in China shut down, companies worldwide faced shortages of essential goods, from electronics to pharmaceuticals. The crisis made one thing clear: dependency on a single country or region was a risk many businesses could no longer afford.
- **The rise of regionalism:** Instead of a singular, global marketplace, we are seeing the emergence of strong regional hubs. Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America are all positioning themselves as viable alternatives to the traditional powerhouses of global trade. Businesses are increasingly looking to regional partners to avoid geopolitical uncertainties and logistical disruptions.
- **The rise of regulation:** To contend with the ambiguous nature of business practices while protecting local industry players, many nations began to impose “soft barriers” to trade. Some of such barriers translated into regulatory and compliance impositions that further stifled competition while protecting latent “local production”. Competition gave way in some manner to localisation, thereby reducing emphasis on excellence.

While these shifts may seem like a retreat from globalisation, they are an adaptation to a more complex and fragmented world economy. The interconnectivity remains – it just looks different.

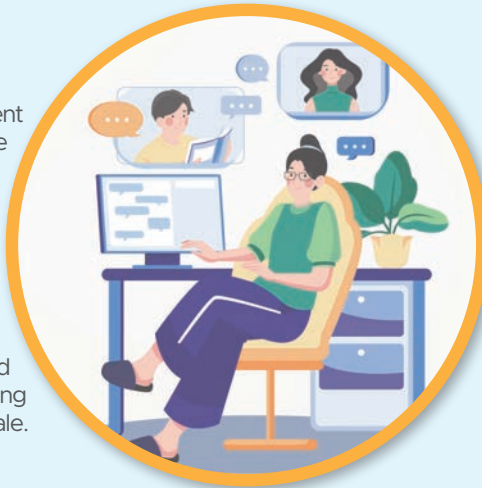
## Globalisation isn’t dead; it’s just changing

THE idea that globalisation is collapsing is an oversimplification. The world is still profoundly interconnected, but the way businesses engage with it is shifting.



**Supply chain diversification:** Companies are spreading their operations across multiple regions instead of relying on a single country for production. The “China plus one” strategy – where businesses maintain operations in China but also establish factories in other countries is becoming the norm. This shift helps mitigate risks associated with geopolitical tensions, trade restrictions and unexpected disruptions like pandemics or natural disasters.

**Digital globalisation:** While the movement of physical goods may be slowing, the movement of information is accelerating. Remote work, digital services and cloud computing have allowed businesses to expand globally without the need for a physical presence. A startup in Malaysia can now serve clients in Europe without ever opening an office there. Global e-commerce, virtual collaboration and cross-border fintech solutions are redefining what it means to operate on a global scale.



**Sustainable and ethical sourcing:** Consumers are demanding more accountability from brands. The days of chasing the cheapest labour, regardless of working conditions, are being replaced by a focus on ethical sourcing and sustainability. Companies are under increasing pressure to ensure fair wages, improve the living conditions of workers, reduce carbon footprints and engage in responsible production practices. Businesses that fail to adapt to these expectations risk losing consumer trust and long-term viability. Imposing global responsibilities through standards like UN Global Compact, TCFD regulations, CCS guidelines, etc, is crucial for businesses to comply with.

**Reshoring and nearshoring:** In response to supply chain vulnerabilities, some businesses are bringing manufacturing and services closer to home. This trend is gaining traction, known as reshoring (returning production to the home country) and nearshoring (relocating to a nearby country). While this does not mean the end of globalisation, it signals a shift towards a more balanced, risk-managed approach to global operations.



### What this means for businesses

For companies navigating this new reality, adaptability is key. The assumption that “global is always better” no longer holds. Instead, businesses must strike a balance between international expansion and local resilience.

It is no longer about being everywhere but in the *right* places.

The companies that will thrive in this new era are not the ones blindly following the old globalisation playbook. They are the ones rethinking their strategies, investing in agility and recognising that globalisation is not a tide that has receded but, rather, one that is shifting its currents.

Successful businesses will need to deepen their understanding of local markets, cultures, and consumer expectations. This involves not only adapting products and services but also aligning values with community priorities. Building trusted local partnerships, maintaining operational flexibility, and continuously innovating will become essential practices for staying competitive and relevant.

Moreover, proactive risk management and scenario planning will be critical to swiftly respond to geopolitical shifts, regulatory changes, and unforeseen disruptions, further enhancing organisational resilience.

The question *is* no longer if globalisation will continue but *how* businesses will navigate its new form. Those who can adapt to this evolving landscape – embracing digital connectivity, diversifying supply chains and prioritising sustainability – will be advantaged in this new global order.



Bobby Varanasi is a respected global thought leader in globalisation, economic sustainability, and business transformation. Recently, he won the Innovation Leadership Award at the World Innovation Congress 2025.



# Half truths, misquotes and other myths we love to repeat

**I**N today's age of social media and instant information, myths and misinformation spread like wildfire, shaping beliefs and influencing decisions. But what if everything you thought you knew was wrong? Let's set the record straight on five widely believed myths.

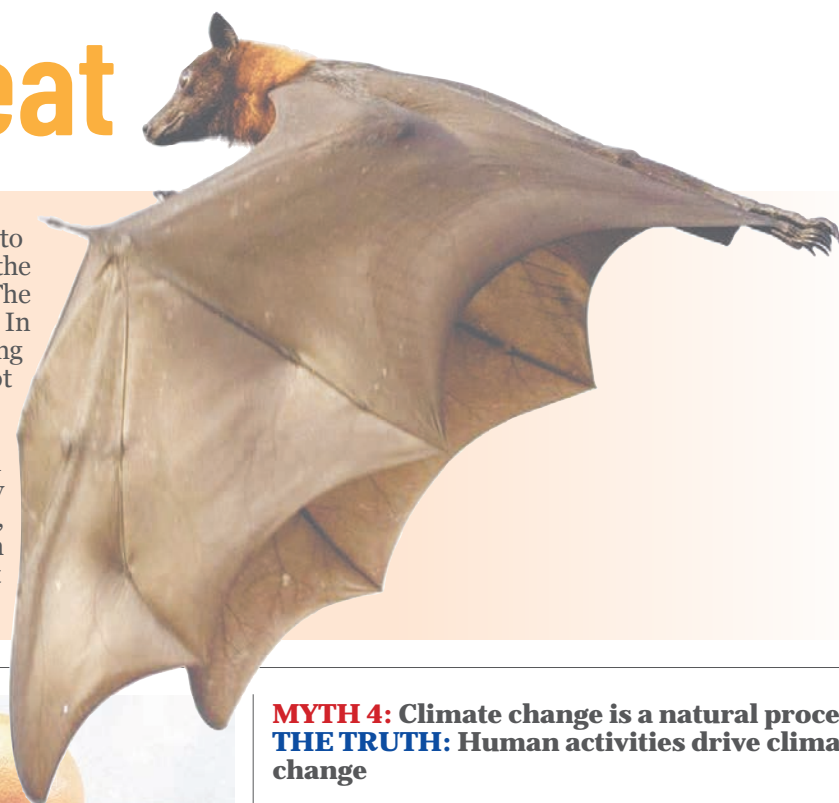
## MYTH 1: Bats are blind

### THE TRUTH: Bats are not blind

Many species of bats have perfectly good vision and some can see better than humans in low light. The confusion comes from their

use of echolocation, a sonar-like ability to emit high-frequency sounds and listen to the echoes to navigate and hunt in the dark. The phrase "as blind as a bat" is misleading. In fact, they are incredibly adapted to navigating in the dark, using tools humans cannot perceive.

**Evidence:** Bat Conservation International says bats rely on sight and sound, especially in different environments. For example, fruit bats do not use echolocation as much but depend mainly on their sharp eyesight and sense of smell.



## MYTH 2: Carbs are bad for you

### THE TRUTH: Not all carbs are bad

Carbs are always blamed as the leading cause of weight gain. Carbs are vital to fuel our muscles, brain and organs. Moderate carb consumption is helpful for overall health and can support weight loss when part of a balanced diet. It is essential to focus on the quality of carbs and avoid overconsumption of processed or sugary foods. Harvard School of Public Health emphasises knowing the quality and type of carbohydrates to determine which ones to consume and reduce. Increase the intake of unprocessed and minimally processed carbs, whereas reduce refined and processed foods in daily diet.

**Evidence:** Not all carbs are created equal as complex carbs like whole grains, vegetables and legumes provide fibre, vitamins and minerals. However, refined carbs (like sugary snacks) can contribute to weight gain when consumed in excess.



## MYTH 4: Climate change is a natural process

### THE TRUTH: Human activities drive climate change

Climate change can occur naturally over long periods due to volcanic eruptions, solar cycles and Earth's orbit changes. However, the current rate and scale of climate change are not natural as they are mostly driven by human activities. Natural factors alone cannot explain the sharp rise in global temperatures, extreme weather and melting polar ice observed over the last century. Nasa also confirms that CO<sub>2</sub> levels are now higher than at any point in at least 800,000 years, a spike directly linked to human actions.

**Evidence:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that over 95% of the observed warming since the mid-20th century is due to greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel use, deforestation and industrial processes.



## MYTH 3: Left-brain vs right-brain theory is correct

### THE TRUTH: Brains have two halves and both work seamlessly

The infamous left-brain vs. right-brain theory that classifies left-brained people as more analytical and methodical or right-brained people as creative or artistic is largely a myth. While it is accurate that certain brain functions are lateralised (language tends to be processed in the left hemisphere, for example), no credible scientific evidence supports the idea that people use one side of their brain more than the other in a dominant, personality-defining way.

**Evidence:** A study using magnetic resonance imaging on over 1000 participants found no correlation to individuals having a dominant hemisphere influence their personality or cognitive style.

## MYTH 5: Hair and fingernails continue to grow after death

### THE TRUTH: Hair and fingernails do not grow after death

In *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the author describes a friend's fingernails growing in corkscrews after the burial. This myth does have a basis in a biological phenomenon that can occur after death. A person's hair, fingernails and stubbles may

appear longer due to dehydration of the body after death and drying or desiccation may lead to skin retraction around the hair or nails.

**Evidence:** According to the Dermatology Clinic at UAMS, skin retraction can create an appearance of increased length or greater prominence because of the optical illusion created by contrasting the shrunk soft tissues with the nails or hair.





# Sarah Lian: **Owning her story,** one chapter at a time

BY theSUNDAY TEAM

**S**OMETHING about Sarah Lian makes you lean in a little closer, not in how celebrity profiles often rely on glossy images or high drama, but in how a good story does. One that's been lived fully, with detours, comebacks and a lot of heart.

She's the kind of person you could imagine in a boardroom at noon and guiding a breathwork circle by evening. With over two decades in the entertainment industry across North America and Asia, Lian has gracefully shifted between stages and boardrooms, from acting to coaching, hosting to building her own brand.

But don't be fooled by the polish. Behind the poise is someone who has been documenting her journey since she was 15. Not for likes or brand deals but simply because she had thoughts to share. Reflections. Stories. Vulnerabilities.

"I show up for younger Sarah. I show up for her," she says. That line alone might sum up the fire that keeps her going.

Her timeline reads like a vivid scrapbook. One of her earliest milestones was hosting *UTours*, a Canadian show that explored student life across top universities.

"It wasn't just a gig," she reflects. "It was my introduction to storytelling." Then came the thrill of a brief but memorable role in *American Pie*, and the moment her name rolled through the credits – it was surreal, she says, but grounding.

Perhaps the boldest leap came when she registered her company, Suppagood, 14 years ago.

"I didn't know then it would teach me so much about success and failure." That leap turned into a runway for what would become a profoundly layered career – one that now includes Supparetreat, a platform that empowers women through workshops, conversations and retreats.

## World is your oyster

Working in multiple countries gave Lian a unique perspective on the entertainment landscape. She remembers being in a Malaysian production where the crew would start each shoot with a Muslim prayer.

**“My superpower is showing women theirs and I just want to see them win.”**

Sarah Lian



"Even as a non-Muslim, I appreciated that ritual. It connected everyone to a shared purpose." In Canada and the United States, things are run with more structure – unions, pre-negotiated rates, wardrobe fittings and mandatory breaks.

