



**AI software to be used in early stage lung cancer detection**

Initiative represents shift in approach to curb alarmingly high rate of Stage 3 and 4 cases, says health minister.

Report on  
page 4

# Shameful to 'age out' old staff

Unscrupulous firms using euphemisms such as 'restructuring' or 'performance improvement programme' to perpetuate injustice on seasoned employees.

Report on  
page 5

## Do not speculate on Petronas-Petros arrangement: Anwar

Discussions on processing and distribution of gas to continue after Sarawak premier returns from official visit to London.

Report on > page 2

## Parliament convenes rare special sitting on US tariffs

Important economic topic to be discussed in Dewan, with heated debates expected from lawmakers.

Report on > page 3



Industry experience that was once a badge of honour is being warped by some companies into a form of disqualification as ageism reshapes the corporate world. — SYED AZAHAR SYED OSMAN/THE SUN

## King, Queen convey wishes to heroes in red

**KUALA LUMPUR:** In conjunction with World Firefighters' Day yesterday, the King of Malaysia His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim and the Queen Raja Zarith Sofiah conveyed their appreciation to the heroes in red.

In a post on his Facebook page, Sultan

Ibrahim expressed his gratitude for the sacrifices, courage and dedication of all firefighters.

"You are heroes, ever prepared to face danger to ensure the safety of the community."

"Al-Fatihah for those who have left us.

May they be placed among the faithful and martyrs."

World Firefighters Day, celebrated on May 4 every year, is a symbolic event to commemorate and appreciate the sacrifices and service rendered by firefighters around the world. — Bernama



A demo by firefighters during the World Firefighters Day celebration in Kuantan yesterday. — BERNAMAPIC

## Fire Services (Amendment) Bill sent for royal assent

**KUANTAN:** The Housing and Local Government Ministry has submitted the Fire Services (Amendment) Bill 2025 passed by Parliament on March 5, to His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, the King of Malaysia for royal assent before it is gazetted.

Its minister Nga Kor Ming said the Bill, approved by the Senate on March 23, aims to strengthen the governance and regulatory framework of the Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department, including the Volunteer Fire Squad and fire cadets.

He said it also covers fire safety consultants and consulting firms, competent persons, fire safety contractors, registered training providers, instructors and firefighting equipment.

Nga was speaking at the 2025 World Firefighters Day celebration at Padang MBK 1 yesterday.

The celebration was graced by the Sultan of Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah and the Tengku Ampuan of Pahang Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah.

They were accompanied by the Tengku Mahkota of Pahang Tengku Hassanal Ibrahim Alam Shah.

Also present were Housing and Local Government Deputy Minister Datuk Aiman Athirah Sabu, Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan

Ismail and Fire and Rescue director-general Datuk Nor Hisham Mohammad.

Nga said the ministry and the department are pressing ahead with several infrastructure projects worth RM203.45 million to boost Pahang's fire and rescue capabilities.

He said these include the reconstruction and renovation of the Kuantan Fire and Rescue Station, upgrades to the Bentong station and the construction of new stations in Sungai Lembing and Benta.

"We will also build the Gohtong Jaya Fire and Rescue Station along with staff quarters through a smart partnership with Genting Malaysia Berhad, as well as develop the Pulau Tioman fire station."

Al-Sultan Abdullah expressed his appreciation to Pahang's Fire and Rescue personnel for their dedicated service over the past year.

"Without the Fire and Rescue Department, the challenges we face during the monsoon and dry seasons would be far more difficult to overcome."

The 2025 World Firefighters Day celebration, themed *Bomba Tonggak Penyelamatan Negara*, featured a vibrant parade of 34 contingents involving 1,500 personnel, including members of the Volunteer Fire Squad, Kuantan Port, Royal Malaysian Air Force and Petronas Petrochemical and Fire Services Response. — Bernama

## Kosovo president ends four-day visit to Malaysia

**SELANG:** Kosovo President Dr Vjosa Osmani Sadriu departed for Brunei yesterday after concluding a four-day official visit to Malaysia aimed at strengthening bilateral relations.

A red-carpet farewell ceremony was held at the Bunga Raya Complex of the KL International Airport, featuring a guard of honour mounted by the First Battalion of the Royal Ranger Regiment (Ceremonial).

Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek was present to bid farewell to Osmani and her delegation.

On Friday, Osmani was accorded an official welcoming ceremony, followed by a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

One of the highlights of the visit was the conferment of Kosovo's highest civilian honour, the Order of Independence, upon Anwar. The award is granted to individuals who have made significant contributions towards the country's independence.

The Kosovo government also conferred the award posthumously on former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in recognition of his contributions during a pivotal moment in the country's history.

In a joint media conference on Friday, Anwar said Malaysia remains committed to working with Kosovo beyond traditional diplomatic ties, expanding into trade, investment and broader cooperation.

Osmani said Kosovo is set to deepen diplomatic, economic and security ties with Malaysia, signified by the opening of its embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

Expressing deep gratitude for Malaysia's longstanding support, Osmani said the bond between the two nations was built not only through diplomacy but also on shared values of unity, dignity and diversity.

Malaysia officially recognised Kosovo on Oct 30, 2008, becoming one of the first Asian countries to do so. Diplomatic relations were formally established on March 18, 2011. — Bernama

# 'Refrain from acting on Petronas-Petros dispute'

➤ Federal and Sarawak govts to discuss licensing issue once Premier Abang Johari returns from official London visit, says PM

■ BY DEEPALAKSHMI MANICKAM  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called on all parties to refrain from taking any action or making statements until further discussions are held with the Sarawak government regarding the ongoing licensing dispute between Petronas and Petroleum Sarawak Bhd (Petros).

He said the federal government and the Sarawak government would engage in further discussions to finalise the Petronas-Petros arrangement once Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg returns from his official visit to London.

"I had the opportunity to speak with Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari yesterday regarding Petronas-Petros arrangements based on the principles previously agreed upon," Anwar said in a post on his Facebook page yesterday.

"I'm highly confident that the issue can be resolved with wisdom and by staying

firmly within the bounds of healthy and meaningful discourse, *Insha-Allah*."

Anwar's comments came after Petronas confirmed that its subsidiary, Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd (PCSB), received a notice on April 30 from the Sarawak Utility and Telecommunications Ministry concerning gas processing and distribution.

It was reported on May 2 that Sarawak had issued a legal notice to PCSB for allegedly operating without a permit at its Miri Crude Oil Terminal.

PCSB was given 21 days in the notice dated April 30 to obtain the necessary licence, failing which it could face financial penalties under Section 21A of the Distribution of Gas Ordinance (DGO) 2016.

It was also reported that PCSB, which functions as the upstream subsidiary of Petronas, is accused of violating Section 7(e) of the DGO 2016.

This provision mandates that a licence be obtained for constructing, managing or maintaining gas pipelines and related infrastructure.

The DGO, which took effect on July 1, 2018, designated Petros as the state's regulator and sole gas aggregator. This was part of Sarawak's broader initiative to assert greater control over its natural resources.

Petronas failed to obtain an injunction in a Kuching High Court to halt the suit filed by state-owned Petros to stop the court from hearing the suit on gas payments.

The national oil firm told Bernama that Petronas Carigali is statutorily authorised under the Petroleum Development Act 1974 to undertake the company's activities and comply with all applicable laws in doing so.

Abang Johari was quoted by the Sarawak Public Communications Unit as saying that discussions are moving forward based on a win-win approach for both Sarawak and Petronas.

"In this oil and gas matter, we've been tactfully 'playing ball' with Petronas for a while now."

He said Anwar had contacted him and both of them agreed to move forward with a fair and sincere approach.

He added that Sarawak had fulfilled its responsibilities despite not receiving additional revenue.

"This solution will be based on mutual goodwill and the belief that the nation's oil and gas wealth should be shared fairly."

# Special Dewan sitting to discuss US tariff fallout

➤ Safeguards must be in place to protect low-income workers, small businesses as levies could deepen widening gap in income inequality: Economist

■ BY AZURA ABAS AND HARITH KAMAL  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Parliament convenes today for a rare special sitting as Malaysia confronts a critical economic flashpoint – the newly imposed US tariffs on Malaysian exports.

The urgent session is expected to be a watershed moment, drawing lawmakers from across the political spectrum into what could be a heated debate over the far-reaching consequences of the tariffs and the government's strategy in response.

The atmosphere is tense. Businesses are increasingly anxious, economists are scrambling to assess the fallout, and the public is eager for answers.

At the heart of today's session will be high-level ministerial briefings offering the first comprehensive look into the government's internal assessments. Which sectors will bear the brunt of the tariffs? How severe will the economic shockwaves be? Key industries — from electronics and manufacturing to agriculture — are in the spotlight as MPs demand clarity on which products are affected, the scale of the duties and whether recent reports of a temporary suspension hold any weight.

This special sitting is not just about identifying the problem — it's about finding solutions and forging a path forward.

With jobs at risk and investor confidence wavering, all eyes are on Putrajaya. What levers can the government pull to cushion the blow? Is there room for renewed diplomatic engagement with Washington? What domestic policy recalibrations are needed to help local industries remain competitive?

These are the urgent questions dominating the national discourse. Malaysians expect more than vague assurances — they want a concrete, forward-looking plan.

Ahead of the sitting, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Department of Economics and Financial Studies senior lecturer Dr Mohamad Idham Md Razak flagged several critical blind spots in the current discourse on the tariffs.

## 'Malaysia must rethink long-term role in global economy'

■ BY HARITH KAMAL  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** As trade tensions with the United States escalate, Malaysia stands at a crossroads, not just in terms of immediate policy response but to rethink its long-term role in the global economy.

The situation has prompted broader questions about Malaysia's economic resilience and its heavy reliance on traditional export markets.

Universiti Teknologi Mara Department of Economics and Financial Studies senior lecturer Dr Mohamad Idham Md Razak said Malaysia must respond with a clear and phased strategy that provide immediate relief, midterm adjustments and long-term



The session is expected to be a watershed moment, drawing lawmakers from across the political spectrum into what could be a heated debate. — ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

Chief among them, he noted, is the impact on low-income workers and small businesses — the groups most likely to be hardest hit.

"The conversation so far has largely overlooked the vulnerability of low-wage workers and small enterprises.

"If there are no safeguards, the tariffs could deepen the already widening gap in income inequality. It is crucial that we consider the social consequences of these trade measures."

Mohamad Idham said Malaysia must not sacrifice long-term sustainability for short-term gains in the rush to mitigate the economic damage.

"The environmental costs of shifting towards cheaper, less sustainable production models have barely been discussed.

"We need a strategy that combines social protection for vulnerable workers with incentives for green transitions. If we're not

transformation.

He warned that without swift intervention, vital sectors such as electronics, palm oil and rubber could face significant losses, while low-income workers and small businesses risk being left behind.

"In the short term, the government must urgently roll out targeted subsidies to protect affected industries while actively negotiating tariff exemptions for critical goods.

"At the same time, we need to divert exports temporarily to untapped, tariff-free markets to cushion the immediate impact."

Mohamad Idham also called for direct financial support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), alongside renewed diplomatic efforts to secure fairer trade terms with Washington.

careful, we risk trading long-term economic resilience for short-term ecological harm."

Mohamad Idham's concerns echo those of many Malaysians who will be closely following the proceedings.

Businessman Arief Abdullah said today's parliamentary session is no ordinary sitting.

"It marks a critical juncture in the country's economic and political journey — one that demands more than theatrics. It calls for unity, clarity and firm resolve.

"The stakes are high. Malaysia's future in an increasingly volatile global trade landscape hinges on the decisions made today. Partisan squabbles must give way to a cohesive national response. The country needs a unified strategy that restores business confidence and safeguards its economic foundation," he said, adding that Parliament must rise to meet the moment.

Over the next 6 to 12 months, he said Malaysia could reduce its dependence on the US by strengthening trade ties with Asean neighbours, East Asia and the Middle East.

"We need to broaden our export base and introduce tax incentives to encourage research and development, particularly in automation and sustainable production.

"Building resilient regional supply chains will also be key to reducing long-term vulnerability.

"Malaysia must build a more self-sufficient economy by investing in value-added sectors like renewable energy and digital services while also strengthening STEM education, infrastructure and industrial capacity to reduce reliance on external markets," he added.

## Govt backs media on policy push for AI

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government's aim is not merely to see Malaysia climb the Press Freedom Index, but more crucially, to support media practitioners grappling with the rise of AI, said Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil.

He noted that journalists today face pressing challenges, from job insecurity and welfare concerns to growing unease over AI potentially replacing the role of human reporters.

"In this context, the World Press Freedom Index 2025 by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) offers a timely opportunity for the government to step up efforts to safeguard the interests of media professionals," he told reporters after attending the Universiti Malaya Public Health Campaign: Diabetes Is Not a Barrier yesterday.

Malaysia has jumped 19 places in the 2025 index, now ranking 88th globally — the second highest in Asean, just behind Thailand at 85th.

Fahmi, who is also the MP for Lembah Pantai, said government initiatives — including drafting legislation for the Malaysian Media Council — have helped boost the country's standing.

"We hope that by National Journalists Day (May 29), the council or its founding board will be in place. That would mark a meaningful step forward," he said.

He also expressed willingness to engage with media organisations such as journalists' clubs, the National Union of Journalists Malaysia (NUJ) and the Malaysian Press Institute (MPI) to discuss AI guidelines in journalism.

"We need clear guidelines. We need understanding, so we can harness the power of AI without falling prey to fake news, misinformation, or AI misuse, particularly within the media landscape.

"I'm ready to meet and will try to make time this week to get initial input from NUJ," he added.

On the 3R (race, religion, royalty) concerns flagged by RSF, Fahmi underlined the need to strike a balance between freedom of expression and compliance with existing laws.

"We cannot allow misinformation — especially content that touches on 3R issues and threatens public order — to spread unchecked. Malaysians, including those in the media, have the right to speak and report, but they must do so within the legal framework." — Bernama.

## Veteran journalist to be laid to rest tomorrow

**KUCHING:** Award-winning journalist James Alexander Ritchie, who died of a heart attack at Sarawak General Hospital on Saturday, will be laid to rest tomorrow.

His wife Tan Lee Fong said following the release of his body from the hospital yesterday, it was taken to the St Thomas Church Multipurpose Hall B, for the wake. The funeral is scheduled for tomorrow morning.

She said the doctor confirmed Ritchie died of a heart attack at 11.40am on Saturday.

Ritchie, 75, is survived by his wife, daughter and granddaughter.

Beginning his journalism career as a cadet reporter with *The Straits Times* in Kuala Lumpur at the age of 23, Ritchie rose through the ranks to become a leading journalist, particularly in Sarawak.

He covered major events and high-profile cases, including the Japanese Red Army's 1975 raid on the United States' Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, the capture of notorious criminal Lai See Kiaw, known as the "Master of Disguise", and gangster Wong Swee Chin, better known as Botak Chin.

Ritchie held several prominent roles in journalism and media, including serving as a journalist with the *New Straits Times* in Sarawak in 1981, public relations officer at the Sarawak Chief Minister's Department in 1998, and media consultant for *Sarawak Digest* in 2022.

His outstanding contributions to journalism earned him numerous accolades, including the Shell Kenyalang Gold Award, Azam Press Award, and the Ang Lai Soon Gold Award.

Last year, he was honoured with the National Journalists' Day (Hawana) Award. — Bernama



# Deploying AI to boost early detection of lung disease

➤ Technology allows monitoring of organ health in more comprehensive and proactive way, enabling more effective interventions: Minister

BY HARITH KAMAL  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PUTRAJAYA:** Malaysia is taking a bold step in the early detection of lung disease by deploying artificial intelligence (AI) software at selected public health clinics to analyse chest X-rays.

The initiative seeks to curb the nation's alarmingly high rate of late-stage lung cancer diagnoses. Currently, 90% to 95% of cases are only detected at Stage 3 or 4 when treatment is far less effective and survival rates plummet.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the rollout signals a fundamental shift in the national approach to lung health, anchoring it within a more integrated public health strategy targeting both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

"Instead of treating each disease in isolation, we're now focusing on the lungs as a central point of intervention - an organ that's exposed to multiple risk factors such as smoking, air pollution, occupational hazards and infections," he said at the Health Ministry headquarters yesterday.

"This technology allows us to monitor lung health in a more comprehensive and proactive way, enabling earlier, more effective interventions before diseases progress to advanced stages."

Disease Control Division (Non-Communicable Diseases) deputy director Dr Noraryana Hassan said the AI software, once integrated with existing X-ray machines, will enhance the accuracy and speed of diagnosis.

"The system can detect abnormalities like nodules or

shadowing that may escape the human eye, thus improving the likelihood of catching diseases like lung cancer at an earlier, more treatable stage," she said.

The pilot phase will see the AI technology deployed at seven public health clinics, each serving as a regional analysis hub.

The clinics selected are Seberang Perai (Penang), Kok Lanas (Kelantan), Kajang (Selangor), Luyang (Sabah), Beserah (Pahang), Pendang (Kedah) and Batu 9 Cheras (Kuala Lumpur).

Clinics not equipped with the software can refer X-ray images to these hubs for analysis. Each centre will also coordinate with nearby hospitals for follow-up consultations and access to advanced diagnostics such as CT scans.

Noraryana said the one-off cost of installing the AI software is approximately RM10,000 per clinic, but added that its accessibility across clinic networks means it does not need to be installed at every site.

The AI initiative falls under the Malaysia Lung Health Initiative 2025-2030, a national roadmap aimed at transforming how lung

diseases are detected, treated and prevented.

The plan targets major respiratory illnesses including lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma and tuberculosis.

It emphasises early screening, public education, integrated care and coordinated action to reduce exposure to known risk factors.

Additional components include enhanced anti-smoking campaigns, stricter enforcement of the newly passed Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2023 (Act 852), improved workplace safety protocols and national-level efforts to address air pollution.

