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Going broke to tie the knot

High cost of weddings leading many couples to take on debt to fund their big day, with Insolvency Dept linking nuptial-related financial burden to rise in bankruptcy cases among young Malaysians.



Couples who cannot afford lavish weddings are advised to set a clear budget early, allowing them to plan within their means.
- ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

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Arduous but unrelenting task ongoing to save tapirs

Queen urges Malaysians to be grateful for peace, continue preserving unity

KUALA LUMPUR: All Malaysians must be grateful for the blessings of unity enjoyed in this country, which must continue to be preserved, said Her Majesty the Queen of Malaysia Raja Zarith Sofiah.

Her Majesty reminded citizens that while many impoverished places in a war-torn world see thousands perishing, Malaysia is fortunate to enjoy peace.

"We should be thankful and grateful for the peace we enjoy. But perhaps because we are not running away from being bombed, we have the time instead to highlight issues which some of us know will create tensions among the different communities in Malaysia, which is home for us all."

"May Allah grant peace in our country, and love in our hearts for one another as Malaysians," the

Queen said in a post on Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar's official Facebook page.

Raja Zarith Sofiah also shared her previous writing from 2018 regarding the issue over an Indian temple site in Subang Jaya.

In that post, Her Majesty had expressed her family's sorrow over the passing of Tunku Abdul Jalil Sultan Ibrahim, and how their grief was compounded

by the intolerance and misunderstandings between races at that time.

Raja Zarith Sofiah also recalled the royal family's close ties with four Malaysian Indians, expressing appreciation for them, namely Datuk Dr Subramanyam Balan, Datuk Dr Singaraveloo, Datuk Sugumaran a former aide-de-camp to the Sultan of Johor, as well as a palace official known

as Mohan, who had always been helpful in times of need.

"My husband (His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim) and I have many friends of other races. But for now, while the scrutiny is on Malaysian Indians, it is these four men who I think deserve mention and a thousand thank-yous from my family," said Her Majesty in the post. - Bernama

'Nation keen to maintain good ties with US'

America among country's largest investors, with some firms operating since Independence: Minister

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia wants to maintain good ties with the United States (US), said Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

"Malaysia has always been a good economic partner to the US. That's why the US has always been among Malaysia's largest foreign investors."

"We provide an environment where US companies are able to prosper. Intel has been in Malaysia since 1971. Others have been in Malaysia even longer, some since Independence."

He was speaking at the Asean Leadership Forum organised by the Centre For Strategic and International Studies in Washington on Friday.

He was asked what a positive US-Malaysia economic relations would look like under President Donald Trump's administration without a trade war.

"So, what we want is the ability for us to continue with this (positive) relationship. Create a mechanism where both parties will gain in terms of opportunities to prosper within the

space, compete within the space to grow, and integrate what they have within Malaysia with their global supply chain. That's a great outcome."

"I think it can continue to go down that path, because both parties treat each other with respect. Both parties work to integrate things along the way and work to a common outcome."

He emphasised the importance of focusing on how to make the cake bigger, rather than getting caught up in arguments over how to divide the cake into little bits.

He said such an approach would add little value, Bernama reported.

Reflecting on the longstanding relationship between Putrajaya and Washington, Amir Hamzah said their shared history has consistently enabled both sides to come together and make bigger cakes, rather than debating over portions.

On the nation's approach over the 24% reciprocal tariffs, he said Malaysia has already started discussions with the

US about the move.

"The good thing is, we have had our first conversation, and the conversation was received well enough. Next is a number of steps that will have to come after that," he said acknowledging that a bilateral arrangement takes time.

"To lock up trade agreements, it takes a while to work through the technicalities, but it starts with the first conversation and first principles, and then continued dialogue to close gaps."

On Thursday, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Aziz had meetings with US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick in Washington.

In a statement on the meeting, the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry said Malaysia stands ready to continue collaborating with the US to reach mutually agreeable solutions regarding the reciprocal tariffs.

Malaysia has expressed its openness to negotiating with the US on four key areas, namely reducing the trade deficit, addressing non-tariff barriers, strengthening technological safeguards and security as well as exploring a potential bilateral trade agreement.

Education to remain strong pillar of M'sia-UK ties: Envoy

LONDON: The education sector will continue to be one of the main pillars of relations between Malaysia and the United Kingdom (UK), said Malaysia's High Commissioner to the UK and Northern Ireland Datuk Zakri Jaafar.

He said Malaysia currently ranks as the eighth highest source of international students pursuing higher education in the UK, with a total of 13,005 students.

"At the same time, there are more than 50 schools and five UK universities operating in Malaysia."

He was speaking at a dinner with Malaysians in the UK hosted by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof at the Malaysian High Commission in London on Friday.

About 80 people, comprising students, representatives from GLCs and staff of the High Commission, attended the event.

Also present were Fadillah's wife Datin Seri Ruziah Mohd Tahir, Tenaga Nasional Berhad chief new energy officer Mohd Zairi Mohd Hashim, Sarawak Energy Berhad Group CEO Datuk Sharbini Suhaili and delegates from the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry.

Fadillah, who arrived from Türkiye on Wednesday for a three-day working visit, led the Malaysian delegation to the Future of Energy Security Summit held at Lancaster House.

Zakri said Malaysia and the UK have maintained close cooperation in the defence sector, particularly through the Five Power Defence Arrangements which include joint military exercises, defence industry collaboration, procurement and technology exchange.

He added that a total of 315,980 visitors from the UK visited Malaysia in 2024 compared with 272,297 in 2023 and 134,667 the year before, adding that the number is expected to rise this year following the resumption of British Airways flights to Kuala Lumpur.

Zakri said the working visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to the UK earlier this year is proof of the strong ties between both nations, not only on a bilateral basis but also through various fora held by Commonwealth, United Nations and others.

"These relations are further strengthened through the UK's participation as an Asean dialogue partner, and more recently, its accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, of which Malaysia is an existing member." - Bernama

Ignore negative rhetoric and focus on future, says PM

IPOH: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim urged Malaysians not to be affected by negative rhetoric, including during the Ayer Kuning state by-election, but instead focus on the nation's growing achievements and its future prospects.

"I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that we must not be complacent, not take things lightly and not be swayed by the rhetoric we hear in Ayer Kuning."

"We are now talking about digitalisation, AI, the country facing tariffs, training our children in engineering and nurturing new talent, but the focus of debate is on Christianity, the Chinese and DAP. I'm not saying these topics are off-limits, but let's turn our attention to the future," he said in his speech at an Aidilfitri celebration held at the Indera Mulia Stadium on Friday.

Anwar said he remains optimistic about Malaysia continuing to attract foreign investments, thereby uplifting its stature.

He expressed confidence that Malaysia could rise in stature if the country remains stable, with strong political foundations, clear policies and development frameworks as well as a more efficient government machinery. - Bernama



Anwar being greeted by visitors to the Aidilfitri celebration held at the Indera Mulia Stadium in Ipoh. - BERNAMAPIC

Newlywed couple adds colour to voting day

Arriving in full traditional bridal attire, bride and groom turn heads in admiration at polling centre

■ BY HASHINI KAVISHTRI KANNAN
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TAPAH: A newlywed couple took time off from their wedding celebrations yesterday to cast their votes for the Ayer Kuning by-election.

Spa worker Norhidayanty Yaziz, 29, never thought her wedding day would become even more memorable when it coincided with polling day, making it extra special for her and her husband, electrical maintenance worker Khairul Shafaez Idris, 35.

"I found out about the by-election date clashing with our wedding about a month ago. Initially, I was surprised, especially since it was my first time voting.

"However, out of a sense of duty, I still made it a point to vote and choose someone to represent us here," she told Bernama when met at the Sekolah Kebangsaan Batu Tiga polling centre.

The newlyweds arrived at the polling centre with their family members around 4.30pm.

Norhidayanty, who works in the



Norhidayanty and Khairul strolling out after casting their votes at the Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bidor polling centre yesterday. – BERNAMAPIC

Klang Valley, said the wedding reception held at Kampung Tersusun Batu 33 in Temoh was a joyful affair and many of the guests were also voters in the constituency.

"I am so grateful to my family and close relatives who helped a lot with the preparations. *Alhamdulillah*, everything went smoothly although we were a bit worried that the by-election might keep many guests busy," she said.

Meanwhile, single mother Suzana Ilias made time to cast her vote despite having to care for her three autistic children, arriving at the Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bidor polling centre with all three of them in tow.

According to Suzana, 53, this is the second time her children Muhammad Khir Khairul Nizam, 29, Nur Fatimah, 28, and Nur Ashikin, 25, have exercised their voting rights, the first being for the 15th general election in 2022.

"This time was more challenging as I had to single-handedly manage the three of them. Previously, my late husband helped, but after he passed away last year, I now have to manage everything alone."

The Election Commission earlier said as of 4pm yesterday, only 54.01% of voters in the Ayer Kuning constituency had cast their ballots.

Senior fellow at the Singapore

Institute of International Affairs told *theSun* voter apathy is growing as more people were getting tired of endless political fighting.

"These endless fights over race and religion, instead of focusing on the economy and people's livelihoods, have worn the public down.

"There is no magic formula to hold on to any seat, but attention to voters' livelihoods would go a long way," he said.

All 19 polling centres, comprising 63 voting streams, were opened simultaneously at 8am to allow the 31,281 registered voters to cast their ballots.

Eighteen polling centres remained opened until 6pm, except for the centre at Sekolah Kebangsaan Toh Tandewa Sakti, which closed at 4pm.

Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi expressed satisfaction with the strong collaboration between BN and Pakatan Harapan (PH) throughout the 14-day campaign period.

The Umno president said cooperation during the campaign was well-executed, similar to previous by-elections in Nenggiri, Kelantan and Mahkota in Johor, which resulted in BN victories.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain and Perak Police Chief Datuk Noor Hisam Nordin were also present to observe the polling process at SMK Bidor and Sekolah Menengah Agama Daerah Batang Padang.

'All govt agencies need to collaborate to tackle sexual literacy issues'

KOTA BHARU: Addressing issues related to reproductive health education and sexual literacy, particularly among the youth, requires a comprehensive approach involving multiple ministries and agencies, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He stressed that the effort was not solely the responsibility of the Health Ministry but required the mobilisation of the entire government through a whole-of-government approach.

"It is not just the ministry's responsibility, but also that of the Education, the Women, Family and Community Development and Youth and Sports ministries.

"The ministry will adopt a whole-of-government approach to ensure that education on reproductive health and comprehensive awareness is implemented in an integrated manner," he told reporters after attending the *Jom Sihat @ Kota Lama Mini Carnival* here on Friday, Bernama reported.

Dzulkefly also stressed that strong support from various parties was crucial to ensure that the implementation of this agenda was not limited to Kelantan but extended nationwide.

He added that the key to the successful implementation of the initiative was equipping the community with knowledge and awareness so they could enhance their self-control and strengthen their moral values.

He said this when asked to comment on a media report on April 9, in which Kelantan police chief Datuk Mohd Yusoff Mamat stated that the number of rape and incest cases in Kelantan had increased, but investigations showed that many were consensual sex cases.

Mohd Yusoff said 252 cases were reported in 2024, compared with 206 cases in 2023, reflecting an increase of 22.3%. He added that what was more worrying was that some of those involved were as young as 10 years old.

Multi-purpose reservoirs to address floods, water shortage

LONDON: The government is adopting the approach of constructing multi-purpose reservoirs as part of its efforts to mitigate floods in the country and reduce losses caused by natural disasters, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

Fadillah, who is also Energy Transition and Water Transformation Minister, explained that the reservoirs will not only store large volumes of rainwater but also serve as a vital water source during dry seasons.

"The reservoirs will enable us to reserve water for use during droughts, ensuring a stable supply. The stored water can then be treated and

distributed for various needs, whether for drinking, agriculture, industry or other uses. It is one of the strategies we are implementing," he said at a dinner with Malaysians in the United Kingdom at the Malaysian High Commission here Friday.

It was attended by about 80 people, including students, employees of government-linked companies and staff of the Malaysian High Commission in London.

Fadillah, who arrived here from Türkiye on Wednesday for a three-day working visit, earlier performed Friday prayers with the Malaysian Muslim community at Malaysia Hall.

During his visit, Fadillah led the Malaysian delegation to the Summit of the Future of Energy Security held at Lancaster House, which was held for two days starting Friday.

Elaborating further, Fadillah said flood mitigation efforts must be carried out urgently, as significant climate change is currently affecting Malaysia's weather patterns, leading to various natural disasters, including floods caused by intense rainfall.

"Our focus now is on mitigating floods due to climate change. Thunderstorms, strong winds and other extreme weather events now result in a day's rainfall equaling what used to fall in

a month. Places that have never experienced floods before are now inundated."

He stressed the need to minimise the impact of floods on the people and the country, noting the heavy financial losses incurred.

"We have to make sure we can reduce the impact of floods on the people, the financial impact not only on the people but also the country, because during a major flood, we lost RM3 billion, including for recovery and so on."

Fadillah also reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to achieving 70% renewable energy by 2050. – Bernama

MPs invited for urban renewal study tour in KL: Minister

KUALA LUMPUR: The Housing and Local Government Ministry will be hosting a special study tour in the capital on Tuesday to provide members of parliament insights into the importance of the Urban Renewal Bill, its minister Nga Kor Ming said.

He said official invitations were sent to all MPs earlier this month to participate in the programme.

"I would like to invite all MPs, including opposition lawmakers, to join the ministry in visiting dilapidated urban areas and study the success of urban renewal projects that have been implemented," he said in a statement on Friday.

Nga said the tour will include visits to several flats to assess their current condition and identify local

issues faced by residents, reported Bernama.

MPs will also have the opportunity to witness successful urban renewal projects, where old flats have been redeveloped into modern, comfortable and livable residential areas, he added.

Nga, who is also Teluk Intan MP, said through the initiative, the ministry aims to highlight the

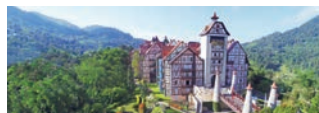
potential of the Urban Renewal Bill in accelerating the renewal of unsafe areas and improving the quality of life for urban residents.

"We have arranged three buses from Parliament to take all MPs to see firsthand the dilapidated and neglected conditions of several low-cost flats that urgently need attention," he said, emphasising that the tour aims to underline the

urgent need for the drafting of the bill.

The Urban Renewal Bill, which has been in the works since 2013, is expected to be tabled at the next Parliament sitting in June.

The bill aims to enhance quality of life for the people by expediting the process of urban renewal and conservation, particularly for buildings that are not livable.



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High costs dampen dream weddings

Smart planning such as establishing savings funds and opting for cost-cutting measures could significantly help lower expenses, says academic

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
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PETALING JAYA: Weddings in Malaysia have become increasingly expensive, posing a significant financial challenge for many young couples.

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) entrepreneurship and business professor Datuk Dr Nik Maheeran Nik Muhammad said inflation, rising venue and catering costs, and societal expectations have driven wedding budgets to soar between RM50,000 and RM200,000.

"Malaysia's wedding expenses are among the highest in Asean, with average costs ranging from RM50,000 to RM200,000," she said.

"In comparison, weddings in Cambodia and the Philippines

are significantly more affordable, averaging around US\$15,000 (RM71,000) and US\$4,800 (RM22,800), respectively."

Research shows that Chinese couples tend to allocate more funds towards luxurious venues and gourmet catering, while Malay and Indian couples often prioritise elaborate decorations and invitations.

Regardless of cultural preferences, the rising cost of weddings affects all communities, leading many couples to take on debt to fund their dream celebrations.

"Some take out personal loans or rack up credit card debt ranging from RM30,000 to RM100,000," said Nik Maheeran.

"Alarmingly, the Malaysia Insolvency Department has

linked wedding-related financial burdens to an increase in bankruptcy cases among young Malaysians."

Nik Maheeran also said financial struggles are a key reason why many young Malaysians, particularly Chinese men, are delaying marriage.

"Statistics show that the marriage rate among Chinese Malaysians has declined sharply in recent years, dropping from 9.8 per 1,000 in 2016 to just 6.6 in 2022. This trend has continued to decline in 2024," she said.

"As the cost of living and property prices continue to rise, marriage rates may decline further unless economic conditions improve."

To avoid financial distress,

smart wedding planning is essential. Nik Maheeran advised couples to set a clear budget early, allowing them to plan within their means.

Establishing a wedding savings fund can help cover expenses without relying on loans.

Cost-cutting measures, such as reducing the guest list or selecting an off-peak wedding date, can significantly lower expenses.

"Avoid following others in having a grand wedding if you cannot afford it," she advised.

"Have a small wedding instead, and perhaps plan for a grand 10th or 25th year anniversary celebration when you have a stable income or accumulated wealth."

Rather than splurging on lavish weddings, open discussions about finances, realistic budgeting, and prioritising financial stability can help couples build a secure future together.

Nik Maheeran emphasised "a wedding is just one day, but

financial stability lasts a lifetime".

Nurizyan Syafiqah Mohd Shafuruddin, 27, a customer service executive, managed to finance her RM40,000 wedding entirely through savings.

"I had a savings budget of RM40,000 for my wedding, covering both the *nikah* and *bersanding* ceremonies. To supplement my income, I sold perfumes and did Shopee affiliate marketing, using that extra income for daily expenses while saving my salary entirely for the wedding."

She said a simple *nikah* followed by a meal can save significant costs.

For business analyst Yaswini Kannan, 28, her budget initially had no strict limit, but she estimated her total spending at RM85,000, keeping it under RM100,000. However, unexpected costs arose.

"My makeup artist initially charged RM3,150 but later added an extra RM300 for waiting time during my *saree* change."

'Plan celebration according to financial means'

PETALING JAYA: Planning a wedding in Malaysia today looks starkly different from just a few years ago.

With costs soaring across the board, couples now face steeper costs and more personalised demands as they enter a new era of matrimony.

According to A2Z Event Planner directors Jacklyn Selvamani and Thurai Ganesan, wedding package prices have risen by 20% to 30% over the past three to five years.

This jump is fuelled by inflation and rising living costs, which have driven up both service fees and the cost of materials.

"The most significant price hikes we've seen are in catering – especially premium

menus, which have gone up by 25% to 40% – and décor, where personalised setups using fresh flowers have increased by 15% to 25%," said Jacklyn.

While venues remain accessible, high-demand locations such as hotels and resorts have upped their rates by 20% to 30% due to surging demand post pandemic. Customisation is another key cost driver.

Social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest heavily influence bridal trends, prompting couples to opt for themed decorations, bespoke invitations, and unique entertainment features like bar stations.

On the vendor side, rising fuel and

transport expenses – especially for lorries transporting décor – have forced companies like A2Z Events to revise their pricing structures.

Yet they remain committed to working within clients' means.

Meanwhile, founder and co-founder of Magical Blooms, Maureen George and Nithya Bharthi Banu, said the demand for customised décor, especially among South Indian weddings that use a significant amount of fresh flowers, has driven costs up.

"Materials are expensive, and fresh flowers in particular can be a major factor," they said. – *By Kirtinee Ramesh*

Unique bridal gown made of cake steals show at fest

KUALA LUMPUR: When Hatta Dolmat worked part-time at a hotel, he would fantasise about creating a dress made of cake while watching chefs preparing the dessert.