"It's a well-oiled machine," she says, "but teamwork and camaraderie make or break the process regardless of location."

Staying relevant in a fast-paced industry is no small feat, but for Lian, the challenge lies less in trends and more in truth.

"It's easy to share when life is going well. It's harder when you're vulnerable," she admits. Over the years, she's written and posted through the highs and lows – and surprisingly, it's the more honest moments that have often had the most impact.

"Strangers have come up to me and said my words resonated with them," she said.

"That motivates me to write the words I once needed to hear."

That desire to help others see their worth is the heart of Supparetreat. What started as a side project has become one of her most meaningful pursuits.

"My personal journey from passion to purpose has been deeply transformative."

I want to help women recognise their potential. My superpower is showing women theirs – and I just want to see them win."

There's a certain magic in how she describes witnessing transformation. Lian lights up when people begin to see what's possible for themselves.

"Their wins become my wins," she says, without hesitation.

And while her work is now deeply intertwined with wellness and empowerment, she still embraces all the other parts of herself – actress, entrepreneur, mentor, wife, dog mom. When asked how she balances it all without tipping over, she keeps it simple:

"I try to stay present with whatever I'm doing. If you zoom out and look at the big picture, it's overwhelming. But zoom in, just focus on the next step and each day becomes a privilege."

Sundays, for example, are sacred in their simplicity.

"I love my quiet mornings. I take my dog out just as the sun peeks, meditate and connect with myself." Later, she might find a new café to explore with her husband, sneak in a workout and then settle in with a good book before bed.

"It's nothing grand. But it fills me up."

Journaling also plays a big part in her self-care routine.

"It helps me process emotions I may not have noticed during the week. And long walks with my dog give me space to be present – no deadlines, no performance, just being."

## Rooted in purpose, ready for more

Looking ahead, Lian is shifting gears in exciting ways. She's bringing her coaching and wellness expertise into corporate spaces, expanding her breathwork practice and developing tailored workshops for professionals.

"Over the years, I've built the confidence to enter this next chapter. I've been testing and refining, and now I'm ready to bring wellness into environments that really need it."

At the same time, her retreats under Supparetreat continue to grow. There's one on the horizon for later this year and she's working on collaborations with a few brands to elevate the experience. She's also quietly expanding her speaking engagements, focusing on meaningful conversations that create impact – "even if it's just one person at a time."

She's not chasing the next big thing just to keep up appearances. Her work is now rooted in purpose, not pressure. And that might be the secret to why Lian still shines years after she first stepped into the limelight.

You might walk away surprised if you came looking for dramatic anecdotes or name-dropping. But what you get instead is something rarer: a woman who has built a life by paying attention to what matters most. Who speaks as much for the girl she used to be as for the women she now helps.

And maybe that's the real takeaway. We don't always need noise to make an impact. Sometimes, the quiet fire, the honest showing up, creates the deepest ripples.



Adopting effective coping strategies to manage and reduce stress is a realistic approach.







**I**F you've been strolling through your local park or checking out the community centre lately, you might have noticed something curious. The sound of paddles hitting balls, laughter among friends and competitive banter are all becoming more common. And no, while it does look like tennis, it isn't.

Welcome to the world of pickleball – a quirky sport rapidly gaining traction globally and in Malaysia. Let's unpack this phenomenon.

#### A brief history of pickleball

You might be wondering where this fun game gets its unusual name. The origins of pickleball can be traced back to 1965 on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Invented by Barney McCallum, Joel Pritchard and Bill Bell, it was initially meant as a way to entertain their families. They combined elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis using a makeshift court and equipment.

The name "pickleball" is said to have come from the family dog, Pickles, who loved to chase the balls. Others speculate it's derived from the term "pickle boat," referring to a crew of rowers that consists of leftover parts from other teams. Regardless of its name, the sport found its footing over the following decades, initially in the US and later, reaching international shores. This little-known game has exploded into a global sensation, with an estimated 4.8 million players in the United States alone.

#### Why the surge in popularity?

So what's driving the pickleball craze? There are several factors at play.

- **Accessibility and inclusivity:** One of the fundamental reasons for pickleball's rising popularity is its accessibility. Anyone can pick up a paddle and join in, regardless of age or skill level. The smaller court makes it easier

# Pickleball fever is smashing through the courts

*It's part sports, part social craze and it's sweeping the globe one paddle at a time*

BY ASHRAF WAHAB

for beginners to participate, thereby opening up opportunities for families, friends and even office colleagues to engage in healthy competition.

- **Social aspects:** Pickleball is immensely social. Many find that games end with camaraderie fostered among players. It's not solely about winning; it's about having fun and bonding with others. This appeal to the social side is particularly attractive for our urban Malaysian audience, where community engagement often provides a respite from busy work schedules.
- **Health and fitness:** As people increasingly focus on their health and well-being, pickleball presents a fun way to stay active. It combines cardiovascular exercise, strength training and balance, all while being low-impact compared to other racquet sports.

You engage your entire body without the heavy strain of running across a large court like tennis. This gentle introduction to physical activity makes pickleball a favoured choice for those new to sports or looking to ease back into fitness.

- **Media exposure:** We can't ignore the impact of media attention. Major sporting events and platforms, including ESPN, have showered the sport with coverage. This trend has attracted a younger crowd, while celebrity endorsements and appearances bring in casual enthusiasts. Social media platforms have also made it easier for pickleball enthusiasts to share gameplay moments, creating buzz and encouraging others to try it themselves.
- **Local developments:** In Malaysia, the rise of pickleball can largely be attributed to growing enthusiasm in urban areas. Many community centres and sports clubs are now offering pickleball courts. It seems like every week, there's a new club forming or a tournament being announced. As more people discover this sport, it creates a snowball effect, drawing in new participants eager to join the excitement.

#### Pickleball vs tennis: Similarities and differences

One of the reasons pickleball is gaining traction is its apparent connection to tennis. Both sports involve similar skills and strategies, yet they offer vastly different experiences. Here's how they compare:

- **Court size and dimensions:** A standard tennis court measures 78 feet long and 36 feet wide for doubles matches. A pickleball court is much smaller, measuring 44 feet long and 20 feet wide. The reduced court size means less running and enables quicker points, making it ideal for players of all ages.
- **Equipment:** In tennis, players use rackets that tend to be larger and heavier, while pickleball paddles are lightweight and typically made from wood or composite materials. The balls are also different. Tennis balls are covered in felt and usually bounce higher, whereas pickleballs are plastic with holes that create lower bounce dynamics.



One of the fundamental reasons for pickleball's rising popularity is its accessibility.





In Malaysia, the rise of pickleball can largely be attributed to growing enthusiasm in urban areas.

- **Game pace and strategy:** Tennis matches often involve longer rallies and various shots like serves, volleys and lobs. On the other hand, pickleball emphasises quick exchanges and strategic placements since rallies are generally shorter. Pickleball's unique concepts, like the non-volley zone (or "kitchen"), encourage players to think strategically about where to position themselves on the court and how to approach their shots.
- **Learning curve:** Because the court is smaller and the game pace is more gradual, many find pickleball has a shallower learning curve compared to tennis. This makes it a perfect entry point for newcomers to racquet sports. Experienced tennis players might find pickleball offers refreshing gameplay dynamics but without the steep physical demands often associated with tennis.
- **Social experience:** Both sports foster social engagement; however, the environment often feels more relaxed in pickleball. The smaller court size and dual-play options encourage more interactions among players. Additionally, many pickleball players emphasise the fun and casual nature of the game, fostering a strong community.

#### Why choose pickleball?

For those considering picking up a racquet sport or looking for an enjoyable alternative to tennis, pickleball stands out with its ease of entry and accommodating nature. Here are a few reasons it might be the right fit for you:

- **Less intimidating:** The smaller court and lighter equipment can alleviate the intimidation some may feel when engaging in tennis or squash, especially for beginners or those returning to sports after a hiatus.
- **Improved social dynamics:** The game's structure often encourages socialising during play, making engaging with opponents and having friendly banter easier.
- **Health benefits:** Like tennis, pick-

leball offers excellent physical fitness benefits. This includes cardio workouts, improved coordination and strength training. However, because there's less running, it may be easier on the joints, making it an attractive option for older adults or those with physical limitations.

- **Quick play:** With shorter games and the ability to play in various environments – indoor and outdoor – pickleball is highly versatile, making it convenient for busy schedules.

#### So, how do you play pickleball?

Now that you're intrigued, how do you actually play pickleball? Here's a simple rundown of the rules to get you started.

- **The basics:** Pickleball can be played in singles or doubles, considering Malaysia's penchant for group activities, doubles is often the preferred format. The game is played on a 20' x 44' court divided by a net. Players use a paddle to hit a plastic ball with holes, similar in design to a wiffle ball, over the net.
- **Scoring:** The game is typically played to 11 points and you must win by a 2-point margin. The serving team can only score points when the opposing team fails to return the ball or hits it out of bounds.
- **The serve:** To start each point, players must serve from behind the baseline. The serve must be underhand and hit diagonally across the net to the opponent's service area. This rule adds a level of strategy, as positioning plays a critical role from the get-go.
- **Keeping it fair:** Players cannot volley (hit the ball before it bounces) in the non-volley zone, which is located 7 feet from the net on each side. This rule promotes longer rallies and fair play.

#### What do you need to play?

If you're convinced to try pickleball, you might wonder what gear is necessary. Unlike many sports that require extensive equipment, pickleball is refreshingly straightforward.

- **Attire:** Opt for comfortable athletic wear that allows you to move freely. Proper footwear is also essential. Look for shoes with good grip and support, preventing any slip-ups on the court.



- **Net and court:** If you plan to play at home, consider purchasing a portable net and setting up a dedicated space. Community parks or local sports clubs increasingly have designated pickleball courts, so check those out.



#### Let the games begin

Pickleball has swiftly transitioned from a regional curiosity to a beloved sport enjoyed by many, including here in our urban Malaysian spaces. Its rise in popularity is reminiscent of futsal during the early 2000s.

Pickleball's unique combination of accessibility, camaraderie and fun fitness make it a perfect fit for people from all walks of life. With growing exposure, community support and the joy of the game itself, it's no surprise that the popularity of pickleball is set to continue its rapid rise. So grab a paddle, rally your friends and join the fun – you might just find your new favourite pastime.

## Connecting with the community

The best way to dive into pickleball is to connect with others. Malaysia has seen an influx of clubs and community gatherings dedicated to this sport. Joining a local league or inviting friends to play can help you integrate into the broader pickleball community. Many clubs also host social events, making meeting new people while enjoying a game a fantastic opportunity.



- **Paddle:** The core item you'll need is a paddle. Pickleball paddles are usually made from wood or composite material and come in various sizes and weights. You don't need to go for the most expensive paddle – just pick one that feels comfortable for you. Local sporting goods stores or online platforms should have a good selection.



- **Ball:** Next, you'll need a pickleball. These plastic balls with holes are specifically designed for the game. Outdoor balls tend to be slightly heavier and made to withstand the elements, while indoor balls are lighter and tend to bounce more.





### Weekend night market, Pingmin Hub

April 25 - 27, May 2 - 4, 5pm to 12am

Only three minutes away from TRX, the Pingmin markets have slowly become one of the city's rising attractions, bringing together tourists and locals alike. With its wide offerings and charming atmosphere, their next market is one you cannot miss out on. Plus, it's pet-friendly, too. Come and check out sweet and savoury treats to satisfy every craving, or shop for artisanal body care products like locally made perfumes and aromatherapy. They also have an array of artsy goodies like unique handcrafted pieces, pet food and accessories.

Follow @pingminmarket on Instagram for updates.



### Kuala Lumpur Illustration Fair, GMBB

May 1 - 4, 11am to 8pm

Calling all art lovers! The illustration fair is back in town; this time, it will be an art exploration across three floors at the creative community mall of GMBB. Immerse yourself in a world of visual storytelling and get inspired by a wide range of illustrations at this four-day event. Aside from exhibitions and creative showcases by 160 artists from all over the globe, you can also partake in workshops to keep your creative juices flowing. Visit @klillustrationfair for the list of artists coming.