The initiative also aims to reduce the burden of preventable respiratory diseases by tackling root causes such as tobacco use, second-hand smoke exposure, environmental pollutants and occupational risks.

Malaysia will further elevate the conversation to the global stage with plans to table a resolution on integrated lung health at the upcoming World Health Assembly in Geneva.

## No plan to ban vape sale as strict action continues

**PUTRAJAYA:** The federal government is sticking to strict enforcement of existing laws to control vape sales and use, with no plans for a nationwide ban for now.

Health Minister Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the government had made its position clear with the enactment of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024, which lays out a comprehensive legal framework to regulate tobacco and vape products.

"I've addressed this issue many times. The Act reflects our firm, unequivocal stance."

"Now that both the Act and its regulations are in force, our focus is on tough enforcement."

"That's the federal government's position," he said at a media briefing on the Malaysia Lung Health Initiative 2025-2030 at the Health Ministry headquarters yesterday.

Dzulkefly stressed that enforcement efforts would be carried out thoroughly and effectively, led by the ministry's Inspectorate and Enforcement Division.

He also lauded state governments that have chosen not to issue business licences for vape sales, citing Johor, Terengganu and Kedah.

"We urge other states to take similar steps, but regardless of their approach, local authorities are still required to comply with Act 852," he said, adding that close cooperation between federal and state governments is crucial for consistent enforcement and protecting public health nationwide. - by Harith Kamal

## Doctors object to Act 723 use for price labelling move

BY HASHINI KAVISHTRI KANNAN  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Doctors are not against price transparency for medicines but object to the enforcement of the recent mandatory price labelling move under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 (Act 723), the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) said in a statement yesterday.

Ahead of the planned march from the Health Ministry to the Prime Minister's Office on Tuesday, titled "Doctors Betrayed: The Long Walk to Putrajaya", MMA Private Practitioners Section chairman Datuk Dr Parmjit Singh Kuldip Singh said the symbolic walk aims to express the medical fraternity's deep disappointment over the application of Act 723 - a law not originally intended for the medical profession.

The march would highlight concerns about the various unanswered questions on the medicine price display and the unresolved issue of stagnant private general practitioner consultation fees, a longstanding issue since 1992.

Parmjit Singh said the protest would go ahead as planned if there are no objections, as MMA has submitted all necessary documents to inform the relevant authorities about the gathering.

He said a memorandum will be handed over to the Prime Minister's Office through a joint effort between the association and other doctors' associations during the march.

Last week, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad and Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali announced that the mandatory price labelling would take effect on May 1.

They said the move aims to ensure the public can make informed choices when managing their medication expenses.

"This initiative is being introduced in line with the Madani government's commitment to promoting price transparency through the Medicine Price Transparency Mechanism."

"It will be enforced under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering (Price Marking for Medicines) Order 2025, pursuant to the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 (Act 723)," they said.

The price labelling requirement applies to all medicines for human use, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, traditional remedies, health supplements and extemporaneous preparations.

It covers all private healthcare facilities and community pharmacies regulated under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act 1998 [Act 586] that sell, supply or administer medicines.

Following this, MMA called for the suspension of the policy's rollout to ensure that the concerns were adequately discussed and resolved.



Fahmi with participants of the university's health campaign yesterday.

- ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

## Govt yet to decide on WFH plan during Asean Summit

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government has yet to finalise a proposal for civil servants to work from home (WFH) and for students to undergo home-based teaching and learning during the Asean Summit scheduled for end of this month.

Communications Minister and Madani government spokesman Datuk Fahmi Fadzil said the matter was discussed two weeks ago and is being reviewed in detail by the Asean Secretariat at Wisma Putra.

"The focus is on those working in or around the venue and areas where several major meetings will be held."

"According to the calendar, the

summit is expected to take place at the end of May. I believe we will have more information after the upcoming Cabinet meeting," he said after attending the Universiti Malaya Public Health Campaign "Diabetes is Not a Barrier" at IWK Ecopark Pantai Dalam yesterday.

Previously, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said the WFH and home-based teaching proposals for the Asean summits in May and October would be brought to the Cabinet, following concerns over disruptions caused by road closures during Chinese President Xi Jinping's recent state visit in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya. - Bernama

## Regulation compliance encouraging

**PUTRAJAYA:** Compliance with the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering (Price Marking for Drug) Order 2025, which took effect on May 1, has been encouraging, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He reiterated that private healthcare facilities and pharmacies will not face penalties during the first three months of implementation, as the Health Ministry is focusing on education and awareness to ensure proper compliance.

"This grace period is designed to allow all parties time to understand the requirements and properly implement the price display measures," he said during a media briefing on the Malaysia Lung Health Initiative 2025-2030 at the Health Ministry headquarters yesterday.

He also shared that during his visits to three pharmacies and private clinics, he observed a variety of methods being used, including QR codes to display medicine prices.

He expressed confidence that private healthcare facilities would fully cooperate to ensure the smooth implementation of the order.

The new regulation requires all private clinics and community pharmacies to clearly display the prices of medicines, whether on shelves, in printed catalogues, or in written price lists.

# Firms using malicious polices to 'age out' older workers

► Ex-employee alleges 'clear pattern' of individuals aged 50 and above being systematically pushed out at former workplace

BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** What was once a badge of experience has, for many seasoned executives, become a quiet disqualification as ageism reshapes the upper tiers of the corporate world.

A former group communications senior manager at a major multinational corporation told *theSun* that he felt compelled to resign after eight years with the company once he turned 50 years old.

The corporate veteran, who wishes to remain anonymous, was told that the department he once led had "evolved" and he no longer had the skills needed to contribute.

He said this came as a shock, given his consistent performance and alignment with the company's vision throughout his tenure.

The final blow came in the form of a three-month "performance improvement programme", which he described as unusually harsh and packed with "unrealistic targets".

"It felt more like a tactic to force me out than a genuine effort to support my development. The pressure was subtle but

relentless, and emotionally draining."

After months of tension, he eventually tendered his resignation, serving the required three-month notice.

"Initially, the signs were vague, such as comments about 'declining deliverables' that did not reflect my actual performance.

"But as the weeks wore on, especially nearing my departure, the message became clear that regardless of my track record, the company no longer saw a place for me."

He claimed that there is a clear pattern of employees aged 50 and above being systematically pushed out at his former workplace.

"There is a long-standing habit of disguising this under terms such as 'restructuring' or 'evolving business needs'.

"I have seen many talented, long-serving colleagues, mostly over a certain age, quietly edged out.

"It is a silent but persistent trend that has created a climate of fear and uncertainty among senior staff."

A former banker told *theSun* that she was sidelined by her company shortly after turning 55 years old, with her responsibilities gradually

reassigned to a younger officer whom she was eventually required to report to.

"The experience made me feel insignificant. I was under immense mental stress," she said.

"I did not resign because I was not young enough anymore to find another job and I had a family to support. But the five years leading up to my retirement were nothing short of mental torture.

"During that time, I felt invisible and sidelined. I was essentially 'cold-stored'," added the woman, who requested anonymity.

She explained that what made the situation even more painful was her deep family history with the bank.

"My grandfather and father both worked for the same international bank and retired from it after decades of service, more than 40 years in total.

"For me, the workplace was like a second home. To be treated that way was disheartening."

When asked if she had considered legal action, she admitted that the idea had crossed her mind but felt powerless to act.

"Yes, I thought about it. But I was too old and too tired to fight a multinational organisation. Maybe if I had been younger, I would have considered it.

"My former employers will grow old one day too. And when they do, someone else might make them feel just as disposable."

## MEF warns employers against pushing staff to quit

**PETALING JAYA:** Employers who pressure staff into quitting could face legal action under the Industrial Relations Act 1967, warned the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF).

Its president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said employers risk being found guilty of unfair dismissal if workers can prove that they were forced to resign through sustained pressure or toxic working conditions.

"If a resignation is not voluntary, if it is driven by unreasonable demands, exclusion or harassment, it could amount to constructive dismissal. In such cases, the employer is liable."

Section 20 of the Act allows employees to file a complaint with the Industrial Relations director-general if they believe they have been dismissed without just cause.

"Older employees are often sidelined or excluded from key projects and decisions, making them feel unwelcome or redundant.

"The goal is to pressure them into resigning rather than going through official disciplinary channels. The emotional strain can be immense."

He said companies found to be engaging in such practices could find themselves under increased scrutiny from the Labour Department and urged firms to stop sidelining older staff.

"Age-based discrimination does not just breach legal duties, it also poisons workplace culture and weakens the organisation."

"Employers must build age-inclusive environments if they want long-term resilience.

"Driving out staff reflects a deep failure in leadership and performance management. Fix the culture, not the people," he said.

Meanwhile, human rights advocate Charles Hector presented his expert perspective.

He urged employees facing such pressure not to quit.

"No matter how intense the pressure, stay put until the company terminates you officially. Then you can lodge a claim for unfair dismissal and seek reinstatement."

He reminded workers that any such claim must be filed within 60 days of termination.

"Once you sign that resignation letter, it is almost impossible to prove that you were pushed. Even if you were pressured, do not sign."

He warned that job security is eroding fast, with short-term contracts becoming the norm.

"Gone are the days of guaranteed employment until retirement. Now, many are laid off due to automation, restructuring or cost-cutting, even without any wrongdoing."

— by **Ikhwan Zulkaflee**

## Couple arrested over jewellery store theft

**SHAH ALAM:** Police have arrested a couple in Bandar Puncak Alam, Kuala Selangor in connection with a recent theft of jewellery worth about RM111,743 from a goldsmith's shop in Shah Alam.

The arrested individuals are aged 25 and 23.

Shah Alam district police chief ACP Mohd Iqbal Ibrahim said police also recovered the stolen jewellery following the arrest of the couple at 3.20pm on Friday.

"The suspects are unemployed and have no prior criminal records. Initial urine tests returned negative for drugs.

"They have been remanded for four days.

"The case is being investigated under Section 380 of the Penal Code," he said in a statement yesterday, Bernama reported.

A two-minute and 26-second CCTV recording was widely apread on TikTok, showing a man and a woman stealing a gold bracelet and a ring from the jewellery store.



**MODERNISING TRADITION ...** Visitors enjoying the Fusion Wayang Kulit exhibition inspired by superhero characters at a shopping complex in Kuala Lumpur. — **ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN**

## Statements recorded from 12 individuals in abduction case

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Police have recorded statements from 12 individuals over the disappearance of Datin Seri Pamela Ling Yueh, who is believed to have been abducted while heading to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office in Putrajaya on April 9.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Rusdi Mohd Isa said those interviewed included family members, MACC officers and the victim's lawyer.

"There are no leads or developments regarding her whereabouts."

Ling, 42, went missing while en route to the MACC office to provide a statement related to an ongoing investigation. Police received a report on her disappearance at 3.02pm the same day.

Her brother Simon Ling Wan Siong said she had sent a WhatsApp message to her lawyer at 1.57pm saying she was on her way to the office and expected to arrive at 2.08pm via an e-hailing service.

Despite efforts by her family and lawyer to contact her after 2pm, their phone

calls were unanswered and WhatsApp messages unread.

Grab Malaysia has confirmed that the ride was marked as completed but no further information has been obtained.

Rusdi earlier said no ransom demand had been received in connection with the case, which is being investigated under Section 365 of the Penal Code for abduction.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Simon at 012-886 6799 or the victim's father Ling Kie Yui at 012-886 7979. — Bernama

## Motorcyclists killed in fiery collision

**NIBONG TEBAL:** Two men were killed after the motorcycles they were riding were involved in a crash and caught fire in Jalan Sungai Kechil near the Jawi Golf Resort on Saturday.

Penang Fire and Rescue Department operations assistant director John Sagun Francis said the victims, believed to be in their 40s, died from severe injuries, including burns to various parts of their bodies.

He said six firefighters and two fire engines from the Nibong Tebal Fire and Rescue station were despatched following a distress call at 12.06am.

"One victim suffered severe leg injuries after being trapped and sustaining burns, and was pronounced dead at the scene."

"The other, who sustained burns on over 50% of the body, died while receiving treatment at the Sungai Bakap Hospital."

He said firefighters brought the blaze under control at 12.32am, adding that the operation concluded at 1.25am. — Bernama



## Rainy season brings hard times for rural families

**SIK:** The rainy season not only brings weather changes but also affects the daily lives of thousands of rural families who depend on natural resources for survival.

Rainy days are particularly challenging for rubber tappers as they cannot work, losing their primary income source.

This is the reality for Siti Zaleha Harun, 41, from Kampung Dusun here, who relies on rubber tapping to support her six children after her husband was partially paralysed several years ago.

"My family relies on the income from rubber tapping to buy daily necessities and pay for the schooling of three of my six children. However, it has been raining frequently over the past couple of weeks, which has prevented me from going out to work, and my income has been affected."

She said government aid through Sumbangan Tunai Rahmah (STR) and Sumbangan Asas Rahmah (Sara) provides hope, helping her family cover daily expenses.

She said the STR and Sara assistances have been crucial in helping the family meet household needs, school expenses and care for her husband.

"My husband was recently admitted to the hospital for treatment. I used the STR aid to purchase disposable diapers for him.

"Without this help, it would be tough for me to provide for my husband's needs, given how little and inconsistent the income from rubber tapping is," she said, expressing hope that the government would increase aid for those in need.

Another rubber tapper Mohd Zahir Md Aris, 45, from Kampung Charuk Tok Pong said his income is insufficient to support his family, including four school-going children.

"The income from rubber tapping is not enough, especially with the rainy season. My wife also earns a little by babysitting to help support the family. The Sara and STR aid can at least lighten the burden for groceries and daily needs," he said.

The government started distributing the second phase of the STR payments on March 24, allocating RM1.7 billion, which is an increase from RM1.5 billion last year. Nearly nine million recipients, comprising 60% of Malaysia's adult population, are set to receive aid of up to RM650.

Sara is a Madani government initiative to reduce the cost-of-living burden for recipients by crediting aid directly to their MyKad.

As of April 1, the Sara programme expanded to 5.4 million recipients, increasing about eightfold from 700,000. Monthly assistance has been raised to as much as RM200, depending on the category, which is an increase from the previous amount of RM100. — Bernama

## 38-year-old pursues education behind bars

➤ Imprisoned since age of 14, man earns PhD in business administration

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Despite spending 23 years behind bars, a man who asked to be known as Murad never gave up his pursuit of knowledge. His perseverance has been rewarded as he received his PhD in Business Administration at Open University Malaysia's (OUM) 29th convocation.

The 38-year-old was placed under *Tahanan Limpah Sultan* (detained at the pleasure of the ruler) at the Kajang Prison in 2001 when he was 14 years old. He began his educational journey in prison in 2006 with the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia, followed by the Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM).

Originally from Kota Marudu in Sabah, Murad moved to Peninsular Malaysia at a young age. After completing his STPM, he applied to OUM through the Prisons Department.

He admitted that the decision was difficult due to the scepticism and discouragement he faced from those around him.

Sixteen years after enrolling at OUM and beginning with a bachelor's degree in business administration with honours, Murad was conferred the PhD in Business Administration by OUM pro-chancellor Tan Sri Azman Hashim, marking a triumphant conclusion to his long academic journey.

"I would like to express gratitude to OUM for believing in me and supporting my pursuit of higher education, which has led to the completion of my PhD. I am also thankful to the Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah for granting me a royal pardon.

"The reason I remain strong and motivated to pursue higher education is the encouragement and support I receive from the community. I am trying to prove to society and fellow inmates that I, too, am capable of change and success," he told reporters at the World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur.

Murad was granted a royal pardon by



Murad receiving his PhD from Azman on Saturday. — **BERNAMAPIC**

Sultan Sharafuddin in conjunction with His Royal Highness' birthday last December.

The Muslim convert said he is passionate about promoting entrepreneurship among former inmates, adding that his next goal is to establish a small business that will provide them with opportunities for a better future.

At the same ceremony, two senior graduates were honoured with the Lifelong Learning Award in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements, Bernama reported.

Yusuf Haron, 73, from Perak, who earned a master's degree in Islamic studies, expressed delight and gratitude to OUM for bestowing him with the award.

"At this stage in my life, I am thankful that OUM welcomed me to continue my studies."

Tang Tung Khing, 79, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications with honours, shared that he was inspired by his

children's academic achievements to return to the classroom.

"I was inspired to continue my studies after seeing all three of my children complete theirs. I believe that senior citizens must equip themselves with sufficient knowledge to improve their lives," said the former press secretary and retired civil servant.

Special officer to the chairman of Bernama, Azlinda Zainudin, 44, received the President's Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement after earning a master's degree in management.

"I thank Allah for this. This award is not just for me. It belongs to everyone who supported me, including my family, lecturers and friends."

Since its establishment in 2000, OUM has produced over 120,000 graduates across diploma to doctoral levels, and will celebrate its 25th anniversary in August.

## EDUCATION

FOCUS 2025

Education matters remain an important component of Malaysian society. Today the landscape is fast paced with new exciting developments in technology such as AI, coding, virtual reality, and cybersecurity, leading the way for changes in curriculum development. To showcase the latest and most updated content, we invite you join us in 2025, and be part of our Education Focus!

**theSun**  
Malaysian Paper  
www.thesun.my

Contact us now for special deals on digital, video and print advertising.

☎ 03-7784 6688

✉ advertise@thesundaily.com



# PAP triumphs again

## Workers' Party emerges as main opposition

**SINGAPORE:** Prime Minister Lawrence Wong said the convincing re-election of his People's Action Party (PAP) would help the city-state face turbulent times, as analysts said the weekend poll also showed one party emerging as the main opposition group.

PAP's 14th successive election victory was never in question. Instead, the focus was on the mandate voters would give Wong in his first electoral test since assuming the top job a year ago.