The 42-year-old fashion designer's "crazy" dream finally came true recently at the Wear the Couture Dress Cake show, a collaboration between Hatta and popular local dessert brand Gula Cakery, where his "delectable" couture wedding gown stole the spotlight.

Weighing 90kg, the multi-layered gown worn by a model, complete with intricate gum paste floral detailing, was not only visually stunning but also entirely edible.

"The biggest challenge was to create a cake structure that was not only stable but also allowed the model to move on stage. Initially, we planned to use a trolley but found it unsuitable, so we had to find another way for her to walk," Hatta told Bernama at the fashion show held with the launch of KahwinFest 2025, a wedding exhibition at Wangsa Walk Mall here running from April 25 to today.

The designer also received recognition from the Malaysia Book of Records as the "First Malaysian Fashion Designer to Organise a Conceptual Fashion Show Featuring a Couture Dress Made of Cake".



Hatta beside a model wearing the 90kg multi-layered cake gown, complete with intricate gum paste floral detailing. The gown is entirely edible. – *BERNAMAPIC*

Kari ayam ranked world's best stew

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's chicken curry, known locally as *kari ayam*, has been ranked the world's best stew in the latest TasteAtlas Top 50 Best Stews listing for April 2025.

The announcement was made by TasteAtlas, an online food-based platform which describes itself as an encyclopaedia of flavours and a world atlas of traditional dishes, local ingredients and authentic restaurants.

In a Facebook post, TasteAtlas congratulated the top contenders with the caption, "Congratulations! TOP 50 Best Stews, TasteAtlas Ranking (April 2025)."

Kari ayam took the top spot, followed by Thailand's *Phanaeng Curry* and Armenia's *dzhazh*, while India's *murgh makhani* and Iran's *kalle pache* completed the top five.

TasteAtlas stated on its website that its food rankings are based on the opinions of its global community, as well as the quality and authenticity of traditional dishes.

Other stews in the top 10 included Indonesia's *rendang* at 6th place, India's *keema* at 8th, and Türkiye's *hünkâr begendi* at 9th, reflecting a strong showing by Asian cuisines.

The list also featured several other entries from the region, including Thailand's *massaman* curry at 7th place, green curry at 26th and Vietnam's *bo kho* at 36th.

According to the platform, it has catalogued over 10,000 food and drink items to date, with thousands more to be researched and mapped, including many forgotten or lesser-known local specialties.

TasteAtlas aims to document culinary heritage from all parts of the world.

The full list of the world's best stews is available at www.tasteatlas.com/best-rated-stews-in-the-world. – Bernama

Working tirelessly to ensure survival of tapirs

Addressing shortage of translocation boxes, corporate collaboration and hands-on support for rescue efforts among initiatives to save endangered species: Nature society

BY DEEPAKSHMI MANICKAM
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PETALING JAYA: As Malaysia commemorates World Tapir Day today, the celebration is overshadowed by a grim reality – 112 Malayan tapirs, one of the country's most iconic yet endangered species, have been killed on roads from 2020 to March 2024.

The figure, revealed by Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, is more than just a number – it is a quiet death toll echoing through fragmented forests, where highways have become deadly frontlines.

Once roaming freely through unbroken forest, the solitary and nocturnal tapir is now increasingly forced to navigate fragmented habitats, only to fall victim to speeding vehicles on highways that dissect its home.

But beyond the bleak headlines, quiet heroes are working tirelessly to pull the species back from the edge.

At the forefront is the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), a long-standing advocate for tapir conservation through grassroots initiatives, corporate collaboration and hands-on support for wildlife rescue efforts.

"Having the tapir as our logo is not just symbolic. It represents our commitment to its survival, from awareness campaigns to real, on-the-ground interventions," said MNS marketing and partnerships manager Muhammad Raffi Ismail.

One of MNS' most impactful initiatives has been addressing a shortage of tapir translocation boxes, which are essential for safely moving rescued animals from



Raffi said despite its ecological value, the species still lacks public attention as focus has largely been on tiger conservation. – PIC COURTESY OF MALAYSIAN NATURE SOCIETY

conflict zones to rehabilitation centres or forest reserves.

In response, MNS launched its "Lend Your Hand" CSR programme, rallying institutions like the French Embassy, L'Oréal, MBSB Bank and RHB Bank to sponsor these crucial relocation crates.

"Just this year, we helped Perhilitan (Wildlife and National Parks Department) secure three more translocation boxes through corporate pledges," Raffi said.

"One of the boxes, sponsored by MBSB Bank, was used in the rescue of a trapped tapir at Bukit Kapar in Kuala Selangor. These tools make the difference between life and death," he added.

Recognising that tapirs are selective eaters, with a study showing they consume over 217 plant species, MNS also partnered with Felda and wildlife department to establish the Tapir Food Bank.

"Healthy tapirs need greens. We focused on the top 30 preferred species identified in research, and this year, with support from the Gamuda Inspiration Award, we're mobilising local communities to expand the food bank through tree planting efforts," Raffi said.

However, roads remain deadly for tapirs, and Raffi pointed out a crucial but often overlooked factor.

"Tapirs are nocturnal, so many are struck at night, but drivers passing through remote forested areas often speed out of fear, whether of crime, wild animals or even superstition. This only increases the risk," he added.

While the wildlife department has installed tapir crossing signs at known hotspots, he said change depends heavily on public mindset.

"We hope public perception will change over time. People need to realise these signs are not just for show; they're life-saving warnings."

On the subject of wildlife crossings, Raffi admitted they are a challenge due to cost.

"Wildlife crossings are a huge investment with low financial return. But we're starting to see progress. The ECRL uses elevated tracks through forested areas and the West Coast Expressway has implemented some animal crossings."

Despite the tapir's ecological value, the species still lacks the public attention it deserves.

"The focus has largely been on tiger conservation, which is important, but it overshadows other species. Tapirs are elusive creatures, but they matter too."

MNS is also a key player in the Malayan Tapir Conservation Action Plan 2021-2030, co-developed with the wildlife department, Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Copenhagen Zoo.

The plan outlines strategies encompassing habitat management, ex-situ care, education and research.

"With concentrated efforts from government, corporations and communities, we can rebuild the population to a healthy number," he said.

While underpasses and signs exist, they're inadequate.

"Tapirs are collateral damage in a system that still treats conservation as an afterthought," said WCS Country (Malaysia) director Dr Mark Rayan Darmaraj.

Tapirs are often left out of conservation priorities due to their reclusive nature and lack of charisma.

"We need sustainable, long-term funding," Wong stressed, calling for better land-use planning and stronger use of frameworks like the Central Forest Spine Master Plan.

"If we can't save a species as harmless and gentle as the tapir, what does that say about our commitment to biodiversity?" – By Deepalakshmi Manickam

MACC seizes, freezes assets worth RM285m

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) seized, froze and forfeited assets and issued compounds worth over RM285 million last year in an effort to combat crimes involving corruption.

MACC chief commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said it proved that the law enforcement carried out by the commission was effective and showed that MACC was not only investigating but also restoring the rights of the people who have been betrayed.

He said the investigation and recovery of assets carried out by the MACC was not an easy matter and required diligence, wisdom, cooperation and collaboration from other countries as well as the involvement of the media to provide balanced and informative coverage to the people.

"For the first quarter of this year, MACC recorded the largest asset seizure value of RM177 million involving cash and gold bars related to the investigation against former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob," he said in his speech at the MACC Media Awards Night on Friday.

Also present was MACC deputy chief commissioner Datuk Azmi Kamaruzaman and the Malaysian National News Agency editor-in-chief Arul Rajoo Durar Raj. – Bernama

Actor, mother found dead at condo block

KUALA LUMPUR: Local Tamil actor and singer Sivakumar Jayabalan was found dead alongside his mother at a condominium in Taman Desa Petaling, Cheras here.

Cheras police chief ACP Aidil Bothassan said initial investigations found that Sivakumar, 48, and his 76-year-old mother are believed to have fallen from the 11th floor of the building at about 12.35pm on Friday.

"Their bodies have been sent to the Chancellor Tuanku Muhriz Cheras Hospital for a post-mortem and so far, there is no evidence of a crime. Further investigations will be carried out."

Aidil appealed to anyone with related information on the incident to contact the nearest police station to assist in the investigation. – Bernama

Nigerian bites off ear of policeman

KUALA LUMPUR: A policeman lost part of his left ear when a Nigerian man bit it off during a scuffle after being arrested at a clinic in Metro Prima, Kepong.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Rusdi Mohd Isa said the incident occurred at 10.03am on Friday when the corporal responded to a distress call about a foreign man causing disturbance at a clinic.

"The 38-year-old suspect was detained by officers from Kepong police station."

"The corporal was instructed to assist in transporting the suspect back to the Sentul district police headquarters."

"While escorting the suspect to the back seat of the patrol car, the suspect, with his hands cuffed behind, started to act aggressively and refused to cooperate."

"He then bit the victim's left ear, severing part of it," Rusdi said in a statement. – Bernama

Identification issue hampers conservation efforts

PETALING JAYA: Despite their impressive size and ancient appearance, Malayan tapirs remain one of the least understood large mammals in Malaysia.

A new study by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Malaysia Programme is shedding rare but critical light on the elusive species—and the challenges threatening their survival.

The study highlights the tapir's secretive, nocturnal habits and preference for highland forests. But more significantly, it exposes a troubling reality – tapir conservation efforts are severely hampered by a lack of data, resources, and tools to track individuals effectively.

WCS Peninsular Malaysia Landscape manager Christopher Wong said identifying individual tapirs is difficult.

"Unlike tigers or leopards, tapirs don't have distinct markings. We rely on scars, necklines and body patterns – but even then, many camera trap photos are unusable," he said.

The identification issue hampers conservation efforts.

"Misidentification leads to flawed population counts. If we underestimate, tapirs seem rarer. If we overestimate, their plight is overlooked. This puts their conservation in a dangerous grey area."

The study estimates 3,88 adult tapirs per 100 km² in the Belum Forest Complex and 456 in Temengor, only the second robust population estimate in Peninsular Malaysia.

Tapirs were also found at record elevations of over 1,940m, suggesting they may be retreating from human activity.

ON SUNDAY APRIL 27, 2025

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NATIONAL

History told in art and jewellery

Gallery and museum set up by jeweller showcase heritage of Chinese, Chetty and Jawi Peranakan communities

BY QIRANA NABILLA
MOHD RASHIDI
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AMPANG: Blending tradition with contemporary styles, an artistic collaboration at Harta Gallery and the Heritage Jewellery Museum provides an opportunity to explore the rich cultural heritage of Malaysia, showcased through glittering gold jewellery and dazzling diamonds.

Launched in 2023 as part of a public initiative by Habib Jewels, Harta (short for Habib: Action for the Revival of our Traditions and Arts) was established to highlight Malaysian heritage, culture and artistic expression.

"Habib has always celebrated heritage through its jewellery, as each piece tells a story. By creating spaces like Harta Gallery and the museum, those stories transcend wearable objects and become immersive experiences," its spokesperson told *theSun*.

"It's about honouring our traditions, preserving cultural narratives and creating opportunities for people to reconnect with Malaysian identity through art and history."

Curated by a team of experts, the museum features traditional *kebaya* ensembles and over 800 pieces of jewellery collected over six decades, with some dating back to the 1800s.

Open to the public free of charge, the museum celebrates the rich heritage of the Chinese, Chetty and Jawi Peranakan communities, highlighting the stories behind their intricate motifs and distinctive materials.

"By revealing the human side of gold, we move beyond carats and purity. We (present) how gold is passed down through generations, worn at weddings and cultural rituals."

"Gold is not just a valuable object. It is something meaningful, alive and deeply woven into our identity."

As a family-founded



Through the gallery and museum, Habib Jewels honours the past while exploring new pathways for growth. – ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

business, Habib Jewels continues to interweave tradition with its evolving modern identity.

While embracing innovation, the brand remains deeply rooted in enduring values such as trust, quality and respect for heritage.

Through initiatives such as Harta Gallery and the Heritage Jewellery Museum, the brand honours the past while exploring new pathways for growth, always with an eye on its origins.

"It helps people understand where that legacy comes from. The museum gives us a sense of the techniques, symbolism and the evolution of design, connecting the dots between what is in our showcases today and the heritage that inspired it."

"It's like giving people a chance to see the roots of what we create."

Among the treasured artefacts at the museum is the *Kerongsang Thoe*, a traditional brooch worn by *Peranakan* women that holds deep cultural

and emotional significance.

A symbol of identity, femininity and heritage, it is typically crafted as a set of three intricately designed brooches used to fasten the front of the *kebaya*.

In *Peranakan* culture, it embodies grace, status and ancestral connection, often passed down as a cherished heirloom through generations.

"Its presence in the museum reflects Habib Jewels' commitment to preserving gold and the stories intricately woven into it across centuries."

"This piece reminds us that jewellery is not only meant to adorn but to tell stories of families, traditions and the cultural richness that continues to inspire our work today."

Adjacent to the museum, the Harta Gallery offers a more fluid and dynamic space, with new exhibitions launched every few weeks, providing a platform for both established and emerging Malaysian artists.

"Art and jewellery come from the same place – a deep respect for craftsmanship, beauty and meaning. Habib Jewels doesn't just make beautiful things, we make things that last, that represent emotion and memories."

theSun

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Grand farewell for Pope

Funeral breaks tradition, with burial outside Vatican

VATICAN CITY: Presidents, royalty and simple mourners bade farewell to Pope Francis yesterday at his funeral, where a cardinal said the pontiff's legacy of caring for migrants, the downtrodden and the environment must not die with him.

On one side of Francis' coffin in St Peter's Square sat US President Donald Trump, who clashed with the pope on those issues.

On the other side sat cardinals who must decide if Francis' successor should continue with his push for a more open Church or cede to conservatives who want to return to a more traditional papacy.

"Rich in human warmth and deeply sensitive to today's challenges, Pope Francis truly shared the anxieties, sufferings and hopes of this time," said Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, who presided over the funeral mass.

The Argentine pope, who had reigned for 12 years, died at the age of 88 on Monday after suffering a stroke.

The crowd broke into applause when Re spoke of Francis' care for immigrants,

his constant pleas for peace and the need for negotiations to end wars.

Applause also rang out at the start of the ceremony as 14 pallbearers carried the coffin, inlaid with a large cross, out of St Peter's Basilica and into the square.

Aerial views of the Vatican showed a patchwork of colours – black from the dark garb of the world's leaders, red from the vestments of some 250 cardinals, the purple worn by some of the 400 bishops and the white worn by 4,000 attending priests.

Choirs sang Latin hymns and prayers were recited in various languages, including Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese and Arabic, reflecting the global reach of the 1.4-billion-member Roman Catholic Church.

The faithful hurried to St Peter's from the early hours while many camped out to try and secure spots at the front of the crowd. The Vatican estimated some 200,000 people had gathered at the start of the service.

"We want to say goodbye because he (was a) living saint, humble and simple," said Mary James, a Franciscan nun.

Francis' death ushered in a meticulously planned period of transition, marked by ancient ritual, pomp and mourning. Over the past three days,

around 250,000 people filed past his body, which was laid out in an open coffin before the altar of the 16th-century basilica.

Francis, the first non-European pope for almost 13 centuries, battled to reshape the Roman Catholic Church, siding with the poor and marginalised, while challenging wealthy nations to help migrants.

"Francis left everyone a wonderful testimony of humanity, of a holy life and of universal fatherhood," said a formal summary of his papacy, written in Latin, and placed next to his body.

The pope shunned much of the pomp and privilege usually associated with the papacy. He carried that desire for greater simplicity into his funeral, having rewritten the elaborate, book-long funeral rites used previously.

Francis also opted to forego a centuries-old practice of burying popes in three interlocking caskets made of cypress, lead and oak. Instead, he was placed in a single, zinc-lined wooden coffin.

In a further break with tradition, he will be the first pope to be buried outside the Vatican in more than a century, preferring Rome's Basilica of St Mary Major as his final resting place. – Reuters



Re leads the funeral mass as the coffin is blessed in St Peter's Square. – REUTERS/SPIC

Xi calls for self-sufficiency in AI development

HONG KONG: President Xi Jinping pledged "self-reliance and self-strengthening" to develop AI in China, media reported yesterday, as the country vies with the US for supremacy in artificial intelligence, a key strategic area.

Speaking at a Politburo meeting study session on Friday, Xi said China should leverage its "new whole national system" to push forward with the development of AI.

"We must recognise the gaps and redouble our efforts to comprehensively advance technological innovation, industrial development, and AI-empowered applications," Xi said.

Xi noted policy support would be provided in areas such as government

procurement, intellectual property rights, research and cultivating talent.

Some experts say China has narrowed the AI development gap with the United States over the past year. Its AI startup DeepSeek drew global attention when it launched an AI reasoning model in January that it said was trained with less advanced chips and was cheaper to develop than its Western rivals. China has also made inroads in infrastructure software engineering.

The announcement challenged the assumption that US sanctions were holding back China's AI sector amid a fierce geopolitical tech rivalry, and that China lagged the US after the breakthrough launch of OpenAI's ChatGPT in late 2022.

"We must continue to strengthen basic research, concentrate our efforts on mastering core technologies such as high-end chips and basic software, and build an independent, controllable, and collaborative artificial intelligence basic software and hardware system," Xi said.

He said AI regulations should be speeded up to build a "risk warning and emergency response system, to ensure that artificial intelligence is safe, reliable and controllable".

Xi said last year that AI shouldn't be a "game of rich countries and the wealthy", while calling for more international governance and cooperation on AI. – Reuters

India, Pakistan exchange gunfire for second day

SRINAGAR: Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged gunfire for a second straight day yesterday as ties plummeted between the two nuclear-armed neighbours after an attack on tourists blamed on Pakistani gunmen killed 26 in Kashmir.

The Indian Army said its troops responded to "unprovoked" small arms fire from Pakistan Army posts that started around midnight on Friday along the 740km de facto border separating the Indian and Pakistani areas of Kashmir.

The Indian Army said Pakistani troops had also opened up with sporadic fire around midnight on Thursday. No casualties were reported from the Indian side, it said.

Kashmir police have identified three suspects, including two Pakistani nationals, who carried out the April 22 attack. Pakistan has denied any involvement and its defence minister has said an international investigation was needed.

After the attack, India and Pakistan unleashed measures against each other, with Pakistan closing its airspace to Indian airlines, and India suspending the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty that regulates water-sharing from the Indus River and its tributaries.

India and Pakistan have a decades-old ceasefire agreement over the disputed region of Kashmir but their troops still exchange gunfire sporadically. The two nations both claim Kashmir and have fought two of their three wars over it. – Reuters

Australia PM praises diversity

SYDNEY: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said yesterday cultural diversity was the country's strength as he pledged A\$25 million (RM70 million) for students to learn languages other than English, a day after a neo-Nazi disrupted a public gathering in Melbourne.

Albanese, entering the final week of campaigning ahead of a May 3 general election, said if re-elected, his government would support 600 community schools that help more than 90,000 students across Australia learn 84 languages.

"Our diversity is our nation's strength – we're supporting more Australian families to stay close to their culture with community language schools," Albanese said in a statement, after on Friday labelling as cowardly a neo-Nazi who heckled during an indigenous ceremony in Melbourne on Anzac Day, a national holiday honouring military veterans.

Australia, where one in two people are either born overseas or have a parent born overseas, has been grappling with a rise in right-wing extremism. In February, it imposed sanctions on far right online network "Terrorgram".