Purchase your tickets at klillustrationfair.my



# Where to go, what to hear, what to love

Whether you're a self-proclaimed bookworm, music aficionado or collector, check in to know about exciting events in the upcoming weeks

### Collector's pick - Curated classics, Amcorp Mall

April 25 - 27, 10am

Famed for its unique shops and bustling weekend flea markets, the iconic Amcorp Mall returns with the 15th edition of Collector's Pick - a treasure trove of rare gems by vendors spanning from the lower ground to the third floor of the building. This year's Curated Classics theme takes you on a nostalgic journey through 100 years of vintage treasures, so prepare your shopping bags for one-of-a-kind memorabilia, antiques and more at this three-day affair. Not in a spendy mood? Do some window shopping instead and chat with friendly collectors and enthusiasts.

Follow Amcorp Mall on Facebook for more information.

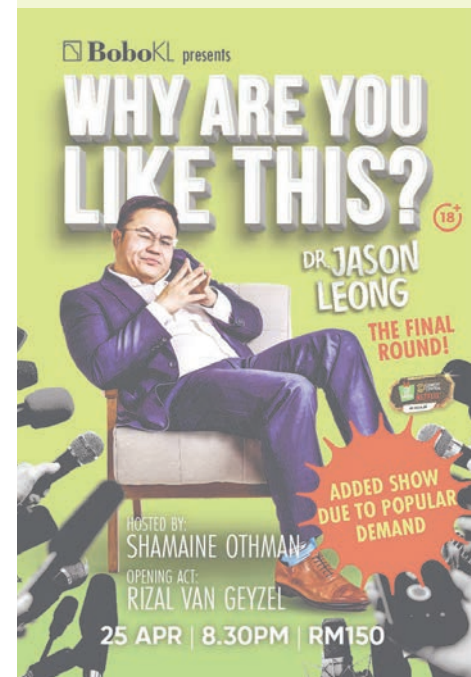


### Why Are You Like This?, Bobo KL

April 25, 8:30pm

On his sold-out Why Are You Like This? tour, which was a hit in cities like London and Amsterdam, Dr Jason Leong has dropped one final extra show at Bobo KL for his Malaysian fans due to popular demand. Hosted by beloved local comedians Shamaine Othman and Rizal Van Geysel as the opening act, expect an evening of non-stop laughter that will leave you all smiles.

Purchase your tickets at [www.bobokl.com](http://www.bobokl.com)



### Community sound bath, The Campus Ampang

Every Friday, 6 - 7pm

Sometimes, a good event doesn't have to be packed with activities or stimulation. Organised by Body Tech Wellness Solutions, this newly commenced community sound bath invites guests to tune out from everyday stresses with the help of healing sounds and vibrations from calming instruments like gongs, crystal bowls and Tibetan singing bowls. The event runs on a pay-as-you-wish system, with 50% of all contributions going to the The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Make your bookings via @bodytechkl on Instagram.



### Kuala Lumpur Reads, Perdana Botanical Gardens

Every Saturday, 8:30am to 10:30am

What began as an open invitation to read together at the park in 2023 has since grown into a community of over 17,000 followers on Instagram, uniting book lovers of all ages. But this isn't a book club, it's a community-driven initiative that makes reading a shared social experience in a free and green public space. So if you're looking for a quiet, low-cost activity, come over with a book (or two), a mat and maybe some insect repellent for a chill time out at the park with other like-minded readers. Who knows, this might be your new favourite weekend ritual.

Follow the page on Instagram at @kualalumpurreads



### ForReal jazz night

May 3, 4pm to 10pm

If you're in the mood to mingle with a side of music and good vibes, join Kuala Lumpur's first immersive jazz event right in the city's heart. A single ticket worth RM35 comes with two free drinks and an additional 50% off discount on all drinks for the remainder of the night. Feeling a little shy? Fret not, they've got games and activities to help break the ice. The live performance by Sammy & the Band, plus booth vendors, will give you plenty of entertainment while you make new organic connections with people from all walks of life at the swanky Belaire Pool Bar, JW Marriot.

Get your tickets at [deadenterprise.com](http://deadenterprise.com)





# Rebel with a cause

X-Wedge coming soon with premium motorcycles without exorbitant pricing



The detailing of the X-Wedge bikes is not as intricate as a Harley but impressive no less.

**WHILE** some automotive manufacturers stick by the adage, "take the best and make it better", others go by "take the best and make it cheaper". That is particularly true for manufacturers and brands from China.

But that is not necessarily a bad thing, because based on what we experience from a recent trip to China, taking the best and making it cheaper just means that more people have access to great motorcycles.

During the trip, hosted by MForce Bike Holdings, we visited plenty of manufacturing plants, and one of them makes the motorcycle you see here, known as the X-Wedge.

If you have never heard of X-Wedge before this, fret not, neither had we. But that is exactly what made discovering the brand and riding their motorcycles so special, because they are quite good at what they do and the world deserves to know more about them.

X-Wedge is assembled by a subsidiary of the Huansong Industrial Group which is based in Chongqing, China and who have been in business since 1988.

The company which is called Hisun, also produces other small capacity motorcycles and ATV's and distributes its products all around the globe.

Interestingly, all X-Wedge products are not designed in-house but are instead designed by a design house called Kiska.

Kiska is an Austrian company that has also worked on other motorcycles particularly from CFMoto as well as Husqvarna.

In fact, the entire brand communication campaign for CFMoto and the Husqvarna Norden 901 was put together by Kiska.

So this is a company with a huge amount of

experience in the motorcycle industry.

## MORE ABOUT X-WEDGE

The X-Wedge started life as an engine configuration than a brand. If you follow the motorcycle industry, you would probably be familiar with S&S engines.

The S&S stands for Smith and Stankos, the last names of the founders of the company which traces its roots back to 1958.

Today, and over the past couple of decades, S&S engines are common among custom motorcycles and Harley-Davidsons.



Such premium X-Wedge showrooms will also be available in Malaysia soon.



The Vanguard VT2000 is a trike without the hefty price tag and will also be launched in Malaysia.

X-Wedge will also offer a full range of premium accessories.

But the X configuration started out as a power upgrade for large displacement motorcycles, in particular cruisers from America.

In S&S' own words, the engines are "designed to offer proven performance and reliability".

Fast forward a few years, Hisun motors approached the aforementioned Kiska to "re-imagine" X-Wedge as a brand.

To cut a long story short, that is how X-Wedge went from a simple engine configuration to becoming a brand.

Imagine, Honda's VTEC or Toyota's VVT-I being introduced as a third-party brand independent of their manufacturers. That is basically how X-Wedge came about.





### WHAT ABOUT X-WEDGE MOTORCYCLES?

In all honesty, this writer experienced a jaw drop moment the first time I saw all of their models.

There were five models on display, the Ranger RX2000, Rover RL2000, Vanguard VT2000, Voyager VS2000 and Walker WR1000.

Almost all of which are coming to Malaysia, except for the Voyager VS2000 which is a Ranger RX2000 but with a side car.

If you are wondering why, well Malaysian regulations simply does not allow for sidecars to be registered for anything else but for commercial purposes. That is something for JPJ to look into but for now we will focus on what will eventually make it here.

### WHAT POWERS THE MOTORCYCLES?

Four out of the five models are powered by the 1979cc V-Twin engine with overhead valves which are "activated" by pushrods.

This engine produces 103hp @ 5,000rpm and 158Nm of torque at 3,000rpm. Interestingly, the compression ratio of this engine is rated at a lowly 9.75:1, which means that it can run on low octane fuel.

So, if you ever find yourself in a country where the petrol is on the lower end of RON 95, you really don't have anything to worry about.

### WHAT ABOUT THE MODELS THEN?

I had the pleasure of riding almost all the motorcycles during our trip to the Huansong headquarters, and detail all of them below:

#### Ranger RX2000

The Ranger is what we call a basic cruiser. It has all of the key ingredients such as a low-slung design, long wheelbase and a hardtail look. Fuel is carried in an 18-litre tank while the overall bike weighs in at 350kg.

The RX2000 is undoubtedly a good-looking bike, but it is no Harley-Davidson. There are certain things about it that feel a little rough around the edges such as the welding, switch quality and even the speedometer.

You also feel the heft of the bike when you first get on it, but that is to be expected. The gearshifts are a little spongy while the brakes and the suspension do a decent job.

Our ride was limited to the factory vicinity which is not exactly the most ideal situation to show the true capability of a motorcycle, but good enough to show that the Ranger switches directions easily, delivers good power instantaneously and can come to a stop on a dime.

The engine reminds me of Harley-Davidsons from a little over a decade ago where you felt the vibrations and even some of the heat, but it made me feel nostalgic because modern Harley engines are just way too



smooth bordering lacking character.

#### Rover RL2000

This is basically the touring version of the RX2000. It comes with an upper case and a backrest as well as arm rests for the passenger, a large fairing, leg shield, footboards instead of pegs and side cases. It too has an 18-litre fuel tank and weighs in at a hefty 420kg.

Riding this needed some strength. Even picking it up needed some effort but that is to be expected considering the weight.

Since the engine is the same as the Ranger RX, the shifts and power delivery largely felt

the same.

But handling, braking and suspension characteristics are entirely different since this is a significantly heavier bike.

Low speed handling is not as graceful as its Harley equivalent, but considering what X-Wedge has accomplished from the get-go, I believe that is just a matter of time.

#### Vanguard VT2000

This has a single front wheel like a regular motorcycle but two rear wheels like a car, which makes this a trike.

Based on the Rover RL2000, like the previous two, it too has an 18-litre tank and weighs in at a whopping 505kg.

Riding a trike of any sorts is always a fun experience. You don't have to worry about the balance and can just completely immerse in the experience.

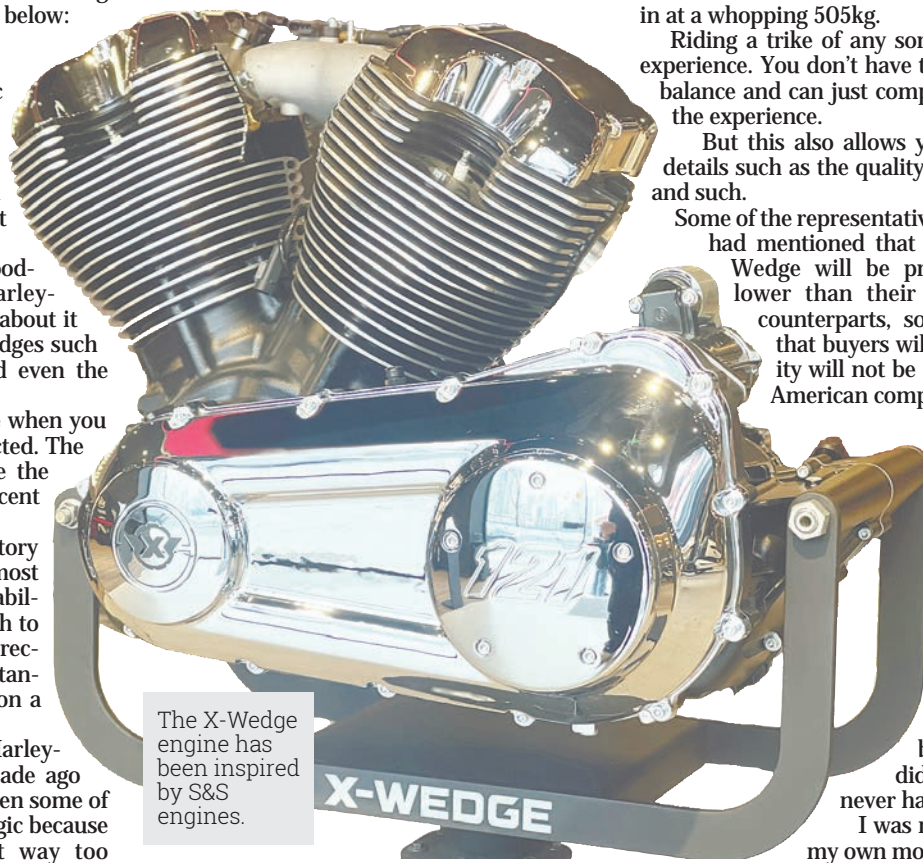
But this also allows you to soak in the details such as the quality of the motorcycle and such.