PAP, which has ruled since before Singapore's 1965 independence, won 87 of the 97 parliamentary seats up for grabs in Saturday's vote, the election commission said. Wong said PAP won 65% of the vote, improving on the 61% achieved in the 2020 contest.

"The results will put Singapore in a better position to face this turbulent world," Wong said early yesterday.

The 10 seats that PAP did not win on Saturday were all won by the Workers' Party.

"It was a very difficult fight for the Workers' Party. As you know, any opposition party in Singapore, to make inroads into our

political system, the challenges are real," party leader Pritam Singh told reporters yesterday.

Analysts said the Workers' Party had solidified its position as the main challenger to PAP's stranglehold on power.

"It is a hard, thankless slog, but they are attracting really high-quality candidates, running a tight outfit, and using these elections to give new people valuable electioneering experience," said Flinders University College of Business, Government and Law associate professor Michael Barr.

Wong was facing his first major test against a rejuvenated opposition and had urged voters to offer him a strong show of support amid the global economic uncertainties brought on by US President Donald Trump's tough tariffs policy.

PAP, which has steered the country to prosperity during its decades in power while being criticised for suppressing dissent, was always expected to easily retain a clear majority in the legislature.

Although its dominance had been increasingly challenged by a more vocal electorate over the years, the vote saw PAP's popularity climb as compared with 2020 elections.

Wong took over last year from his predecessor Lee Hsien Loong, the son of founding premier Lee Kuan Yew, who ruled

the island state after its break-up with Malaysia in 1965.

Wong had warned Singapore would be hit hard if Trump went ahead with the tariffs he announced – and then paused – for most countries, and that it needed to stay open and competitive to counter their effects.

He has also said the ructions caused could require a major restructuring of Singapore's economy.

"The intense campaigning by PM Lawrence Wong and former PM Lee Hsien Loong in the hot seats must have helped a lot and the fear of Trump's tariffs must have worried voters as well," said political observer and veteran former editor P.N. Balji.

At a post-vote rally attended by cheering PAP supporters wearing white and waving flags with the party's red lightning bolt symbol, one supporter said he had voted for stability.

"PAP is the government and most of the time, things have been going smoothly. To me, PAP is reliable," said Arham, an 18-year-old student.

The overwhelming PAP majority has become a norm in Singapore's political landscape.

At the same time, younger voters showed themselves to be increasingly receptive to alternative political voices. – Reuters/ AFP



Wong (centre) acknowledging supporters at the assembly area for the announcement of election results yesterday. – REUTERS/SPIC

## Philippine bishops defend papal frontrunner

**MANILA:** The Philippines' governing body of Catholic bishops has issued a rare statement on clerical sexual abuse, defending Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle on the issue days before the opening of a conclave to elect a new pope.

Watchdog group *BishopAccountability.org* warned on Friday that Tagle and Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin could not be relied on to protect children, with its co-director accusing the church in the Philippines of remaining in the "dark ages".

Both men are considered frontrunners to replace Pope Francis. Cardinals from around the world are in the Vatican, ahead of a conclave on Wednesday of the eligible ones among them to elect a new pontiff.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) posted a statement to its

Facebook page on Saturday night saying that "addressing allegations of misconduct by clergy rests with the respective diocesan bishops or religious superiors" and not with Tagle.

"Since his appointment to a full-time position in the Roman Curia, Cardinal Tagle no longer holds direct authority over any diocese in the Philippines," the statement dated May 2 read.

It also noted the key role Tagle – who served as archbishop of Manila between 2011 and 2019 – had played in crafting pastoral guidelines on sexual abuse that were disseminated in 2003.

Anne Barrett Doyle, co-director of *BishopAccountability.org*, said on Friday that guidelines dealing with sexual abuse cases

have not been published on the webpages of the Manila archdiocese nor the bishops' conference of the Philippines.

"If Cardinal Tagle cannot even get his brother bishops from his home country to publish guidelines, what on earth can we expect for him to achieve as pope of a global church?" said Doyle.

The document cited by the CBCP, "Pastoral Guidelines on Sexual Abuses and Misconduct by the Clergy", could not be found on the body's website by AFP journalists yesterday.

Calls to the CBCP and the Manila Archdiocese were not immediately returned.

Doyle reserved even harsher criticism for Parolin, calling him a "consummate secret-keeper" and saying "any hope of transparency will be dashed," were he to be elected. – AFP

## Vietnam protests maritime claims

**HANOI:** Vietnam on Saturday protested claims by China and the Philippines over a disputed reef in the South China Sea that it considers its own territory.

Manila and Beijing traded barbs last week over Sandy Cay, a group of small sandbanks in the waterway's Spratly Islands, after a Chinese state media report suggested the area had been seized.

The Philippines and China have been engaged in months of confrontations over the South China Sea, which Beijing claims nearly in its entirety despite an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.

On Saturday, Vietnam's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Pham Thu Hang said in a statement posted on the government's official website that Hanoi had "issued protest notes to the countries involved regarding violations of its sovereignty over Sandy Cay".

Vietnam considers the resource-rich Spratly Islands, which lie some 500km off its east coast, as part of its territory.

Pham Thu Hang said that Vietnam demands "relevant parties" respect its sovereignty over the archipelago, urging them to "refrain from actions that further complicate the situation".

Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said last week that the country's coast guard had "implemented maritime control" over Tiexian Reef, part of Sandy Cay, in mid-April.

Days later, the Philippine Coast Guard released its own photo showing Filipino sailors holding the country's flag over the same disputed reef during an early morning mission the day before.

The Sandy Cay reef lies near Thitu Island, or Pag-asa, where the Philippines stations troops and maintains a coast guard monitoring base.

The South China Sea is home to valuable oil and gas deposits and crucial shipping lanes, and several of China's neighbours have voiced concern that Beijing is seeking to expand its reach.

Vietnam, along with several other countries in the region, also claims parts of the strategic waterway. – AFP

## BRIEFS

### NEW ZEALAND TO REPLACE AGEING NAVY HELICOPTERS

**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand announced yesterday a US\$1.2 billion (RM5.1 billion) plan to replace its ageing navy helicopters, part of a major defence overhaul in response to rising "global tensions". Defence Minister Judith Collins said the funding was the first tranche of the government's renewed commitment to ramp up defence spending. A US\$5 billion plan for new spending over 10 years unveiled last month also includes investment into missiles, cyber security and drones. It will lift New Zealand's defence spending from 1% of GDP to more than 2%. Collins said the new helicopters would boost improved defensive and offensive capability, along with a greater survey range. She also announced US\$570 million over four years towards defence force deployments, training and infrastructure. – AFP

### DISPUTED ISLAND INTRUSION UPSETS JAPAN

**TOKYO:** Japan has lodged a protest against Beijing after a Chinese helicopter "violated" Japan's airspace and four vessels entered its territorial waters around disputed islands. The islands in the East China Sea – known as the Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan – are claimed by Beijing but administered by Tokyo and are a frequent hotspot in bilateral tensions. Its Foreign Ministry said in a statement that its vice-minister lodged "a strong protest" with the Chinese ambassador to Japan "over the intrusion of four China Coast Guard vessels into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands" on the same day. The minister also protested "the violation of Japan's territorial airspace by a helicopter launched from one of the China Coast Guard vessels, strongly urging (China) to ensure that similar acts do not recur". – AFP

## French police rescue kidnapped dad of crypto firm boss

**PARIS:** French police mounted a weekend raid to free a man who had been kidnapped in Paris to force his crypto-millionaire son to pay a ransom, prosecutors said, adding four people were arrested.

The man, whose identity was not disclosed, was traced to an address in the Paris suburb of Essonne, which police raided on Saturday, the prosecutors' office said.

He had been abducted in Paris' southern 14th arrondissement on Thursday. One police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said four men wearing ski masks had bundled him into a delivery van.

Le *Parisien* newspaper reported that the kidnappers had demanded a ransom of between €5 million and €7 million (RM24 million and RM38 million).

A source close to the investigation said one of the father's fingers had been chopped off. There were fears of other mutilations if police had not raided the property, the source said.

French Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau hailed the "decisive" police operation to free the man in a message on X.

The victim's wife told investigators that her husband and the wealthy son, who both owned a crypto marketing firm in Malta, had been targeted by threats in the past.

The kidnapping followed a Jan 21 abduction of a French crypto boss and his partner. That victim, David Balland, had co-founded a crypto firm, Ledger, valued at more than US\$1 billion (RM4.25 billion).

Ballard had a finger cut off by his kidnappers, who demanded a hefty ransom. He was freed the next day, and his girlfriend was found tied up in the boot (trunk) of a car in the Paris suburb of Essonne.

Nine suspects are under criminal investigation in that case, including the suspected ringleader. – AFP

## UK police uncover terror plot, five held

**LONDON:** Britain's counter-terrorism police arrested five men, including four Iranians, on suspicion of terrorism offences over a plot to target a specific premises, the Metropolitan Police said in a statement yesterday.

The arrests occurred on Saturday in Swindon, west London, Stockport, Rochdale and Manchester.

However, police did not disclose details of the plot, citing operational reasons.

The Embassy of Iran in London did not respond to a request for comment.

"The investigation is still in its early stages and we are exploring various lines of inquiry to establish any potential motivation as well as to identify whether there may be any further risk to the public linked to this matter," said Commander Dominic Murphy, head of the Met's Counter Terrorism Command.

All five men were arrested on suspicion of preparation of a terrorist act, contrary to Section 5 of the Terrorism Act (TACT) 2006. They remain in custody.

The four Iranian nationals have been detained under TACT.

The fifth man was detained under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

"We understand the public may be concerned and I would ask them to remain vigilant."

"If they see or hear anything that concerns them, then please contact us."

Officers are carrying out searches at a number of addresses in the Greater Manchester, London and Swindon areas. – Reuters/Bernama

# Australian PM basks in win

## Albanese targets tariffs and cost-of-living

**SYDNEY:** Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese basked yesterday in his landslide election win, promising a "disciplined, orderly" government to confront cost-of-living pain and tariff turmoil.

Residents clapped as the 62-year-old and his fiancée Jodie Haydon visited his old inner Sydney haunt, Cafe Italia, surrounded by a crowd of jostling photographers and TV journalists.

Albanese's Labor Party is on course to win at least 82 seats in the 150-member parliament, partial results showed.

Opposition leader Peter Dutton's conservative Liberal-National coalition had just 36 seats, and other parties 12. Another 20 seats were still in doubt.

"We will be a disciplined, orderly government in our second term," Albanese said, after scooping ice cream for journalists in a cafe he used to visit with his mum.

"She would be very proud," Albanese said of his late, single mother Maryanne, who raised him in a modest government-subsidised Sydney flat.

"We've been given a great honour of serving the Australian people, and we don't take it for granted, and we'll work hard each and every day," he said.

Dutton, a hard-nosed former policeman, who critics tagged "Trump-lite" for policies that included slashing the civil service, endured the rare humiliation of losing his own seat.

US President Donald Trump's trade tariffs, and the chaos they unleashed, may not have been the biggest factor in the Labor Party victory but analysts said they helped.

"If we want to understand why a good chunk of the electorate has changed across the election campaign over the last couple of months, I think that's the biggest thing," said Henry Maher, a politics lecturer at the University of Sydney.

"In times of instability, we expect people to go back to a kind of steady incumbent."

The scale of Albanese's win took his own party by surprise.

"It's still sinking in," Treasurer Jim Chalmers said.

"This was beyond even our most optimistic expectations. It was a history-making night. It was one for the ages."

But the win came with "healthy helpings of humility," he said, because under-pressure Australians want "stability in uncertain times".

Albanese has promised to embrace renewable energy, cut taxes, tackle a worsening housing crisis, and pour money into a creaking healthcare system.



Albanese receives a vinyl record album as he leaves after a visit to a cafe in Sydney. – AFP/IC

Dutton wanted to slash immigration, crack down on crime and ditch a longstanding ban on nuclear power.

Before the first vote was even counted, speculation was mounting over whether the 54-year-old opposition leader could survive an election loss.

"We didn't do well enough during this campaign. That much is obvious tonight and I accept full responsibility," Dutton told supporters in a concession speech.

Economic concerns have dominated the contest for the many Australian households struggling to pay inflated prices for milk, bread, power and petrol.

"The cost of living, it's extremely high at the moment, (including) petrol prices, all the basic stuff," human resources manager Robyn Knox said in Brisbane.

The 36-day campaign was a largely staid affair but there were moments of levity.

Albanese tumbled backwards off the stage at

a heaving campaign rally, while Dutton drew blood when he hit an unsuspecting cameraman in the head with a stray football.

Leaders around the world congratulated Albanese on his triumph.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he hoped to "promote freedom and stability in the Indo-Pacific" with Australia, a "valued ally, partner and friend of the United States".

An unnamed Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Beijing was "ready to work" with Australia's government.

Albanese said he had spoken with the prime ministers of Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, and received "some good text messages" from leaders in Britain, France "and a range of others".

The prime minister said he planned to speak with the leaders of Indonesia and Ukraine, promising to back Kyiv against Russia's invasion: "That's my government's position. It was yesterday. It still is." – AFP

## Two million throng Lady Gaga concert

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Lady Gaga rocked Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana Beach on Saturday with a free mega-concert that the Brazilian city said drew about two million fans.

"Brazil, I missed you so much," screamed the American pop star, in her first Brazil gig since 2012, before launching into *Poker Face* on a huge chessboard, one of many grandiose backdrops in the two-hour extravaganza.

The 39-year-old singer kicked off the concert perched 2m above the stage, sporting a massive scarlet hoop gown which opened to reveal a vertical cage from which her dancers exited to a rendition of her 2011 song *Bloody Mary*.

She then moved on to *Abracadabra*, one of the highlights of her latest album, *Mayhem*, released in March.

In the middle of the song, Gaga removed the red dress, revealing another she was wearing

underneath in the colours of Brazil's national flag: green, blue and yellow.

"Lady Gaga means everything to me, I've been a fan of hers since 2008," said Walter Segundo, a 23-year-old student who travelled almost 3,000km from Sao Luis in Brazil's northeast.

All week, Gaga fans, known affectionately as "Little Monsters", flocked to Rio.

Rio officials had expected a turnout for the Gaga show of around 1.6 million people, which they estimated could bring US\$100 million (RM426 million) into the local economy, but City Hall said later that 2.1 million had attended.

The crowd was about half a million people more than was estimated to have attended a Madonna concert at the same venue last year.

Rio officials want to continue holding free mega-concerts in May to boost tourism during

what is considered the low season.

Mayor Eduardo Paes has hinted that he plans to bring in Irish rock band U2, although no date has been given.

Local authorities deployed a massive security force for the concert on Saturday, including 5,000 officers, drones and both surveillance and facial recognition cameras.

Lady Gaga was supposed to be one of the headliners at the Rock in Rio festival in 2017, but was forced to cancel for health reasons.

"You waited more than 10 years for me. You might be wondering why it took so long to come back, but the truth is I was healing. I was getting stronger," the *Bad Romance* singer told fans in Copacabana on Saturday.

"You kept cheering me on. You kept asking me to come back when I was ready. Brazil, I am ready." – AFP

# UN urges independent probe into aid ship attack

➤ Freedom Flotilla Coalition blames Israel for bombing

**GENEVA:** The UN human rights office on Saturday called for an independent investigation into the drone attack on a Gaza-bound aid ship in international waters off Malta and renewed its call for Israel to lift its blockade on Gaza, which it says constitutes "collective punishment."

"We have seen the worrying reports on the incident. We are unable to independently confirm them. However, it is crucial that there be independent, impartial and effective investigation by competent authorities into the incident leading to apparent fire on board the vessel and a distress call in international waters, with a view to ensuring accountability," human rights spokesperson Thameen Al-Kheetan said in a statement.

The vessel *Conscience*, organised by the Freedom Flotilla Coalition, caught fire after reportedly being bombed by drones on Friday while carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza.

The Maltese government confirmed the fire was contained with the help of a nearby tugboat and that all 12 crew members and four civilians aboard were safe, although they refused to abandon the ship.

The vessel remains in international waters under monitoring.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition blamed Israel for the attack, calling for Israeli ambassadors to be summoned over what it described as violations of international law, including the blockade and the bombing of the civilian ship.

It said it had been organising a non-violent action under a media blackout to avoid any potential sabotage.

"Volunteers from over 21 countries travelled to Malta to board the mission to Gaza, including prominent figures," it said in a fuller statement on its website.

"On the morning of their scheduled departure, the vessel was attacked. Armed drones attacked the front of an unarmed civilian



Activists gesture from a yacht carrying supplies as they are prevented from approaching the damaged vessel. – REUTERS/PIC

vessel twice, causing a fire and a substantial breach in the hull."

Francesca Albanese, the UN special rapporteur for Palestine, also condemned the attack and urged EU leaders to denounce it and demand an urgent investigation.

Hamas similarly accused Israel and appealed to the UN Security Council to act against Israeli "violations".

Al-Kheetan also pointed to the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza, saying restrictions on movement and the flow of goods have severely affected the population for more than 17 years.

"It amounts to the collective punishment of Gaza residents," he said.

He added that conditions have worsened recently, with Israel blocking all goods from entering Gaza since March 2, which has only

intensified the already dire situation.

"Collective punishment is prohibited by international humanitarian law and amounts to a war crime," he said.

"As the occupying power, Israel has the obligation – under international humanitarian law – to ensure food and medical supplies for the population to the fullest extent of the means available to it, or to agree to and facilitate by all means at its disposal relief schemes by other states or impartial humanitarian organisations," the spokesperson said.

"We call on Israel to urgently lift the blockade on Gaza and allow the entry of life-saving material," he said.

Nearly 52,500 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza in a brutal Israeli onslaught since October 2023, most of them women and children. – Bernama/Reuters

## Reservists called up for expanded offensive

**TEL AVIV:** Israel was issuing orders to call up tens of thousands of reservists ahead of an expanded offensive in Gaza, Israeli media reported, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attacked truce mediator Qatar.