Peter Dutton, leader of the conservative National-Liberal coalition, Albanese's main political opponent in the election, also condemned Friday's far-right action, saying "it just has no place in our community, in our society whatsoever".

Early voting for the election began on Tuesday, with Albanese's Labor party holding a slim lead over the coalition. Cost of living and housing affordability are the key issues. – Reuters

Hamas open to freeing hostages, five-year truce

Lift blockade, Canada PM tells Israel

CAIRO: Hamas is open to an agreement to end the Gaza war that would include the one-time release of all remaining hostages and a five-year cessation of hostilities, an official from the Palestinian group said yesterday.

"Hamas is ready for an exchange of prisoners in a single batch and a truce for five years," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity, as a delegation from his group was set to meet mediators in Cairo later in the day.

On April 17, Hamas, which opposes a "partial" ceasefire agreement, rejected an Israeli proposal that included a 45-day truce in exchange for the return of 10 living hostages.

The group has consistently demanded that a truce agreement must lead to the end of the war, a full Israeli

withdrawal from Gaza, a prisoner exchange, and the immediate and sufficient entry of humanitarian aid into the war-battered territory.

Israel, for its part, demands the return of all hostages and the disarmament of Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza – the latter being a "red line" for the movement.

Of the 251 people taken hostage on Oct 7, 2023, 58 are still being held in Gaza, including 34 who are dead, according to the Israeli army.

A truce from Jan 19 to March 17 allowed the return of 33 hostages to Israel, including eight who were deceased, in exchange for the release of about 1,800 Palestinians from Israeli prisons.

According to figures published by Gaza Health Ministry, at least 2,062 Palestinians have been killed since the Israeli offensive resumed on March 18, bringing the total death toll in Gaza to

51,439 since the start of the war.

In Ottawa, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney urged Israel to allow the World Food Programme to work in Gaza, saying food must not be used as a "political tool", hours after the UN agency ran out of stocks due to a sustained Israeli blockade on supplies.

The WFP said on Friday it had delivered its last remaining supplies to kitchens providing hot meals in Gaza and that the facilities were expected to run out of food in the coming days.

"The UN World Food Programme announced that its food stocks in Gaza have run out because of the Israeli government's blockade – food cannot be used as a political tool," Carney said.

The UN agency said no humanitarian or commercial supplies had entered Gaza for more than seven weeks because all main border crossing points were closed. – AFP/Reuters

Move to defund US Social Security board

NEW YORK: The White House wants to defund a bipartisan board that advises the president and Congress on Social Security policy, two sources told Reuters.

The White House's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has notified staff at the Social Security Advisory Board (SSAB) that it plans to cut the board's annual budget from around US\$3 million (RM13 million) to zero.

The move to defund the SSAB has not been previously reported.

Congress established it in the 1990s as an independent federal agency to provide objective analysis on how to improve Social Security, the popular programme that annually pays US\$14 trillion in benefits to 73 million Americans.

While the board does not have decision-making power, its research has helped shape how the SSAB runs itself and facilitated legislation. It has also played a role in important policy debates, including a 2005 effort under then-president George W. Bush to privatise the agency that ultimately failed.

Its research was a key building block in a 2018 law that reduced the compliance burden for select categories of people appointed to receive benefits on behalf of those who cannot manage their own payments, while tightening checks for others.

While technically a separate agency, the advisory board's funding is a line item in the SSAB's budget each year. This month, OMB gave SSAB its proposed budget for the next fiscal year from Oct 1, with funding for the board set at zero, the two sources said.

When asked about the budget, OMB spokesperson Rachel Cauley said no final decisions had been made. – Reuters

Wave of momentum for high seas treaty

NEW YORK: A treaty to protect the high seas will not come to life by the time the UN Oceans Conference opens in June, but persistence by member states has nudged the landmark pact towards enactment.

Adopted in June 2023, the pact aims to protect marine habitats vital to humanity but threatened by pollution in waters beyond national jurisdictions.

It now has 113 signatories but just 21 have ratified it.

After the past two weeks of UN meetings negotiators came "one step closer to shaping the institutional backbone" of the agreement, said Nichola Clark of the Pew Charitable Trusts.

However, as the treaty can only take effect 120 days after the 60th ratification, there is no chance of its enactment happening before the UN Oceans Conference gathers in Nice on June 9-13.

Experts now hope the 60-ratification threshold can be reached by June so the treaty can still take effect this year.

The Nice summit will feature dozens of heads of state and will be preceded by a conference bringing together 2,000 scientists from around 100 countries.

A special ceremony in Nice on June 9 will serve as "a unique opportunity to reaffirm our collective political commitment" to the treaty's implementation, French delegation head Sandrine Barbier said.

On Thursday, President Donald Trump opened the door to commercial extraction of rare earth minerals from the ocean floor, including in international waters, bypassing the jurisdiction of the International Seabed Authority, of which Washington is not a member. – AFP



A boy fills up containers with water from what is left in underground pipes in Beit Lahia. – AFP/PI

Sex offender accuser commits suicide

SYDNEY: Virginia Giuffre, one of sex offender Jeffrey Epstein's most prominent accusers, has committed suicide, her family said on Friday.

Giuffre, 41, died on Friday in Western Australia, where she had been living for several years, the family said in an emailed statement.

"Virginia was a fierce warrior in the fight against sexual abuse and sex trafficking. She was the light that lifted so many survivors. Despite all the adversity she faced in her life, she shone so bright. She will be missed beyond measure," the family said.

Western Australia state police said they received a report on Friday that a 41-year-old woman died at a residence in Neergabby, a rural area on Perth's outskirts. Police said first aid was

attempted to no avail and that foul play was not suspected.

Giuffre was one of the first people to call for criminal prosecution against Epstein, which he eventually faced. Epstein was charged with sex trafficking in July 2019. Authorities say he committed suicide a few weeks later while imprisoned in New York's Metropolitan Correctional Center.

Epstein's death has ignited controversy for years, with some alleging he was murdered in jail to cover up the exposure of the rich and powerful clients who allegedly were involved in trysts with some 250 underage girls on his island.

A group of victims filed a lawsuit last year accusing the FBI of covering up its failure to investigate Epstein.

The administration of President Donald

Trump has vowed to release all documents related to the charges against Epstein, including lists of high-profile people associated with him. In February the "first phase" of documents was released but contained no bombshells.

Giuffre in 2022 settled a lawsuit in which she accused Britain's Prince Andrew of sexually abusing her as a teenager at Epstein's mansion in New York and on Epstein's Caribbean island, Little St James.

Several lawsuits and legal cases have been spawned by the accusations against Epstein, including the sex trafficking conviction in New York for British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, who was accused of helping Epstein, her former boyfriend, sexually abuse teenage girls. She is serving a 20-year sentence at a prison in Florida. – Reuters

A man with a beard, glasses, and a black cap stands in a workshop filled with mannequins and colorful artwork. He is wearing a white t-shirt, a dark vest, and multiple necklaces. He is pointing towards a mannequin that is wearing a white skirt. The background features various paintings and a large red wall with many small figures.

theSunday

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Special

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a myth or must-do

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Thread by thread

Bernard Chandran reinvents the game



"MY parents were conservative but inspired," Bernard Chandran shares.

"What I mean by that is they never in their wildest dreams thought being a fashion designer could be a successful career path, yet they always had a keen eye for good workmanship, especially my mother." It's a fitting start from the man who has spent decades turning fabric into emotion, heritage into modern silhouettes and Malaysia into a quiet but potent presence on the global fashion radar.

Growing up, Chandran was captivated not just by the textiles and tailors around him but by the technicolour boldness of '80s music videos.

"David Bowie and Duran Duran inspired me to go into fashion," he says.

"My vision began with a desire to be like the famous European designers and evolved into a desire to bring Malaysian fashion to the international stage." That evolution didn't happen overnight. It unfolded through carefully stitched milestones: years of persistence, re-invention and unapologetic boldness.

The needle never sleeps and neither does style

Malaysian icon Bernard Chandran shifts tech and sustainability, and still does what he has always done best while trusting his gut, staying grounded and keeping the world guessing

BY theSUNDAY TEAM



"Social media and fast fashion have revolutionised the fashion industry, making it more accessible and affordable."

The heart behind the stitch ... Chandran draws strength and inspiration from his family, the quiet force behind every thread and silhouette.

ON SUNDAY APRIL 27, 2025

theSunday Special

?

He names three defining moments, “The introduction of my *Petang Raya* shows, the privilege of designing for our royalty and participating in Fashion Week in Europe.”

It’s worth pausing here. Because *Petang Raya*, which now holds a cult-like following, didn’t just introduce contemporary twists to traditional wear – it gave Malaysians the privilege to reimagine culture. It made the *Baju Kurung* cool, luxurious and runway-worthy. Designing for royalty? That affirmed his status at home. And stepping onto Europe’s most coveted fashion stages? That was the moment Bernard transcended nationality and became a designer, period.

His work often straddles two worlds. On the one hand, there are the deeply rooted cultural codes of Malaysia, such as rich brocades, traditional silhouettes and ceremonial undertones. On the other, there’s the polished sheen of European education and global fashion vocabulary.

“From growing up in Malaysia to being educated in Europe, I have had the privilege of being exposed to the diversity of Malaysia as well as European culture. These inspirations and exposure helped inform my ability to create an aesthetic that appeals to an international audience while showcasing traditional inspirations.” But Chandran is not one to romanticise the journey. Nor does he believe in over-strategising creativity.

Asked what the biggest challenge was in breaking into global fashion, he shrugs it off, “I never saw it as a challenge; I just kept doing it and believing in it.” That belief – the quiet, stubborn kind has become the backbone of his brand. He doesn’t chase applause. He doesn’t follow trends.

“I don’t look at trends, I just follow my gut,” he says, without a hint of pretension.

“Keep believing in your work and don’t be afraid to rework and redo it. Don’t worry about fame and fortune, it will come naturally.” He is refreshingly grounded for someone who’s dressed everyone from royalty to celebrities.

When asked what he wears off-duty, the reply was instant: “I wear what I want all day, every day. I’m a fashion designer. You’d expect nothing less.”



Rooted in Malaysia, refined in Europe, the designer blends cultural richness with a global perspective.

Amid the swirling shifts of fashion, from couture to click-to-cart, slow fashion to microtrends, Chandran remains a compass. He’s not static, though, far from it.

“With the evolving landscape, as an experienced designer, I remain open-minded and embrace new technologies and younger audiences,” he says.

“Social media and fast fashion have revolutionised the fashion industry, making it more accessible and affordable, thereby expanding the fashion market. This accessibility eventually leads to consumers’ desire for quality and authenticity.” While many brands are now scrambling to embrace sustainability, Chandran’s been there for decades.

“My brand has practised sustainability since 1998. We don’t waste fabrics. We recycle or upcycle in many forms.” For him, it’s not a trend, it’s just how things should be done.

Despite several decades and collections in, Bernard doesn’t rest on reputation.

“New environments and new tools help evolve the process. Alongside consistent practice, don’t stop to look right or left – enjoy it. I always challenge myself creatively.” And if you’re wondering where he gets his endless reservoir of inspiration, it’s not from Pinterest boards or Paris street style.

“My family,” he says simply when asked what keeps him going.

So, what’s next for Bernard Chandran?

“Expect the unexpected,” he says with a smile.

He doesn’t elaborate and he doesn’t need to. With a career built not on following formulas but breaking them, he has never been one to give you what you think you want. Instead, he delivers what you didn’t know you needed.

And in that, he remains – as ever – ahead of the curve.



Chandran ... “I don’t look at trends, I just follow my gut.”



THE surging advancement of technology has unlocked a world of possibilities. At the forefront of this transformation is artificial intelligence (AI). Once a concept relegated to science fiction, AI is now a part of our everyday lives, particularly thanks to the smart apps we carry in our pockets.

For urban professionals in Malaysia, these applications are not just tools but essential partners in enhancing productivity and improving quality of life. Let's explore how AI-infused apps reshape our work and personal lives, making them smarter, easier and more efficient.

The rise of smart apps

In the last decade, smartphones have evolved beyond simple communication devices. Today, they house powerful AI applications that help us manage various aspects of our lives, from personal finance to health tracking and productivity management to travel planning. These apps harness the potential of AI to learn from user behaviour, making them increasingly responsive and tailored to individual needs.

Gone are the days when you needed to have extensive tech knowledge to leverage the benefits of advanced tools. Nowadays, with just a few taps on your smartphone, you can have an intelligent assistant that understands your preferences, manages your schedule and even provides insights into your spending habits.

AI Boost in Your Pocket

BY ASHRAF WAHAB

Enhancing productivity

For urban professionals juggling multiple tasks, time management can often feel like an uphill battle. This is where smart apps come to the rescue. Productivity apps powered by AI offer features that streamline your workflow, freeing up time for what truly matters.

Personal assistants

Virtual assistants like Siri, Google Assistant and Alexa have become household names. With just a voice command, you can schedule meetings, set reminders or even send messages hands-free. These voice-activated assistants learn from your habits, becoming more adept at anticipating your needs. Planning your week? Just ask.

Task management

Apps like Todoist or Trello use AI to help you prioritise tasks and manage your projects more effectively. They analyse your productivity patterns to suggest optimal times for deep work or when to tackle lighter tasks. With AI's help, finding that balance becomes a whole lot easier.

Time tracking

Ever wondered where all your time goes? Enter apps like RescueTime or Clockify. Using AI, these applications track how you spend your time across different platforms, giving you insights into your habits. You can pinpoint distractions and make informed adjustments. After all, knowledge is power, especially when it comes to maximising productivity.

Transforming communication

In today's fast-paced world, effective communication has never been more critical. Smart apps are leveraging AI to enhance how we connect with coworkers, clients and loved ones.

Intelligent email management

With the influx of emails, keeping track can feel daunting. AI-driven tools like Google's Smart Compose feature suggest responses and adjust your writing style to make your emails more efficient and effective. Imagine receiving recommendations based on your previous patterns, writing emails has never been easier.

Collaboration tools

With the rise of remote work, collaboration tools like Slack and Microsoft Teams have become essential. These platforms use AI to propose relevant channels, prioritise messages, and even summarise conversations, ensuring you never miss vital information.

Language translation

Living in a multicultural society like Malaysia means that language barriers can sometimes pose challenges to communication. Apps like Google Translate use sophisticated AI algorithms to provide real-time translations. This ability not only aids in work situations but also enriches our everyday interactions, fostering deeper connections.

Elevating personal life

AI isn't limited to just enhancing productivity at work; it also transforms our personal lives and helps us create a sustainable work-life balance.

Health and wellness

Wellness apps like MyFitnessPal or Sleep Cycle are making strides in personal health management. These tools analyse your lifestyle choices and provide recommendations for exercise, nutrition and sleep patterns. AI allows these apps to adapt their suggestions based on ongoing inputs and changing goals, making it easier to stay healthy amidst a busy schedule.

Smart banking and budgeting

Handling finances can be tedious, but with AI-driven finance apps like YAP or MoneyLover, you can easily simplify budgeting and track spending. These apps categorise expenses, create budgets and even forecast future expenditures based on recent habits. Having your financial information neatly organised at your fingertips lets you make informed decisions on the go.

Personalised entertainment

Let's face it. After a long work day, we all need some downtime. Streaming services like Netflix and Spotify use AI algorithms to learn your preferences and suggest tailored content. No more endless scrolling. Now, it's all about diving straight into what you love. Apps like Goodreads can recommend your next favourite read, ensuring your leisure time is well spent.

Navigating daily life

Smart apps are also changing the way we navigate our daily lives, from home management to travel planning, making life significantly more manageable.

Smart home management

With IoT devices becoming more prevalent, AI-powered home management apps let you remotely control everything from lighting to temperature. Home automation tools take it a step further, learning your habits and adjusting settings to create a personalised environment. Imagine stepping into a well-lit home at the perfect temperature; that's our future.

Travel assistance

Travel can often feel overwhelming, especially with the need for endless research and planning. AI-driven apps like Google Maps or Kayak simplify the process by providing real-time updates on traffic, weather and travel conditions. These applications can even optimise your route based on your preferences, ensuring a smoother journey, whether you're commuting to work or hitting the road for a weekend getaway.

Smart shopping

Mobile shopping apps have leveraged AI to enhance the retail experience. Amazon, for example, uses AI to analyse your shopping habits and suggest products that match your preferences. This personalisation filters out the noise, making your shopping journey as efficient as possible.

Ethical considerations of AI

While embracing AI's potential in our daily lives, it's crucial to tread carefully and consider the ethical implications. AI's ability to learn from user data raises concerns about privacy, security and potential biases in algorithms. Developers and users must address these issues head-on to ensure a responsible approach to this powerful technology.

Embracing the future

AI in our pockets isn't just a trend; it's a reality reshaping how we work, communicate and live. So, next time you pull out your smartphone, remember there's a world of intelligence and convenience at your fingertips. Embrace it!



10,000 steps per day a myth or must-do

Is hitting the 'magic number' the secret to a healthier life or have we all been following a number born out of marketing, not medicine? The answers may surprise you

EVERYWHERE you look, from fitness trackers on your wrist to wellness influencers on your feed, 10,000 steps a day has become the gold standard for staying healthy. It sounds neat, attainable and oddly satisfying. But is it the magic number for health or just a clever marketing gimmick from the past? Let's take a walk (pun intended) through the origins, evidence and what really matters when it comes to stepping up your fitness game.

Contrary to popular belief, the 10,000-step rule didn't emerge from a laboratory, medical journal or United Nations health resolution. It came from Japan in the 1960s, thanks to the Manpo-kei pedometer, which translates to "10,000 steps meter." Created by the Yamasa Clock and Instrument Company, the number wasn't based on rigorous science but rather a round figure that was easy to remember and market. The idea took off.

The choice of 10,000 steps was likely selected because the Japanese character

for 10,000 (万) resembles a person walking. This catchy figure gained popularity and has since been ingrained in fitness culture worldwide.

Decades later, wearable tech companies like Fitbit and Garmin adopted the benchmark and it quickly embedded itself into public consciousness as the daily quota for good health. It was catchy. It was measurable. And for a lot of people, it worked.

Beyond the number

While the "10,000" figure grabs headlines, what really matters is consistent movement. Walking, even in shorter bursts, brings a buffet of benefits:

- **Heart health:** It boosts circulation, lowers blood pressure and strengthens your cardiovascular system.
- **Weight management:** It burns calories and helps keep your waistline in check.
- **Mental wellness:** Walking improves mood, reduces anxiety and even acts as a mild antidepressant by releasing endorphins.
- **Disease prevention:** Regular walking reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, cancers and metabolic syndrome.

But it doesn't stop there. Walking also improves joint mobility, especially for those with arthritis or stiffness due to sedentary lifestyles. It enhances sleep quality by regulating your circadian rhythm and helping your body wind down more naturally at night. Even your digestive system

benefits from a post-meal stroll, aiding in faster digestion and reducing bloating. And here's the beauty of it – walking doesn't require a subscription, a personal trainer or high-end shoes. You can do it almost anywhere, at any time, rain or shine. In short, walking is the unsung hero of fitness routines. You don't need to join a gym or run marathons, just lace up your shoes and step outside.