Some of the representatives of the company had mentioned that all bikes from X-Wedge will be priced significantly lower than their Harley-Davidson counterparts, so that also means that buyers will accept that quality will not be up to par with the American competitors.

So, the Vanguard trike offers everything that we love about motorcycling but then adds an extra wheel at the back.

I have never personally ridden a trike over long distances but not because I did not want to, but never had the chance to.

I was not going to spend my own money on one since a



The X-Wedge engine has been inspired by S&S engines.

regular motorcycle appeals more to me, but I can also understand the charm of a trike for some.

And when it is launched in Malaysia, the X-Wedge Vanguard will open up the world of a trike to a lot more people because the only brand that offers a trike is Harley-Davidson, and those things cost upwards of RM200,000. The Vanguard will cost a fraction of that.

#### Voyager VS2000

This is essentially the RX2000 but with a side car, so it shares the same common features. The only main difference here is the weight. Because it has a sidecar, this model tips the scales at 490kg.

As mentioned earlier in the article, the Voyager is basic the Ranger RX but with a sidecar. Unfortunately, this will not make it to Malaysia which is a bit of a pity. Riding the Voyager is a lot of fun as well, but right-hand turns can be challenging as it feels like the car wants to flip over.

So, you definitely have to change your approach to motorcycling if you want a side car.

#### Walker WR1000

This is the only machine in the X-Wedge line-up that is different. It breaks away from the cruiser design and conventions and in fact looks more like a Can-Am Spyder than a classic cruiser with two-wheels up ahead and one at the rear.

It is also powered by an entirely different engine. A 975cc V-Twin engine powers the Walker, with power rated at 81hp and 80Nm of torque.

Power is delivered to the rear wheel through a CVT transmission, and it also has a reverse gear.

Riding the Walker is similar to riding the Can-Am, you need to muscle the handlebars when you want to change directions. It is not as powerful as the bigger engine in the cruisers, but it definitely has some grunt.

The CVT transmission works seamlessly, and it otherwise seems quite comfortable as well, though a proper road test will better reveal its character.

### WHEN WILL X-WEDGE BE AVAILABLE HERE?

The cogs are already turning, dealers are being appointed, and showroom locations are being identified already.

When it makes it here, you can expect a proper buying experience with dedicated 3S centres, very much like that of premium brands like Harley-Davidson, Ducati and even BMW.

You will only buy X-Wedge motorcycles from their showrooms rather than from multi-brand shops. That alone should tell you what X-Wedge aspires to be.

Their motorcycles don't only look good, but the entire buying experience screams premium from the moment you step into the showroom. Except that you don't have to worry about paying premium prices.



# Milestone in electrification journey

New Volvo EX90, updated XC90 SUVs hits the road

**VOLVO** Car Malaysia has unveiled its latest flagship electric SUV, the Volvo EX90, marking a significant milestone in the brand's electrification journey.

Introduced in the high-spec Ultra Twin variant, the EX90 is touted as Volvo's most advanced and safest vehicle to date, offering cutting-edge technology, exceptional performance, and premium Scandinavian design.

The EX90 represents several industry firsts for Volvo. It is the company's first model equipped with built-in lidar technology and the first to be entirely software-driven, laying the foundation for future full autonomous driving.

Designed with efficiency in mind, its aerodynamic profile incorporates features such as flush glazing and integrated door handles, contributing to a low drag coefficient of 0.29 without compromising its robust SUV stance.

Powered by dual motors and Performance all-wheel drive software, the EX90 Ultra Twin produces 517hp and 910Nm of torque, enabling it to accelerate from 0 to 100kph in just 4.9 seconds.

Its energy comes from a 111 kWh lithium-ion NMC battery (107 kWh usable), which provides a WLTP-certified range of up to 623km.

Ultra-fast DC charging allows the battery to

be replenished from 10% to 80% in approximately 30 minutes.

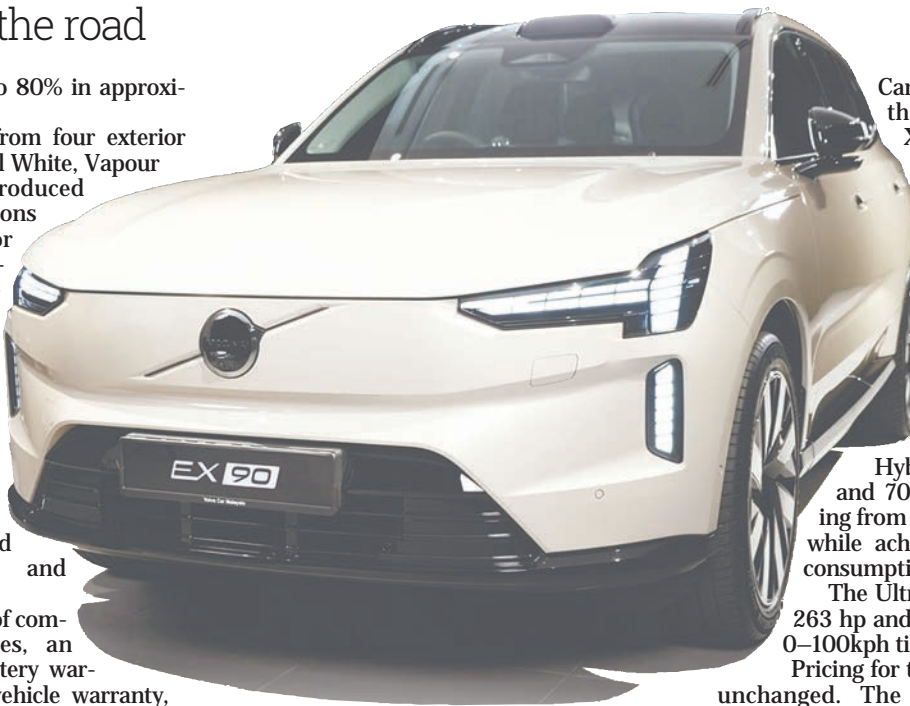
Customers may select from four exterior colours: Onyx Black, Crystal White, Vapour Grey, and the newly introduced Sand Dune. Interior options include Charcoal or Cardamom Nordico upholstery, paired with sustainably sourced FSC™-certified Birch wood trim.

Volvo has placed a strong emphasis on safety with the EX90, declaring it the safest vehicle it has ever produced.

The Volvo EX90 is priced at RM442,888 in Peninsular Malaysia and RM442,648 in Sabah and Sarawak.

It comes with five years of complimentary digital services, an eight-year high-voltage battery warranty, unlimited mileage vehicle warranty, and 24-hour roadside assistance.

The first 50 customers will receive a complimentary wallbox charger and sunshade package worth RM5,000.



Car Malaysia also introduced the refreshed 2025 Volvo XC90, aimed at customers who prefer plug-in hybrid or mild hybrid options.

The new XC90 features updated styling, a redesigned dashboard, and expanded digital interfaces, including an 11.2-inch central touchscreen, a 12.3-inch digital driver cluster, and a head-up display.

The Ultra T8 Plug-in Hybrid variant offers 462hp and 709Nm of torque, accelerating from 0 to 100kph in 5.3 seconds while achieving an impressive fuel consumption of 1.8L/100km.

The Ultra B5 Mild Hybrid delivers 263 hp and 390 Nm of torque, with a 0–100kph time of 7.7 seconds.

Pricing for the updated XC90 remains unchanged. The Ultra T8 is priced at RM434,888 in Peninsular Malaysia and RM434,457 in Sabah and Sarawak. The B5 Mild Hybrid is available at RM418,888 and RM418,457, respectively.

## Updated Volvo XC90

Alongside the launch of the EX90, Volvo

## Hyundai returns to physical controls

**IN A TIME** when the automotive industry increasingly leans into digital interfaces, Hyundai is taking a measured stance against the overuse of touchscreen technology in modern car interiors.

While many automakers continue to integrate oversized screens in place of traditional tactile controls, Hyundai has signaled a renewed focus on driver ergonomics and safety.

The company has acknowledged growing consumer frustration over the excessive reliance on digital displays, noting that an overdependence on touchscreens can lead to driver distraction and discomfort.

The automaker intends to retain physical buttons for frequently used features to ensure safer and more intuitive control for drivers.

The priority is to keep drivers' attention at eye level rather than on central displays.

By preserving certain physical controls, Hyundai aims to leverage drivers' muscle memory, enabling adjustments without diverting their gaze from the road.

However, Hyundai's recent unveiling of its Pleos software platform suggests a more complex reality.



Preview images of upcoming Hyundai vehicles showed a dominant, Tesla-style infotainment screen positioned prominently in the dashboard.

However, beneath the display, a row of placeholder physical buttons was visible, indicating that the company has not entirely abandoned tactile functionality.

These buttons are expected to be functional in production models beginning in the second quarter of 2026.

## Ferrari set to revive manual transmission

**FERRARI** is preparing to bring back the legendary gated manual gearbox, marking a major shift in its performance philosophy after more than ten years of focusing purely on speed and technology.

For years, Ferrari resisted reintroducing manual transmissions, favouring dual-clutch gearboxes that deliver lightning-fast shifts and maximum performance.

But now, the company says it has reached the limits of what today's technology – and human bodies – can handle.

Gianmaria Fulgenzi, Ferrari's Head of Product Development, explained that performance levels have peaked. With cars like the SF90 XX hitting 0–100kph in just 2.4 seconds, further gains in acceleration are becoming less meaningful – especially for rear-wheel-drive models like the 296 GTB, which already produce over 800hp.

Ferrari has found that increasing power beyond 900hp presents serious challenges. Not only do tyres and chassis struggle to keep up, but the forces placed on drivers are so intense that it would require Formula 1-level physical training just to enjoy the car. Fulgenzi said this isn't realistic or desirable for most Ferrari owners.

As a result, Ferrari is changing direction. Instead of chasing higher numbers, the brand is shifting toward more emotional and engaging driving experiences.

This has opened the door for the return of the gated manual, likely in a future model that prioritises driving feel over outright speed.

The manual gearbox is expected to be offered in a future Icona model – Ferrari's exclusive line of limited-edition cars that celebrate the brand's history.

## Porsche celebrates anniversary in style



**PORSCHE MALAYSIA**, under Sime Darby Auto Performance, is marking its 15th anniversary with the highly anticipated debut of the latest generation Porsche 911.

Two new variants – the 911 Carrera and the innovative 911 Carrera 4 GTS – have officially been introduced and are now available for order across Malaysia. Prices begin at RM1.43 million for the 911 Carrera and RM1.89 million for the 911 Carrera 4 GTS.

The headline innovation of this new generation lies within the 911 Carrera 4 GTS, which introduces a cutting-edge hybrid powertrain developed from Porsche's extensive motorsport experience.

The T-Hybrid system, as it is called, integrates a newly engineered electric exhaust gas turbocharger.

By placing an electric motor between the turbo's compressor and turbine wheel, the unit can generate immediate boost pressure and double as a generator, converting exhaust gas flow into up to 11kW of electrical energy.

### Carrera 4 GTS

The hybrid system's internal configuration reflects Porsche's commitment to lightweight engineering. A permanent magnet synchronous motor is built into the new eight-speed dual-clutch transmission (PDK), providing up to 150Nm of extra torque and a 40kW performance boost even from idle.

Power is supplied by a high-voltage

battery capable of storing up to 1.9 kWh of energy, operating on a 400-volt system, while a separate lithium-ion battery supports the standard 12V electrical system.

At the heart of the 911 Carrera 4 GTS is a newly developed 3.6-litre boxer engine.

Enhanced with VarioCam camshaft control and rocker-arm valve actuation, the engine produces 485PS and 570Nm on its own.

Despite the addition of electrification, the new 911 Carrera 4 GTS has gained only 50kg in weight.

### 911 Carrera

The 911 variant retains its 3.0-litre twin-turbocharged boxer engine, but benefits from several technical upgrades.

Borrowing the intercooler from the higher-end Turbo models and gaining turbochargers that were previously exclusive to GTS models, the updated engine now delivers 394PS and 450Nm of torque.