Several news outlets reported that the military had begun sending the orders for reservists to replace conscripts and active-duty soldiers in Israel and the occupied West Bank so they can be redeployed to Gaza.

A military spokesperson neither confirmed nor denied the reports, but relatives of AFP journalists were among those who received mobilisation orders.

Israel resumed major operations across Gaza on March 18 amid deadlock over how to proceed with a two-month ceasefire that had largely

halted the war sparked by the October 2023 attack.

Qatar, which hosts Hamas' political office, brokered the truce alongside the US and Egypt that came into effect in January. Efforts to secure a new deal however have appeared to stall.

Netanyahu accused the gas-rich Gulf state of "playing both sides with its double talk". Posting on X, he said Qatar had to "decide if it's on the side of civilisation or if it's on the side of barbarism".

Netanyahu, under pressure from his far-right supporters, without whom he would lose his governing coalition, has been increasingly vocal in his calls to continue the war.

"Israel will win this just war with just means," he said.

Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed

al-Ansari rejected the "inflammatory" comments, charging that they "fall far short of the most basic standards of political and moral responsibility" in a statement on X.

Israel has also blocked all aid deliveries to Gaza since March 2, prompting warnings from UN agencies of impending humanitarian disaster.

Hamas on Saturday released footage of an apparently wounded Israeli-Russian hostage held in Gaza.

In the undated four-minute video, Maxim Herkin, who turns 37 this month, was shown wearing bandages on his head and left arm.

Speaking in Hebrew in the video, which his family urged media to disseminate, he implied he had been wounded in a recent Israeli bombardment. – AFP

BRIEFS

### PRESS GROUP PUSHES FOR GAZA ACCESS

**TEL AVIV:** The Foreign Press Association on Saturday called on Israel to allow news media "unrestricted" access to Gaza, off-limits to outside journalists operating independently since October 2023. "We call on Israel to stop delays, uphold fundamental principles of press freedom and allow unrestricted entry for journalists to Gaza," the Jerusalem-based association wrote in a statement to mark World Press Freedom Day. The FPA has more than 350 members working for foreign outlets in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The association criticised Israel for banning foreign journalists from entering Gaza, calling it a "mark of shame for a country that claims to be a beacon of democracy". – AFP

### MISSILE STRIKES NEAR BEN GURION AIRPORT

**TEL AVIV:** A missile launched from Yemen struck near Israel's main international airport yesterday briefly halting air traffic and triggering threats of retaliation. Police reported a "missile impact crater" near Ben Gurion International Airport outside Tel Aviv after the military said that "several attempts were made to intercept" it. It was not clear whether the impact was caused by the missile or by an interceptor. Journalists said they had heard explosions in the area of Jerusalem and the airport, after air raid sirens sounded in several parts of the country. Israel's airport authority said that "departures and arrivals have resumed" at Ben Gurion. – AFP

### 'NO NEED TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS'

**MOSCOW:** President Vladimir Putin said in comments that the need to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine had not arisen, and that he hoped it would not arise. In a fragment of an upcoming interview with Russian state television published on Telegram, Putin said Russia has the means to bring the conflict in Ukraine to a "logical conclusion". On Ukrainian strikes, he said: "There has been no need to use those (nuclear) weapons ... and I hope they will not be required. We have enough strength to bring what was started in 2022 to a logical conclusion with the outcome Russia requires." Putin has in recent weeks expressed willingness to negotiate a peace settlement. – Reuters

### 15 KILLED IN SOUTH AFRICA COLLISION

**JOHANNESBURG:** A night-time collision between a packed minibus and a pick-up truck has killed 15 people in rural South Africa. Five people were in hospital with serious injuries after the crash at around midnight on Saturday near the Eastern Cape town of Maqoma, about 1,000km south of Johannesburg, said transport spokesman Unathi Binqose. The drivers of both vehicles were among the dead and an inquest would be opened to determine what happened, Binqose said. The victims included 13 passengers in the minibus, which was reportedly travelling from the town of Qonce to Cape Town, a journey of nearly 1,000km. – AFP

## Brazil minister resigns over pensions scandal

**BRASILIA:** Brazil's minister for social security has resigned over a scandal to defraud retirees of part of their pensions.

Carlos Lupi had been at the centre of a storm over revelations that unions and other associations skimmed off part of pensions, with the possible collusion of officials from the National Social Security Institute.

The head of the INSS, which administers pensions, was removed from his post last week over the allegations.

Four other INSS officials and a federal police officer were also suspended.

The office of the comptroller, which combats state corruption, said it detected unauthorised deductions from pensions for services such as legal assistance that many retirees said they never signed up for or received.

The investigation is focusing on US\$1.1 billion (RM4.7 billion) in deductions between 2019 and 2024.

This is the second corruption case in under a

month to topple a member of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's left-wing government.

In April, Communications Minister Juscelino Filho resigned after being charged with taking bribes while he was a congressman in 2022.

Corruption is a sensitive issue for Lula, who himself served 18 months in prison in 2018-2019 for allegedly taking bribes.

His conviction was later annulled on the grounds that the judge in the trial had been biased. – AFP

# Savouring the now

**T**IME! It is the one currency we all chase yet it slips through our fingers like sand. Just the other day I found myself tangled in a conversation about why time feels like it is sprinting away from us.

Monday dawns and before you can blink it is Friday, with the weekend vanishing in a blur.

It is as if time has a personal vendetta, refusing to pause for anyone. This was not a one-off chat – the same lament surfaced over coffee with colleagues in Penang.

We are all caught in this relentless race against the clock. The feeling is universal, time is fleeting and we are always trying to catch up.

Living in Penang, where the action hums, my colleagues and I shuttle back to Kuala Lumpur for the weekend. The journey is a ritual and we each have our preferred chariots, flights for the hurried, buses for the thrifty, cars for the independent or in my case the Electric Train Service (ETS), which blends all three.

The ETS, clocking in at three-and-a-half to four hours, depending on whether it is the express or the stop-heavy regular has become my sanctuary. It is not just transport; it is a pocket of time carved out for me. The train offers a unique space where I can pause and breathe amidst the chaos of daily life.

The ETS is a microcosm of Malaysia, bustling, diverse and endlessly fascinating. The trains are always packed, a testament to their efficiency and affordability. Locals and tourists cram the carriages, each passenger a story in motion.

I cherish these hours where I am free to dive into my thoughts occasionally, surfacing to observe the parade of characters around me. There is quiet joy in people-watching, in catching the quirks and antics that unfold when folks think no one is looking.

I do this while drumming on my keyboard trying to maximise the time. The train becomes a stage for human stories unfolding in real-time.

Take the elderly couples for instance. They are

a fixture on the ETS, sitting side by side in stony silence as if they have run out of words after decades together. It is almost comical how they occupy the same space yet seem worlds apart.

You will see them, each staring out their window, lost in private universes. Occasionally, one might nudge the other, trying to make a point, which fizzles with the other party dismissing the action.

It is as if they play a game of who can stay quiet longest. Once I watched an elderly man meticulously peel an orange offering a segment to his wife, who accepted it without a glance, popping it into her mouth while gazing out the window.

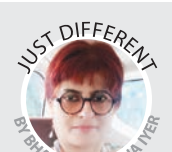
The unspoken routine was oddly endearing like silent choreography honed over years. Another time, I saw a couple in a passive-aggressive snack standoff: she offered a biscuit he declined with a wave and she insisted by placing it on his lap, and he placed it back on her tray.

This went on for five minutes neither saying a word, their faces a masterclass in stoic determination. These little dramas, these unspoken negotiations make the ETS a stage for human comedy. Young couples though are rare perhaps, too busy snapping selfies elsewhere to bother with train rides.

What irritates, however, is the obliviousness of some seniors. Earphones absent, they are glued to tiny screens, volume cranked up, broadcasting soap operas or viral videos to the entire carriage.

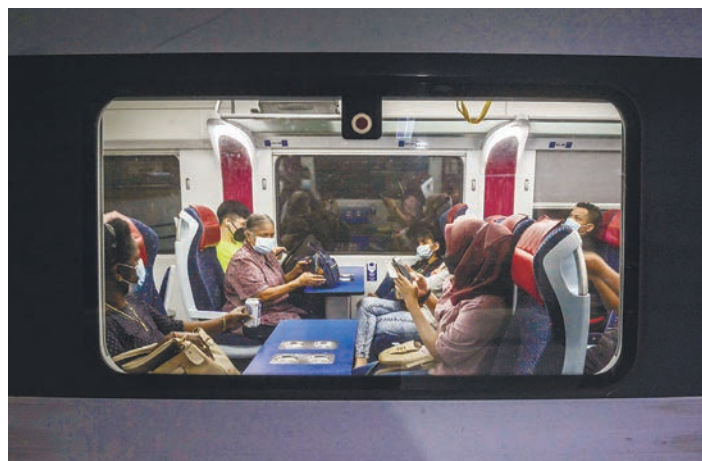
It is a small nuisance but persistent. And here is a curious observation. In all my trips, I have yet to spot a single soul reading a book. Not one. Have books fallen out of fashion or is the ETS not the place for them? It is a mystery that nags at me. The absence of books feels like a quiet loss in this digital age.

Then there are the tourists. These are no ordinary travellers. They board the ETS armed with knowledge as if they have memorised the train manual. They know the exact platform, the



JUST DIFFERENT  
BY BHAVANI KRISHNA IYER

*"It is sobering: How many of us can say with certainty we will wake up tomorrow? The now is all we are guaranteed, yet we spend so much of it chasing what is next."*



The ETS is a microcosm of Malaysia, bustling, diverse and endlessly fascinating. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THE SUN

best seats and where to snag an e-hailing taxi upon disembarking.

These seasoned explorers have scoured blogs and forums before setting foot in Malaysia. You will never catch them asking for directions; they move with the confidence of locals if not more.

Contrast that with some locals, myself included, who seem allergic to research. We are the ones fumbling at the station asking fellow passengers how to top up a ticket. It is endearing, this reliance on human connection over Google. It reminds us how differently we navigate the world.

This brings me back to time or rather its absence. On the ETS, time feels different. It is not just hours ticking by, it is space to exist in the now. There is a philosophy I have been mulling over that tomorrow is an illusion.

All we have is this moment, this breath, this fleeting now. It is sobering: How many of us can say with certainty we will wake up tomorrow? The now is all we are guaranteed, yet we spend so much of it chasing what is next.

On the train, I confront this now with less distraction. I jot down ideas, reflect on the week or watch the countryside blur past scenes of rural life and glimpses of lives I will never know.

It is a rare gift of uninterrupted time and it has

made me realise how little of it we claim for ourselves.

The ETS, for all its quirks, is a time machine. It does not transport you to the future or past but anchors you in the present. You are not rushing to catch a flight or stuck in traffic, you are here sharing space with strangers, who for a few hours are part of your story.

As we pull into Kuala Lumpur, the spell breaks. The station buzzes and people scatter, taxis honk and the race resumes.

I step off the train, nostalgic for those hours of now. Time may be scarce but on the ETS, I have learned to steal a little back. It is not about slowing the clock, it is about savouring the ride.

So, the next time you are chasing time, consider hopping on a train. Let the world fog outside the window. Watch the strangers around you. For a few hours, just be. Because in the end, it is not about how much time we have, it is about what we do with the now.

**Dr Bhavani Krishna Iyer** holds a doctorate in English literature. Her professional background encompasses teaching, journalism and public relations. She is currently pursuing a second master's degree in counselling. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

## Prioritising preschool education in Malaysia

COMMENT  
By Ng Kim Chu and Michelle Huan

**I**N a complex and demanding time for public policy and government funding, very few investments offer returns as far-reaching as early childhood education.

By prioritising quality early childhood education programmes, the long-term benefits may come in different ways – depending on the curriculum and target population – especially for children from low-income groups and children who are at risk.

These benefits may include reduced learning difficulties, higher secondary school graduation rates, decreased reliance on social welfare programmes and lower involvement in criminal activities.

It is important to note that the first few years of a child's life marks a crucial period for learning. Placing importance on efforts for early childhood development must be of priority during these years for the greatest efficiency and effectiveness.

Having the right stimuli in a quality early childhood education setting will nurture a child's natural curiosity, foster creativity and build a love

for learning, which provides a strong foundation for their future learning and success.

Preschools provide a supportive and structured environment where children can learn through play, interact with their peers and develop essential life skills. These early interactions allow them to understand, express and manage their emotions.

They learn crucial social skills such as self-regulation and empathy, developing a healthy sense of self. Social-emotional skills are essential for forming and maintaining healthy relationships with family, friends and others, which will in turn shape their future academic and life journey.

However, the rising costs of early childhood education places financial pressure on parents, often forcing them to enrol their children in more affordable alternatives or even resort to homeschooling.

While some alternatives may provide similar educational content, they may lack appropriate facilities such as playgrounds, gym mats, sports programmes and toys for appropriate ages.

Additionally, nutritious meals might not be a priority, while there may be limited opportunities for social interaction with peers for those who are learning from home.

While the Education Ministry has acknowledged the importance of early exposure to Bahasa Melayu and English, and has outlined plans to improve the quality, accessibility and relevance of education nationwide, more needs to be done.

Focusing on quality early childhood education can reduce achievement gaps between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds, which can emerge even before young children enter preschools.

For instance, two-year-old children from low-income groups may only use as few as 10 words, compared to their affluent peers who know up to 450 words. By providing high-quality early childhood learning environments for all children, the government can help to reduce the disparities before it sets firm policies, addressing social inequalities in the long run.

Beyond benefiting children's development, government investment in high-quality early childhood education will also support and encourage greater female workforce participation.

According to the data by International Labour Organisation in 2023, 55.59% of mothers with children under the age of six were part of the workforce in Malaysia.

Accessible and affordable preschools are essential to support women, enabling them to have a greater workforce participation while ensuring their children receive developmentally appropriate care and education.

Such investments serve as both an educational foundation and a vital family support system for families, creating economic benefits that extend beyond the children directly served. Parents with reliable early childhood education access demonstrate higher productivity and lower absenteeism.

As we look forward to the new Malaysian Blueprint 2026-2036, we hope that preschool education is prioritised, with it being a key pillar in the nation's education and economic policies.

By investing in quality early childhood education programmes, the government must make choices that align short-term expenditures with long-term fiscal responsibility while advancing core societal values of opportunity, equality and potential human development.

**Ng Kim Chu and Michelle Huan** are lecturers in the Diploma in Early Childhood Education programme at Taylor's College. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

COMMENT by Dr Rais Hussin

# Lazy statistics, loud opinions

**W**HEN Bill O'Reilly doubled down on his mockery of Malaysians – scoffing that Malaysians “can’t even buy a little hat” and citing a household income figure of US\$5,731 (RM24,400) versus US\$42,220 in the US – he was not just being flippant. He was showcasing the danger of lazy statistics.

By cherry-picking figures without context, he painted a distorted picture of economic despair – and in doing so, revealed a worldview still steeped in colonialist condescension. Like many such soundbites, the truth lies in what he left out.

## A single number doesn't define prosperity

The US\$42,220 figure cited by O'Reilly comes from the US Census Bureau's annual household survey, the Current Population Survey (CPS).

It refers to the median personal income of individuals aged 15 and above in 2023, adjusted for inflation (in what is called “2023 CPI-U-RS dollars”). The figure is widely referenced and republished by the Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis under the series code MEPIUSA672N.

For Malaysia, the figure seems to have been quoted from the CEIC's “Annual Household Income per Capita” dataset, which draws on official data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM).

The calculation starts with the mean monthly household income in 2022, recorded at RM8,479 (DOSM), which is then annualised, multiplied by the estimated number of households (about 8.662 million in 2022), divided by Malaysia's mid-year population, and finally converted into US dollars using the average 2022 exchange rate.

Thus, O'Reilly's framing ignores several key contextual differences:

• **Different units:** He compares income earned by actual individuals in the US to household income per capita in Malaysia, which includes non-earners such as children and elderly dependents. This pulls the Malaysian figure down and inflates the gap.

• **No purchasing power**

**adjustment:** A US dollar buys far more in Malaysia than it does in the US. Nominal comparisons ignore this, understating the true standard of living in Malaysia.

• **Different timeframe and inflation adjustments:** The US number is from 2023, inflation-adjusted to constant dollars. The Malaysian number is from 2022, in current prices. So, O'Reilly is comparing different years and price bases, which further muddies the waters.

Even when we use CEIC's harmonised household income data series – applied equally to both Malaysia and the US – but adjust for purchasing power parity using the World Bank's official 2022 factor, Malaysia's household income per capita rises to US\$16,857. On that basis, the US-Malaysia income gap is only 2.3 times, not seven.

Similarly, GDP per capita (PPP) shows Malaysia at US\$34,366 compared to the US at US\$78,035 – a 2.3 times gap as well. Therefore, O'Reilly's claim did not just miss context – it overstated the disparity by a factor of three.

These comparisons still ignore differences in cost of living and access to services. Declaring a nation poor without accounting for those factors is, at best, lazy arithmetic. No wonder Malaysians cheekily reminded O'Reilly, “we have free healthcare, grandpa”.

In the US, the top 20% controls over 50% of disposable income. Furthermore, Harvard data suggests 85% of American families now require some form of financial aid.

High healthcare, housing and student loan costs heavily erode American incomes in ways Malaysians are largely protected from – thanks to public healthcare, fuel subsidies and affordable food. A *nasi lemak* in Kuala Lumpur still costs less than a coffee in New York.

## A region that matters

O'Reilly's deeper implication – that Southeast Asia is irrelevant to the global economy – is just as inaccurate, as Emir Research previously elaborated in “How Malaysia Keeps its Compass Steady amid Tariff Shocks – and Builds for What's Next”.