But here's the catch, 10,000 steps isn't a one-size-fits-all prescription. For a healthy 30-year-old office worker, it might be reasonable. But for an 80-year-old with arthritis or someone recovering from surgery? It could be overwhelming.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, which could translate to about 7,000 to 8,000 steps per day. What matters more is regular movement, not perfection.

Think of it as a flexible goal. For some, 4,000 steps a day may already represent a major improvement. The trick is progression, not obsession.

Psychology of the pedometer

Let's not overlook the motivational power of numbers. Even if 10,000 steps isn't mandatory for health, it gives people a target. It's a tangible, visual reminder to stand up, walk around and be less sedentary.

Science behind the steps

NOW, here's where it gets interesting. Researchers have recently examined whether 10,000 steps is truly the magic bullet for wellness or if we've just walked in circles.

- **Mortality and step count:** A widely cited study published in *Jama Internal Medicine* found that people who walked roughly 7,000 steps per day had a 50% to 70% lower risk of early death than those who were more sedentary. In short, you don't need to hit 10,000 to make a big difference.
- **Cognitive health:** In another study published in *Jama Neurology*, a peer-reviewed medical journal from the American Medical Association focusing on brain and nervous system research, experts discovered that walking just 3,800 steps a day was associated with a 25% reduction in dementia risk. Up that to around 9,800 steps and the risk drops by 50%. That's not just your body thanking you, your brain's in on it too.
- **Incremental wins:** Still not near 10,000? Don't stress. Researchers say that every extra 1,000 steps you take daily may reduce your risk of early death by roughly 15%. Small steps count.

But for others, that number can become a source of guilt or burnout. If you're dragging yourself out at 11.45 pm to do laps in the living room to "hit your 10K", it may be time to rethink the goal. Health should empower you, not guilt-trip you.

Get more steps without losing your mind

If you're not a fan of hour-long walks, don't worry. Movement can be sneakily embedded into your day. Here's how:

- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Park farther from the entrance.
- Do a walking meeting (yes, Zoom calls count).
- Walk while on phone calls.
- Dance in your living room, it's legal exercise.

The idea is to reduce sitting time and inject small bouts of movement into your daily routine. It adds up.

Bottom line?

Let's land this plane. Is the 10,000-step rule a myth? Technically, yes. It wasn't rooted in science. But is it harmful? Not at all. If anything, it helped wake the world up to the dangers of sedentary lifestyles.

The real takeaway is this: You don't need to hit an exact number to be healthy. Start where you are. Walk more than yesterday. Don't let a round number on your wrist dictate your self-worth.

In a world obsessed with extremes, there's something wonderfully ordinary and compelling about just walking. So, put one foot in front of the other and let the steps take care of themselves.

The 10,000-step mantra may have started as a marketing gimmick but evolved into something positive. Whether your daily count is 4,000, 7,000 or 12,000, the key is regular movement and a lifestyle that supports long-term health. No medals for hitting a number. But the reward? A longer, stronger, happier life.



Contrary to popular belief, the 10,000-step rule didn't emerge from a laboratory, medical journal or United Nations health resolution.



A simple step towards better health

BY AQILAH NAJWA JAMALUDDIN

Amid the pressure of high-intensity workouts, walking remains the underrated key to a healthier heart

"HIGH-intensity workouts", "How to lose belly fats in 5 minutes" and "Fastest ways to grow muscles" are the kinds of headlines that flood our screens when we search for simple ways to stay healthy.

The wellness landscape has become increasingly rigid and intense, often making fitness feel like an exclusive club for the ultra-disciplined. As a result, many choose to forgo exercise altogether, either overwhelmed by unrealistic expectations or deterred by the exorbitant costs of gym memberships that drain the wallets of Malaysians.

However, many may not realise that one of the most effective exercises is also the most accessible. Walking. It requires no expensive memberships, no high-tech gear, just a pair of comfortable shoes and a commitment to move.

Walking is more than just a means of getting from one place to another. It is a powerful ally in combating heart disease, a leading cause of death in Malaysia. While elite athletes may push their limits, health professionals continue to promote this age-old and easily accessible form of exercise. And for good reason. This simple activity provides significant benefits for heart health, circulation and overall wellness.

According to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS 2023), 33.3% of Malaysian adults, approximately 7.6 million individuals, suffer from high cholesterol, a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Even more concerning, half remain unaware of their condition, underscoring the need for preventive healthcare measures.

Walking is beneficial for all ages

Dr Richard Chan Tze Ming, a consultant cardiologist from Sunway Medical Centre, stresses that walking is an exercise suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels, making it an ideal choice for maintaining cardiovascular well-being.

"Walking is the most basic form of exercise that everybody can do. We are born to move around and be active. It's something even the elderly can do in their golden years. Walking is better than being sedentary if you are not a fan of high-intensity workouts."

Beyond its heart-strengthening properties, walking enhances circulation, lowers cholesterol and alleviates stress. It effectively manages weight, regulates blood pressure and improves muscle endurance. Moreover, studies show that regular walking can boost mental well-being by reducing anxiety and depression, reinforcing its holistic health benefits.

"Walking is good for those with some degree of heart failure. There are also rehabilitation programmes for patients who suffer from heart attacks. Overall, even for those with heart diseases, it is good to pick up exercise and walking is the mildest, least harmful form."

Experts recommend at least 30 minutes of walking two to three times a week for tangible health improvements. However, Chan highlights that incorporating it into daily routines yields even greater benefits. Simple lifestyle changes like choosing stairs over lifts, parking further from the entrance or taking an evening stroll can significantly enhance cardiovascular health over time.

Heart health patients should prioritise exercise

Having graduated from the University of Auckland, New Zealand and serving as a cardiologist for over a decade, Chan highlights the persistent misconceptions surrounding exercise and heart disease. Many still believe that working out post-heart attack is dangerous, a notion he is eager to dispel.

"Many people think that exercising endangers the heart and can lead to sudden death. But in actual fact, the more you exercise, the healthier the heart."

The fear that physical exertion can trigger heart failure stems from widely publicised cases of sudden death during exercise. However, medical professionals affirm that structured physical activity strengthens the heart and reduces cardiovascular risks. According to *Harvard Health Publishing*, avoiding exercise due to fear of overexertion is a dangerous misconception. In reality, movement fortifies the heart and enhances longevity.

"While we do still hear about people suddenly passing away during jogging or badminton, they would likely have an underlying heart disease which can go unnoticed."



Even for those with heart diseases, it is good to pick up exercise and walking is the mildest, least harmful form.



Therefore, we must do frequent medical check-ups to identify potential heart diseases," said Chan.

Despite the benefits of early detection, many Malaysians remain reluctant to undergo health screenings. According to the NHMS 2023, only 34.6% of Malaysians opt for regular check-ups. This reluctance stems from financial constraints, fear of discovering underlying illnesses and the belief that medical attention is unnecessary unless symptoms arise. As we enter 2025, the need to shift this mindset has never been greater.

Heart disease among Malaysian youth

The increasing prevalence of heart disease among young Malaysians is another growing concern. Sedentary lifestyles, increased screen time and high-stress work environments are driving cardiovascular issues among younger demographics. The Malaysian Society of Hypertension reports that obesity, diabetes and hypertension are becoming alarmingly common among the youth.

"A rise in screen time likely exacerbates a more sedentary lifestyle. Anything can be done via the screen now. Most things can be done in the comfort of our homes. Work has also become more demanding and competitive. As a result, this brings out a new level of stress and pressure, indirectly contributing to cardiovascular diseases," explains Chan.

Modern work cultures have also led many to prioritise convenience over nutrition, often opting for processed and fast food. A study found that 13.5% of



Walking is the most basic form of exercise that everybody can do. It's something even the elderly can do in their golden years. Walking is better than being sedentary if you are not a fan of high-intensity workouts."

Chan, consultant cardiologist

Malaysian adolescents consume fast food four to seven times per week, while 69.3% indulge one to three times weekly. Factors such as busy schedules, urban living and school food availability contribute to these unhealthy dietary habits.

Additionally, research indicates that up to 30% of Malaysian children are classified as overweight or obese due to excessive junk food consumption. Chan reiterates the importance of proactive health measures, including balanced diets, regular medical check-ups and physical activity to counteract these risks.

"I usually tell my younger patients to invest in their future. The best investment they can do is invest in their health as it would give them a longer lifespan and a healthier and functional body as they progress into the last few decades of their lives. To sum up, the best form of investment is regular exercise, eating healthy and doing regular health screening."

Staying informed: The key to prevention

Public initiatives strive to promote a more active lifestyle, with urban planning projects, community fitness programmes and corporate wellness campaigns encouraging daily movement. As April marks National Walk Day, this is a timely reminder to embrace an active lifestyle.

"Most of my patients who come to get their hearts checked out are due to the news around about people suddenly dying from heart attacks. So, social media is disseminating this kind of news, which raises public awareness and encourages people to get their health checked out," says Chan.

Education plays a crucial role in preventing heart disease. Those with a family history of cardiovascular conditions or who have lost loved ones to heart failure must remain particularly vigilant. The

digital age offers unparalleled access to medical insights. Still, it is essential to source information from reputable outlets such as healthcare professionals, government health bodies and medical journals to avoid misinformation.

"Focusing on education, early detection and lifestyle interventions is always beneficial. Encouraging healthier diets, regular physical activity and routine medical check-ups can contribute to better heart health outcomes. Collaboration between healthcare professionals, policymakers and the community strengthens preventive care."

As public health initiatives continue to advocate for heart disease prevention, walking remains one of the most accessible and sustainable solutions. Healthcare professionals are calling for a cultural shift towards a more active way of life, reinforcing that even the smallest changes can yield significant health improvements.

Taking small steps today can pave the way for a heart-healthy future. Whether walking to work, choosing stairs over lifts or incorporating daily walks into a routine, every effort brings us closer to a healthier Malaysia.

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Half truths, misquotes & other myths we love to repeat

In 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: The *Pontianak* only appears on full moons

THE TRUTH: The *Pontianak*'s appearance is not tied to lunar cycles

The *Pontianak* is a staple of Malay ghost stories. Many Malaysians and Southeast Asians have heard of this folklore growing up, which may appear in

other nicknames for different languages and dialects. The *Pontianak* is known to be the spirit of a woman who died during childbirth, often described as wearing a white cloth with long black hair and clinging to banana trees or dark paths to haunt villagers. Pop culture and old wives' tales commonly claim she appears during full moons; a myth likely blends Malay beliefs with Western horror tropes like werewolves and vampires.

Evidence: In classical Malay texts like *Hikayat Abdullah*, there is no mention of lunar phases. The full moon association appears to be a later addition influenced by Western horror media.



MYTH 2: A giraffe's neck has more bones than a human's

THE TRUTH: Giraffes and humans both have the same neck bones

At first glance, it seems logical – giraffes have long, towering necks, while humans have relatively short ones. But in reality, both species share the same number of cervical vertebrae: seven. The difference lies in the size of each vertebra – a giraffe's can exceed 25cm, whereas a human's is only a few centimetres.

Evidence: X-rays, veterinary studies, and museum skeletons confirm this identical count, even if the scale varies dramatically.



MYTH 4: Lightning never strikes twice in the same place

THE TRUTH: Lightning strikes the same place repeatedly

Despite the saying, 'lightning never strikes the same place twice,' in reality, lightning does strike the same spot over again, especially if it is a tall, pointy and isolated object. For example, the Empire State Building is hit about 25 times annually and Petronas Twin Towers, KLCC is equipped with lightning rods due to frequent hits. These structures reach high into the sky, aligning them as the perfect conductors for electrical discharges.

Evidence: Lightning seeks the path of least resistance. If a building, tree or peak offers a direct, unobstructed route to the ground, it becomes a regular target.



MYTH 3: Eating durian with Coke can cause death

THE TRUTH: Eating durian with Coke does not cause fatality

This myth is so common in Malaysia and Singapore that many refuse to mix the two. The claim is that it creates a deadly chemical reaction in the stomach. Linguistically, it is repeated as *panas dalam* (internal heat), tied to traditional Chinese medicine beliefs. Durian is classified as a "heaty" food and carbonated and sugary Coke is thought to amplify it.

Evidence: Laboratory tests on animals and anecdotal reports show no lethal effect. While consuming both may cause discomfort, such as indigestion or bloating due to their richness, there is no scientific basis for a deadly reaction.



MYTH 5: You must wait 30 minutes after eating before swimming

THE TRUTH: Swimming after eating will not cause cramps or drown you

This long-held belief comes from a cautious place, voiced concerns over digestion diverts blood from muscles, giving you cramps while in the water, thus drowning. In many cultures, it has been

passed down as firm advice, especially to kids at the beach. But biology says differently.

Evidence: Reviews by groups such as the International Life Saving Federation found no evidence linking post-meal swimming to increased drowning risk. While heavy meals may cause sluggishness, light to moderate activity, such as swimming, is generally safe.

It doesn't try to be trendy. It doesn't demand a fancy label or feature in glossy packaging. And yet, the humble cucumber – *timun*, as we call it here – may be doing more for your body than half the supplements lining your kitchen shelf.

In Malaysia, cucumber is everywhere. It's sliced into *nasi lemak* packets, paired with *sambal* at the *mamak* restaurant, stuffed into *rojak* and served beside fried rice like a quiet, loyal sidekick. You'll also find it soaking in *asam* water, turned into *kerabu* or tucked into homemade sandwiches with just a bit of mayo. It's familiar, affordable and rarely the star of the show. But maybe it should be.

Cucumber is made up of roughly 95% water, which means every bite you take is a hydration boost – something we all need more of in Malaysia's sticky, unforgiving heat. But beyond water, cucumbers come with a list of underrated benefits: they're rich in antioxidants, have natural anti-inflammatory properties and contain compounds like silica, which supports skin and connective tissue.

In traditional Malay households, cucumber isn't just food; it's cooling medicine. You'll hear people say, *badan panas*; immediately, someone will suggest *ulam timun* or a glass of cucumber juice. It's also a fixture in Chinese households, often used to soothe heaty conditions and support digestion after heavy or fried meals.

And let's not forget the universal image of two cucumber slices over tired eyes at a spa – cliché, yes, but not wrong. The truth is, cucumber cools your system inside and out, whether you eat, drink or wear it on your face.

It's a fridge staple that works harder than it gets credit for. Here's a closer look at how this everyday vegetable quietly supports your health in refreshingly simple ways.

Keeps you hydrated

In a tropical climate like ours, staying hydrated isn't a seasonal concern – it's a daily one. Cucumbers are one of the most hydrating foods you can eat. Packed with

water and electrolytes like potassium and magnesium, it helps your body regulate temperature and maintain fluid balance. It's beneficial when you've spent the day outdoors, after a workout or even just to recover from salty food. While we often rely on sweet isotonic drinks to beat the heat, a chilled cucumber juice or a cucumber salad can hydrate you just as effectively – minus the sugar.

Supports gut health

Cucumber is light on the stomach but rich in fibre, making it excellent for digestion. Its cooling nature helps reduce internal "heatiness", a concept familiar in traditional Chinese and Malay medicine, which links certain symptoms like ulcers, bloating and dry mouth to excessive internal heat. Eating cucumber after a spicy or oily meal can help neutralise that effect and soothe your digestive tract. Plus, its mild diuretic properties can help reduce water retention and bloating, especially if you've had a particularly salty or heavy meal.

Cucumber cool and unbothered

It doesn't scream "superfood" or beg for attention, but cucumber's been quietly keeping Malaysians cool, hydrated and glowing for generations



Hydration and skincare? Cucumber does both effortlessly.



Cools inflammation and puffiness

Cucumber offers natural relief, whether you're puffy from poor sleep, a long day in the sun, or just general fatigue. That famous spa trick of placing chilled cucumber slices over your eyes works because the coolness constricts blood vessels and the antioxidants help reduce swelling. Internally, the anti-inflammatory compounds in cucumber may help lower chronic inflammation linked to fatigue, joint pain or skin flare-ups. It's not dramatic, but it's consistent and sometimes, that's better.

Supports skin from the inside out

Cucumbers contain silica, vitamin C and other antioxidants that help maintain healthy skin elasticity, fight free radicals and keep skin hydrated from within. Malaysians who grew up with *bedak sejuk* and natural masks may remember cucumber pulp being mixed into beauty routines – and there's science behind that. Eating cucumber regularly can help reduce dryness and dullness, especially when combined with proper water intake. If your skin is tired or lacklustre, your solution might be sitting in your salad bowl.

May help manage blood pressure

The potassium in cucumbers plays a role in balancing sodium levels in the body, which is essential for managing blood pressure. Regularly consuming potassium-rich foods can help support cardiovascular health, especially for hypertension patients.

Cucumbers' high water content also reduces strain on the kidneys, allowing the heart to function more efficiently. Swap out salty snacks for a cucumber and tomato salad with lime; you'd be surprised how satisfying it can be.

Freshens breath and cleanses the mouth

Here's a lesser-known benefit. Cucumber helps freshen your breath. Its high water content helps stimulate saliva production, which washes away bacteria in the mouth. The phytochemicals in cucumber also have mild antibacterial effects, especially when chewed slowly.

So if you've just had raw garlic or strong spices, nibbling on a slice or two of cucumber can help neutralise odours and leave your breath feeling cleaner, so no chewing gum is required.



Cucumber helps balance sodium and support blood pressure.

Swipe left on the bad boy

Modern women have moved on from the emotionally unavailable man-child. Here's what makes someone swipe right in real life



LET'S get one thing out of the way – women, as a collective, are not sitting around waiting for a gym-addicted alpha with bulging biceps, a bulging wallet and a bluetooth earpiece. If anything, most are quietly eye-rolling their way past the flex and looking for something a little more ... well, evolved.

True, there will always be someone out there with a soft spot for the emotionally unavailable "bad boy" who disappears for a week and resurfaces with a cryptic WhatsApp reply. But for the rest of the population? That gets old fast.

So what are women actually drawn to? What makes someone genuinely attractive in the eyes of a woman who's seen her fair share of overpriced dates and conversations that go nowhere?

You might be surprised. Here's a breakdown of what really counts and no, it's not how many zeroes are in your payslip.

Don't be a know-it-all uncle
Intelligence is attractive. But mansplaining? Not so much.

Women appreciate a man who can engage in a proper conversation that doesn't resemble a lecture or a monologue with PowerPoint slides. You don't have to quote Nietzsche, just be interested in the world around you. Current events, music, books, and even that viral social issue she's passionate about join the conversation without trying to control it.

And here's a tip straight from the trenches: If you don't know something, say so. "I've never really looked into that, tell me more" is way sexier than "Actually, let me explain ..."



Be passionate & adventurous

No, you don't need to fly her to Bali on a whim or drag her up Broga Hill at sunrise every weekend. Adventure can be subtle, it's about being open to life. Being curious. Saying yes more than you say: *lah, malas* (loosely translated: I can't be bothered).

It's about shaking up your routine. If your weekends revolve around the same *kopitiam* breakfast, futsal session and *teh tarik* with the boys, maybe it's time to slot in something new. A play she's mentioned. A museum. That new Thai fusion spot in Petaling Jaya. Try something she's into, even if you secretly have no idea what you're doing (hello, *batik* painting workshop).

Taking the initiative shows you're interested in more than just her Instagram stories — you're interested in her world.



Be emotionally available

Emotional maturity is no longer optional, it's essential. If your idea of communication is a thumbs-up emoji or a "K", you might need to level up.