These enhancements enable the 911 Carrera Coupe to sprint from 0 to 100kph in just 4.1 seconds, or 3.9 seconds with the Sport Chrono package, and reach a top speed of 294kph – modest gains in both acceleration and maximum velocity.

The arrival of these new 911 models not only marks a significant technical evolution for the legendary sports car but also serves as a proud milestone for Porsche Malaysia.



# Dashing start

Jetour committed to delivering high-value mobility solutions

**JETOUR** Malaysia has officially marked its debut in the country's competitive automotive landscape with the unveiling of the all-new Dashing SUV, introduced in an elegant launch ceremony at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre (Mitec).

The Dashing represents Jetour's first foray into Malaysia's SUV segment, embodying a contemporary design philosophy, refined features, and a commitment to delivering high-value mobility solutions tailored to Malaysian preferences.

Crafted as a five-seater SUV with striking proportions, the Dashing features a sleek 3D coupe fastback silhouette measuring 4,590mm in length, 1,900mm in width, and 1,685mm in height, slightly smaller than a Proton X70.

The Dashing is equipped with 19-inch alloy wheels designed to provide superior road grip and stability, contributing to assured driving across varying road conditions.

Enhancing the open-cabin atmosphere



is a panoramic 75-inch sunroof, offering a connection to the outdoors while preserving the comfort expected of a premium SUV.

The SUV also features lane change warnings, rear cross traffic alert systems, and door opening warnings to protect occupants from oncoming vehicles.

Under the bonnet, the Dashing is powered by a 1.5-litre turbocharged engine, producing 156PS and 230Nm of torque. This powertrain delivers responsive urban acceleration and composed highway cruising, catering to everyday driving demands.

The SUV will be offered in two variants – Comfort and Prime – with the Comfort variant priced at RM109,800, and the Prime variant goes for RM116,800.

Both variants will be available in five exterior finishes: Carbon Black, Khaki White, Aurora Green, Phantom Grey, and Hematite Red. These are complemented by dual-tone interior treatments with red accents.

Standard packaging will include five times free service, seven years/150,000km vehicle warranty coverage and 10 years/1,000,000km engine

warranty coverage. Additionally, the first 500 customers get a RM2,000 cash rebate.

In preparation for its Malaysian rollout, Jetour has already established more than 30 sales and service outlets across the country, with over 30 additional 3S and 4S centres set to open by the end of 2025.

These centres will span both Peninsular and East Malaysia, including key regions such as Selangor, Penang, Johor, Sabah, Sarawak, Melaka, Seremban, and Ipoh.



## Mazda launch MX-5 35th Anniversary Edition

**BERMAZ MOTOR**, the exclusive distributor of Mazda vehicles in Malaysia, introduces the highly anticipated Mazda MX-5 35th Anniversary Edition – a tribute to 35 years of driving joy, timeless design, and the spirit of Jinba-Ittai, Mazda's philosophy of perfect harmony between driver and machine.

In celebration of this legacy, the 35th Anniversary Edition makes its debut in Malaysia in limited numbers. This commemorative model combines heritage-inspired details with modern upgrades in performance, design, and connectivity – making it a collector's dream.

Mazda's Kodo: Soul of Motion

design language is brought to life in this exclusive edition, particularly through the debut of the Artisan Red Premium exterior.

Created using Mazda's advanced Takuminuri painting technology, this deep and radiant red finish enhances the car's sculpted lines with a sense of movement, strength, and elegance – even while stationary.

The 2025 Mazda MX-5 range also sees key design and equipment enhancements. Exterior updates include redesigned LED headlamps with recessed low beams, giving the car a unique "eye-like" expression.

Inside, all variants benefit from a newly designed meter cluster with

improved readability and a frameless auto-dimming rearview mirror.

Under the hood, the 2025 MX-5 RF continues with the spirited Skyactiv-G 2.0L engine, delivering 181hp and 205Nm of torque with a top speed of 200kph.

Pricing for the Mazda MX-5 RF (Manual/Auto) starts from RM293,000.00, and the Mazda MX-5 35th Anniversary Edition is priced at RM315,000.00.

All new Mazda models come with a 5-Year manufacturer warranty and 5-Year Free Maintenance (including parts, labour, and lubricants, excluding Mazda B50), with a mileage limit of 100,000km or five years, whichever comes first.

## Hot-hatch Yaris gets a boost

**THE** Toyota GR Yaris has received a comprehensive round of updates for 2025, as the Japanese carmaker continues to refine its rally-bred hot hatch five years after its original debut.

Following the early 2024 facelift, this latest evolution introduces a host of aerodynamic enhancements, mechanical refinements, and expanded safety features aimed at reinforcing the model's status as a stand-out in the performance hatchback segment.

The most striking addition is a newly developed rear wing,

which has been designed to improve high-speed stability and enhance braking performance.

A new bonnet, made from aluminium rather than the carbon fibre of the GRMN version, now features a centrally mounted air duct to assist with cooling the engine more effectively.

A redesigned front spoiler lip and an adapted fuel tank under-cover also form part of the performance-oriented upgrade.

Under the bonnet, the 1.6-litre turbocharged three-cylinder engine now benefits from improved cooling. Meanwhile,

the eight-speed automatic transmission – introduced with the facelifted model a year prior – has been recalibrated to offer quicker gear changes and more immediate responsiveness, particularly when operating in manual Sport mode.

The updated GR Yaris is priced from ¥3,560,000 (RM113,900) in Japan for the entry-level manual version. The range-topping automatic variant carries a price tag of ¥5,330,000 (RM170,500). Toyota has not yet confirmed whether these updates will be made available to international markets, including Malaysia.





JayMen's PIX-ZLE Page      PUZZLES with Pictures ... In Other Words!

All puzzles are created by **Jay Menon**.  
He runs **RoadRunners MS**  
(Treasure Hunts/ Team Building)  
He is Past Chair of **Malaysian Mensa**  
*Interested in taking the test?*  
(<https://mensa.my/test-info>)  
He is co-founder of the **Treasure Hunt Society of Malaysia**  
(<https://www.facebook.com/thsmalaysia>)  
He can be reached at jay1men@gmail.com



## Your weekend horoscope



**ARIES**  
March 21 – April 19

Basking in good fortune, you are welcoming financial luck with open arms this week. You are laying a strong foundation for future wins. Wisdom is guiding you to spend thoughtfully, keeping balance in check. Healthy habits are boosting your prosperity.



**TAURUS**  
April 20 – May 20

Embracing bold ideas, you are stepping beyond old traditions with confidence. You are navigating small tensions with elders or colleagues gracefully. Financial clarity is empowering your sense of worth. Patience is helping you stay focused and calm.



**GEMINI**  
May 21 – June 20

Bursting with energy, you are defending your vision with passion and nearing a big breakthrough. You are sparking creativity by reconnecting with friends or playful moments. Prioritising mental health is keeping you steady. Balance is fuelling your success this week.



**CANCER**  
June 22 – July 22

Feeling lighter, you are clearing emotional clutter and seeing things clearly. You are spotting hidden truths and acting with kindness to protect your boundaries. Quick decisions are strengthening your confidence. Connections are growing deeper with every step.



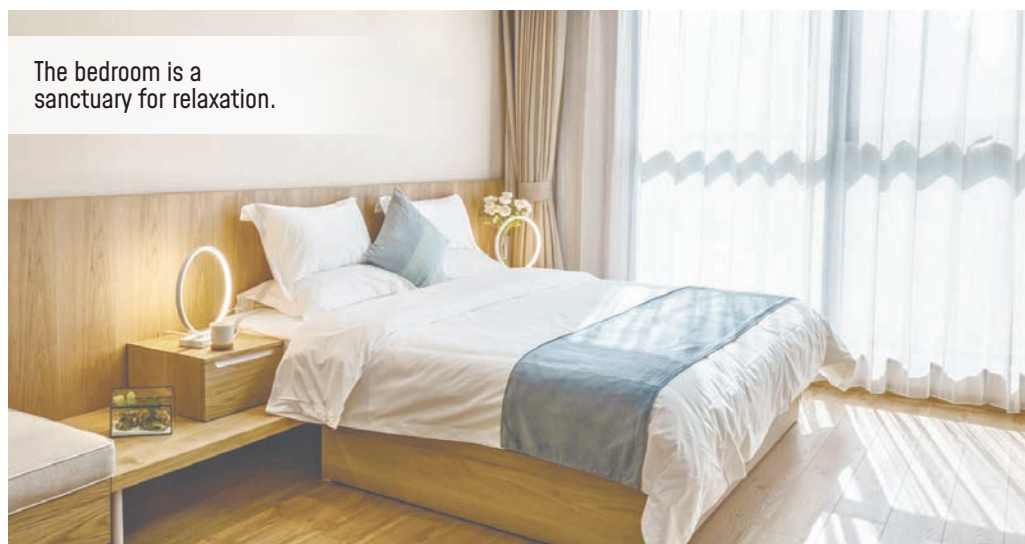
**LEO**  
July 23 – Aug 22

Growing wiser, you are choosing honesty and building stronger bonds with those close to you. You are learning from slip-ups, embracing them as part of growth. Accountability is lifting your spirits. Trust is blooming as you move forward with grace.



**VIRGO**  
Aug 23 – Sept 22

Easing up on perfection, you are embracing your humanity and finding joy in mistakes. Family is reminding you of life's simple beauty through warm reunions. A fresh outlook is guiding your path. Clarity is shaping a brighter, lighter journey.



The bedroom is a sanctuary for relaxation.

## Sleep right with feng shui

### Strategic bedroom setup to promote deep rest, mental clarity

**THE** bedroom is more than just a place to sleep. It is a sanctuary for rest, rejuvenation and personal well-being. In *feng shui*, the bedroom plays a crucial role in energy restoration, directly influencing health, relationships and overall success in life. A well-arranged bedroom promotes deep rest, mental clarity and emotional stability, while a poorly designed one can lead to fatigue, stress and stagnation in life.

Unlike other areas of the home, the bedroom is where we spend a significant amount of passive time, allowing the body to absorb and replenish *qi*. If the energy of this space is disrupted, it can affect sleep quality, decision-making and personal relationships.

Proper *feng shui* in the bedroom ensures a peaceful and supportive environment, setting the foundation for long-term success.

#### Ideal bed placement for stability

The positioning of the bed is one of the most important aspects of bedroom *feng shui*, as it determines how *qi* interacts with the body during sleep.

- **Headboard against a solid wall:** The bed should be placed against a stable wall for support, providing a sense of security and grounding energy.

- **Avoid sleeping in line with the door:** This is known as the "coffin position" (*guancai wei*), where the feet are pointed directly towards the bedroom door, symbolising energy loss and unrest. If unavoidable, a small rug at the foot of the bed can help slow down the outflow of *qi*.

- **Balanced space on both sides:** Leave equal space on both sides of the bed rather than pushing it against a corner. This ensures harmony in relationships and allows *qi* to circulate freely.

#### Declutter for mental and emotional clarity

A messy bedroom creates stagnant energy that can lead to stress, confusion and difficulty making progress in life.

- **Keep the space under the bed clear:** Storing items under the bed blocks *qi* flow and can subconsciously weigh down energy levels.

- **Organise personal items:** Unfinished projects, work materials or excessive decorations can create mental clutter, making it harder to relax. Keep the space minimal and purposeful.

- **Limit excessive furniture:** A crowded bedroom restricts energy movement. Maintain a balance between functionality and open space.

#### Soft and calm ambience for restful sleep

The bedroom should evoke a sense of calmness, promoting deep relaxation.

- **Ensure proper ventilation:** Fresh air circulation helps maintain a healthy flow of *qi*, reducing the feeling of stagnation.

- **Soft and gentle lighting:** Harsh or overly bright lights create unnecessary stimulation, affecting sleep quality. Opt for warm and adjustable lighting to create a peaceful atmosphere.

- **Comfortable bedding and mattress:** The quality of your bed affects the body's ability to recharge. A good mattress and clean, comfortable bedding enhance restful sleep.

#### Strengthening relationship energy

For those in relationships or seeking one, bedroom *feng shui* can influence emotional connections.

- **Pair items in twos:** Symbolising harmony, having two bedside tables, two pillows or even pairs of decorative items encourages balanced relationships.