Metric	Malaysia	USA	Ratio (USA + Malaysia)
Household Income per Capita (Nominal, CEIC)	US\$5,731.68	US\$39,167.92	6.8*
Household Income per Capita, PPP-adjusted	US\$16,857.81	US\$39,167.92	2.3*
GDP per Capita (Nominal, World Bank)	US\$11,748.10	US\$78,035.20	6.6*
GDP per Capita (PPP, World Bank)	Int'l \$34,366.20	Int'l \$78,035.20	2.3*
Manufacturing Value Added (% of GDP, World Bank)	23%	10.5%	0.5*
Manufacturing Output per Person (PPP-adjusted est.)	~\$7,900 (est.)	~\$8,200 (est.)	1.04*

### Notes:

- \* All figures reflect 2022 data unless stated otherwise.
- \* Malaysia's PPP-adjusted household income is calculated as: Nominal income × FX rate (RM4.41) × PPP factor (1.5).
- \* Manufacturing output per person is derived as: Manufacturing % × GDP per capita (PPP).

Figure 1: Malaysia vs USA – Income and Output Gaps, Contextualized (2022)

Malaysia and its Asean neighbours are emerging economic powerhouses in their own right. The image of Southeast Asia as having “no money” also ignores the region's massive market potential. With over 680 million people, rising middle classes and growth rates outpacing the West, Asean is a prize in global commerce. This is why trillions in South-South capital (from China, the Middle East and elsewhere) are actively seeking opportunities in these emerging powerhouses.

Thus, when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Malaysia in April, over 30 bilateral cooperation agreements were signed. These were not handouts. They were joint ventures – in AI, green tech and smart infrastructure. Signs not of desperation, but of ambition to climb the value chain. That strategic openness to both East and West has become far more pronounced under the Anwar Ibrahim administration.

Similarly, Western tech giants like Google and Microsoft have recently invested significantly in Malaysia's digital economy.

Malaysia's economic approach today is pragmatic: be a “bridge, not battleground” between great powers while investing in connectivity, upskilling talent and maintaining macroeconomic stability.

## Colonial lens still lingers

Perhaps most revealing was O'Reilly's flippant “Ha-ha, I'm a colonialist” remark. That line, paired with his mockery of “small” countries, betrays a mindset that still

colours parts of Western commentary.

This view assumes Western dominance as a given and frames non-Western nations as inherently lesser. In the view of the O'Reillys of the world, if a country does not match American standards of wealth, it is fair game for ridicule. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim rightly called such comments “arrogant and ignorant”, shaped by imperial assumptions that no longer hold.

Malaysia is not a dependent economy. It is an upper-middle-income nation with a diversified export base, strong industrial capability and rising agency.

In 2023, it exported approximately US\$74 billion in integrated circuits – 23% of total exports – ranking among the world's top semiconductor exporters. It also contributes 13% of the global market for backend semiconductor services like testing and packaging. These are not signs of weakness but reflect systemic relevance and significant potential.

The challenge now is to translate that structural position into broader socioeconomic gains – a goal central to the current administration's reform agenda. Unlike the West, which entrenches dominance through IMF conditions, petrodollar hegemony and the privilege of printing the world's reserve currency, Malaysia – like many real-economy nations – has had to build its sovereignty from the ground up.

That has not come easy. Global

history shows that leaders who defend sovereignty in word and deed are often undermined – not just rhetorically but through sustained economic and political pressure. The nexus between supranational and entrenched local colonialists runs deep.

Malaysia is no exception. The current administration inherited a system long dominated by entrenched interests – what can rightfully be called internal colonialists, sustained in part by external colonialists who, in many ways, never truly left.

Decades of divisive politics and absolute policy inertia have left deep structural challenges. Anwar's reform agenda marks a break from that legacy but the path forward remains an uphill climb.

Still, Malaysia continues to push forward. It settles more trade in local currencies, strengthens South-South ties and plays an active role in shaping regional policy through platforms like Asean, RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) and CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership). Its strategy – resilience without retaliation – offers a potential model for others.

So, when O'Reilly mocks Malaysia's outreach to China, he misses the point. Kuala Lumpur is not choosing sides, it is choosing independence. It welcomes both East and West on terms that serve mutual national interest.

Next time someone chuckles about who “has money”, remember: context matters. Malaysia's story – of grit, growth and strategic savvy – is far more compelling than a drive-by income comparison. Dismissing a country based on a single, unadjusted figure is not just a bad analysis; it is a relic of a fading worldview.

In a world of shifting power, it is not the loudest voices that lead but those with the clearest compass.

## Dr Rais Hussin is the

founder of Emir Research, a think-tank focused on strategic policy recommendations based on rigorous research. Comments: [letters@thesundaily.com](mailto:letters@thesundaily.com)

LETTERS [letters@thesundaily.com](mailto:letters@thesundaily.com)

# NUJM hails Malaysia's progress in press freedom

**THIS** year, NUJM (National Union of Journalists Peninsular Malaysia) welcomed the improved standing for Malaysia in the 2025 World Press Freedom Index, rising 19 spots to 88th place.

We attribute this improvement to the hardworking journalists, editors and media practitioners who tirelessly strive for press freedom in the country.

This improved ranking was also made possible by the passing of the Malaysian Media Council Bill at the parliamentary level in February.

As the government works towards

gazetting the Bill, we hope that it will strengthen the journalism industry in the country.

With the formation of the Media Council, we hope that journalists will no longer be threatened under the draconian Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984, which the union hopes to see abolished soon.

The NUJM would also like to highlight the increased use of Artificial Intelligence within the journalism industry, which presents both opportunities and risks.

We hope that, with the Media Council, more guidelines can be

issued, and the NUJM is ready to offer its assistance on the matter in the future.

There is a need for the ethical use of AI within journalism, as the technology should not replace the talent, skill and creativity possessed by journalists – qualities that must be recognised and valued. This is an important part as it will also secure better welfare of the journalists working in the industry.

We also stand in solidarity with our colleagues around the world who are risking their lives to report the ever-evolving truth.

We express our deepest condolences to our neighbour, the Philippines, over the death of veteran Filipino journalist Juan “Johnny” Dayang, 89, who served as president emeritus of the Publishers Association of the Philippines Inc, and was recently shot by an unidentified assailant in his home.

More than 200 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, including 32 in a single incident in 2009.

According to the International

Federation of Journalists (IFJ), 122 journalists were killed in the course of their work in 2024.

IFJ general-secretary Anthony Bellanger has highlighted the worrying situation for journalists in countries including the US, Ukraine, Russia, Sudan, Yemen, Turkey, China, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tunisia, Myanmar, Argentina, Hungary, Somalia, the DRC and Palestine.

## On behalf of the

Executive Council  
Teh Athira Mohamed Yusof  
General-Secretary

# Insurers face changing landscape

➤ Rising medical costs, digital transformation, generative AI among key trends emerging in local insurance sector this year, says Sun Life Malaysia country head

■ BY JOHN GILBERT  
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The domestic insurance industry is expected to face several key trends this year that will significantly impact the landscape, with rising medical costs being a major concern.

The escalating expenses may lead to higher claims and subsequent premium adjustments, pushing insurers to develop more innovative products that address the root causes of these cost increases.

Meanwhile, digital transformation will continue to accelerate.

The licensing of digital insurance and takaful operators is expected to significantly improve market access and close protection gaps.

At the same time, generative artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly playing a vital role in the industry, especially in the area of enhancing fraud detection, enabling hyperpersonalised services, and streamlining operations via automation.

Furthermore, predictive analytics will allow insurers to anticipate customer needs, while AI-driven efficiency will reduce costs and improve service speed.

Sun Life Malaysia president and

country head Raymond Lew said the industry is also witnessing more strategic cross-industry collaborations, which are increasingly vital for insurers.

"Partnerships with healthcare, technology, and financial services sectors enable the development of integrated solutions that cater to diverse client needs. Examples include comprehensive health programmes, advanced digital platforms and bundled financial products.

"By delivering seamless, holistic experiences, insurers can significantly enhance client satisfaction, foster long-term loyalty, and improve retention," he told *SunBiz*.

Lew said domestic and global economic uncertainties are driving a strong focus on financial inclusion.

He said the industry is actively working to expand insurance and takaful penetration, particularly among underserved communities, to ensure greater financial resilience in

the face of these uncertainties.

For 2024, Lew said the Malaysian insurance industry remained resilient, despite rising costs and premium concerns, with investment-linked products leading the market. This lined up with Malaysia's positive economic growth, which grew from 3.6% in 2023 to 5.1% in 2024.

The growth in consumer spending and favourable digital and regulatory reforms, including the comprehensive Policy Document on Licensing and Regulatory Framework for Digital Insurers and Takaful Operators also supported the industry's favourable performance, he added.

Lew said inflation and rising living costs are significantly impacting financial resilience in Malaysia.

He stated that many people prioritise meeting their basic needs, which leaves little space for future savings.

"Escalating costs, from food to medical bills, are creating financial strain," Lew noted.

He pointed out that Sun Life's Asia Financial Resilience Index 2024 revealed that only 38% of Malaysians have a financial plan beyond one year ahead.

Furthermore, the respondents listed retirement and savings as their second-highest financial priority, but only 18% currently have a retirement or pension plan to support their goals.

"We recognise the challenges posed by inflation and rising living costs.

"Sun Life is addressing these concerns through increased emphasis on financial literacy programmes, making retirement planning tools more accessible, and developing products that help Malaysians build financial resilience in the face of these economic pressures," Lew said.

Sun Life's priority remains empowering Malaysians to secure their financial future through better awareness and accessibility to insurance and takaful solutions, he said.

"Legacy planning will be a major focus in 2025, as we continue to bridge knowledge gaps in this crucial area. Our recent insurance

literacy survey indicated that 65% of respondents acknowledged the important role of legacy. However, only 15% of respondents have a plan in place.

"A key initiative driving this agenda is our partnership with Alif Satar as Sun Life Malaysia's 2025 ambassador.

"Through initiatives like bite-sized education series, Alif will help deepen public understanding of how takaful supports long-term financial security and family stability," Lew said.

Beyond education, Sun Life is also focused on growing its agency and bancassurance channels in tandem, providing customised solutions to meet their evolving needs.

Such coverage includes legacy solutions for high-net worth clients, comprehensive family critical illness protection for middle-to-lower-income families and simple term plans sold online to protect a wider audience.

Lew said, "We are committed to exploring all avenues to boost our business growth and capabilities. Being a digitally driven enterprise, we are actively intensifying our digital efforts, including investing in technology, digital tools, and analytics to transform operational efficiency.

"We aim to use technology to help our advisers deliver the best possible advice and experiences to our clients.

"For example, we have partnered with Munich Re Automation Solutions, adopting their SaaS underwriting platform, Allfinanz Spark, to streamline and automate the underwriting processes. This enables us to provide quicker, better service and more personalised assessments to clients."

Globally, Lew said, Sun Life is embracing the generative AI trend with Amazon's AWS.

"Our 'Sun Life Asks' chatbot is a game-changer. It is answering over 10,000 queries a week and saving our team significant time. In short, by leveraging AWS and generative AI, we are able to scale our operations, reduce costs, and innovate rapidly, ensuring we stay ahead in the competitive insurance landscape," he said.



Lew says there are more strategic cross-industry collaborations, which are increasingly vital for insurers.

## Instapay and Mastercard expand cross-border money transfer services

**PETALING JAYA:** Instapay Technologies and Mastercard are enhancing international money transfer services for Instapay customers through Mastercard Move, a portfolio of money movement capabilities powering person-to-person and business payments to more than 180 countries worldwide in over 150 currencies.

This collaboration will allow over three million migrant workers living in Malaysia to remit funds to home countries in local currencies in near real-time.

Malaysia's migrant workforce comes primarily from Indonesia, Nepal, Bangladesh, India and the Philippines, according to International

Organization for Migration data.

With Mastercard Move, Instapay users in these five cross-border payment corridors as well as in Pakistan, can enjoy seamless transfers to bank accounts, digital wallets and cash pickup locations. They can also track payments, fees and estimated delivery times.

Instapay will first launch these Mastercard Move capabilities to individual customers in the second quarter of 2025 and has plans to expand to corporate customers.

Instapay Technologies co-founder and CEO, Rajnish Kumar said they are happy to deepen their relationship with Mastercard.

"This collaboration enables us to leverage Mastercard's vast global payment network and cross-border transfer expertise. It will enhance our remittance service to our customers, making it more efficient, secure, and cost effective," he said, adding that their goal has always been to leverage technology to make transactions more efficient and reduce the cost per transaction.

"There are many innovations happening in the cross-border payment space, and this collaboration ensures we stay at the forefront of offering enhanced services to our customers," he said.

Mastercard country manager,

Malaysia and Brunei Beena Potthen said, "As the global economy evolves, there is an ever-growing demand for more practical, cost-effective digital solutions for cross-border payments. What is especially important for the millions of migrant workers in Malaysia who are supporting their families back home is that the money transfer is fast, secure and transparent."

Instapay Technologies focuses on financial inclusion for unbanked workers by providing accessible and convenient financial solutions. As a licensed e-money issuer, Instapay provides migrant workers with a comprehensive digital platform for

their financial needs, including a prepaid Mastercard card, remittance solutions, and salary crediting accounts. Through its technology-driven approach, Instapay aims to improve financial access and well-being for underserved communities.

Mastercard Move provides banks, non-bank financial institutions, direct disburers and their customers with a fast, secure money transfer solution, both domestically and internationally. The portfolio of solutions reaches more than 180 countries and over currencies, with access to more than 95% of the world's banked population.



BY HAYATUN RAZAK  
[sunbiz@thesundaily.com](mailto:sunbiz@thesundaily.com)

**PETALING JAYA:** Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar concluded his five-year tenure as chairman of Bursa Malaysia on April 30, bringing to a close a period defined by reform, innovation and resilience.

Among the milestones that were achieved during his chairmanship of the exchange operator were the launch of Malaysia's first syariah-compliant carbon market and a digital gold trading platform, besides overseeing a record-breaking year for initial public offerings (IPO).

"I must say it has been an honour, privilege and pleasure to serve Bursa Malaysia as chairman for the past five years," Abdul Wahid, reflecting on the impact and legacy of his time at the helm, told *SunBiz* in an exclusive written interview.

His departure, first announced on March 27, took effect at the close of business on April 30. He previously served on Bursa's board as an independent director from 2004 to 2011.

Abdul Wahid guided the exchange through the Covid-19 pandemic Movement Control Order period, when Malaysia's economy came to a near standstill.

During that period, Bursa Malaysia maintained uninterrupted market operations.

The exchange's resilience during that time helped preserve investor confidence and ensured companies could still raise funds through the capital markets.

The pandemic led to a spike in new Central Depository System account openings, with many first-time investors entering the market.

Bursa also experienced historic high daily trading volumes during the pandemic. It reported a 62.2% increase in operating revenue in 2020 compared to 2019 driven by high retail participation and market volatility.

"The team at Bursa Malaysia (*Warga Bursa*) have certainly gone through a lot together navigating through the Covid-19 movement control order period and ensuring the market continues to operate in a fair and orderly manner notwithstanding the volatility and surge in trading volume," Abdul Wahid said in the interview.

Just weeks before his departure, Abdul Wahid was honoured with the Saleh Kamel

## A legacy of reform, innovation and resilience

➤ Abdul Wahid's 5-year tenure as Bursa Malaysia chairman was marked by milestones such as launch of syariah-compliant carbon market and digital gold trading platform, record IPOs and steering the exchange through Covid-19



Abdul Wahid maintained a firm stance against cryptocurrencies.

Award for Islamic Economy in Madinah, a recognition he dedicated to Bursa staff and the broader Malaysian Islamic finance community.

"I am indeed honoured to have received the Saleh Kamel Award for Islamic Economy from HRH the Governor of Madinah two weeks ago on April 16, 2025. The award is indeed a recognition for the people in various organisations I have worked with

including our *Warga Bursa* and the Malaysian Islamic finance fraternity," he remarked.

Other notable achievements during his tenure include the launch of the PLC Transformation Programme to boost corporate performance, the introduction of *waqf*-featured exchange traded funds, and the establishment of Bursa RAM Capital for debt market fundraising.

In 2024, Bursa Malaysia emerged as the most vibrant IPO market in Southeast Asia, with 55 new listings raising RM7.4 billion and contributing RM31.4 billion in market capitalisation. This followed a joint initiative with the Securities Commission Malaysia to reduce listing application processing time to under three months.

Abdul Wahid also oversaw the exchange's transition towards a more independent regulatory structure with the formation of the Regulatory and Conflicts Committee, and initiated the payment of business *zakat* starting from the 2020 financial year.

Abdul Wahid signed off with a personal, light-hearted yet pointed reminder: "No cryptos please."

"As I sign off, I urge the board and management team to continue doing their best for Bursa Malaysia, their families and the nation. And to continue fulfilling our mission of Creating Opportunities, Growing Value towards achieving our vision of becoming Asean's leading, sustainable and

globally connected marketplace," he said.

It is worth noting that Bursa Malaysia under Abdul Wahid's leadership has maintained a firm and cautious stance towards cryptocurrencies, a position he voiced publicly on several occasions.

At the 63rd World Federation of Exchanges general assembly and annual meeting on Nov 20, 2024, Abdul Wahid made an unscheduled intervention during a panel session on cryptocurrencies.

Abdul Wahid, who was not listed as a speaker, stood up to express his opposition to supporting crypto assets.

"At Bursa Malaysia, although we are moving to become a multi-asset exchange ... we choose which assets will be traded," he said. "At the end of the day, we are clear about our purpose ... to serve as a marketplace where businesses come to raise capital to grow."

"For other asset classes, there is this concept of creating opportunities and growing value. But we fail to see that in cryptocurrencies."

Abdul Wahid said cryptocurrencies lack any underlying value, and backed up his concern with internal data.