Being emotionally available means you can talk about feelings without looking like you've swallowed a lemon. It means checking in with her when she seems off, listening when she speaks and sharing how you feel too, not just bottling it up until you explode at the *mamak* over the wrong order.

Also, vulnerability isn't weakness. You don't lose man points for saying, "I had a rough day." If anything, you gain her trust. And that's where the real connection grows — in the honest moments, not the heavily curated ones.



Dodgy stand-up comedy act

Humour is consistently rated as one of the most attractive traits in a partner. But humour doesn't mean cracking jokes non-stop like you're auditioning for *Maharaja Lawak* (a local comedy contest).

It's about sharing laughter. Bantering in the car. Laughing at the ridiculousness of a traffic jam that hasn't moved for 20 minutes. Finding joy in the small stuff. It's also about appreciating her humour, not just waiting for your turn to shine.

Bonus tip: Malaysian humour is rich. Tap into the quirks of daily life. Comment on the uncles who double-park at will. Joke about the endless weather drama (KL: 36°C and thunderstorm warning at the same time). Just don't rely solely on sarcasm or outdated jokes about your ex, no one's laughing.



Shared values

You don't need to like the same music or agree on which *nasi lemak* stall reigns supreme (though this can spark great debate). What matters more is how your inner compass aligns with hers.

This means shared ideas about kindness, loyalty, ambition and the big-ticket values that make relationships last. She might be a city girl who thrives in a fast-paced KL lifestyle, while you're more of a laid-back Penang soul. That's fine. But if one of you believes in building a future and the other is still figuring out whether to renew their Netflix subscription, that's a problem.

Malaysia is diverse culturally, spiritually, politically and so are relationships. However, shared ground keeps things from falling apart when disagreements enter the chat.



Respect is still sexy in any era

Respect is underrated. It's not just about holding doors open, it's how you speak to her, about her and in front of others. It's how you treat service staff when you're out. How you respond when she has different views. How you show up when it matters.

In a country where honouring elders and cultural etiquette is still ingrained, respect isn't just old-fashioned — it's timeless.



So ... what does she really want?

She wants someone real. Someone who makes her laugh on a bad day and listens when she vents about work. Someone who can switch from being goofy at the pasar malam to reflective during a late-night chat over Milo ais. Someone she can grow with, not just pose with on social media.

You don't have to be perfect. You don't even need to have it all figured out. Just show up, be present, be kind and every once in a while, surprise her with *nasi lemak*, no questions asked.

Now that, gentlemen, is attractive.

The secret emotional lives of pets

YOU talk to your pet all the time. A little morning greeting. A guilty explanation when you leave the house. A celebratory "good boy!" after a successful trick. But how often do you stop to ask what your pet might be trying to say to you?

In Malaysia, where more and more households are welcoming pets into their homes, especially in urban areas and high-rise living, understanding the emotional needs of our furry, feathery (and even scaly) companions is becoming increasingly important. With long working hours, unpredictable traffic, and smaller living spaces, many pets spend most of their day alone or unstimulated. And while most owners can tell when their pets are happy or hungry, fewer recognise the subtler signs of boredom, stress or anxiety.

They feel more than you think

Science has made major strides in recognising the emotional worlds of animals. Dogs, for instance, are known to exhibit primary emotions like joy, fear, anger and love – and even secondary ones like jealousy. Cats may not wag their tails, but they bond deeply with their humans and experience complex emotional shifts. Parrots and cockatiels, common sights nowadays in Malaysian homes, have demonstrated levels of emotional intelligence similar to toddlers.

One study showed that dogs can differentiate between happy and angry human facial expressions. Another revealed that cats form secure attachments to their humans, much like babies to parents. Even so-called "lower" animals like fish and reptiles can show signs of stress or calm depending on their environment and handling.

This emotional capacity means pets aren't just reacting to food or routines – they're responding to our energy, tone and the emotional climate of the home.

Misunderstood behaviours

We often label unwanted pet behaviours as annoying, naughty or difficult – but more often than not, they're attempts at communication.

A dog that chews furniture may be bored out of its mind. A cat that urinates outside the litter box could be anxious, not misbehaving. A parrot that screeches non-stop might simply be lonely. A rabbit that hides all day? Possibly scared or overstimulated.

In Malaysia's densely populated urban centres, such as Klang Valley or Penang, it's not uncommon to see large-breed dogs living in condominiums with minimal access to the outdoors. While the intention may be good, these breeds often suffer silently. They lack the space to move, the variety to stay mentally engaged and the consistent companionship they were bred for.

As more Malaysians embrace animal companionship, it's time to listen closely to what our pets are trying to tell us through their behaviour, moods and silent signals

BY SIMON VELLA



Similarly, cats confined in high-rise apartments without visual stimulation from windows or access to vertical spaces can develop a quiet kind of emotional fatigue. Some sleep more; others act out subtly, easily missed ways.

What to watch for

Understanding your pet's emotional cues isn't about being an expert, it's about being observant.

- **Dogs:** Watch for pacing, whining, excessive licking or tail tucking. These aren't just quirks, they're signs of stress. Even subtle shifts, like refusing food or ignoring commands, can point to emotional discomfort.
- **Cats:** Hiding, over-grooming or suddenly avoiding their litter box could signal anxiety or even depression. A normally sociable cat that becomes distant may be trying to tell you something.
- **Birds:** Feather plucking, repetitive pacing in their cage, or lack of vocalisation can indicate loneliness or boredom. Many birds need as much attention as a toddler and just as much stimulation.
- **Small mammals** (like guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits): Lethargy, biting or reduced appetite are often early signs of fear or frustration.



It's not about overanalysing every twitch or bark but tuning in. If your pet behaves unusually for more than a day or two, ask yourself what might have changed – physically and emotionally.

Small changes, big impact

The good news is that supporting your pet's emotional well-being doesn't require grand transformations.

- **Rotate toys and vary routines:** Even something as simple as changing your walking route or introducing a new scent toy can re-energise your dog's day.
- **Talk to them:** Pets may not understand every word, but they respond to tone, rhythm and intent. Your voice becomes their emotional compass.
- **Offer choices:** Let your cat decide where to nap. Let your rabbit explore new corners. Empowering pets helps them feel more secure and seen.
- **Enrichment matters:** Snuffle mats, treat puzzles, scratching posts and climbing perches aren't indulgences; they're necessities for mental health.

Some Malaysians are beginning to use pet cameras to observe their animals while they're away. It's not about surveillance, it's about insight. These tools often reveal hidden behaviours: a cat pacing near the door at 4 pm, a dog staring at the window until sunset. Patterns emerge that can guide how you plan your time with them.

Even brief 10-minute play sessions, spaced throughout the day, can do wonders. In fact, many trainers here in Malaysia now advocate short, high-quality engagement over long, sporadic bursts of attention.

When to ask for help

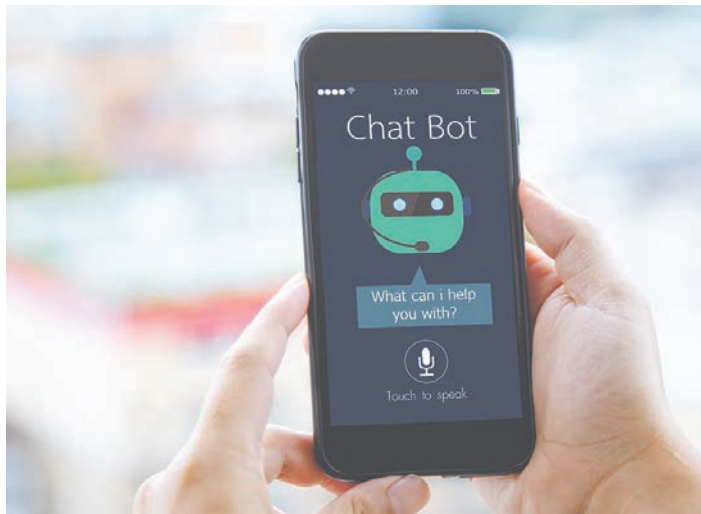
Sometimes, no matter how much you adjust, your pet remains withdrawn or reactive. That's when it's time to check with a vet. In Malaysia, an increasing number of clinics are partnering with animal behaviourists. These specialists help decode behavioural shifts and craft customised enrichment or training plans.

It's a growing field and a promising one. Because not all wounds are physical and not all ailments are visible. We often say pets love unconditionally. But do we honour that love with our attention? Our presence? Our curiosity?

It's easy to meet their basic needs – food, shelter, vet check-ups. However, their emotional needs require different kinds of care: patience, observation and empathy. They're not accessories for our social feeds or a footnote to our busy lives. They're emotional beings navigating our world with limited tools and total trust.



Next time you notice your cockatiel staring at you a little longer or your cat meowing without apparent reason, pause. It may not mean "I want food." It might mean, *I want you to notice me.*



Chatbots ... Many jobs that were once outsourced are now being automated.

Beyond cheap labour

Companies are no longer chasing the lowest bidder as the focus now is on innovation, value and collaboration

BY BOBBY VARANASI

FOR decades, outsourcing was synonymous with cost-cutting. Businesses, particularly in developed economies, sought the lowest-cost providers, often relocating operations to countries where wages were a fraction of those in the West. Call centres moved to India and the Philippines, factories shifted to China and IT services were outsourced across Eastern Europe and Malaysia. The logic was simple: reduce expenses, boost profits.

However, this outsourcing model – one that prioritised cost over everything else is no longer as viable as it once was. The landscape has changed. Companies are beginning to realise that the lowest-cost provider is not necessarily the best option. Cheap labour alone does not guarantee quality, reliability or the ability to keep up with technological advancements. Today, businesses are looking beyond cost arbitrage, seeking outsourcing partners who offer innovation, expertise and long-term value. In essence, the focus is shifting from bottomline to topline thinking.

Decline of the cheap labour model
Outsourcing's reputation as a race to the bottom has been shifting for several years, but the pandemic accelerated this transformation. Supply chain disruptions, labour shortages and rising wages in traditional outsourcing hotspots have forced businesses to reconsider their strategies. Several factors have contributed to this shift:

- **Rising wages in key outsourcing hubs:** Labour costs in previously low-cost destinations have risen. For

instance, salaries in India's IT sector have increased significantly over the past decade and China is no longer the bargain it once was for manufacturing. Companies relying solely on low wages struggle to maintain the same cost advantages as their competitive edge.

- **Automation and AI:** Many jobs that were once outsourced are now being automated. AI-powered chatbots are replacing call centres, software can now handle accounting and data entry and robotic process automation is transforming supply chain management. This means businesses are no longer looking for just cheaper human labour – they are looking for outsourcing partners who can integrate AI, automation and data-driven efficiencies into their services.
- **Quality and innovation matter more:** Businesses have realised that while cost savings are important, poor quality and inefficiency cost even more in the long run. A cheaper outsourcing partner that delivers subpar results can lead to dissatisfied customers, operational inefficiencies and reputational damage. Companies now focus on outsourcing partners that provide strategic value, domain expertise and innovation rather than just low costs. This involves a fundamental shift in such relationships, from cost-containment to co-creating topline value.
- **Geopolitical and supply chain risks:** The pandemic highlighted the fragility of global supply chains. Many businesses faced severe disruptions due to border closures, lockdowns and

shipping delays. As a result, companies are looking for more resilient outsourcing strategies, including nearshoring (moving services closer to home) and multi-sourcing (working with multiple providers across different locations).

The new outsourcing model: Collaboration over cost

Instead of simply offloading work to the lowest bidder, companies are co-creating solutions with their outsourcing partners. This shift is redefining the outsourcing industry in three key ways:

1. From transactional to strategic partnerships

In the past, outsourcing was viewed as a vendor-client relationship, where companies dictated terms and service providers simply executed tasks. Today, businesses are looking for collaborative partnerships where both parties bring expertise to the table. This means:

- Shared risk and rewards in projects
- Joint innovation initiatives
- Greater integration between the outsourcing team and the in-house team

For example, instead of hiring a call centre to handle customer queries, businesses are working with outsourcing firms to develop AI-driven customer experience strategies that improve service efficiency and satisfaction alongside opportunities for hyperpersonalisation.

2. Value-based outsourcing over cost-based outsourcing

Companies are now assessing outsourcing partners based on their capabilities, technological expertise and ability to drive business growth rather than just offering lower costs. The focus is on:

- **Industry specialisation:** Businesses want outsourcing firms with deep expertise in their sector, whether it is finance, healthcare, logistics or cybersecurity.
- **Innovation capacity:** Companies seek partners who can integrate cutting-edge solutions like cloud computing, AI and blockchain into their processes.
- **Long-term scalability:** Instead of short-term cost-cutting, businesses want outsourcing relationships that will scale with their growth.

3. A Focus on nearshoring and reshoring

As businesses become more cautious about geopolitical instability and supply chain disruptions, they are shifting towards nearshoring (outsourcing to nearby countries) and reshoring (bringing operations back in-house or to the home country). For example:

- European firms are increasingly outsourcing to Poland, Portugal and Ukraine instead of India.
- American companies are moving operations from China to Mexico, Costa Rica and Canada.
- UK businesses are considering Ireland and Eastern Europe as outsourcing destinations.

This shift provides several advantages:

- Time zone alignment for better collaboration
- Cultural and linguistic compatibility
- Greater control over supply chains and compliance with local regulations

Who will succeed in the new landscape?

The outsourcing firms that thrive in this new model will move beyond cost-cutting and focus on innovation, expertise and business transformation. The most successful outsourcing companies are those that:

- Invest in cutting-edge technologies to improve efficiency and service quality.
- Offer specialised expertise in high-demand industries, with an emphasis on industry/ domain knowledge and not just transactional skills.
- Provide end-to-end solutions rather than just executing tasks.
- Focus on collaborative relationships with their clients, rather than just fulfilling contracts.

What this means for businesses

It is time to rethink strategies for companies still relying on outdated outsourcing models. The days of purely cost-driven outsourcing are fading and businesses must consider the following:

- Is my outsourcing partner bringing strategic value beyond just cost savings?
- Am I working with vendors or co-creating solutions with true partners?
- Does my outsourcing strategy incorporate resilience, innovation and long-term growth potential?

In the next phase of outsourcing, success will not be defined by who can offer the lowest price but by who can deliver the greatest value. Companies that embrace this shift will not only future-proof their businesses but also gain a competitive advantage in an increasingly complex and technology-driven world. Outsourcing is no longer just about cheap labour. It is about smart, strategic and scalable solutions for the future.



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.



the Sun Motoring

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Simply Dashing

New Jetour SUV ideal for young families on a budget

BY KESHY DHILLON



The flagship model rolls on 19-inch wheels.

IF YOU think you're being bombarded by new car brands from China on a near weekly basis, well, you would not be the only one.

As motoring scribes, those in my profession are facing an onslaught of brands, information and model updates at a pace that could just match the smart phone industry.

It was never like this just a few years ago, when there would probably be one new model launch a month, a couple of press conference a week and that would be about it. The pace was slower. Much slower.

But this quicker pace of things is not a bad thing. In fact, everyone stands to win from this.

Legacy brands that have been having it easy in Malaysia are now forced to rethink their strategies to offer Malaysians the best value for money cars or otherwise be left behind.

The newer brands have to compete harder to convince buyers and they do so by giving as many features as they can for as low a price tag as possible.

Many would agree that the features being offered would put some locally assembled premium brands to shame. But who ultimately wins from all this? You! The consumer. The buyer.

And joining the race now is a brand called Jetour. And if you have not already heard of them, well, you're in for quite a treat.

Who is Jetour?

Jetour is another brand under the massive Chery group, which also



The engine may not be very powerful but at least the car is comfortable.

includes the likes of Omoda and Jaecoo as well.

You might be wondering why Chery would expand their brand identity so thin, but there is a specific reason behind it.

While Omoda and Jaecoo focus on the export market as premium brands, Jetour has its own specific purpose as well.

A quick search online will tell you that Jetour was created to "focus on affordable, family-oriented SUVs and crossovers particularly targeting young families and middle-class consumers."

So, by creating a sub-brand, Chery could then focus on creating niche products for a different demographic without diluting its main brand.

And this would also allow Chery to compete against domestic and international rivals in the budget SUV segment.

It is no secret that Chery is interested to move upmarket with its premium brands, it is consistently firing salvos at that segment with its Omoda and Jaecoo sub-brands in the local market as well as other global market.

With Jetour, it can focus on a creating products for a completely different demographic using products that are tech-savvy and youth-focused that offer high value-for-money with a design that is both trendy and sporty.

Enter the Dashing

This is the first model introduced by Jetour for the local market. And it is set for local assembly in a few months.

Jetour is working with Berjaya Assembly to assemble the cars at its plant in Johor, but the first 100 cars will be imported from China. So as of writing this, ready stock is avail-



There's also the all-important spare wheel.

able for those interested.

The Dashing is available in two different variants, the entry-level Dashing 1.5 TC1 Prime which is priced at RM109,800 and the flagship Prime variant, priced at RM116,800.

The Dashing operates in the ultra-competitive SUV C-segment, which includes such heavyweights as the Proton X70, Honda CRV as well as the GWM Haval H6. So, the Dashing truly has a mountain to climb to convince buyers.

The trick up its sleeve

I look for the good and the bad every time I review a car in order to help you make an informed purchase decision.

But any car reviewer should always look at the price tag of the car first, before seeing the actual car what more driving it.

On a recent first impression drive

organised by the team at Jetour Malaysia, I had a chance to get properly acquainted with the flagship Prime variant.

It was the only model available, and with a price tag of the aforementioned RM116,800, I approached it whole heartedly.

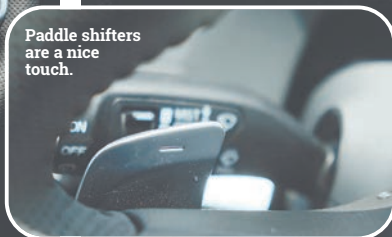
And you can't help but embrace the experience "whole heartedly" because when you first see the Dashing in person, it truly looks like a majestic car because of its size and futuristic design angles.

Its design has a little bit of everything in it. A touch of Lotus, headlights from the Omoda 5 and stacked on top of one another like they are on the Mitsubishi Triton. The rear is a mix of Toyota Corolla Cross and the Omoda 5 as well.

It is a good-looking car, and that is to be expected since the brains behind the design is none other than Hakan Saracoglu.



The steering wheel has quite a number of buttons but its easy to navigate.



Paddle shifters are a nice touch.



The dashboard is a nice balance of futuristic minimalism.



Overall layout is decent and you also get a 50 watt charge pad as well.



Gear selector is said to be inspired by the aviation industry.



The seats are supportive and comfortable.

Hakan is a Turkish-German automotive who formerly worked for Porsche and designed such greats as the Boxster, Cayman and the 918 Spyder. So, with such design pedigree, it is not entirely surprising that Jetour's first model for the Malaysian market has such a dashy appearance (lame and cringe-worthy, I know).

And then there is the size that grips you when you first lay eyes on it. It may not look like it in these photos, but it is a big car. And you feel the space inside as well.

The interior is said to be inspired by oriental living layout, which is meant to wrap around you according to the Jetour spokesperson who was giving the pre-drive briefing.

I am not sure what to make of that, but I can tell you that the interior is a nice balance of minimalist futurism.

The two screens up ahead for the infotainment system and instrument cluster each measure in at 10.25-inches.