- **Avoid work-related items in the bedroom:** Bringing work into the bedroom can create stress and disrupt intimacy. Keep workspaces separate from areas meant for rest.



**LIBRA**  
Sept 23 – Oct 22

Juggling exciting projects, you are focusing on building a strong network with ease. You are sharing wisdom with younger peers, confident in your unique value. New connections are sparking respect and friendship. Opportunities are unfolding through shared goals.



**SCORPIO**  
Oct 23 – Nov 21

Shining as a leader, you are embracing a bold new role at work with infectious energy. You are guiding projects with enthusiasm and fresh ideas. Gentle feedback is inspiring your team to thrive. Integrity is weaving magic into your efforts.



**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 22 – Dec 21

Overflowing with kindness, you are sharing resources to lift others up this week. Your generosity is touching hearts and inspiring hope. Emotional wisdom is guiding your every move. You are glowing as a beacon of light for those in need.



**CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22 – Jan 19

Chasing big dreams, you are embracing spontaneity with a fearless spirit. You are tackling challenges with clever solutions and quick thinking. Opportunities are flowing as you seize the moment. Confidence is driving your bold vision forward.



**AQUARIUS**  
Jan 20 – Feb 18

Rising above challenges, you are finding strength in unexpected support from a wise woman. You are navigating financial surprises with grace and calm. Teamwork is improving as you set high standards. Kindness is smoothing out rough patches.



**PISCES**  
Feb 19 – March 20

Welcoming big shifts, you are breaking free from past confusion with renewed energy. You are healing from old hurts, stepping boldly into the world. Rejuvenation is fueling your focus. Victory is shining bright as you empower yourself. Your time to shine is nigh.

*This article is contributed by  
feng shui consultant Daniel Siew*

*This is contributed by  
Mystic Kali Tarot*



# Rose 'tormented' by Masters near miss

**JUSTIN ROSE** has admitted that he is "tormented" by the thought of what might have been at the Masters after his agonising playoff defeat to Rory McIlroy.

Rose produced a superb final-round 66 to match his rival at the top of the leaderboard, but fell short when the Northern Irishman birdied the first play-off hole to complete a career grand slam.

While McIlroy's hunt for a fifth major dominated the discussion over the weekend, the Englishman has endured his own woes at Augusta, having now finished second on three occasions.

Rose has twice been denied a green jacket in a playoff having also lost to Sergio Garcia in 2017 having let the opportunity to take the tournament outright in the final round slip with a bogey at the 17th.

The 44-year-old has also twice finished

second at The Open, including last year at Royal Troon, and conceded that his run of near misses is tough to take.

"(There are) mixed emotions for sure," Rose reflected on the Masters. "A lot of outpouring from people with a lot of positive comments coming at me so trying to absorb that and absorb the week, but the same time looking at my phone and wishing there was a different message there."

"Having been in that situation before and even more this time, I could really sense what it would be like to win it. I was right there on the edge of winning it obviously."

"I certainly don't feel down in any way, shape or form because of the performance I was able to put in and how I was able to feel putting in that performance, but just sort of... don't know

Englishman was pipped in a playoff at Augusta for a second time in his career

what the right word is, tormented probably by the thought of what might have been.

"I take that loss pretty badly. But listen, I was a stone's throw away from winning the Open, winning the Masters."

"I would have been going for a grand slam at the PGA (Championship). It's like, it can be that close. I've got to believe that."

"The last two majors I've been right there and been beaten by the top players in the world at the peak of their game."

"But on both occasions I've felt like I've stepped up, I've hit the shots, I've played well, I've felt great, and I'm doing the right things to win. So just got to keep the level high enough to keep creating those opportunities." – The Independent



Justin Rose.  
– AFP/PICT

## Russell welcomes Mercedes signing Max



**GEORGE RUSSELL** would have no concerns if Mercedes tried to sign Max Verstappen as he believes he is a match for any driver on the grid.

Verstappen's tricky start to the season at Red Bull has again ignited speculation over his future after Mercedes boss Toto Wolff's very public pursuit of the Dutchman last season.

Wolff made no secret of his desire to sign the four-time world champion to replace Lewis Hamilton but said that was in the past after bringing in talented youngster Kimi Antonelli.

Russell has had a superb start to the season, claiming three podiums in four races and putting his car in amongst the dominant McLarens.

The 27-year-old is out of contract at the end of this season but is confident his performances mean he need not fear Verstappen.

"Why wouldn't they want to sign Max? It's totally understandable," Russell said in Jeddah.

"He's the best at the moment. He's a four-time world champion. That's not anything against me or Kimi. There's two drivers for every team and he is one person."

"So that doesn't concern me one bit because the performance is my currency and right now I think I am performing as good as anyone on this grid."

"I am very happy. Many drivers have contracts but the fact is that if you don't perform, the teams will find a way to get you out of that. When the time is right we'll discuss a contract."

"I have been teammate with a world champion for three years, the greatest of all time for three years (Hamilton)."

"I believe I can beat anybody given the right chance and that is your power."

Russell does not believe a title challenge is on the cards but is determined to one day climb that ladder.

"This has been a strong start to the season but I'm in my seventh season of F1 now and I'm very pleased with my results so far but I am not dreaming of standing P2 or P3," he added.

"I am dreaming of fighting for a world championship, winning a world championship and that is what I am working towards." – The Independent

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Jobs

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- For Senior/Assistant Manager – with supervisory skills.
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- Ensure all maintenance activities comply with relevant health, safety and environmental regulations.
- Coordinate with external contractors and vendors for specialised maintenance and repair works.
- Monitor and optimise energy usage to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Assist in preparation and management of maintenance budget.
- Assist in any ad-hoc operations and admin tasks assigned by Management from time to time.

#### Requirements

- Diploma/Degree in Building or Facilities Management, Safety & Health or related field.
- Additional certificate: Electrical Chargeman, preferably A4 or minimum A1 would be an added advantage.
- Minimum of one year of experience in Building Maintenance or Safety & Health.
- Adequate technical knowledge of building systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing etc).
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  - Building and sustaining strong working relationship with advertising agencies and clients.
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# History repeating itself

Madrid's signing of Mbappe made the team worse, shows *Los Blancos* still cannot resist the allure of a superstar

BY MIGUEL DELANEY

AMID all the recriminations within Real Madrid, and some "ruthless" words in the Bernabeu dressing room, there were also some surprising words from Thibaut Courtois. The goalkeeper had been one of the few players who had performed to standard in the Arsenal elimination, so he could speak with authority. But few expected this.

"We put in a lot of crosses, but this year we didn't have a Joselu, a natural striker."

So, in "year one" of Kylian Mbappe, as the local media put it about one of the most expensive players in history, what Real Madrid were actually missing was a 35-year-old journeyman emergency signing in his position.

There's obviously a bit more to it: Courtois himself is well aware of that, given he also spoke about how "you have to be self-critical and look at everything".

"I feel we are a team but we must have more team plays and not everything individual," the goalkeeper continued.

Or, as the line went in Madrid, there was one thing missing from all the "ambiente de remontada". Amid all the talk of a famous comeback, what was missing was the actual football.

Madrid had to keep playing crosses, and unimaginatively going out wide, because they didn't have those players capable of doing more. They didn't have creativity, imagination or simply direction. Arsenal were easily able to withstand it all, because Madrid couldn't really build anything.

It wouldn't be the first time that the club's football project has got lost among other elements in the Florentino Perez era.

Many have long attempted to impose on the veteran president the importance of how the delicate chemistry of a team actually works, but he has never really got it. His football understanding has always been described as "superficial".

So it was in the summer, which represented a classic case of someone being unable to escape their nature, of history repeating itself.

Over the previous five years, Perez had empow-

ered chief scout Juni Calafat to maximise an evident aptitude for team-building. The Brazilian put a plan in place, that involved careful and patient selection of exactly the right players, usually based on young potential.

It led to the rebirth of the club, a rise all the more impressive given that the change in strategy had come out of desperation that Madrid could no longer keep up any more.

And into this plan they dropped a player they didn't need, with Mbappe. It was written on these pages as long ago as November that the French star represented a modern equivalent of Perez insisting on David Beckham in 2003: another signing that wasn't necessarily motivated by pure football.

Perez had essentially become emboldened by Madrid's return to Champions League glory, so couldn't help regressing to what he knows best and wants most: stars. The word for this in Spanish is "ilusion", which is excitement from spectacle, but Perez has never really understood that true "ilusion" in football actually comes from the play you produce.

It's why Calafat's investment in youth made such sense, even if it felt like it went against Madrid's sense of self. Perez remembered what he was, and forgot what the team is.

There's almost a morality play element.

None of this is hindsight either. It was being said by people close to the very top of the club last season, right up to the eve of the victorious Champions League final win over Borussia Dortmund.

Many maintained there was

no obvious place for Mbappe in the team, but that was accompanied by a common line. "Our president, he can get this star, so he wants him."

Mbappe's first season has now resulted in Madrid going from European champions to going out in the quarterfinals, the French star not even finishing the game.

There is also a basic logic. Madrid had one of the best left forwards in the world in Vinicius Junior, but really needed to replace one of the best midfielders in the world, in Toni Kroos. Calafat had previously been obsessed with this succession plan, putting a lot of thought into which young talents were right to replace the club's totems like Benzema and Kroos.

That instead went out the window, as another left forward was signed in Mbappe, and that central

role went empty. Hence Wednesday's absurd performance, where Madrid kept trying to just get the ball to their fast players, without having the sophistication to actually direct them properly, to maximise that ability.

The need to accommodate Mbappe has meant so many players being moved out of their best positions, to make the team disjointed and messy.

The temptation here is to singularly criticise Mbappe, especially amid the recent farce of his lawyers last week staging a press conference about his legal row with PSG.

The Qatar-owned club have almost been laughing at how they have gone to a new level without him, and it would be another irony if the Qatar-owned club won the Champions League and Madrid lose it just as he switches. That hasn't been seen since Zlatan Ibrahimovic left 2008-09 Internazionale for 2009-10 Barcelona.

Amid all that, there has been this debate about how the stars don't move enough. Much has been made about how Arsenal outran Madrid in both legs, and that despite two totally different approaches. In the first leg, they dominated possession and ran 12.7km more. On Wednesday, they ceded possession and ran 8.5km more.

That isn't new either. By November, one senior player was complaining to friends – and anyone who would listen – that the forward line does not run enough.

Mbappe and Vinicius have run the lowest number of kilometres per 90 for forwards in the Champions League this season, at 4.97km and 5.47km, respectively. It's fine if you have one. Two is a problem against modern pressing systems. Another telling moment came on Wednesday when Jude Bellingham stood watching Martin Odegaard glide past him.

While those close to the squad insist the mentality is good, there are clearly grounds for grudges and splits. Again, it's that delicate team chemistry. And now Trent Alexander-Arnold is to be dropped into this, potentially taking abrasive club legend Dani Carvajal's place. Typical compromises may see Alexander-Arnold moved into the centre, which might make a certain sense. He has that ability for imaginative passes they missed against Arsenal. There is still a difference between that and actually running a game.

It comes back to the football. It always does. Madrid should know that better than anyone. Perez, evidently, still hasn't realised. – The Independent



Kylian Mbappe (right) waves to the fans next to Real Madrid's president Florentino Perez during a first appearance as a Real Madrid player at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in Madrid on July 16, 2024. – AFP/PIC



# Amorim 'inspired' by 1999 miracle

Awe-inspiring comeback against Lyon could only draw comparisons to the Champions League heroics of '99

BY WILL CASTLE

**RUBEN AMORIM** has pointed to the Champions League heroics of 1999 as his inspiration behind another famous night in Europe for Manchester United.

There are few more famous comebacks in football history than the one staged on that special night at the Nou Camp, as Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer struck in extratime to stun Bayern Munich, overturning their early 1-0 advantage and lifting the most coveted prize on the continent.

Friday's surreal turnaround at Old Trafford drew obvious parallels to 1999. With Lyon 4-2 to the good, United required three goals in extra time to win the tie, and only had six minutes to do so.