An internal analysis made earlier in 2024 showed that while gold had a one-year volatility rate of 15% and bonds 11%, cryptocurrencies recorded a staggering 72.9%.

"That's gambling. Bursa Malaysia will not be supporting it, even if it means missing out on revenue because it causes more harm than good," he said bluntly.

Abdul Wahid also cited a case in Malaysia where a company was targeted by a ransomware attack, with the ransom specifically demanded in Bitcoin.

"I'm just amazed that we spend so much time and effort on anti-money laundering, Amla, and all those in the real world. But yet, in cryptocurrency world, there's that complexity that we overlooked."

## S Ecosystem takes digital rewards experience to new level

BY AIMIE SHAZRIE  
[sunbiz@thesundaily.com](mailto:sunbiz@thesundaily.com)

**PETALING JAYA:** In today's fast-paced digital landscape, user engagement is the key to success for any e-commerce app – traditional loyalty programmes and static incentives are no longer enough to retain users and drive meaningful interactions.

The general manager of S Ecosystem (M) Sdn Bhd, a technology enabler specialising in customer relationship management and loyalty programmes for retail brands, Lew Wai Hoong (*pic*), said its digital rewards ecosystem redefines engagement by offering dynamic, personalised and seamless reward experiences that keep users coming back.

"By integrating innovative reward mechanisms, our ecosystem empowers businesses to enhance user retention and boost app activity."

"Whether through gamification, blockchain-based rewards, or artificial intelligence-driven personalisation, we provide the tools to create compelling experiences that resonate with modern users."

"These advanced solutions ensure that every



interaction feels rewarding, increasing long-term customer loyalty," he told *SunBiz*.

Lew said the company's platform supports a wide range of digital assets, from in-app credits to tokenised rewards that users can redeem across multiple platforms.

"This flexibility allows businesses to tailor incentives to their audience, fostering deeper connections and higher conversion rates. The seamless integration with existing apps ensures a frictionless user experience, eliminating barriers to engagement," he explained.

Security and transparency are at the core of S Ecosystem's digital rewards ecosystem, Lew said.

"Leveraging cutting-edge technology, we ensure that every transaction is secure, verifiable and trustworthy," he added.

Beyond rewards, Lew highlighted that the company's ecosystem provides valuable insights into user behaviour and engagement patterns.

"Businesses can leverage data-driven analytics to refine their strategies, optimise reward structures and drive higher levels of interaction. By understanding what motivates users, companies can craft experiences that truly

engage and inspire."

As the digital landscape continues to evolve, Lew said, S Ecosystem's digital rewards ecosystem is at the forefront of innovation, helping businesses unlock new possibilities for engagement. "By combining technology, personalisation and seamless integration, we empower brands to create next-generation experiences that captivate users and drive sustained growth."

Furthermore, he added, AI-driven personalisation is transforming how businesses engage with users by delivering tailored experiences that adapt to individual preferences and behaviours.

"By leveraging machine learning and real-time data analytics, apps can create hyper-personalised interactions that keep users engaged."

"Whether it is recommending relevant rewards, optimising content based on user activity, or predicting future behaviors, AI ensures that every interaction feels meaningful and intuitive. This level of personalisation not only enhances user satisfaction but also drives higher retention and conversion rates," Lew explained.

Beyond personalisation, smarter AI-driven engagements enable businesses to automate and refine their engagement strategies, he said.

"AI-powered chatbots, predictive analytics and dynamic content delivery ensure that users receive the right message at the right time. By continuously analysing user patterns and preferences, AI helps brands craft seamless and interactive experiences that evolve with each user."

"This intelligent engagement fosters stronger customer relationships, increases app usage, and ultimately drives business growth in an increasingly competitive digital landscape."

Lew said balancing digital and physical touchpoints is crucial for creating a seamless and engaging user experience.

"While digital interactions provide convenience, speed and scalability, physical touchpoints add a layer of trust, emotional connection, and real-world engagement."

"Brands that successfully integrate both can enhance customer journeys by offering a unified experience, whether through personalised app notifications that lead to in-store rewards, QR codes linking physical products to digital content, or AI-powered customer support that bridges online and offline interactions."

"This hybrid approach ensures users stay engaged across multiple channels, fostering deeper loyalty and a more cohesive brand experience," he added.



# Failing to register for service tax can lead to stiff penalties

**T**HE Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) is undertaking a special operation to identify businesses which have not registered for service tax purposes.

This exercise is “unearthing” businesses which have failed to register either intentionally or unintentionally. The businesses try avoiding registration so that their prices can remain lower than that of their competitors who charge service tax.

Failure to register at the correct time can warrant three types of penalties: late payment penalties up to 40% of the unpaid taxes, upon conviction, fine for non-filing of the returns due to the delay in registration up to RM50,000 or imprisonment up to three years or both. In addition, there will also be a general penalty on conviction for non-registration up to RM30,000, or imprisonment up to two years or both. In the event the matter is not brought to court, the taxpayer can be subject to compounds not exceeding 50% of the maximum fine.

## What are the problems faced by businesses?

At first glance, the requirement to register for service tax appears straightforward: registration becomes mandatory once a business exceeds the relevant threshold of RM500,000 for most taxable services, RM1.5 million for the food and beverage industry, and zero threshold for credit card providers and customs agents, where registration is automatic.

In practice, registration is not always straightforward due to challenges in determining which services are taxable. Overlapping definitions, such as between marketing (non-taxable) and advertising (taxable), create confusion.



**TAX MATTERS**  
B.S.M. THANNEERMALAI

Similarly, businesses providing mixed services to residential and commercial properties often struggle with segregating taxable from non-taxable components.

There is often confusion in determining the threshold based on the backward and forward 12-month rules. Using the past 12 months is more straightforward, as actual revenue figures are available. In contrast, the forward 12-month projection is more subjective, as it involves forecasting future income.

However, if there is a reasonable basis to believe the threshold will be exceeded in the coming 12 months, registration must be done in advance.

During an RMCD audit, with the benefit of hindsight, the authorities may allege non-compliance. In such cases, it will be the taxpayer's responsibility to justify the reasonableness of their original forecast.

The export of services is not subject to service tax. However, businesses exporting services often struggle to determine if their services qualify as relating to a subject matter outside Malaysia.

A common grey area is when a foreign company, with no presence in Malaysia, seeks advice from a Malaysian consultant on

Malaysian matters for use in its global operations.

The RMCD is aware that some businesses try to artificially fragment their business to avoid registration threshold by operating through many separate businesses. This is specifically discouraged in the legislation which will effectively disregard the separate businesses and treat them as a single business for service tax registration purposes.

Added to that will be the consequential penalty mentioned above will apply and it could be regarded as tax evasion which will incur severe penalties.

Once you have started any business, monitoring the threshold and determining the time in which you should register is an ongoing exercise to avoid any non-registration penalties. If your mistake is realised after the due date, the cost of the non-registration is high and equally importantly is the loss of the opportunity to benefit from the business-to-business exemption.

It will be better for taxpayers to approach the RMCD on a voluntary basis before an audit is commenced. The RMCD is welcoming voluntary disclosure where you have not fulfilled your compliance responsibilities. It is willing to exercise leniency in the imposition of fines and penalties.

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

## Proton re-enters Singapore with its first EV, e.MAS 7

**PETALING JAYA:** Proton Holdings Bhd has re-entered Singapore with its first electric vehicle (EV), Proton e.MAS 7, which was showcased at The Car Expo 2025 in the island republic over the weekend.

Partnering with its newly appointed authorised distributor Vincar Group, the Malaysian carmaker is returning to an export market that is ranked number two globally for per-capita gross domestic product in terms of purchasing power parity. Looking to the future, Vincar will spearhead retail operations of Proton's EV lineup under the e.MAS brand, offering Singaporean drivers high-quality EVs designed for urban lifestyles.

Notably, Proton's return to Singapore is timely, aligning with the country's accelerating transition to green mobility. The market share of EVs in Singapore has steadily increased from 12% to 18% of the total automotive industry volume between 2022 and 2023, with projections reaching 55% by 2027.

To support this shift, Singapore aims to establish at least 12,000 EV charging points in about 2,000 Housing and Development Board car parks by 2025, and 60,000 by 2030. Additionally, the government targets 100% of vehicles to run on cleaner energy by 2040, contributing to Singapore's net-zero emissions goal by reducing land transport emissions.

Boasting an aerodynamic silhouette with a drag coefficient of 0.275, a futuristic design, and cutting-edge features, the e.MAS 7 sets a new benchmark for electric SUVs in its class.

In Malaysia, more than 6,000 bookings have been received, demonstrating an increasing number of Malaysians who are willing to make the switch to EVs with Proton, provided the overall package meets their expectations.

“The debut of the Proton e.MAS 7 in Singapore marks a significant step in our



The Proton e.MAS 7 was showcased at the Car Expo 2025 in Singapore over the weekend.

international expansion and our commitment to bringing high-quality, technologically advanced EVs to the region,” said Proton CEO, Dr Li Chunrong. “We are confident that the

e.MAS 7, with its compelling features and suitability for urban environments, will resonate well with Singaporean drivers as the nation embraces electric mobility.”

## Ramssol first-quarter net profit jumps 42% year-on-year

**PETALING JAYA:** Ramssol Group Bhd, a people solutions and licensing technology provider, reported strong financial results for the first quarter ended March 31, 2025 (Q1'25), underpinned by robust demand for its PeopleTech and AITech solutions as well as successful execution of its business strategies.

The group recorded a 25.6% increase in revenue to RM18.11 million in Q1'25, compared to RM14.42 million in the same quarter last year (Q1'24).

Gross profit rose 18.7% to RM11.70 million from RM9.86 million previously, while profit before tax increased 33.4% to RM6.05 million from RM4.53 million. Profit after tax strengthened by 42.5% to RM5.85 million, compared to RM4.1 million recorded in Q1'24.

The strong financial performance was largely driven by continued growth momentum across the group's core business pillars. Heightened sales from human capital management consulting services, customised payroll solutions, and system upgrade projects continued to propel the PeopleTech segment.

Meanwhile, the AITech segment delivered solid growth with new projects secured and successfully executed, contributing to higher revenue and profitability. Additionally, increased demand for digital transformation consulting and implementation services further reinforced the group's upward trajectory.

Notably, PeopleTech accounted for 70.3% of the group's total revenue for the quarter, while AITech contributed 23.4%. Despite the AITech arm only being acquired in June last year, it has demonstrated rapid progress and meaningful contributions within a short span of time, highlighting the strength and potential of this new business pillar.

Ramssol remains optimistic about its outlook for the remainder of FY25.

## Saham2u's upgraded platform simplifies share financing process

**PETALING JAYA:** Saham2u, a syariah-compliant share financing platform, has launched its upgraded platform designed to offer a more user-friendly, secure and seamless experience for investors.

The enhanced platform features a more intuitive interface, simplified application processes and strengthened security protocols, making it easier than ever for investors to access capital while keeping their shares intact.

Saham2u operations head Noor Hazimah Sain said since its launch in October last year, Saham2u has become a solution for investors, with more than 1,000 investors having leveraged the platform to unlock liquidity from their stock portfolios.

“With this upgraded platform, we have made it even easier for investors to leverage their portfolios to access alternative financing that is simple, secure, and aligned with Islamic financial principles.”

Noor Hazimah said their goal is to make share financing a mainstream option for Malaysian investors.

“We are proud to offer a solution that is not only syariah-compliant but also tailored to meet the evolving needs of modern investors. With the platform's enhanced simplicity and security, we are confident more investors will see the benefits of leveraging their portfolios through Saham2u,” she added.

Saham2u's platform is designed with robust security features, safeguarding user data and financial transactions. Through a strategic partnership with MSC TrustGate.Com Sdn Bhd, Saham2u employs state-of-the-art encryption to protect personal and financial information.

# Rakuten Trade revises fee structure for retail investors

➤ Digital broker aims to make equity trading more affordable to Malaysians, especially during current volatile climate

**PETALING JAYA:** Rakuten Trade Sdn Bhd, Malaysia's first fully digital broker, launched a newly revised brokerage fee structure, setting a new benchmark for affordability and accessibility for retail traders.

With the new structure, clients can enjoy the lowest brokerage fees for trades valued up to RM9,999.99 when trading in ringgit and up to US\$990 (RM4,230) for US market trades when trading in US dollar.

"We believe every Malaysian should be able to participate in the stock market without worrying about high fees," said Rakuten Trade CEO Kazumasa Mise (*pic*).

"As a digital broker, our role is to remove friction for investors, especially in today's volatile market environment, it's crucial that traders and new investors alike can manage their portfolios without being burdened by brokerage fees. This new brokerage revision reflects our continued focus on putting our customers first and making trading stocks more accessible."

As global markets continue to grapple with persistent volatility and shifting investor sentiment, Malaysian retail investors are seeking smarter, more cost-efficient ways to manage their portfolios.

With the local stock market showing mixed signals amid external uncertainties – from the United States' global implementation of

reciprocal tariffs to existing geopolitical tensions – retail participation has remained cautious.

However, Rakuten Trade equity sales head, Vincent Lau opines that the local stock benchmark index is not expected to see new lows, unless the tariff war between the United States and China escalates further.

"There is not much negative news for Malaysia now, so the FBM KLCI should remain stable or trade sideways. The index is unlikely to see another sharp drop unless new catalysts emerge," Lau said.

He added that selected initial public offering (IPO) stocks that have dipped below their listing prices could present some opportunities.

"As we know, the IPO market is currently quite depressed, with many recent listings trading below their IPO prices. It may be worth looking into some of these names that are now undervalued."

The new brokerage rates, together with the recently launched amalgamated trades for the New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq, are expected to significantly lower trading costs for Rakuten Trade clients and solidify the company as the ideal choice for a wide variety of investors, from day-traders to new investors.

Rakuten Trade's dedication to uplifting retail investors extends beyond lower fees, by providing services ranging from educational resources and licensed analysts' trading calls from their equity sales team and research team to daily reports for market opportunities and webinars for exclusive insights into local companies.



## Rubber prices tipped to stage mild rebound

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Malaysian rubber market is expected to rebound slightly this week supported by a positive outlook amid potential Chinese stimulus measures, the Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (Magma) said.

The Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries projected this positive outlook, estimating that natural rubber (NR) consumption will rise by 1.5% in 2025 to about 15.6 million tonnes.

"Continued limited NR supply in major rubber-producing countries will also have an

effective impact on prices," a Magma spokesperson told Bernama.

However, she noted that nothing has materialised from the United States-China trade talks and this will continue to weigh on the market and the global economy.

"Prices will continue to track the performance of regional rubber futures markets, as well as the ringgit's strength against the US dollar and benchmark crude oil prices," she added.

Meanwhile, industry expert Denis Low said the Trump administration has brought about

many uncertainties and volatility in the rubber market.

"We are entering an increasingly dynamic and extremely complex global economic environment. It is pertinent for businesses across the world to continue adapting as best they can to manage the continuous challenges posed by (US President Donald) Trump's policies," he added.

On a week-to-week basis, the Malaysian Rubber Board's reference price for SMR 20 fell 14.5 sen to 738 sen per kg while latex in bulk fell 16.5 sen to 609 sen per kg.

## Sunway REIT proposes to dispose of university campus for RM613m

**PETALING JAYA:** Sunway REIT Management Sdn Bhd, the manager of Sunway Real Estate Investment Trust (Sunway REIT), announced that RHB Trustees Bhd, the trustee of Sunway REIT, has entered into a conditional sale and purchase agreement with Sunway College (KL) Sdn Bhd, to dispose of the Sunway University and College campus for a consideration of RM613 million.

Acquired by Sunway REIT on April 15, 2019 for RM556 million, the REIT has spent additional capital expenditure of RM8 million over the years to refurbish and enhance the asset.

Accordingly, the campus has since appreciated in value with the latest valuation of the property as of December 2024 being RM586 million, translating to fair value gains of RM20 million for Sunway REIT over the years. The disposal price of RM613 million represents a premium of 4.6% over its latest valuation and Sunway REIT will record additional gains on disposal of RM21 million (including estimated incidental costs on disposal) in its current financial year upon the completion of the transaction, which is expected to be in the second half of 2025.

The proposed disposal forms part of Sunway REIT's strategic asset recycling initiative aimed at optimising portfolio yield and unlocking capital for future growth. This move is expected to be positive for unitholders by enhancing financial flexibility and enabling Sunway REIT to explore new investment opportunities with higher yields. Additionally, it will help ease Sunway REIT's gearing position to about 37.8%, allowing Sunway REIT to explore further portfolio acquisitions.

Sunway REIT Management Sdn Bhd CEO Clement Chen said, "The proposed disposal aligns with our proactive portfolio management strategy to unlock the underlying value of our assets and recycle capital into investments with higher yield or growth potential. Coupled with the current uncertainties in the global economy, we believe the proposed disposal is a timely and prudent step to firstly, strengthen our balance sheet and secondly, to give Sunway REIT substantial financial flexibility in pursuing acquisition opportunities should they arise in such volatile times."

Proceeds from the disposal have been earmarked for potential acquisitions, asset enhancements, and debt repayment, reinforcing Sunway REIT's commitment to maintaining a resilient and diversified portfolio.

## HSI-CWEP top traded as Hong Kong market gains for third week

### WARRANTS WATCH

**TURNOVER** in the local warrants market last week came in at RM389.2 million, a 31% week-on-week (w-o-w) decline, in view of the shortened trading period in conjunction with the Labour Day Holiday on May 1.

Further, turnover in trading over Hang Seng Index (HSI) warrants fell w-o-w, coming in more than 33% lower at RM303.7 million. Nonetheless, HSI warrants trading comprised 78% of the week's turnover.

Global markets continued their relief rally last week with indices notching gains.