But in typical Chery fashion which in turn has some design inspiration from Mercedes-Benz, the two screens are merged at the centre to form one giant screen. You see this in almost all of Chery products except for the Jaecoo J7.

So, what is that trick up its sleeve you may ask? It is the space and comfort levels of the Dashing.

It is easy for someone about six-feet tall to get comfortable in the front and rear seats.

There is plenty of boot space as well, 486 litres expandable to 977 litres to be exact.

And for that price tag, this is quite impressive, and I believe this alone may attract some buyers.

The space is further complemented by such niceties like wireless Apple Carplay and Android Auto, a full panoramic roof, six-speaker sound system, ambient lighting and of course, multiple USB ports sprinkled all around the cabin.

But why is that the trick up its sleeve?

Because driving it is not an occasion to be remembered. I know that is putting it very bluntly, but the Dashing is a tool, a means to an end.

It is designed to be a nice big SUV that will keep your family safe and comfortable and will get you to where you want to go without so much as a fuss. And that is about it.

Powering the Dashing is a 1.5-litre, turbocharged, four-cylinder petrol engine. It is mated to a six-speed dual-clutch transmission which sends 156PS and 230Nm of torque to the front wheels.

It is not a very powerful powertrain but neither does it try to be. There are only two drive modes – Sports and Eco – but this is for

power delivery. There are also two drive modes for the steering wheel – Sports and Comfortable.

Though they might sound purposeful, but the difference between two modes is not that broad.

And finding and selecting the modes is a multistep process that involves diving deep into multiple menu layers when a simple dedicated button would have done the trick. Or perhaps included it as an option in the swipe down menu.

A little more eagerness from the powertrain would have helped with merging into traffic and accelerating to get up to highway speed.

In its current form, it feels a little lethargic. But as I said earlier in this article, we must keep its price in mind.

The fact of the matter is, the Dashing is an affordable SUV that offers impressive space and comfort.

And if its more power you want, there are other fruits to pick from Chery's tree in the form of the Omoda, Jaecoo and Chery itself.

Anything else you should know about?

For its price tag, it offers some impressive safety systems as well. These differ between the Prime and the Comfort, but the flagship variant gives you six airbags, brake assist, traction control, electronic stability

control, tyre pressure monitoring system, and even an ADAS suite that include lane change warning, blind spot monitoring, rear cross traffic alert and a 540° camera.

It may not be a power monger, but it does come with an impressive array of features designed to keep you safe and comfortable. That alone makes the Dashing worth a look.

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SPECIFICATIONS

Engine: 1.5-litre, turbocharged, inline-4, petrol
Power: 156PS
Torque: 230Nm @ 1750rpm
Transmission: 6-speed dual-clutch
PRICE (AS TESTED): RM116,800

We like: Design, spaciousness and comfort.

We don't like: Needs more power.

ON SUNDAY APRIL 27, 2025

theSunday Special

XV



Ready for launch

HONDA MALAYSIA has begun accepting bookings for its first fully electric vehicle, the all-new e:N1, as the company accelerates its entry into the battery electric vehicle (BEV) market.

The highly anticipated SUV is scheduled for launch in the second quarter of 2025 and is available for pre-booking via the company's official website and HondaTouch mobile application.

The introduction of the e:N1 represents a significant step forward in Honda Malaysia's electrification journey.

Developed with a clear focus on the needs of modern Malaysian motorists, the e:N1 blends advanced electric powertrain technology with the brand's signature approach to driving enjoyment, innovation, and daily usability.

According to the company, the model serves as a strong foundation for Honda's BEV strategy in the country.

Built on Honda's newly engineered e:N Architecture F platform, the e:N1 is designed with front-wheel-drive configuration to offer smooth acceleration and precise vehicle

Honda opens bookings for first-ever all-electric e:N1

control under a wide range of road conditions.

The platform supports a high-performance electric motor paired with a 68.8kWh lithium-ion battery, capable of producing 201hp of power and 310Nm of torque.

With a claimed range of up to 500km based on the NEDC cycle, the e:N1 aims to offer both efficiency and long-distance usability.

Visually, the e:N1 reflects Honda's evolving design language with clean, aerodynamic lines and modern aesthetics.

Among its most distinctive features are the full LED headlights, a continuous LED taillight design, and 18-inch dual-tone alloy wheels unique to this BEV model.

A new white "H" logo has been incorporated into key design elements of the car, including the keyless remote, the steering

wheel, the centre wheel caps, and the front charging port cover — all of which underscore its identity as part of Honda's electric vehicle lineup.

The rear of the vehicle features a refreshed spread-letter Honda emblem, lending a more refined and upmarket look to the overall design.

To support the launch of the e:N1, Honda Malaysia has designated eight authorised dealerships across three regions to handle customer inquiries, service requests, and test drives specific to the new electric model.

These dealerships have been specially prepared to guide buyers through the transition to electric motoring.

The launch of the e:N1 signals Honda Malaysia's intent to play a significant role in the nation's transition towards more sustainable mobility solutions.

It also underscores the brand's effort to align with broader global and regional objectives on carbon neutrality and innovation in electrified mobility.

BMW 3 Series still turning heads at 50

BMW GROUP MALAYSIA has kicked off celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the BMW 3 Series, a model that has become a cornerstone of the brand's identity and an enduring presence in Malaysia's automotive landscape since the 1970s.

As part of the celebration, the company unveiled the new BMW M340i xDrive Edition 50 Jahre, a commemorative model limited to just 50 units and available exclusively through BMW Shop Online for a recommended retail price of RM396,800.

Since its debut in 1975, the BMW 3 Series has undergone seven generations of evolution, consistently reflecting the brand's core values of dynamic performance, cutting-edge technology, and timeless design.

This legacy continues to resonate in Malaysia, where the model has built a loyal following and helped shape the perception of premium automotive excellence.

Compared to its predecessor, the exterior of the new BMW features a distinctive M rear spoiler, adding to the car's sporty rear profile.

It also comes equipped with M Performance Parts as standard, including M Performance side skirts that further enhance its athletic stance.

At the heart of the driver-focused cockpit is the BMW Curved Display, which integrates a 12.3-inch instrument cluster and a 14.9-inch touchscreen control display.

Under the hood, the New BMW M340i xDrive Edition 50 Jahre is powered by the robust 3.0-litre B58 in-line six-cylinder engine, producing 387hp and 500Nm of torque.

It accelerates from 0 to 100kph in just 4.4 seconds, with a top speed electronically limited to 250kph.

Buyers can choose between Sensatec Perforated upholstery in Black or Tacora Red, while exterior colour options include Alpine White, Arctic Race Blue, M Brooklyn Grey, and Black Sapphire.



Go from zero to 322kph in 10.3 seconds!

HENNESSEY SPECIAL Vehicles has officially introduced the Venom F5 Evolution, a significantly upgraded iteration of its celebrated hypercar, now recognised as the most powerful road-legal car powered solely by an internal combustion engine.

Developed in partnership with Ilmor Engineering, the new model generates power and is accompanied by substantial improvements in aerodynamics, suspension, handling, and comfort.

The launch of the Venom F5 Evolution marks a pivotal moment in Hennessey's ongoing mission to redefine the limits of performance and engineering.

At the heart of this next-generation hypercar lies the newly optimised "Fury" engine, a 6.6-litre twin-turbocharged V8 created through a collaboration with high-performance specialists Ilmor Engineering.

Building upon the original powerplant, the revised engine benefits from advanced componentry, including the world's largest mirror-image turbochargers (Precision 76/80 Next Gen), Ilmor-designed billet aluminium pistons, extreme-duty aluminium connecting rods, lightweight titanium exhaust valves, high-capacity fuel injectors, and refined billet valve covers.

These enhancements collectively contribute to an increase of 214 brake horsepower (bhp) over the original output. The result is a staggering total of 2,031bhp at 8,000rpm and 1,959Nm of torque at 5,200rpm, delivered while using Shell E85 pump fuel.

This immense power propels the Venom F5 Evolution from zero to 322kph in a mere 10.3 seconds, positioning it at the pinnacle of combustion-engine performance.

The package is priced at US\$285,000 (RM1,257,420), with the optional Touring upgrades offered at an additional cost.

Welcoming back the MG

B-segment electric SUV purpose-built with Malaysian roads in mind

MG MOTOR MALAYSIA has officially previewed the highly anticipated MGS5 EV, marking a pivotal moment in the brand's reintroduction to the local market.

The B-segment electric SUV represents the first model under MG's new chapter in Malaysia, bringing a compelling mix of advanced technology, dynamic performance, and everyday practicality.

The company has also announced the estimated price, starting from RM115,000, ahead of its

official launch.

According to Emory Qifeng, managing director of SAIC Motor Malaysia, the MGS5 EV sets the tone for what Malaysians can expect from the MG brand moving forward.

"This model represents a significant milestone in our electric mobility journey. Following its global debut in China last October, the MGS5 EV has been purpose-built with Malaysian roads in mind, offering best-in-class driving dynamics in its segment."

The MGS5 EV is engineered to offer segment-leading handling and performance, boasting rear-wheel-drive dynamics rarely seen in its category.

Customers will have a choice between two battery configurations: a 49kWh unit paired with a 125kW motor producing 170PS and 250Nm of torque, capable of delivering up to 340km (WLTP) range; and a more powerful 62kWh battery offering up to 430km of range with 150kW DC fast charging support. Both variants feature 6.6kW AC charging and Vehicle-to-Load (V2L) functionality.

Buyers will be able to select from five exterior colours: Arctic White, Monument Silver, Camden Grey, Dynamic Red, and Elegant Latte, all paired with a stylish dark interior with leather and fabric combination seating.

With its sleek design, practical features, and commitment to electrification, the MGS5 EV is poised to become a strong contender in Malaysia's growing EV market.

Full pricing and availability details are expected to be announced closer to its launch.



Audi introduces all-new A6 Sedan

AUDI has expanded its A6 model line with a new business-class sedan that merges elegance with technological sophistication. Set for a global rollout beginning mid-April 2025, the new A6 Sedan embodies the marque's commitment to design excellence, aerodynamic efficiency, and driving comfort, marking a new chapter in the premium full-size segment.

This latest iteration of the A6 boasts a drag coefficient of just 0.23 – the lowest ever achieved by an Audi production model powered by an internal combustion engine. It exemplifies Audi's advancement in aerodynamics, combining subtle design refinements with high-performance engineering to enhance both efficiency and performance.

Underpinning the new A6 is a range of modern petrol and diesel powertrains, all integrated with the brand's MHEV plus mild-hybrid technology. This system supports the combustion engine with electric assistance, allowing smoother acceleration, lower emissions, and greater fuel efficiency. It also enables limited electric-only driving in low-speed urban conditions and while coasting. The line-up includes a 2.0-litre TDI four-cylinder engine producing 204PS, and a 3.0-litre TFSI six-cylinder delivering 367PS. Both benefit from the electrified system's additional torque of up to 230Nm and a power boost of up to 24PS during overtaking or take-off, while



recuperation during deceleration can reach up to 25 kW.

Visually, the A6 Sedan features Audi's latest design language – a balance of sportiness and stately elegance. The vehicle's clean, streamlined profile is defined by a characterful curve along the upper window line, a sharply contoured tailgate, and a wide diffuser that contributes to its aerodynamic stability. At the front, the signature low-slung Singleframe grille is flanked by sleek LED headlights and newly optimised air curtains that manage airflow while adding to the vehicle's assertive road presence. A front spoiler integrated into the bumper and detailed underbody panelling further enhance aerodynamic performance by reducing lift and improving stability.

Audi's engineering emphasis on balance and control is evident in the inclusion of advanced suspension systems. The optional adaptive air suspension refines the ride height and damping to suit varying driving conditions. In

standard driving mode, the car rides 20mm lower than with conventional suspension; in dynamic mode, this lowers by an additional 10mm, reducing drag and sharpening response. This suspension setup contributes to a harmonious blend of athleticism and luxury ride comfort, whether on city streets or long-distance motorway drives.

The new Audi A6 Sedan will be manufactured at the brand's facility in Neckarsulm and will be made available globally.

Get Lost transforms iconic Lotus Elise S1 into Project Safari

SURREY-BASED automotive start-up Get Lost has unveiled an audacious reinterpretation of the classic Lotus Elise S1, turning the revered lightweight sports car into a rugged off-road rally-raid machine. Known as Project Safari, the vehicle defies the Elise's traditional road-hugging persona by embracing a radically altered design aimed at conquering rough terrain.

The Project Safari is intended as a provocative departure from the Elise's original ethos. The team at Get Lost conceived the concept with the express purpose of challenging expectations.

Among the most significant engineering changes is the complete redesign of the car's suspension system. The bespoke setup raises the ride height by 100mm, dramatically increasing ground clearance and enabling the vehicle to tackle uneven

surfaces with greater assurance. The undertray has also been reinforced to withstand impacts from debris and rocks that might be encountered off-road.

While the original Rover-sourced 1.8-litre engine has been retired, Get Lost has not yet disclosed the powertrain chosen for the Project Safari. However, the company has confirmed that the new engine offers both enhanced performance and improved reliability – qualities essential for off-road capability. With Project Safari, Get Lost delivers a bold reinterpretation that challenges purist conventions while retaining the essence of what made the Elise a motoring icon. By marrying off-road engineering with the Lotus's lightweight chassis and distinctive profile, the company has created a machine that is both rebellious in spirit and innovative in execution.



Answers will be posted on Sunday, May 4

JayMen's PIX-ZLE Page

PUZZLES with Pictures ... In Other Words!

PIXAGRAM
Example

The picture shows a person in chains or manacles. Look for any answer which has the same letters as either CHAIN or MANACLE.

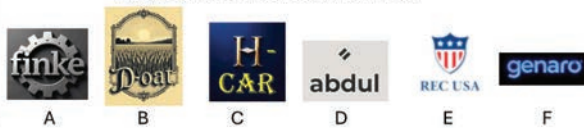


PIXagram is Picture Anagram. Find the words based on the pictures shown and match them with answers that have the same letters.

PIXAGRAM 4



Answers are to be chosen from A to F



CHAIN LETTER 4

The same couple of letters appear (in boxes) in the answers to the clues below. All answers are PROPER names.

- Q1. Bond film _ _ _ _
Q2. Malacca Fortress _ _ _ _
Q3. Former Saudi king _ _ _ _
Q4. Expensive property in Monopoly _ _ _ _
Q5. International football association _ _ _ _

HINT: The 2 letters are represented by the note indicated by the arrow.



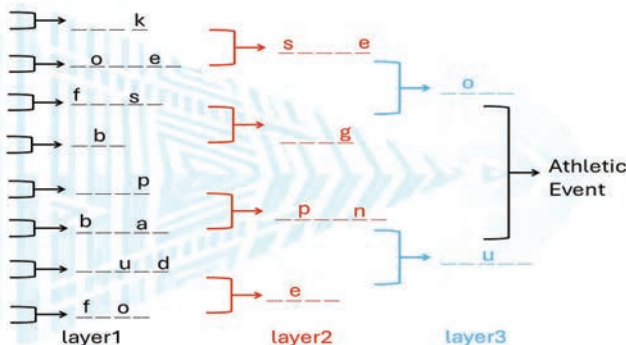
Each pair of words by Meaning or Association leads to another word (indicated by →)

Example: satellite → blue

By meaning (synonym), MOON is a satellite of Earth. By association (phrase or idiom), "blue moon" describes a rare event. Hence the answer is MOON.

Find out the 8 words in layer 1, 4 words in layer 2 and 2 words in layer 3. The two words in layer 3 should match the definition given.

peril
taker
owner
record
hope
fake
recede
tide
hop
high
crack
vacation
tied
duty
leg
bull



STREET PIX 4

Based on the pictures of shop signs seen on Malaysian streets, find the answers to the "treasure hunt" question

- Q1: 1% of genius? _____
Q2: The other approach is with stick _____
Q3: What a piano has _____
Q4: Sudden and fast movement _____
Q5: Utility belt? _____



MEMES:

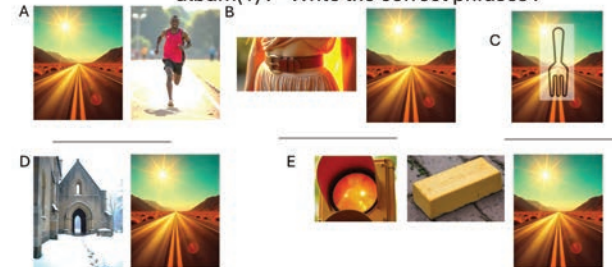
Memes (popular and common phrases) are shown as a series of pictures. In the following EXAMPLES there are 2 categories: Economics(1), Clothing(1). Write down the correct phrases.

A: **me** **down**
(a synonym for used clothing passed from elder child to younger child)

B: **Invisible** **hand**
(term used in economics)

MEMES: 4

There are 5 categories: Oz feature(1), Deciding Moment(1), Bird(1), China initiative(1), Beatles album(1). Write the correct phrases.



TO-PIX

Part 1: Identify Words based on picture clues
Part 2: Subject the Words to the Operation mentioned
An Example is given below

Part 1 Dwarf	Giant	Moon	Hole
Part 2 Operation: Place suitable colours before the words to get heavenly bodies			
Part 2 WHITE Dwarf	RED Giant	BLUE Moon	BLACK Hole

TOPIX 4



STEP 1 _____

Step 1 words are more than 5 letters long.

STEP 2 Operation: Within the above words are spelled places that offer accommodation. Write them down.

STEP 2 _____

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**

Rediscovering your spark, you are uncovering fresh ideas that sharpen your mind this week. You are finding new ways to shine, even if your talents feel underused. Careful steps are keeping your finances steady. Creativity is guiding you towards exciting plans.

**TAURUS****April 20 – May 20**

You are shaking off heavy thoughts and embracing motivation with open arms. You are taking charge of your emotional health steadily as you feel your mind becoming clearer by the day. Slow, thoughtful progress is building lasting strength. Balance is fuelling your inner calm this week.

**GEMINI****May 21 – June 20**

Rising above challenges, you are exploring new paths to prove your worth with confidence. You are breaking free from self-set limits, seeing fresh possibilities. Reflection is helping you choose the best direction. Courage is paving the way forward.

**CANCER****June 22 – July 22**

You are easing financial worries with help from a respected figure. You are feeling secure and grounded, ready to recharge as you welcome this unexpected support. This aid is a sign to rest and regroup. Peace is settling into your heart this week.

**LEO****July 23 – Aug 22**

Choosing wisdom, you are speaking carefully to impress an important figure at work. You are preparing thoughtfully, ensuring your words hit the mark. Smart communication is opening career doors. Success is blooming from your mindful approach.

**VIRGO****Aug 23 – Sept 22**

Aiming high, you are adapting to a new setting that sparks growth and purpose. You are blending tradition with fresh ideas, expanding your outlook. Faith is guiding you through exciting changes. Openness is unlocking your true potential.

Attracting *gui*ren for careerMaximising workspace using *feng shui*

A home office is more than just a workspace—it is a place where ideas take shape and success is cultivated. In *feng shui*, the energy of your home office directly impacts productivity, financial growth and career advancement.

A well-arranged workspace can attract *gui*ren (helpful people), who provide guidance, opportunities and support in business and career.

The home office should be designed to enhance focus, efficiency and strategic thinking. A chaotic workspace can lead to procrastination, confusion and missed opportunities, while a properly structured one helps attract the right connections and a steady flow of professional success.