But after Bruno Fernandes tucked away his penalty to bring United one from parity, Kobbie Mainoo and Harry Maguire sent Old Trafford into raptures as they bagged in the 120th and 121st minutes, flipping the clash on its head and sending the Red Devils into the last four.

While not exactly on the same magnitude as the famed night in Barcelona, Amorim said the Class of '99 motivated him to lead the charge on his own storied comeback.

"I was watching again the 1999 documentary to have some inspiration for these moments," Amorim revealed

to *TNT Sports* after the 5-4 win against 10-man Lyon.

"It was a great night – 4-2 with one more player you think it's over, but here it is never over. I felt here everything is possible."

United looked to be cruising into the semifinals after taking a 2-0 first half lead through Diogo Dalot and Manuel Ugarte, only to be pegged back twice in

the space of seven minutes as Corentin Tolisso and Nicolas Tagliafico put Lyon back on terms.

The visitors went into extratime a man down, with Tolisso seeing red for a second bookable offence, but nevertheless managed to bag the next two goals with Rayan Cherki and Alexandre Lacazette seeming to take the game out of sight with 11 minutes to play.

But that wasn't to be for Paulo Fonseca's side, with Fernandes, Maguire and Mainoo all firing in the dying minutes of extra time to keep United's dreams of silverware alive.

Amorim's side will now take on Athletic Bilbao in the Europa League semifinals, hoping to deny the Basque club a home final at San Mames on May 21. – The Independent



Man United players celebrate with their fans after Harry Maguire (2nd left) scores their fifth goal against Lyon in the Uefa Europa league quarterfinal second leg. – AFP/PIC

## Maguire believes United career summed up by 'maddest game'

**HARRY MAGUIRE** says the "maddest game" of his life summed up his topsy-turvy Manchester United career, with the defender desperate to follow his extra-time winner with Europa League glory.

Nobody watching at Old Trafford or from afar will forget Friday's chaotic quarterfinal second leg against Lyon as Ruben Amorim's side blew a two-goal lead and headed towards an extra time exit to 10 men.

The visitors scored four without reply but United's inherent never-say-die attitude came to the fore, with Bruno Fernandes' 114th-minute penalty bringing hope and substitute Kobbie Mainoo's impressive equaliser sparking bedlam in the 120th minute.

More drama was to follow, with Maguire guiding home Casemiro's cross as the Red Devils became the first team in history to score two goals in the 120th minute of a major European match.

"I've had some amazing moments at this club," said the matchwinner, who has tasted some incredible highs and been subjected to mockery during some crushing lows.

"I've been here six years now and I've had some great times. Some

bad times as well. I think that game pretty much summed up my time at this club, to be honest!

"It was an incredible feeling to score that winner in such an important game, in a game that was full of emotion and the strangest, maddest game I've ever played in or witnessed, to be honest.

"I think the lads showed great spirit and fight in the end to dig in and turn it around."

Maguire scored a last-gasp equaliser in the Europa League at Porto in October and February's stoppage-time winner against former club Leicester in the FA Cup, as well as the League winner against Ipswich later that month.

But Friday was the most astonishing moment by far, keeping United's hopes of Europa League glory alive as the side 14th in the Premier League look to save their season with silverware that brings Champions League qualification.

"It's important we do as well as we can in this competition," Maguire said.

"Listen, we're only in the semifinal, we're playing Athletic Bilbao. I don't know if people are saying they're the favourites to win the

competition, but we'll go into it with a great belief to win the game.

"But we're only in the semifinal, so we don't want to get carried away in terms of winning the competition.

"This season it's been so difficult for everyone involved, all the fans, all the players, the staff.

"It's just been nowhere near good enough and when you get moments like that, and memories you create like that, I think it's so important for the fans to go home with a smile on their faces."

It is a case of Bilbao of bust for United given the Europa League final is also held at the home of semifinal opponents Athletic.

"We've got to do far better than that if we want to win this competition," Maguire said, reflecting on the second leg against Lyon.

"We can't be doing that and be leaving it to turn it around in that situation.

"But it does show great spirit, fight, togetherness, and that's the one thing this group of lads is doing, they're giving everything.

"Sometimes I think this year it's not been good enough and rightly so, it hasn't, but they are giving everything." – The Independent

## Leeds, Burnley edge closer to Premier League return

**LEEDS** and Burnley moved to the brink of promotion to the Premier League on Friday as they maintained a five-point lead over third-placed Sheffield United at the top of the Championship.

Burnley came from behind to win 2-1 at Watford with goals from Zian Flemming and Josh Brownhill.

The Claret equalled a club record of 30 league games without defeat. Scott Parker's men know that victory over Sheffield United at Turf Moor on Monday will guarantee promotion.

"I'm immensely proud of this group and what we have done this year. We are very close now," said Parker.

"On Monday night we can get this done. Hopefully we can go and get the result."

Leeds moved back to the top of the table on goal difference after grinding out a 1-0 win at Oxford.

Manor Solomon slammed home the only goal on 33 minutes.

Leeds will also be pro-

moted on Monday with victory over Stoke should Burnley avoid defeat against the Blades.

Sheffield United kept their promotion hopes alive, bouncing back from three consecutive defeats to beat Cardiff 2-0.

Goals from Gustavo Hamer and Ben Brereton Diaz ensured Chris Wilder's men will finish at least third.

"It's been a really emotionally draining week for everybody," said Wilder.

"It was absolutely vital we got the three points to keep the pressure on the teams above us."

Bristol City opened a four-point cushion in the battle for a place in the playoffs with a 2-1 win over Sunderland.

Frank Lampard's Coventry beat West Brom 2-0 to remain sixth and maintain a three-point lead over Middlesbrough.

Luton gave their chances of avoiding back-to-back relegations a boost with a 1-0 win at relegation rivals Derby. – AFP



# Unpaved road back to Europe

Villa create unforgettable Champions League memories but future is uncertain



Aston Villa's John McGinn (left) in action against PSG. — REUTERS/PIC



## SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

**DRAW NO:** 5954/2025 **DATE:** 19/04/2025 (SAT)  
**STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.**  
 196901000090 (8420-D)

### TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

<b>1st Prize</b>	<b>4778</b>
<b>2nd Prize</b>	<b>3897</b>
<b>3rd Prize</b>	<b>6701</b>
<b>Special</b>	<b>Consolation</b>
8388 0982	9588 1128
3120 4338	4160 7730
3677 9960	9985 1639
7318 9030	5371 7777
4401 8511	3933 1369

### 4D JACKPOT


<b>Jackpot 1</b>	<b>RM 9,183,907.53</b>
4778 3897	3897 4778
4778 6701	6701 4778
3897 6701	6701 3897

<b>Jackpot 2</b>	<b>RM 164,975.25</b>
Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.	

### 4D Zodiac

<b>1st Prize</b>	<b>4778</b>	+	
<b>2nd Prize</b>	<b>3897</b>	+	
<b>3rd Prize</b>	<b>6701</b>	+	
<b>4th Prize</b>	<b>Special Prize</b>	+	
<b>5th Prize</b>	<b>Consolation Prize</b>	+	
<b>6th Prize</b>	<b>Any 4D drawn number</b>		

### TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

	1ST	<div>5 5 6 8 1</div>				
	4TH	<div>■</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>1</div>
2ND		<div>5 6 4 3 8</div>				
	5TH	<div>■</div>	<div>■</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>1</div>
3RD		<div>0 8 4 2 6</div>				
	6TH	<div>■</div>	<div>■</div>	<div>■</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>1</div>

6D

TOTO

1ST

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<b>Jackpot</b>	<b>RM 11,696,024.93</b>

<b>STAR</b>	<b>5 11 20 22 35 48 + 30</b>
<b>Jackpot 1</b>	<b>RM 5,048,304.00</b>

<b>Jackpot 2</b>	<b>RM 100,000.00</b>
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**Toto 6D**  
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**RM 481,248**  
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BY RICHARD JOLLY

UNAI EMERY began his night camouflaged from the Birmingham rain, hood pulled down over his eyes. He ended it lying on the sodden grass, presumably soaked by his disappointment.

He had sunk to his knees and then collapsed to the turf when Ian Maatsen's injury-time volley was blocked by William Pacheco.

It may have been going wide anyway but Emery, forever an animated presence in the technical area, was living every moment.

Aston Villa can relive them now. Perhaps for years, if their return to the Champions League proves a one-season affair or if they simply want to revisit vivid memories.

And yet the immediate reaction was to use them as motivation, to get a further taste. They are not used to fighting on three fronts in April.

Even after exiting the Champions League in a fashion that bordered on the heroic against the Paris Saint-Germain, they have an FA Cup semifinal.

And, more immediately, a bid to return to the Champions League. It could all in effect be over in 10 days, the Wembley meeting with Crystal Palace following six-pointers with Newcastle and Manchester City.

Or an inspired side could take the confidence from beating and, at times, battering PSG to propel them back into the European elite.

They have not been in the Premier League's top five for more than five months but the side seventh in England finished in the top eight of the Champions League's group, reached the quarterfinals and threatened, during a superb comeback, to blitz their way into the semifinals.

Paris Saint-Germain were given a scare by Emery's upstarts, by a rejuvenated Marcus Rashford and a relentless John McGinn.

A Champions League run brought glorious sights, whether Jhon Duran's stunning goal to beat Bayern Munich or Morgan Rogers' hat-trick against Celtic or the table that, briefly but weirdly and wonderfully, showed Villa on top after they beat Bologna.

Villa, lest it be forgotten, won a mere three League games in the whole of the 2015-16 season. They have won eight in the Champions

League alone this year.

Seven years ago, McGinn's debut came against Wigan. Now a scorer against PSG, he called the French champions the best team he had faced.

Villa were further evidence the Champions League is enhanced by not being a closed shop; if others can be jaundiced by annual participation, they turned every game into an event and Villa Park, where they won five and drew one, into a fortress.

They provided a lesson to their supposed superiors. They over-achieved to finish in the top eight of the group stage, ahead of Paris Saint-Germain, Manchester City and Real Madrid, Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund, AC Milan and Juventus.

There will be further turnover in the summer, even if the shape of it may be dictated by whether they qualify for the Champions League.

Villa's high wage bill and losses are the less romantic part of their rise; they may be in breach of Uefa's squad cost ratio.

They borrowed to strengthen in January. Buying Rashford at his £40 million (RM220m) option will not be easy; return him and Marco Asensio to their parent clubs and the squad has less stardust.

Yet the fact that the previously talismanic Ollie Watkins began on the bench in both legs against PSG shows the speed of change at Emery's Villa.

But Rashford, like McGinn and Rogers and Youri Tielemans, is starting to look proof of Emery's ability to transform players.

As he did at Sevilla and Villarreal, he has shown he can take clubs further than had looked logical.

If the ambition is to re-establish Villa as a force on the European stage, this Champions League campaign represented swift progress.

Yet the path, both financial and footballing, is narrow. Villa have the momentum of nine victories in their last 10 games in all competitions but need to climb at least two places in the Premier League table.

They have revived the concept of great European nights at Villa Park and given the hope there will be more, perhaps on an annual basis.

But they can wonder if and when they will see Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich again. — The Independent

## WINNING NUMBERS

PAYMENT GUARANTEED IN FULL



Draw Date: 19/04/25 (Sat) Draw No: 5901/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

### 1+3D SUPER 1+3D

<b>1st Prize</b>	<b>6785</b>
<b>2nd Prize</b>	<b>6372</b>
<b>3rd Prize</b>	<b>4760</b>
<b>Starters</b>	<b>Consolation</b>
1746 4393	9445 4100
1908 7275	7480 2831
6970 8854	0858 7801
6771 8263	4805 8698
1638 4906	3690 0042



### Jackpot 1 RM18,721,689.70

6785 + 6372	6372 + 6785
6785 + 4760	4760 + 6785
6372 + 4760	4760 + 6372

### Jackpot 2 RM391,390.40

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.