The HSI gained 2.4%, up for a third consecutive week, while HSI May

futures advanced by 0.8%. The majority of the gains came on Friday, amid investor optimism surrounding potential trade talks between China and the US, as well as an overnight rally on Wall Street fuelled by strong earnings reports from some tech giants. The HSI managed to close above the 22,500 level on Friday, just 1.5% shy of the level it was at before April 7, the day the index plunged more than 13% and recorded its biggest single day loss since 1997.

With the gain in the previous week, investors were seen actively trading HSI warrants, namely HSI-CWEP, which clocked in the highest value traded for the week at RM53 million, while HSI-PWFM recorded the biggest value traded among HSI puts,

### Top stock warrants by value traded:

Warrant name	Value (RM' mil)	Issuer	Exercise level	Expiry date
HSI-CWEP	53.0	Macquarie	27,000	30 Jun 2025
HSI-CWC4	44.7	Kenanga	25,000	29 May 2025
HSI-CWEI	37.9	Kenanga	27,000	30 Jun 2025
HSI-PWFM	36.6	Macquarie	19,000	30 Jun 2025
HSI-PWFQ	21.3	Macquarie	18,000	30 Jun 2025

at RM36.6 million. Other HSI warrants which saw active trading throughout the week include HSI-CWC4, HSI-CWEI, and HSI-PWFQ.

Wall Street also notched a gain for the week, with the S&P 500 Index (SP500) and Nasdaq-100 Index (NDX) increasing 3% each on the back of strong earnings releases from major

tech names, coupled with a jobs report released on Friday which came in better than expected, soothing investors' fears of a potential recession.

As for Malaysia stock warrants, investors actively traded issues over Gamuda Bhd, MY EG Services B (MyEG), and Inari Amertron Bhd. For

the week, Gamuda shares surged 10%, MyEG was unchanged and Inari gained 3%. However, turnover for Malaysian stock warrants came in 18% lower w-o-w, at RM66 million.

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

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

The warrants will not be offered to any US persons.



## Samsung fights US\$520m India tax demand

**NEW DELHI:** Samsung has asked an Indian tribunal to quash a US\$520 million (RM2.2 billion) tax demand for allegedly misclassifying imports of networking gear, arguing officials were aware of the practice as India's Reliance imported the same component in a similar manner for years, documents show.

Samsung becomes the second major foreign company in recent months to challenge an Indian tax demand.

Volkswagen has sued Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in court for a record demand of US\$1.4 billion for misclassifying its component imports.

In the Samsung case, tax authorities in January asked Samsung to pay US\$520 million for evading the 10-20% tariffs by misclassifying imports of a key mobile tower equipment, which it then sold to billionaire Mukesh Ambani's telecom giant, Reliance Jio, from 2018 to 2021.

In its 281-page challenge at the Customs Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal in Mumbai, Samsung criticises Indian authorities for being "fully aware" of the business model as Reliance had a "long-established practice" of importing the same equipment without any tariff payments for three years until 2017.

Samsung's India unit says it discovered during an Indian tax investigation that Reliance had been warned about the practice way back in 2017, but Reliance did not inform the South Korean company about it and tax officials never questioned Samsung.

"The classification adopted by the appellant (Samsung) was known to the authorities, however the same was never questioned... Department was fully aware," Samsung says in its April 17 filing, which is not public but was seen by Reuters.

"Reliance Jio officials did not inform" Samsung about the tax warning of 2017, it adds.

Further details of Reliance's 2017 warning from tax authorities are not public and were not disclosed in the Samsung filing.

Other than US\$520 million demand Samsung faces, Indian authorities have also imposed an US\$81 million fine on seven of its employees, taking the total tax demand to US\$601 million.

The tax demand represents a substantial chunk of last year's net profit of US\$955 million for Samsung in India. – Reuters

## HK authority intervenes in market to check local currency's rise

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong's de-facto central bank said it sold HK\$46.54 billion (RM25.5 billion) into the market on Saturday to prevent the local currency from strengthening beyond its official peg to the US dollar, the first such intervention in more than four years.

The Hong Kong dollar is pegged to a tight band between 7.75 and 7.85 per US dollar.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority intervened as the Hong Kong dollar touched the strong side of that currency convertibility range. The last time it sold Hong Kong dollars to defend the peg was in October 2020.

"Seeing the HKD getting stronger means capital inflows, which is not problematic for Hong Kong," said Gary Ng, senior economist at Natixis.

The aggregate balance, the key gauge of cash in the banking system, will increase to HK\$91.31 billion on May 7, a Hong Kong Monetary Authority spokesman said. – Reuters

# Inflation curtails Japanese 'Golden Week' travels

## ► Inflow of foreign tourists sends hotel prices soaring

**TOKYO:** Japan's annual "Golden Week" holiday period gets into full swing on Saturday, but inflation and hotel prices sent soaring by record inbound tourism have left domestic travellers less eager to pack their bags.

Traditionally, Golden Week – which includes three consecutive public holidays – gives Japanese workers one of their longest breaks in the year, with many taking the opportunity to see other parts of Japan or to travel abroad.

But this year consumers in the world's fourth-largest economy are feeling the pain of rising prices for everything from cabbage and rice to electricity bills.

The Japanese yen has lost around a third of its value since 2022, one factor behind the record number of foreign tourists also lured by the country's numerous attractions from Mount Fuji's majestic slopes to shrines and sushi bars.

The inflow of tourists has sent demand for hotel bookings spiralling upward, with the room rate in Japan's five major cities around 16% more

expensive at the onset of this year's Golden Week than last year, according to a survey from the business daily *Nikkei*.

All this has translated into a tepid desire among Japanese residents to travel for this year's Golden Week, surveys have shown.

The latter part of the holiday period began Saturday and lasts until tomorrow.

"The biggest reason seems to be the inflation that has curtailed their willingness to spend lavishly," Atsushi Tanaka, a tourism studies professor at Yamanashi University, told AFP.

"Because the inbound tourism is booming so much, hotel operators don't need to lower their accommodation prices, which is making it harder for Japanese people to travel," Tanaka added.

A poll by major travel agency JTB showed last month that 20.9% of its respondents will or "probably" will go on a trip during Golden Week, down 5.6% from last year.

Another survey by marketing research firm Intage similarly found last month that the percentage of those planning to travel domestically during the holiday period dipped by two percent from a year earlier to 13.6%.

While factors like a desire to avoid crowds are also at play, "the tendency to refrain from

going out due to financial burdens" seems to be growing, Intage said.

When it comes to travelling abroad, that is verging on being an "unattainable luxury," it said.

The same study, however, showed the average budget for Golden Week outings this year has edged up to US\$201 from US\$192, underscoring holidaymakers' acceptance of the status quo.

"It shows they are resigned to the fact that it just costs them more this year to do anything," Intage's Motohiro Shimogawara told AFP.

Japan logged more than 36.8 million tourist arrivals in 2024, topping 2019's record of nearly 32 million.

The government has set an ambitious target of almost doubling tourist numbers to 60 million annually by 2030.

But as in other global tourist magnets like Venice in Italy, there has been growing pushback from residents against overtourism.

Residents and authorities in Japanese tourist hotspots, from tradition-steeped Kyoto to towns near the majestic Mount Fuji, are increasingly voicing frustration about overcrowding, traffic violations and bad behaviour by some visitors. – AFP



People walking on a field of nemophila flowers at Hitachi Seaside Park during the 'Golden Week' holiday. – AFP/IC

## US lawmakers urge SEC to delist China companies: FT

**WASHINGTON:** Two Republican lawmakers have urged the US Securities and Exchange Commission to delist Chinese companies, including Alibaba Group, that they say have military links that put American national security at risk, the *Financial Times* reported last week.

The chairman of the House China committee, John Moolenaar, and the chairman of the Senate committee on ageing, Rick Scott, wrote to SEC chairman Paul Atkins to take action against 25 Chinese groups, listed on US exchanges, FT said.

"These entities benefit from American investor capital while advancing the strategic

objectives of the Chinese Communist party... supporting military modernisation and gross human rights violations," they said in the letter, according to FT.

"They also pose an unacceptable risk to American investors."

The companies also include search engine Baidu, online retail platform JD.com and the popular social media platform Weibo.

The lawmakers said the Chinese companies were "ultimately harnessed for nefarious state purposes," no matter how commercial they appeared on the surface, according to FT.

They said that the SEC had the tools and authority under the Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act to suspend trading and compel delisting.

The SEC, Alibaba, JD.com and Baidu did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.

The Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party and the US Senate committee also did not respond to requests for comment.

More than 100 Chinese companies are listed on US exchanges and have a collective market cap of around US\$1 trillion. – Reuters

# Buffett to step down as Berkshire CEO

► 'Oracle of Omaha' passes baton to vice-chairman after 60 years at helm

**OMAHA:** Warren Buffett is ending his career as perhaps the world's most famous and revered investor, saying he will step down as chief executive of Berkshire Hathaway at the end of 2025, and hand over the reins to vice-chairman Greg Abel.

The move caps an era for Berkshire after Buffett's extraordinary 60 years at the helm, which made him a household name, a multi-billionaire and an American success story.

"I think the time has arrived where Greg should become the chief executive officer of the company at year end," Buffett, 94, said on Saturday as he wrapped up Berkshire's annual meeting in Omaha, adding he would still "hang around and conceivably be useful in a few cases" but that the "final word" would be Abel's.

The announcement prompted an outpouring of praise for Buffett from CEOs and investors.

"Warren Buffett represents everything that is good about American capitalism and America itself - investing in the growth of our nation and its businesses with integrity, optimism, and common sense," said Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Tim Cook, chief executive of Apple, in a post on X said: "There's never been someone like Warren, and countless people, myself included, have been inspired by his wisdom."

"It's been one of the great privileges of my life to know him."

Buffett's move will propel Abel into the spotlight at Berkshire.

Abel, who has long been identified by Berkshire to be Buffett's successor, may not have the star power of Buffett although he is expected to preserve the culture of the conglomerate.

Buffett said Abel and most of Berkshire's board of directors had not been aware of his plans prior to the announcement, though the "Oracle of Omaha" had told his two children who are directors.

Berkshire's board of directors will meet later to discuss the transition, he said.

Abel, 62, has been a Berkshire Hathaway



Shareholders attending the Berkshire Hathaway annual shareholders' meeting in Omaha. - REUTERS/PIC

vice-chairman since 2018, and was named Buffett's expected successor as chief executive in 2021.

"I couldn't be more humbled and honored to be part of Berkshire as we go forth," Abel told shareholders.

Buffett also said he had "zero" intention of selling any of his Berkshire stock, nearly all of which will be donated after his death.

"The decision to keep every share is an economic decision because I think the prospects of Berkshire will be better under Greg's management than mine."

The decision to step down caps a

remarkable 60-year run where Buffett transformed Berkshire from a failing textile company into a US\$1.16 trillion (RM4.9 trillion) conglomerate with businesses across the US economy.

Buffett's own fortune totals US\$168.2 billion according to *Forbes* magazine, nearly all of which is in Berkshire stock.

Cole Smead, chief executive of Smead Capital Management, said after Buffett's announcement he turned to his father Bill Smead, who founded the firm, and said: "Well, it's the end of an era. It's sad, but it's life."

Berkshire's stock price has risen 19% this year, compared with a 3% drop in the Standard & Poor's 500.

Many investors have viewed the conglomerate and Buffett's stewardship as a safe haven from uncertainty about the economy and US President Donald Trump's tariff policies.

"The question going forward is: will Berkshire still have a Buffett premium when Buffett is not there?" said Cathy Seifert, an analyst at CFRA Research.

"You're buying a stock and you're also getting the investing prowess of a legend. With that legend gone, what is the value?" - Reuters

## US Fed expected to pause cuts again

**WASHINGTON:** The US Federal Reserve is widely expected to extend a recent pause in rate cuts this week as it waits to see how President Donald Trump's stop-start tariff rollout affects the health of the world's largest economy.

Trump has imposed steep levies on China, and lower "baseline" levies of 10% on goods from most other countries, along with 25% duties on specific items like steel, automobiles and aluminium.

The president has also paused higher duties on dozens of other trading partners until July to give them time to renegotiate existing arrangements with the United States.

Most economists expect the tariffs introduced since January to push up prices and cool economic growth - at least in the short run - potentially keeping the Fed on hold for longer.

"The Fed has to be very focused on maintaining inflation so that it doesn't start moving back up in a more persistent way," said Loretta Mester, who recently stepped down after a decade as president of the Cleveland Fed.

"That would undermine all the work that was done over the last three years of getting inflation down," she told AFP.

The Fed has held its key interest rate at

between 4.25% and 4.5% since December, as it continues its plan to bring inflation to the bank's long-term target of 2%, with another eye firmly fixed on keeping unemployment under control.

Recent data points to inflation hitting that target ahead of the introduction of Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs, while unemployment has remained relatively stable, hugging close to historic lows.

At the same time, various "softer" data points such as consumer confidence surveys have pointed to a sharp decline in optimism about the health of the US economy - and growing concerns about inflation.

"Whether the economy enters a recession or not, it's hard to say at this point," said Mester, now an adjunct professor of finance at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

"I think the committee remains in good condition here, and most likely they'll remain on hold at this meeting," said Jim Bullard, the long-serving former president of the St. Louis Fed.

"I think it's a good place for them to be while there's a lot of turbulence in the trade war," added Bullard, now dean of the Daniels School of Business at Purdue University.

Financial markets overwhelmingly expect the Fed to announce another rate cut pause on Wednesday, according to data from CME Group.

US hiring data for April published last week came in better than expected, lowering anxiety about the health of the labour market - and reducing pressure on the Fed's rate-setting committee to reach for rate cuts.

Economists at several large banks, including Goldman Sachs and Barclays, subsequently delayed their expectations for rate cuts from June to July.

"Cutting in late July allows the committee to see more data on the evolution of the labor market, and should benefit from resolving uncertainty about tariffs and fiscal policy," economists at Barclays wrote in a note to clients published Friday.

Other analysts see rate cuts happening even later, depending on the effects of the tariffs.

The rise in longer-run inflation expectations in the survey data points to growing concerns that tariff-related price pressures could become embedded in the US economy, even as the market-based measures have remained close to the 2% target. - AFP

## Japan envoy says Tokyo insists on US tariff rethink

**TOKYO:** Tokyo's envoy for US tariff talks said on Saturday after a second round of negotiations that Japan was insisting Washington review all the levies as a precondition to a trade deal.

Japan, a key US ally and its biggest investor, is subject to the same 10% baseline tariffs imposed on most nations plus steeper levies on cars, steel and aluminium.

President Donald Trump also in early April announced "reciprocal" tariffs on Japan of 24%, but later put them on pause for 90 days along with those on other countries except China.

After arriving back in Japan, Ryosei Akazawa told reporters that the two sides "made progress" towards an agreement, but stressed Tokyo was insisting that all tariffs be reviewed.

"We have been telling them that the entire series of tariffs" -

including on cars, auto parts, steel and aluminium, as well as reciprocal levies - "are regrettable and have strongly insisted they be revised", Akazawa said.

"Unless this demand is acknowledged in an ultimate package, there is no way we can agree to a deal," he said.

Automobiles accounted for around 28% of Japanese exports to the United States last year.

Earlier on Saturday, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba also reiterated to reporters that "Japan and the United States remain far apart, and unable to find common ground yet".

On Saturday, the Trump administration slapped a new 25% import tax on auto parts including engines and transmissions.

The move was "regrettable", Ishiba said, adding Japan would continue to call for its rethink as well. - AFP

# Carney vows to transform Canada

► Premier seeks to create new economy to enable country to withstand Trump

**OTTAWA:** Prime Minister Mark Carney promised last week to oversee the biggest transformation of Canada's economy since the end of World War II to enable it to "stand up" to Donald Trump.

Carney led the Liberal Party to a dramatic fourth mandate in elections last Monday after a campaign focused on the US president's threats to Canada's economy and sovereignty.

Liberals fell just short of the 172 seats needed for majority control of Parliament, but with 169 confirmed wins they will be in a strong position to pass legislation.

Recounts in two closely contested electoral districts saw the party lose a seat in Quebec province but gain another in Ontario.

At his first press conference since his victory, Carney struck a determined note.

Known for weighing his words carefully, he said that he was "in politics to do great things, not to be something".

"And now that Canadians have honoured me with a mandate to bring about big changes quickly, I will work relentlessly to fulfill that trust," he said.

Canada's strained relations with the United States – historically, its close ally and biggest trading partner – was among "immediate priorities", he said, announcing a trip to Washington tomorrow to meet with Trump on trade and security issues.

Canadians elected him "to stand up to President Trump", Carney said, adding that he will act "with focus and determination".

"Our focus will be on both immediate trade pressures and the broader future economic and security relationship between our two sovereign nations."

But he warned also not to expect any "white smoke" from their first meeting signaling a sudden breakthrough.

Carney reiterated his message from the campaign that he believes the old relationship between the two North American neighbours "based on steadily increasing integration is over".

"The questions now are how our nations will cooperate in the future," he said.



Carney speaking at a press conference in Ottawa. – AFP/PPIC

Trump "respects strength", he added, explaining that this was why he was preparing the country for major changes including a massive build-up of infrastructure and new housing.

The Conservatives, the main opposition party, as well as the Bloc Québécois, the third-largest party in Parliament, both called for unity after the elections to fight US levies including on the automotive and steel sectors.

Carney, who previously headed the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, promised to maintain counter-tariffs on American products as long as Washington's measures were in place.

"This will be an incredibly exciting time as we take control of our economic destiny to create a new Canadian economy."

To this end, he promised to abolish existing trade barriers between Canadian provinces by July 1 to expand the economy, and to strengthen trade with "reliable allies".

"Canada has what the world needs, and we uphold the values the world respects."

Carney announced also that he would unveil his new Liberal government in the week of May 12 and that Parliament would return on May 26.

King Charles III – Canada's head of state, as it is a British Commonwealth country – will deliver the opening speech, Carney said.

"This is a historic honour which matches the weight of our times."