Positioning desk for authority and influence

The placement of your desk is crucial in determining how you control your work and career direction.

► **Command position (*zhu wei*):** The desk should be positioned so you can see the entrance to the room without being directly in line with it, allowing you to have a clear view of opportunities while maintaining control over your work environment.

► **Avoid sitting with your back to a door or window:** This weakens support in your career and can result in unexpected setbacks or lack of assistance from influential people. If unavoidable, placing a high-back chair or a solid structure behind you symbolises stability and backing.

► **Keep a balanced distance from the wall:** Sitting too close to a wall can create a sense of being “trapped” with limited career movement, while too much open space behind can make you feel unsupported. A good balance ensures security and room for professional growth.

Organising workspace to attract *gui*ren

An organised and structured space attracts helpful connections and clear decision-making.

► **De-clutter regularly:** Piles of unfinished work or unnecessary items can create stagnant energy, delaying success and opportunities. Keep the desk clear with only essential

work materials.

► **Use open space wisely:** If possible, leave open space in front of your desk to symbolise welcoming new opportunities and influential people into your career.

► **Dedicated work area:** If working from home, avoid setting up your office in the bedroom, as the energies of rest and work conflict, reducing productivity and sleep quality.

Bringing in supportive energy

In *feng shui*, certain placements can subtly enhance career luck and attract beneficial connections.

► **Proper lighting:** Natural light is ideal for boosting energy levels and maintaining focus. If that is not possible, ensure your workspace is well-lit with warm, comfortable lighting.

► **Symbolic items for *gui*ren energy:** Keeping books, journals or professional certificates in sight reinforces a strong career mindset and attracts knowledgeable mentors or influential connections.

► **A functional chair:** A comfortable, high-backed chair supports stability and authority, creating a sense of control over career matters.

Managing technology and digital flow

In a modern home office, digital clutter is just as important as physical clutter.

► **Organise digital files:** A cluttered desktop or messy email inbox can slow down workflow and create unnecessary stress. Regularly de-clutter digital files for a smooth work process.

► **Limit electronics near rest areas:** Try to keep work-related electronics separate from sleeping areas to maintain a strong boundary between work and rest.

A home office setup can influence the effectiveness of interactions with others.

► **Keep the work area separate from social spaces:** Have a dedicated office room or workspace away from daily distractions. This creates a strong, professional energy and enhances focus.

► **Use a stable internet connection and clear backgrounds:** A workspace that is visually and technically stable reflects professionalism and attracts serious career connections.

**LIBRA****Sept 23 – Oct 22**

You are sharing your views at work with calm confidence. Standing strong, you are keeping your cool, even when opinions clash. Thoughtful words are earning you respect. Balance is helping you shine without losing momentum.

**SCORPIO****Oct 23 – Nov 21**

Overflowing with creativity, you are bringing bold ideas to life with enthusiasm. You are staying grounded, focusing on what truly matters. Humility is keeping your vision clear. Planning is turning your dreams into reality this week.

**SAGITTARIUS****Nov 22 – Dec 21**

Embracing romance, you are showering love on your partner or meeting a mature new connection. You are letting go of old hurts, welcoming joy. Finances are balancing out with your savvy touch. Love is lifting your spirits high.

**CAPRICORN****Dec 22 – Jan 19**

You are steering your life with bold, calculated risks. You are solving challenges with confidence and clever ideas. Steady pacing is keeping you grounded. Success is growing from your careful choices.

**AQUARIUS****Jan 20 – Feb 18**

Riding emotional waves, you are finding strength in your worth despite outside noise. You are navigating relationships with a powerful figure calmly. Wise temper control is sparking personal growth. Abundance is surrounding you with every step.

**PISCES****Feb 19 – March 20**

You are climbing to new heights with pride as you celebrate your hard work. You are seeking out an uplifting company to rediscover your value. A fresh environment is boosting your confidence. Balance is helping you shine, even on tough days.

This article is contributed by
feng shui consultant Daniel Siew

This is contributed by
Mystic Kali Tarot

Liu in front at Chevron

Albatross, closing birdie lifts Chinese ace into lead in year's first major

CHINA'S Liu Yan made a stunning albatross and a closing birdie to seize a one-stroke lead when darkness halted the second round of the LPGA Chevron Championship.

The 27-year-old sank a 15-foot birdie putt at the par-five 18th hole to finish off a level par 72 and grab the lead on 7-under 137 for 36 holes at Carlton Woods in the year's first major women's tournament.

"I'm glad I made that last birdie," she said. "Today I had so many putts so close. Last hole was my first birdie today so I'm very happy."

Liu's most spectacular shot, however, came at the par-five eighth when she holed out her second shot from 170 yards with a seven-iron.

"There was helping wind and I hit a really solid driver on the fairway," Liu said. "I take my 7-iron and I see the ball (went) in,

so that's a really cool thing. But I think (the TV crew doesn't) have video for that hole. Little sad.

"I think I jump twice on the fairway. Just very happy and so

excited. Players in (my) group say congratulations to me, so that's very nice."

It was the first albatross in a women's major since American Morgan Pressel made one at the 2015 Women's British Open.

Liu hopes to make her first LPGA triumph a major victory but a host of rivals were hot on her heels.

American Lindy Duncan birdied her last three holes to shoot 66 and share second on 138 with compatriot Sarah Schmelzel, Japan's Mao Saigo and South Korean Kim Hyo-joo.

South Koreans Choi Hye-jin

and Ryu Hae-ran, American Angel Yin and Belgium's Manon De Roey were on 139.

A 90-minute morning fog delay led to the round being halted by darkness with nine players yet to finish. They will complete the second round overnight before the cut is made

and the third round played.

Among those still on the course, China's Zhang Weiwei was on 5-under with three holes remaining.

Liu, who began playing golf with her mother 15 years ago, has a best LPGA career finish of third at the 2023 ShopRite Classic.

She had opened with a 65 to share the 18-hole lead, but stumbled with bogeys at the first and sixth holes only to answer with the albatross stunner.

After a bogey at the

ninth, Liu's lead was down to one stroke. She parred the next six holes before making bogey at 16, missing an eight-foot par putt to fall back, only to surge into the lead alone again with her closing birdie.

"I think definitely I will feel a little bit (of pressure) because this is a major," Liu said. "I know the course going to be harder so I think I just stay

patient, calm, because I'm a very emotional person." - AFP / Field Level Media



Liu Yan of China. - AFP/PI

Rookies lead, but McIlroy and Lowry still in hunt

US ROOKIES Kevin Velo and Isaiah Salinda grabbed a one-stroke lead after yesterday's alternate-shot second round of the PGA Zurich Classic while defending champions Rory McIlroy and Shane Lowry charged into contention.

Velo and Salinda, each seeking his first PGA Tour title, combined to fire a 3-under 69 to stand on 17-under 127 after 36 holes in the pairs event at TPC of Louisiana in Avondale, Louisiana.

"Overall really solid. We played really to our strengths today," Velo said. "We played pretty flawless. We feed off each other really easily."

Americans Ben Griffin and Andrew Novak, also chasing their first PGA wins, combined for a 66 with birdies on three of their final five holes to stand second on 128, one stroke ahead of Danish twins Rasmus and Nicolai Hojgaard.

"We're both in solid form right now, feeding off each other," said Novak, who lost a playoff to Justin Thomas at last week's Heritage event.

Back-nine starters Salinda and Velo, pals since their junior golf days, were 1-over through nine holes but reeled off three birdies in a row to start their second nine and share the lead. Salinda's birdie putt from just inside 12 feet at the eighth put them alone at the top.



Kevin Velo (left) and Isaiah Salinda. - REUTERS/PI

302 Jobs

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PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN saw their unbeaten record in Ligue 1 this season finally ended in a 3-1 home defeat against Nice yesterday, just ahead of their Champions League semi-final showdown against Arsenal.

PSG had been hoping to become the first team ever to complete a French top-flight season without losing a game, but Morgan Sanson scored twice for Nice as the visitors claimed all three points against the run of play.

Fabian Ruiz had brought PSG level late in the first half, cancelling out Sanson's opener. However, Sanson scored again just 22 seconds into the second half, and Youssouf Ndayishimiye later headed in to make it 3-1.

"For me the result is not fair but that's football, you have to accept it," said PSG

PSG lose unbeaten record ahead of Arsenal showdown

coach Luis Enrique, who saw his side dominate the game with 76% possession and over 30 shots on goal.

PSG had been unbeaten in 30 Ligue 1 matches this season, and had not lost any of their last 41 games against French opposition since a 3-1 home loss against Toulouse on May 12 last year.

The result means PSG, who had already secured a fourth consecutive Ligue 1 title at the start of this month, fall short of equalling the record for the longest unbeaten run from the beginning of a French season.

That record is still held by Nantes, who

went undefeated for 32 matches before suffering their sole defeat on the way to winning the title in 1994/95.

PSG must now quickly put this defeat behind them as they head to London for the first leg of their Champions League last-four tie against Arsenal on Wednesday (3am Malaysian time), before the return at the Parc des Princes on May 8.

"The possibility of beating a couple more records was an objective for us in these last few weeks," admitted Luis Enrique.

"It wasn't to be, but it does not in any way change our objective of carrying on in the

Champions League and getting to the final."

PSG had started with a full-strength lineup but were denied by a string of fine saves by Nice goalkeeper Marcin Bulka.

"What I saw, I would take that again in London on Tuesday and in the return leg," Luis Enrique added.

"I am not worried at all. When you have a team that doesn't speculate, that tries to attack, presses, doesn't stop running, but doesn't take their chances and the opposition goalkeeper makes some incredible saves, well that's football and I accept it" – AFP

Sabalenka makes winning start

World No. 1 looking for ideal workout ahead of French Open

ARYNA SABALENKA kicked off her quest for a third Madrid Open title with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Anna Blinkova in second-round action at the Caja Magica yesterday.

The world No. 1 improved her record at the tournament to 18-4, having lifted the trophy in 2021 and 2023, alongside her runner-up showing to Iga Swiatek last year.

After racing to a double-break 5-0 advantage against Blinkova in the opening set, Sabalenka lost one of her breaks before taking the lead on her third set point on the 48-minute mark.

The second set was a straightforward affair, with an early break of serve enough for Sabalenka to punch her ticket to the third round.

Sabalenka's three Grand Slam titles have all come on hard courts, but the Belarusian power-hitter has shown she can contend on clay, with two trophies clinched from nine finals reached on the surface.

The 26-year-old admits the French Open has proven to be a "challenge" for her and she feels she has unfinished business there after losing in the 2023 semifinals to Karolina Muchova and the 2024 quarterfinals to Russian teenager Mirra

Andreeva.

"Every time I go there, it's like a challenge for me, even though I love playing on clay and I feel really good," said Sabalenka of Roland Garros.

"But I like to accept tough challenges. So I really hope that one year I'll be able to get that beautiful trophy in my collection."

In a late match, British No. 2 Emma Raducanu followed fellow Brits Katie Boulter and Sonay Kartal out after defeats to Marta Kostyuk, Jasmine Paolini and Elina Svitolina respectively. Raducanu looked set to mount a comeback in the second set but 24th-seed Kostyuk pulled away to win 6-4, 2-6, 6-2.

Earlier in the day, world No. 9 Paula Badosa delivered another blow to the tournament as she was forced to withdraw from her home event due to a lower back injury.

Badosa joins her fellow Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz, who pulled out of the Madrid Open on Thursday citing a left hamstring issue and a right adductor injury.

Meanwhile, Tunisian 2022 Madrid champion Ons Jabeur crashed out in her opener to Moyuka Uchijima 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 while Greece's Maria



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus. –REUTERSPIC

nant 6-2, 6-2 win over Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut.

"For me, I always say that this is my favourite centre court in the entire world," said Zverev, who is a two-time Madrid champion.

"I only lost twice in my entire life here, so I hope that stays that way, throughout the next 10 days, and I can continue playing good tennis. As long as I do that, I'm happy."

The top-seeded Zverev will face Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in the third round.

Recent Barcelona champion and Madrid eighth seed Holger Rune retired after dropping the first set of his second round encounter with Flavio Cobolli with a right knee injury, while Gael Monfils withdrew ahead of his clash with defending champion Andrey Rublev due to illness. – AFP

SHORTS

Duo help Sunrisers beat Kings

FAST bowler Harshal Patel grabbed four wickets and Kamindu Mendis showed his allround skill as Sunrisers Hyderabad upstaged Chennai Super Kings by five wickets in Chennai yesterday.

Harshal grabbed 4-28 and was ably assisted by skipper Pat Cummins and Jaydev Unadkat Harshal both finishing with identical figures of 2-21 – to dismiss the home team for a below-par 154 in 19.5 overs.

South African youngster Dewald Brevis was the top scorer for the Kings with a blistering 25-ball 42, cracking four sixes and a boundary on his debut for the franchise.

Skipper MS Dhoni failed to make his 400th T20 a memorable occasion, managing just six runs and coming out on the losing side.

Sunrisers achieved the target in 18.4 overs for the loss of five wickets with Ishan Kishan leading the way with a solid 34-ball 44 with five boundaries and a six.

Mendis struck an unbeaten 32 off 22 balls, adding 49 in an unbroken sixth wicket stand with Nitish Kumar Reddy who finished with a 13-ball 19 not out.

Harshal, declared man-of-the-match, attributed discipline as the key for his fine bowling.

"I figured out pretty early that hitting it on a good length around the stumps was important because it was hard to hit with

the horizontal bat," said Harshal.

Dhoni blamed losing a cluster of wickets for the poor batting show.

"I think we kept losing wickets and another thing is in the first innings the wicket was slightly better," said Dhoni. "A total of 157 wasn't a justifiable score."

Madrid F1 circuit can be world's best, says Sainz

MADRID'S Madrid Formula One circuit can host the best race on the calendar when it debuts next season, according to home driver Carlos Sainz.

The Spaniard told reporters yesterday that the 5.47km layout, with 22 turns, will have its own hybrid character with tight street sections and a more open area with high-speed corners.

"I think we can be the best circuit in the world and the best event of the whole calendar," said the Madrid-born Williams driver, who took part in a press conference as an event ambassador.

"There will be 24 or 25 races, and I honestly think along with Mexico, Miami, Las Vegas that do it very well but sincerely I trust a lot in Madrid and I believe that Madrid can do better."

The Madrid circuit will eventually replace Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya, currently host of the Spanish Grand Prix.

Spain is set for an overlap next season with Madrid and Barcelona, which will be in the last year of its contract, both expected to feature.

Blades keep Stoke in red zone

SHEFFIELD UNITED won a feisty encounter against struggling Stoke to leave the Potters still in danger of being relegated from the Championship.

The Blades' automatic promotion hopes were ended on Tuesday when they lost at Burnley, a result which sent the Claret and Leeds – who had hammered the Potters 6-0 earlier that day – up to the Premier League.

Sam McCallum gave them the lead before the break with his first goal since September, when Rhian Brewster's deep corner was inadvertently headed back across his own goal by Potters sub Bosun Lawal.

Fellow replacement Ali Al-Hamadi forced a fine low save from Michael Cooper in the Blades goal as the hosts pushed for a late equaliser. But Andre Brooks, just on as a substitute, secured the points for Chris Wilder's side with his first touch.

Stoke, in 17th place, will hope the weekend results are enough to secure their survival

before next week's trip to fellow strugglers Derby, who are four points behind them with a visit to 20th-placed Hull overnight.

"I thought we played well. First of all, they've given all they can give," Stoke City manager Mark Robins told *BBC Radio Stoke*.

"We've had chances, there's no doubt. We've played some good football and tried to be on the front foot against a top three side."

"All you can ask is for them to give you everything and they've done that."

"When we got into good positions to cross we hit the first man and we were a bit slow in the build-up from time to time but generally we tried to move it quickly and get the ball through them, that was pleasing. It's just that last little bit."

On staying up, he said: "It's still in our hands. We've got one game to play and we've got to go and win it. The only thing we can do is go and beat Derby County next week." – Agencies

WITH either four or five matches remaining of the Premier League season, only four points separate third and seventh in the race for Champions League qualification.

Nottingham Forest, Newcastle United, Manchester City, Chelsea and Aston Villa will battle to secure the final three spots in Europe's premier cup competition, with Arsenal and Liverpool having all but secured their places.

And with the Reds likely to win their 20th top-flight title at a canter and two out of the three relegation spots already confirmed, the race for the top five is all that's left to provide drama before the final weekend.

With several of the sides in third to seventh still set to play each other as well as the champions-elect and relegated sides, which teams are best placed to finish in the top five come the end of May?

MANCHESTER CITY (61PTS)

Pep Guardiola's side find themselves in unfamiliar territory with four games left to go but Matheus Nunes priceless stoppage-time winner against Aston Villa was a huge boost to their bid to qualify for the Champions League.

Nunes's last-gasp strike sparked wild celebrations from Guardiola and his players as they climbed to third place in the Premier League.

Thankfully for the champions, they have arguably the kindest set of fixtures out of the five sides.

Wednesday's win against Villa will be followed by fixtures against Wolves and Southampton.

After that, the Cityzens need to navigate matches against Bournemouth and Fulham, with the difficulty of those likely to depend on whether each side

Down to the wire

Man City, Forest, Newcastle, Chelsea and Villa fighting for three Champions League places

is still hunting their own place in European competition.

Remaining fixtures:

May 3: Wolves (H)
May 10: Southampton (A)
May 19: Bournemouth (H)
May 25: Fulham (A)

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (60PTS)

Forest's win over Spurs on Tuesday means that they enter the final five game weeks in a slightly more commanding position than their rivals as they look to return to European Cup participation for the first time since 1980.

The two-time winners are well-placed to do so too, as they face two of the most out-of-form sides in the League in Leicester and West Ham, as well as a Palace side who shipped 10 goals across their matches against Newcastle and Manchester City.

Nuno Espirito Santo's side must contend an FA Cup semifinal against City tomorrow (11.30pm Malaysian time), before they return to League action against Brentford on May 2, but it could all come down to a final-day clash at home to Chelsea.

Remaining fixtures:

May 2: Brentford (H)
May 6: Crystal Palace (A)
May 11: Leicester (H)
May 18: West Ham (A)
May 25: Chelsea (H)

NEWCASTLE UNITED (59PTS)

Eddie Howe's side were flying high after their Carabao Cup triumph and dominant wins over Manchester United and Palace, but they were quickly brought down to Earth with that drubbing against Aston Villa.

And the Magpies will have to navigate a fairly difficult set of fixtures if they are to return to the Champions League for the second time in three seasons.

They face Arsenal and Chelsea on consecutive weekends before finishing the season at home to Everton.

Remaining fixtures:

May 4: Brighton (A)
May 11: Chelsea (H)
May 18: Arsenal (A)
May 25: Everton (H)

CHELSEA (57 PTS)

Though Chelsea are still well-positioned to make the top five, some of their fans will be wondering how it's this close after being second in December.

A poor run of form has led to some discontent at the Bridge, but the dramatic comeback win over Fulham has restored some belief ahead of arguably the toughest run of fixtures out of the these five clubs.

There is certainly no "easy" game remaining for the Blues, as they face

Liverpool at the Bridge before the final home game of the season against Manchester United is sandwiched between difficult away trips to fellow top-five chasers Newcastle and Forest.

It could all come down to those last three fixtures for Enzo Maresca and his young side.