<b>1st Prize</b>	<b>Bonus</b>	<b>1st Prize Bonus</b>
496 785 +	RABBIT	RM80,000.00
<b>2nd Prize</b>	<b>Bonus</b>	<b>2nd Prize Bonus</b>
606 372 +	DOG	RM922,611.00
<b>3rd Prize</b>	<b>Bonus</b>	<b>3rd Prize Bonus</b>
304 760 +	RAT	RM1,991,506.00

<b>Starters</b>	<b>Consolation</b>
711 746 974 393	119 445 334 100
981 908 497 275	837 480 782 831
156 970 718 854	530 858 867 801
416 771 418 263	194 805 388 698
731 638 874 906	193 690 710 042



<b>1st Prize</b>	<b>2nd Prize</b>	<b>3rd Prize</b>
785	372	760



### Jackpot RM1,085,590.90

785 + 372 + 760	372 + 760 + 785
785 + 760 + 372	760 + 785 + 372
372 + 785 + 760	760 + 372 + 785

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

Use code [CHINGMING] to signup dmcGO & be rewarded.



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## RESULTS &amp; STANDINGS

**ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP:** Derby 0 Luton Town 1, Norwich 3 Portsmouth 5, Bristol City 2 Sunderland 1, Coventry 2 West Brom 0, Blackburn 4 Millwall 1, Stoke 2 Sheff Wed 0, Watford 1 Burnley 2, Middlesbrough 2 Plymouth 1, Swansea 1 Hull 0, Preston 1 QPR 2, Sheff Utd 2 Cardiff 0, Oxford 0 Leeds 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	43	26	13	4	83	29	91
Burnley	43	25	16	2	59	14	91
Sheff Utd	43	27	7	9	59	33	86
Sunderland	43	21	13	9	58	40	76
Bristol City	43	17	16	10	56	46	67
Coventry	43	19	9	15	61	54	66
Mid'boro	43	18	9	16	63	52	63
West Brom	43	14	18	11	51	41	60
Millwall	43	16	12	15	42	45	60
Blackburn	43	17	8	18	49	46	59
Swansea	43	16	9	18	46	51	57
Watford	43	16	8	19	51	57	56
Norwich	43	13	14	16	66	63	53
QPR	43	13	14	16	51	56	53
Sheff Wed	43	14	11	18	56	66	53
Stoke	43	12	14	17	45	54	50
Preston	43	10	19	14	44	53	49
Portsmouth	43	13	10	20	55	69	49
Oxford	43	12	12	19	43	61	48
Hull	43	11	12	20	41	51	45
Derby	43	11	10	22	44	55	43
Luton	43	11	10	22	38	63	43
Cardiff	43	9	15	19	45	68	42
Plymouth	43	9	13	21	45	84	40

## Almost 45k United vs All-Star tickets sold

**ALMOST** 45,000 tickets have been sold for the highly anticipated clash between English Premier League (EPL) giants Manchester United and the Asean All-Stars at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil on May 28.

ProEvents Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Julian Kam said fan interest has been encouraging, especially following United's dramatic performance in the Uefa Europa League quarter-finals on Friday.

"So far, the support is good, we are almost reaching the 45,000 mark. We hope more fans will come out to watch the biggest sporting event in Malaysia in 2025," he told *Bernama* yesterday. – *Bernama*

**WHEN** Luis Garcia (*pic*) was appointed Johor Darul Ta'zim (JDT) Chief Executive Officer earlier this month, he brought with him the wisdom of a footballing life shaped in Spain and England, and a resume that includes lifting the Uefa Champions League trophy with Liverpool, two decades ago.

But among the many things that caught his eye at JDT, one stood out, none other than a young and electric winger, Arif Aiman Mohd Hanapi.

At just 22, Arif Aiman has become a beacon of local football talent, dazzling fans with his blistering pace, sublime skills, and maturity beyond his years.

Garcia said the three-time Most Valuable Player in the Malaysia National Football Awards represented more than just a player who embodies a blend of raw talent, resilience under pressure, and great promise.

"I think Arif is a very young talent, he starts very soon competing at the highest level and that puts him under pressure and he has

## Shalin Zulkifli to head Adamas Athletes' Committee

**NATIONAL** tenpin bowling legend Datuk Shalin Zulkifli (*inset*) has been appointed as the chairman of the Malaysian Anti-Doping Agency (Adamas) Athletes' Committee to play a role as the voice of athletes in efforts to create a fairer, more integrated and responsible sports environment.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS) in a statement announced that she will be joined by six other members, namely Mathivani Murugeesan (karate), Johnathan Wong Guanjie (shooting), Muhammad Hakimi Ismail (athletic), Noor Askuzaiemy Mat Salim (boc-



cia), Abu Samah Borhan (wheelchair tennis) and Boon Wei Ying (badminton – MSDeaf).

The statement also announced that the establishment of the Adamas Athletes' Committee is a strategic step to strengthen athlete participation in anti-doping policy and implementation, in line with the principles of inclusiveness outlined by the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada).

"As the agency responsible for enforcing the national anti-doping policy, Adamas remains committed to carrying out its role in line with international standards.

## Training boycott issue

MA to prioritise welfare of athletes

**MALAYSIA ATHLETICS** (MA) insist that the welfare of national athletes will continue to be a priority following reports of them boycotting training sessions conducted by MA technical director Robert Ballard.

MA president Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said they are still gathering detailed information and will carry out a comprehensive investigation before taking any action, besides emphasising that every decision will be made based on facts.

"What is most important is fact. We cannot act in haste. The welfare of the athletes will not be neglected. We are preparing for the (Thailand) SEA Games (in December)," he told reporters yesterday.

He added that the governing body will hold a meeting on Thursday (April 24) to get a complete understanding of the situation and find solutions that are fair to everyone.

"Training needs to continue. We do not want the athletes' training sessions to be disrupted. It takes a long time to prepare one athlete. So, we must ensure the continuity of their training sessions.

"I do not want any party to be

affected. If this issue persists, their focus on training will be affected. We must take immediate action to rectify the situation," he said.

Shahidan said that several national athletes are currently competing overseas, including in Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Hong Kong, while six Super Series championships are being held domestically as part of the preparations for the biennial Games in December.

The media had previously reported that several sprinters decided to boycott Ballard's training programme over the past month and received threats of expulsion from the programme if they expressed dissatisfaction with the Australian's management.

The National Sports Council (NSC) said yesterday that they will hold a meeting with the athletes and the MA next week regarding the issue of athletes boycotting training under Ballard.

NSC director-general Jefri Ngadirin said he hoped to get more detailed information on the latest crisis in the country's athletics camp during the meeting. – *Bernama*

## Luis Garcia raves about Arif Aiman

managed to cope with all the situations, becoming one of the best players in Malaysia.

"On these days where football is very quick and fast, having players that can

be placed in one-versus-one situations, scoring goals, playing in different positions is something really important and he's got all the clicks," he told Malaysian media recently.

With his immense potential, the former Spanish international said it is no surprise that the scouts from other clubs are keeping a close eye on Arif Aiman.

Despite the growing spotlight on him, Garcia believes Arif Aiman's journey is only just getting started.

"He's still 22, there's a lot to learn but he's a player that we are really excited about his future," he said.

Arif Aiman has clocked 147 appearances and netted 52 goals in just five seasons with the Southern Tigers, a remarkable run for a winger.

He had also collected 33 caps with the Harimau Malaya (national squad) so far, contributing seven goals and 10 assists, proving that he can deliver beyond the domestic scene. – *Bernama*



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2nd Prize 8236

3rd Prize 4718

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3793 5477	7910 0235
8439 8205	3630 4719
8650 9330	7576 4655
9186 3222	3872 9124

**4D Jackpot**

Jackpot 1 RM6,134,745.67

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8236 + 5389	8236 + 4718
4718 + 5389	4718 + 8236

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Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 RM100,000.00

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

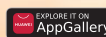
PARTIALLY WON

GROUP 1	8 9 3 6 1 8
GROUP 2	8 9 3 6 1 OR 9 3 6 1 8
GROUP 3	8 9 3 6 OR 3 6 1 8
GROUP 4	8 9 3 OR 6 1 8
GROUP 5	8 9 OR 3 6 1 8
	OR 3 6
GOLDEN NUMBER	1 3

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THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY





Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy celebrates after winning The Masters and completing a career grand slam. - REUTERS/PIC

ONE of the most important moments in Rory McIlroy's historic victory at the Masters came before he had even hit a shot: at Augusta, he said, he was ready to have his heart broken all over again.

After the ride he had been on in pursuit of the green jacket, and career grand slam, McIlroy reckoned he had already been through the worst of what his sport could throw at him, and it wasn't so bad.

"You dust yourself off and you go

The joy returned. A five-shot lead looked insurmountable, until the inexplicable on 13, dumping a chip into Rae's Creek after laying up.

Then, the shot of his life around the trees to reach the 15th in two, setting up an eagle chance which became a birdie to open the gap.

He walked to his drive on the 18th needing par to win the Masters. His approaches had been meticulous all day, but this one somehow found the bunker.

# Rory's redemption

BY JAMIE BRAIDWOOD

McIlroy's acceptance of his vulnerabilities became his greatest strength in finally winning at Augusta

again," McIlroy said on the Tuesday before the Masters.

"I think that's why I've become a little more comfortable in laying everything out there and being somewhat vulnerable."

On Sunday, McIlroy's acceptance of his vulnerabilities became his greatest strength in finally winning at Augusta.

He had a five-foot putt to win the Masters, and missed. He faced the same nightmare and, in the moment that mattered, it made him stronger.

Returning to the 18th hole and facing Justin Rose in the playoff was another form of the torture McIlroy managed to put himself through over the previous four hours; on the 18th, he was required to hit the same shots on the same hole - he was forced to face his demons again.

But then, that was the story of McIlroy at Augusta, ever since he blew a three-shot lead and unravelled after the turn in 2011.

At the age of 21, with jet-black curls spilling out from under his cap, the sight of McIlroy slumping over his driver after another errant drive into the murky depths behind Augusta's pristine surface were the images that could have defined his prodigious talent. In another world, he never recovered.

The extraordinary, raw scenes of emotion as McIlroy fell to his knees after finally achieving the career grand slam were of relief and spoke of the burden he had been carrying.

"That experience, going through the tough losses... I would say to (21-year-old McIlroy) just keep believing, just keep the course."

He started his round with a double bogey on the first, a moment that he said actually helped his nerves.

His lead over Bryson DeChambeau was overturned in a blink, but McIlroy steadied, and loosened: he was cackling to himself after finding a gap the size of the football through the trees on seven.

McIlroy appeared to have escaped trouble. He had a putt to complete the career grand slam and missed.

"The battle was with my mind and staying in the present," McIlroy said. "My battle today was with myself."

It was easy to see the mirror image of his entire career being reflected on his Sunday scorecard, with magic and disaster circling each other as if entwined in a dance.

The past trauma of Augusta and final-day collapses fuelled McIlroy's emotional sobs after the playoff. "I started to wonder if it would ever be my time," he admitted.

At one point, it had appeared inevitable. In 2011, a few months after his first big disappointment at the Masters, McIlroy stormed to victory to win his first major.

He won the PGA Championship in 2012 and the Open at Royal Liverpool in 2014, the year he won the PGA for a second time.

At 25, with four majors and the most dominant player in the sport, the Masters was the only box left to tick.

Instead, a drought followed, with near-misses and heartbreak at the majors shaping the road he travelled, where the next step would be all that mattered.

He returned to the Masters year after year and faced the same questions. There were rounds of brilliance, with opportunities in 2018 and 2022, but putting together four days of consistency eluded him.

And at the other majors, a familiar pattern emerged. Whether winning another Open or US Open would have helped McIlroy's pursuit of the green jacket is now immaterial, but there was a sense that the victories that slipped away so painfully at St Andrews in 2022 and at Pinehurst No. 2 last year were building into a mental block that would prove too much to overcome.

He left Pinehurst without speaking to anyone following his defeat to DeChambeau at the US Open, where McIlroy missed two short putts in the final holes to blow another Sunday lead.

Those thoughts could have been swirling around McIlroy's head at various points of the most dramatic Masters finale in recent memory.

The key, though, was that the self-reflection had already been achieved. During the playoff, faced with the same shot up the hill on 18, McIlroy was ready for more heartbreak.

He accepted it, and forgot about it, which is how he was able to take out his wedge, aim at the flag, and write a different ending. - The Independent