Remaining fixtures:

May 4: Liverpool (H)
May 11: Newcastle (A)
May 17: Manchester United (H)
May 25: Nottingham Forest (A)

ASTON VILLA (57PTS)

Villa briefly looked like their Champions League charge had faltered, but some brilliant recent form – coupled with the general feeling around the club after reaching the competition's quarterfinal and FA Cup semifinal – has propelled them back into contention.

Unai Emery's side, which suffered a late blow against Manchester City on Wednesday, face potential stumbling blocks in the form of Bournemouth and Fulham, who themselves are chasing lower European competition.

However, Villa may be able to count on wins in their last two matches against Spurs and United as they look to qualify for the competition in back-to-back seasons.

Before that though, an FA Cup semifinal against Palace beckons tomorrow (12.15am), and the result there could have a huge impact on the end of Villa's season.

Remaining fixtures:

May 3: Fulham (H)
May 11: Bournemouth (A)
May 18: Tottenham (H)
May 25: Manchester United (A)

The Independent

Van Nistelrooy and Leicester's inevitable relegation

BY RICHARD JOLLY

RUUD VAN NISTELROOY has lost a relegation battle but he could still win Manchester United's manager of the year award.

At least if Ruben Amorim does not bring silverware in the Europa League, anyway, because Van Nistelrooy's record at Old Trafford – three wins from four, unbeaten – stands out in a year of underachievement.

So does his record at Leicester, though in another respect: Van Nistelrooy averaged two points per game at United, a mere 0.4 with Leicester.

A strange season for him has been a dreadful one for Leicester. Relegation went from probability to inevitability, the respectability of their performance against Liverpool, as their fate was sealed, coming amid a wretched run of form.

He hinted he wants to stay – Foxes never quit, after all – and may need to, his reputation sufficiently dented by the last five months that few others may be in a rush to appoint him but it would seem implausible if, when he holds talks with the club, they are keen to keep him.

"I expected to bring more points to the table," said Van Nistelrooy. He brought a mere eight.

He had never been in a relegation battle before as either player or manager. He seemed unsuited to it. Van Nistelrooy and Leicester,

each on the rebound, rushed into a relationship with each other.

He claimed he had "no regrets" about his time in charge. Privately, he should harbour plenty.

Since the middle of December, 22 Premier League goals have been scored at the King Power Stadium, none by Leicester. There is an explanation of relegation there. Perhaps Leicester did not need Van Nistelrooy the manager as much as Van Nistelrooy the forward.

Their other ageing but talismanic striker, Jamie Vardy, has been stuck on 198 Leicester goals for 10 games, his pace blunted by his 38 years. Vardy, the perpetual pest, has been sadly anonymous.

However, two years ago, he started 19 Premier League games. In promotion from the Championship, it was 18. This year, in the top flight, it was 31. It is not Leicester's fault, but somehow they became more reliant on Vardy. That, too, is revealing and damning.

There is mitigation. When Leicester went down two years ago, it was with a squad

tipped for the top 10, with the seventh highest wage bill, with a team billed as too good to go down.

James Maddison, Harvey Barnes and Youri Tielemans were promptly snaffed by top clubs. Now? There should be a top-flight taker for Mads Hermansen, who had a fine start to the season. Maybe for Wilfred Ndidi and Bilal El Khannouss, too, but not too many others.

There will be few offers for a defence with a lone clean sheet and who have conceded 73 goals. "The difference is in the two boxes," lamented Van Nistelrooy.

He had a point and there was some truth in his analysis of the macro footballing landscape.

"Over 32, 33 games, the level of the three promoted sides, it is clear the difference in quality is there," added the Dutchman. "The gap appears to be too big for promoted sides."

For the second successive year, the three clubs that came up will go back

down. And yet, if it is an inevitability, why take the job at all?

Van Nistelrooy was not powerless, just as Leicester's failings compounded a difficult context. This season should not have been so bad; their centreback admitted as much.

"Have we done enough this year? The answer is no," said Conor Coady. "I think it is about how clubs prepare to play in the Premier League."

Leicester prepared badly. Losing Enzo Maresca, their promotion-winning manager, and their best player, Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall, was far from ideal.

But Leicester went from Maresca to Steve Cooper to Van Nistelrooy, three very different managers with different styles of play.

They were not in the relegation zone when they sacked Cooper, which is not to say they would have stayed up under him. He felt a poor fit.

He surely would have taken more than eight points from the last 20 games, though.

They have no League goal at the King Power in 2025, setting a Premier League record for most home games without finding the net.

They had a team who couldn't score or win, dissent in the stands and disappointment on the pitch.

For Van Nistelrooy, as for Leicester, it could scarcely have gone much worse. – The Independent



Leicester City manager Ruud van Nistelrooy. – REUTERS/PICTA

ANGE POSTECOGLOU is hoping the "Stonecutter's Credo" can help Tottenham salvage a season that has gone "disastrously wrong" by winning the Europa League.

Postecoglou is fighting to save his job after a dismal campaign that sees Tottenham head to Liverpool today (11.30pm Malaysian time) languishing in 16th place in the Premier League.

Defeat for Tottenham at Anfield would match their record number of top-flight losses in a single season at 19.

Liverpool need just a draw to clinch the title

Remember the 'Stonecutter's Credo'

and another negative result seems certain for Postecoglou, whose only hope of avoiding the axe lies in the Europa League.

Tottenham, who haven't won a major trophy since the 2008 League Cup, host Bodo/Glimt in the semifinal first leg on Friday (3am).

Amid a painful season of underachievement, Postecoglou brought up the story of the "Stonecutter's Credo" – first mentioned by

Danish-American writer Jacob Riis more than a century ago – as an example of how you never know when the breakthrough moment will arrive.

"I talk to the players a lot about the Stonecutter's creed," Postecoglou told reporters yesterday.

"Only the 101st blow cracks the rock, but no one sees the other 100 blows. And they think it's the last one that does it. It's not.

"So, time will tell whether what I've tried to do over the last two years gets us to crack that stone. If not, maybe I haven't, but you won't know that and you won't know how much I've had an impact until we get to that place.

"What it says is, if you keep doing the right thing, the impact it has is unseen because you won't break it with the 101st blow unless you've done a lot of things which, to the naked eye, seems like you're doing nothing or maybe the wrong thing. But the stonecutter knows you need to keep doing it because it'll come."

Former Celtic boss Postecoglou boasted earlier this term that he always wins a trophy in his second season in charge.

Despite Tottenham's dismal form, they remain in with a chance of backing up the Australian's bold claim, to even his surprise. – AFP

Slot tells Reds to bring it home

Liverpool last lifted the trophy five years ago in an empty stadium due to Covid restrictions, their first title in 30 years

LIVERPOOL head coach Arne Slot admits his side have a big responsibility to fans to win the Premier League at Anfield.

Five years ago Jurgen Klopp's team lifted the trophy in an empty stadium due to Covid restrictions, having won a first title in 30 years by 18 points.

Although there were celebrations outside the ground – both on the night they were confirmed as champions after Manchester City lost at Chelsea when Liverpool were not even playing, and the final game of the season – there was no victory parade for fans to show their appreciation.

With just one point needed from their remaining five matches, Anfield is gearing up for a party at home to Tottenham, who have their eye on Thursday's Europa League semifinal first leg to save a dreadful season, and the expectation is that confirmation will come today.

But Slot knows he and his players cannot be consumed by the occasion.

"It's a big responsibility because we are aware of the fact that the last time this club won the League it was Covid time, so everybody is looking forward to Sunday," he said.

"But we know that there's still a job to be done, and that's at least one point. That's what we know, that's something we are definitely aware of here inside this building.

"Hopefully our fans support us in the best possible way they can, which they've done the whole season, and are aware of the fact that we still need a point."

Slot will join Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti, Antonio Conte and Manuel Pellegrini as the fifth manager to win the Premier League in his debut season. He would become the first

Dutchman and the third Liverpool manager to win the League in his first full season in charge, emulating Joe Fagan in 1983-84 and Kenny Dalglish in 1985-86. However, he is not considering his place in history just yet.

"I get these questions, so then it comes to your mind, of course, but that's the last thing you think about as a manager at this particular moment in time," he added.

"The only thing I think about is that hopefully all the players are available and prepare them.

"I noticed last week (at Leicester) against a team that was relegated how hard it was to get the win over the line, so I'm not getting carried away at all."

However, Slot hopes to be able to enjoy more than the few minutes of happiness he usually experiences after a game.

"I enjoy going to Anfield every single day, but the moment the referee blows his whistle, or even before that when I do my meetings, of course the focus is on trying to get the point or the win over the line," he said.

"Normally we're only settling for a win and a point is not enough.

"So the moment you enjoy is mostly when the referee blows his whistle. These are the three, four or five minutes that you're really happy when you walk off the pitch.

"Then you walk into a dressing room where you always see one or two players that are not as happy as I am because they haven't played, so then already you start to think, 'OK, this has to be managed again as well', and then I need to go to the media.

"So it's mostly three or four or five minutes that you're really happy, and then normal managerial life starts again." – The Independent



SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5957/2025 DATE: 26/04/2025 (SAT)

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19690100099 (84203)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	1521
2nd Prize	2270
3rd Prize	5599

Special	Consolation
1273 5330	3397 8281
8605 9178	1046 3111
0316 5438	6516 6094
1872 4313	9620 3199
9952 7996	7656 4645

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 12,040,698.79**

1521 2270	2270 1521
1521 5599	5599 1521
2270 5599	5599 2270

Jackpot 2 **RM 180,478.65**

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4D Zodiac

1st Prize	1521	+	BOAR
2nd Prize	2270	+	
3rd Prize	5599	+	
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number		

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D	1ST	7 3 2 9 1
2ND	9 2 8 9 8	4TH 3 2 9 1
3RD	9 1 9 4 1	5TH 2 9 1
		6TH 9 1

6D	1ST	3 3 2 2 9 4
2ND	3 3 2 2 9	or 3 2 2 9 4
3RD	3 3 2 2	or 2 2 9 4
4TH	3 3 2	or 2 9 4
5TH	3 3	or 9 4

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WINNING NUMBERS damacai

Draw Date: 26/04/25 (Sat) Draw No: 590425 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER1+3D	
1st Prize	4281
2nd Prize	7477
3rd Prize	8768
Starters	Consolation
9102 5044	4550 6080
9785 6646	7680 6566
8069 9497	8850 2948
8338 1226	9586 2475
8708 1668	8229 4542

1+3D	Jackpot
Jackpot 1	RM22,327,283.40
4281 + 7477	7477 + 4281
4281 + 8768	8768 + 4281
7477 + 8768	8768 + 7477
Jackpot 2	RM228,891.60

3+3D	Bonus
1st Prize	Bonus
964 281 + RAT	RM110,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus
607 477 + MONKEY	RM952,611.00
3rd Prize	Bonus
358 768 + RABBIT	RM2,021,506.00

Starters	Consolation
779 102 575 044	184 550 606 080
749 785 636 646	717 680 796 566
028 069 509 497	408 850 402 948
138 338 371 226	369 586 202 475
998 708 541 668	828 229 124 542

3D	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
	281	477	768

3D	Jackpot
Jackpot	RM1,124,760.10
281 + 477 + 768	477 + 768 + 281
281 + 768 + 477	768 + 281 + 477
477 + 281 + 768	768 + 477 + 281

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.
1+3D Jackpot 2 RM214,138.00 won on 23/4/25!



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SPORTS

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SNOOKER and billiards players, especially from Penang, are expected to contribute gold medals to the national contingent at the 2027 SEA Games, said Youth and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh.

She said Penang indeed has outstanding players in the sport of snooker and billiards, so with the availability of specialised training facilities such as the Northern Region Billiards and Snooker Academy in Bayan Baru, it can produce more champions in the sport.

"For the SEA Games, we are indeed hopeful that athletes from this state will help us get gold medals," Yeoh told reporters after

Yeoh has high hopes for snooker, billiards

inaugurating the Northern Region Billiards and Snooker Academy in Bayan Baru near George Town on Friday.

Also present were Youth, Sports and Health Committee Chairman, Penang Billiards and Snooker Association President Datuk Michael Tan Cheong Heng and Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tsin.

Elaborating further, Yeoh said Penang had also offered to host the 2027 SEA Games and she hoped that snooker and billiards would also be contested in the

state depending on the decision of the organising committee.

Commenting on the development of the sport, she said training centres such as the Northern Region Billiards and Snooker Academy allow athletes to train consistently without having to

move places, thus helping the development of talent from an early stage.

In addition, she said currently only three national players in the sport of snooker and billiards are in the Podium Programme, but it is estimated that there are around 300,000 active players in the sport nationwide.

"Snooker and billiards is suitable for all ages, and we

even promote them for the elderly because it does not depend on weather factors," she said.

Meanwhile, Yeoh said the proposal to open more snooker academies in other states depends on the commitment of the state government and also the level of activity of the association at the state level.

"To create a center like this is not cheap. The National Sports Council (MSN) has allocated RM500,000 for equipment while the state government has provided RM1.3 million for renovation works. So I can't promise that it will be opened in all states," she said. — Bernama

RESULTS & STANDINGS

ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP: Stoke 0 Sheffield United 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	44	27	13	4	89	29	94
Burnley	44	26	16	2	61	15	94
Sheff Utd	45	28	7	10	62	35	89
Sunderland	44	21	13	10	58	41	76
Bristol City	44	17	16	11	57	49	67
Coventry	44	19	9	16	62	57	66
Mid'boro	44	18	9	17	64	54	63
Millwall	44	17	12	15	45	46	63
Blackburn	44	18	8	18	50	46	62
West Brom	44	14	18	12	52	44	60
Swansea	44	17	9	18	48	52	60
Watford	44	16	8	20	51	58	56
Sheff Wed	44	15	11	18	58	67	56
Norwich	44	13	14	17	67	66	53
QPR	44	13	14	17	52	58	53
Portsmouth	44	14	10	20	56	69	52
Stoke	45	12	14	19	45	62	50
Preston	44	10	19	15	45	55	49
Oxford Utd	44	12	13	19	44	62	49
Hull	44	12	12	20	43	52	48
Derby	44	12	10	22	47	56	46
Luton	44	12	10	22	41	64	46
Cardiff	44	9	16	19	46	69	43
Plymouth	44	10	13	21	48	85	43

Notes: Top two promoted to Premier League; 3rd to 6th in playoffs; bottom three relegated.

BUNDESLIGA: Stuttgart 0 Heidenheim 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B. Munich	30	22	6	2	87	29	72
Leverkusen	30	18	10	2	65	35	64
E. Frankfurt	30	15	7	8	58	42	52
RB Leipzig	30	13	10	7	48	38	49
Freiburg	30	14	6	10	43	47	48
Mainz	30	13	8	9	48	36	47
Dortmund	30	13	6	11	57	47	45
W. Bremen	30	13	6	11	48	54	45
B. M'gladbach	30	13	5	12	48	46	44
Augsburg	30	11	10	9	33	40	43
Stuttgart	31	11	8	12	56	51	41
Wolfsburg	30	10	9	11	53	47	39
Union Berlin	30	9	8	13	30	43	35
Hoffenheim	30	7	9	14	38	55	30
St Pauli	30	8	6	16	26	36	30
Heidenheim	31	7	4	20	33	60	25
Bochum	30	5	5	20	29	62	20
Holstein Kiel	30	4	7	19	41	71	19

Note: Top four qualify for Champions League, bottom two relegated.

FRENCH LIGUE 1: PSG 1 Nice 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	31	24	6	1	84	31	78
Marseille	30	17	4	9	62	42	55
Monaco	30	16	6	8	57	35	54
Nice	31	15	9	7	59	39	54
Lille	30	15	8	7	47	32	53
Lyon	30	15	6	9	58	41	51
Strasbourg	30	14	9	7	48	37	51
Lens	30	13	6	11	35	33	45
Brest	30	13	5	12	48	49	44
Rennes	30	12	2	16	45	40	38
Auxerre	30	10	8	11	41	45	38
Toulouse	30	9	7	14	38	39	34
Reims	30	8	8	14	32	42	32
Nantes	30	7	10	13	35	50	31
Angers	30	8	6	18	29	48	30
Le Havre	30	8	3	19	33	64	27
Saint-Etienne	30	7	6	17	33	68	27
Montpellier	30	4	3	23	22	71	15

Note: Top three qualify for Champions League, bottom two relegated.

Promoted/Champions Relegated

Youth and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh performed the gimmick of opening the Northern Region Billiards and Snooker Academy yesterday. — BERNAMAPIC



Sivasangari turns on the style

World No. 11 storms into Grasshopper Cup semifinals

TOP national woman squash player and world No. 11 Sivasangari produced a scintillating performance to send Egyptian Nada Abbas packing 11-6, 11-3 and storm into the semifinals of the Grasshopper Cup 2025 in Zurich, Switzerland on Friday.

The third-seeded Sivasangari took just 15 minutes to show the eighth-seeded Nada, also the world No. 15, the exit in the last eight at the all-glass court inside the Zurich Hauptbahnhof, which is the largest railway station in Switzerland.

"I think I came in well prepared today. I think best-of-three goes a bit quick, so I had to start well from the first point," Sivasangari was quoted as saying on the Professional Squash Association (PSA) official website.

"Nada, she's a fighter and she fights even when she's down, so I had to stay calm even when I was leading. I'm just happy to be getting through to the next round.

"I think inside I was a bit nervous, but I just tried to take the ball early, and play my game. I didn't want to follow her way of playing, and instead focus on my tactics, my game plan, and it worked well today."

The Kedahan can expect a sterner

test in the last four as she will be up against second seed Tinne Gilis after the Beiglain downed Egypt's Salma Hany 11-9, 11-8 in the other quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, Malaysians Ng Eain Yow and Rachel Arnold continued their fine run in the men's and women's events respectively when they advanced to the last four of the Squash On Fire Open 2025 at Washington DC, the United States of America, on Friday.

The second-seeded Eain Yow had to come from behind to beat Karim El Hammamy from Egypt 5-11, 11-8, 11-3, 11-3 at the Squash On Fire court, which is located atop a fire station in the heart of Washington DC.

In the semifinals, Eain Yow will meet unseeded Kareem El Torkey after the Egyptian stunned sixth seed Velavan Senthilkumar of India 7-11, 11-7, 9-11, 11-4, 13-11.

Meanwhile, fourth-seeded Rachel had no problems brushing aside eighth-seeded Nadine Shahin of Egypt 11-6, 11-7, 11-7 to set up a semifinal date against another Egyptian, the top-seeded Rowan Elaraby.

The Egyptian had earlier disposed of her compatriot Salma Eltayeb 11-6, 11-5, 11-8. — Bernama

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3rd Prize **4059**

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3520 5292	9331 9441
2776 0986	8112 1994
1515 3798	1691 9116
6650 0663	1856 4096

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Jackpot 2 **RM100,000.00**

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	1 3 9 0 5 9
GROUP 2	1 3 9 0 5 OR 3 9 0 5 9
GROUP 3	1 3 9 0 OR 9 0 5 9
GROUP 4	1 3 9 OR 0 5 9
GROUP 5	1 3 OR 5 9
	OR 9 0
GOLDEN NUMBER	10

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Slot vows to make up for Liverpool's 'Covid title' by winning Premier League in front of packed Anfield. The Reds need just a point today against Tottenham to confirm their 20th title, levelling Manchester United as the most successful English teams.

Story on **page 14**