"It clearly demonstrates the sovereignty of our country," Carney said in a pointed reference to Trump's ambitions to make Canada the 51st American state.

The ceremonial speech, which marks the opening of a new session of the Canadian Parliament and outlines the government's goals, is usually delivered by the governor general, who is the King's representative in the country. – AFP

## Opec+ countries to increase oil output next month

**VIENNA:** Eight Opec+ member countries on Saturday announced a sharp increase in oil production for the month of June at the risk of driving down already very low prices.

Saudi Arabia, along with Russia and six other members of the oil cartel, will implement a production adjustment of 411,000 barrels a day out of the ground, as in May, according to a Opec+ statement, whereas the initial plan called for an increase of just 137,000 barrels.

Numbering a total of 22 countries, most of which are highly dependent on oil, the group had until recently been exploiting supply scarcity to boost prices, holding millions of barrels in reserve.

"OPEC+ has just thrown a bombshell to the oil market," Jorge Leon, analyst with Rystad Energy, told AFP.

"Last month's decision was a wake up call."

"Today's decision is a definitive message that the Saudi led group is changing strategy and pursuing market share after years of cutting production," he added.

That about-face will also provide an opportunity to build good relations with Donald Trump's United States, he said.

Shortly after taking office in January Trump called on Saudi Arabia, which heads the cartel, to up production in order to bring prices down.

Last month the group slightly lowered its forecast for oil demand growth, citing the impact of US tariffs on the world economy.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries in 2016 came up with Opec+ to strengthen their weight on the global market.

The eight countries that have agreed additional increases are Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman. – AFP

## Shell studying merits of buying BP: Bloomberg

**LONDON:** Shell Plc is working with advisers to evaluate a potential acquisition of rival BP Plc, though it is waiting for further stock and oil price declines before deciding whether to pursue a bid, Bloomberg News reported on Saturday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The oil major has been more seriously discussing the feasibility and merits of a takeover with its advisers in recent weeks, the report said, adding that any final decision will likely depend on whether the rival's stock continues to slide.

For several years, BP and Shell were almost equal in size, but over the past few years Shell has grown to almost twice the size of BP, with a market value of about £149 billion (RM842 billion).

On Friday, when asked about a possible takeover bid for BP, Shell CEO Wael Sawan told the *Financial Times* he would rather buy back more Shell stock.

A Shell spokesperson confirmed the comments.

When asked on an earnings call about Shell's capacity to launch sizable acquisitions, he said "we have to have our own house in order" and have "more work to do" despite progress over the last couple of years.



A Shell petrol station in London. – REUTERS/PPIC

A takeover of its cross-town London rival would make Shell an even bigger force in the global energy industry, giving it scale to rival the likes of Exxon and Chevron.

A merger would also likely certainly invite regulatory scrutiny, considering the size of the deal.

Shell this week reported strong first-quarter results surpassing profit expectations and launched a US\$3.5 billion (RM14.9 billion) share buyback.

Shell may also wait for BP to reach out or for

another suitor to make a first move, and its current work could help it get prepared for such a scenario, some of the people told Bloomberg News.

Deliberations are in the early stages and Shell may opt to focus on share buybacks and bolt-on acquisitions rather than a megamerger, the report added.

"As we have said many times before we are sharply focused on capturing the value in Shell through continuing to focus on performance, discipline and simplification," a Shell spokesperson said when asked about the report.

Under pressure to improve profitability and cut costs, BP chief Murray Auchincloss has announced plans to sell US\$20 billion of assets through to 2027, reduced spending and share buybacks.

It also announced the departure of its strategy chief as it tries to shore up investor confidence.

Activist investor Elliott Investment Management had wanted a change of strategy chief as it seeks higher free cash flow through deeper cuts to spending and costs, sources familiar with the matter told Reuters.

It has increased its stake in BP to just over 5%, placing it between top shareholders BlackRock and Vanguard, according to a regulatory filing. – Reuters

# MARKET ROUND-UP: MAY 2

## Bursa Trade Statistic

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

2 MAY 2025

Participation		Institution (40.26%)		Foreign (40.17%)	
Retail (19.57%)		Net (in RM mil.)		Net (in RM mil.)	
-100.28		-240.47		+340.75	
Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)
431.49	531.77	870.50	1110.97	1158.85	818.11

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

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

iPacOnline @ipaconline1972 Inter-Pacific Securities iPac\_TV

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

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

**DISCLAIMER:** The data and reports are provided as a service to investors. Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

## Bursa Indices

INDEX	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	11,489.30 +81.60
FBMKLCI	1,542.49 +2.27
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	507.74 +1.27
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	152.29 +0.81
CONSTRUCTION	275.28 +7.87
FINANCIAL SERVICES	18,240.90 +6.34
ENERGY	694.97 +6.83
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	508.31 +7.29
HEALTH CARE	1,942.42 +26.29
TRANSPORTATION	984.86 +6.88
PROPERTY	994.90 +21.36
PLANTATION	7,283.77 +26.35
FBMSHA	11,390.30 +116.06
FBMACE	4,649.20 +20.54
TECHNOLOGY	49.60 +1.71
<b>TURNOVER: 2.736bil</b>	<b>VALUE: RM2.460 bil</b>

## Bursa likely to trend higher with return of foreign buying

BURSA Malaysia is expected to trend higher this week, supported by continued improvements in the global economic landscape and the return of foreign buying to the local bourse.

Rakuten Trade Sdn Bhd equity research vice-president Thong Pak Leng said the renewed foreign interest, with overseas investors turning net buyers on Bursa Malaysia, points to the likelihood of further inflows.

"Malaysian equities continue to stand out on valuation grounds, which could increasingly capture the attention of global investors," he told Bernama.

According to reports, China on Friday signalled its willingness to re-engage in trade discussions with the US.

Meanwhile, UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors Sdn Bhd head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan said the overall performance of the FBM KLCI last week exceeded earlier expectations with the index extending its rally to close at 1,542.49 on Friday.

"This stronger-than-expected performance suggests sustained investor confidence and underlying market resilience even amid global uncertainties," he told Bernama.

Non-farm payrolls (NFP) data for April would be pivotal in determining whether the US economy was facing a short-term, tariff-induced slowdown or entering a more prolonged downturn, he said prior to the data's release.

According to NFP data, the number of jobs rose by 177,000 – more than the 138,000 expected by economists – showing that the US labour market remained resilient.

Last week, on a Friday-to-Friday basis, the key index gained 33.29 points to 1,542.49 from 1,509.20 a week earlier.

Turnover shrank to 10.96 billion units valued at RM8.26 billion from 14.14 billion units worth RM9.03 billion in the preceding week.

## Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
REACHTEN	0.540	+0.020	+3.85	1,338,952
HSI-CWEI	0.150	+0.015	+11.1	936,685
NATGATE	1.520	+0.160	+11.77	595,352
HSI-PWFM	0.115	-0.030	-20.69	549,093
JAKS	0.120	+0.025	+26.32	502,680
HSI-CWC4	0.070	-0.005	-6.67	429,055
GAMUDA	4.400	+0.160	+3.77	362,675
TANCO	0.880	+0.020	+2.33	323,755
MYEG	0.905	+0.010	+1.12	316,820
HSI-CWEP	0.115	+0.015	+15.00	306,804
HSI-PWFK	0.065	-0.020	-23.53	305,332
HSI-CWC6	0.255	+0.035	+15.91	264,541
SFPTECH	0.220	+0.010	+4.76	244,254
CIMB	7.150	+0.030	+0.42	238,477
YTL	1.930	+0.010	+0.52	224,137
HSI-CWCT	0.075	+0.010	+15.39	223,420
RTECH	0.320	+0.010	+3.23	223,406
AVANGAD	0.275	-	-	222,314
EWINT	0.265	+0.050	+23.26	220,833
HSI-PWD5	0.125	-0.040	-24.24	210,371



## Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
MPI	19.500	+0.760	5,269
PIE	4.550	+0.440	6,932
ALLIANZ-PA	19.280	+0.420	31
XIAOMI-C33	1.100	+0.300	50
SAM	3.610	+0.290	13,322
SUNCON	4.710	+0.260	74,714
FRONTKN	3.750	+0.250	52,796
SUNWAY-PA	4.650	+0.250	3,511
KLK	19.860	+0.240	2,881
PANAMY	13.740	+0.240	101
SUNWAY	4.790	+0.240	85,100
APM	3.580	+0.200	1,040
TIMECOM	5.350	+0.200	25,343
PENTA	2.720	+0.190	52,783
BAT	6.630	+0.180	2,878
ALLIANZ	18.560	+0.160	315
GAMUDA	4.400	+0.160	362,675
NATGATE	1.520	+0.160	595,352
VITROX	3.290	+0.160	34,612
GCB	3.520	+0.140	10,423

## Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
DUFU-CX	0.020	+300.00	5,000
GAMUDA-C2X	0.030	+200.00	62,465
ECOWLD-C35	0.025	+150.00	6,080
NIKKEI-CM	0.025	+150.00	100
99SMART-CT	0.020	+100.00	8,520
BCMALL	0.010	+100.00	5,106
DGO-C14	0.010	+100.00	500
DUFU-CZ	0.020	+100.00	100
FBMKLCI-CQV	0.010	+100.00	4,960
FRONTKN-C40	0.070	+100.00	500
KGB-CJ	0.030	+100.00	105
MI-C25	0.010	+100.00	639
NATGATE-CG	0.010	+100.00	19,332
NEXGRAM-WD	0.010	+100.00	240
SUNCON-C27	0.050	+100.00	15,986
SUNWAY-C34	0.050	+100.00	24,718
TENAGA-C25	0.010	+100.00	20,760
MRDIY-C37	0.025	+66.67	300
NATGATE-CL	0.025	+66.67	28,493
PENTA-C49	0.025	+66.67	94

## World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA (US)	41,317.43	564.47	1.39
S&P 500 (US)	5,686.67	82.53	1.47
NASDAQ (US)	17,977.73	266.99	1.51
NYSE (US)	19,386.68	336.84	1.77
EURO STOXX 50 (EUR)	5,285.19	124.97	2.42
FTSE 100 (UK)	8,596.35	99.55	1.17
DAX (GER)	23,086.65	589.67	2.62
NIKKEI 225 (JPN)	36,830.69	378.39	1.04
TOPIX (JPN)	2,687.78	8.34	0.31
HANG SENG INDEX (HK)	22,504.68	385.27	1.74
CSI 300 (CHN)	3,770.57	-4.51	-0.12
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	189.68	3.64	1.96
SH SE COM (CHN)	3,279.03	-7.62	-0.23
KOSPI INDEX (SK)	2,559.79	3.18	0.12
SENSEX INDEX (IND)	80,501.99	259.75	0.32
ASX 200 (AUS)	8,238.05	92.45	1.13
ALL ORDINARIES INDX (AUS)	8,456.21	90.48	1.08
FBM KLCI	1,542.49	2.27	0.15
STRAITS TIMES INDEX (S'PORE)	3,845.14	12.63	0.33
WTI (US\$/BBL.)	58.29	-0.95	-1.6
BRENT (US\$/BBL.)	61.29	-0.84	-1.35
GOLD (COMEX) (US\$/T OZ)	3,243.30	21.1	0.65
SILVER (COMEX) (US\$/T OZ)	32.26	-0.21	-0.65
PLATINUM (US\$/T OZ)	965.42	-3.16	-0.33
COPPER (COMEX) (US CENTS/LB.)	467.3	4.5	0.97
COPPER 3MO (LME) (US\$/MT)	9,365.50	159.5	1.73
CORN (US CENTS/BU.)	469	-3.25	-0.69
WHEAT (US CENTS/BU.)	543	12	2.26
SOYBEAN OIL (CBOT) (US CENTS/LB.)	49.43	-0.27	-0.54
COCOA (ICE) (US\$/MT)	8,877.00	134	1.53
RUBBER (S'PORE) (US CENTS/KG)	166.5	1.7	1.03

As at 5pm, May 2

## Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
NESTLE	86.240	-0.760	2,073
HSI-PWFA	0.710	-0.730	20
CETECH	0.750	-0.400	1,000
PICHEM	3.420	-0.250	83,772
PETDAG	19.500	-0.240	1,913
PPB	12.200	-0.240	3,696
NIKKEI-HM	1.610	-0.230	50
DLADY	27.800	-0.200	340
PGF	1.760	-0.190	40
HSI-PWFF	0.885	-0.175	20
HSI-PWCH	0.465	-0.175	30
NIKKEI-HL	0.820	-0.165	30
HSI-PWFN	0.275	-0.145	2,000
SP500-H53	0.950	-0.130	1,159
GOLDET	4.370	-0.130	1,059
HSI-PWFE	0.615	-0.120	105
HSI-PWFB	0.480	-0.115	4,666
F&N	26.900	-0.100	422
KOTRA	4.150	-0.100	20
SDG	4.650	-0.100	47,153

## Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
A50CHIN-H95	0.030	-60.00	200
HSI-PWFA	0.710	-50.69	20
DUFU-CW	0.005	-50.00	560
EAH	0.005	-50.00	10,350
HENGYUANC60	0.010	-50.00	500
MAHSING-C74	0.005	-50.00	32,572
MYEG-C8T	0.075	-50.00	40,000
PICHEM-C10	0.005	-50.00	16,932
PICHEM-C1E	0.005	-50.00	2,439
PICHEM-C1F	0.005	-50.00	11,228
SNTORIA	0.005	-50.00	4,217
ECOWLD-C36	0.020	-42.86	2,511
KERJAYA-C2	0.040	-42.86	1,000
HSI-PWDV	0.035	-41.67	250
HSI-PWDW	0.060	-40.00	10,686
IHH-C52	0.090	-40.00	500
MPSOL	0.030	-40.00	5,000
SUPERMX-C4M	0.030	-40.00	200
CETECH	0.750	-34.78	1,000
HSI-PWFN	0.275	-34.52	2,000

# MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by SunBiz Team

**DISCLAIMER:** The information is extracted from stockbrokers' commentaries and research reports and do not represent the views or opinions of Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd. It is not a solicitation, recommendation or an offer to buy or sell the equities featured. Sun Media Corporation shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

## CPO futures likely to retain downward bias this week

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The crude palm oil (CPO) futures market is expected to remain under pressure this week, largely due to ongoing concerns over rising domestic stock levels amid tepid demand and improving production.

Palm oil trader David Ng said local CPO inventories are likely to increase as the country enters the peak harvesting season, which typically brings a seasonal uptrend in output.

"At the same time, export demand has shown little sign of picking up meaningfully, especially from key buyers such as India and China, as they are reportedly taking a cautious approach due to high global vegetable oil supplies and price competition from other oils such as soybean and sunflower.

"This combination of factors is likely to put further pressure on prices," he said.

He added that traders are adopting a wait-and-see approach ahead of upcoming export and production data.

"Unless there is a significant shift in demand or a surprise policy move from major importing countries, sentiment is expected to remain bearish in the near term.

"I project CPO prices to trade within a softer range of RM3,750-RM3,900 per tonne next (this) week," he added.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the spot month May 2025 slid by RM219 to RM3,920 per tonne, June 2025 fell RM150 to RM3,907, and July 2025 slipped by RM176 to RM3,881.

August 2025 declined RM164 to RM3,883 per tonne, September 2025 contracted by RM151 to RM3,888, and October 2025 was RM138 lower at RM3,891.

Weekly trading volume shrank to 240,534 lots from 410,686 the previous week. - Bernama

## Ringgit to trade in cautious mode ahead of policy moves

**THE** ringgit is likely to trade in a cautious mode this week as investors will focus on the monetary policy decisions domestically and from the United States, said an economist.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said all eyes will be on the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) and the Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meetings, both scheduled for this week, to assess the market sentiment amid ongoing uncertainties.

"We sense that the US Federal Reserve might incline to ease its policy rate as the uncertainties over tariff shocks have weighed heavily on business and consumer sentiments. On that note, the ringgit would stay cautious as traders and investors will assess the possible policy response from the monetary authorities next week."

Meanwhile, Kenanga Investment Bank Bhd expects the ringgit to trade within the 4.30-4.35 range against the US dollar this week, with markets remaining cautious amid ongoing global economic uncertainty and evolving tariff dynamics.

"Trade negotiations, particularly between the US and China, will remain a critical swing factor for the US dollar. Domestically, BNM is expected to hold its ground, but any downward revision to Malaysia's growth outlook may attract attention," it said.

The investment bank also noted that positive outcomes from the special parliamentary sitting on May 5 could also lend additional support to the local currency.

The ringgit ended the week stronger against the US dollar, closing at 4.2560/2600, from 4.3705/3770 in the preceding week.

The ringgit improved against the euro to 4.8297/8342 from 4.9596/9670 last week and strengthened vis-a-vis the Japanese yen to 2.9437/9467 from 3.0431/0481. - Bernama

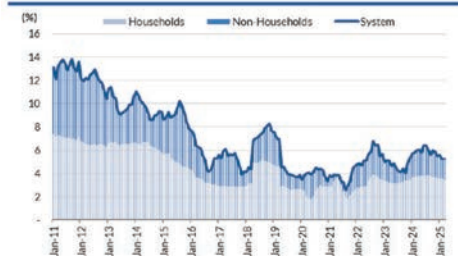
## Exchange Rates

FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.3900	4.2560	4.2460
1 Australian Dollar	2.8260	2.7110	2.6950
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3440	3.2460	3.2380
1 Canadian Dollar	3.1660	3.0810	3.0690
1 Euro	4.9560	4.7960	4.7760
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.6090	2.5120	2.4960
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3440	3.2460	3.2380
1 Sterling Pound	5.8340	5.6490	5.6290
1 Swiss Franc	5.3130	5.0870	5.0720
100 UAE Dirham	120.8700	114.6200	114.4200
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.6870	3.4330	3.2330
100 Chinese Renminbi	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 Danish Krone	68.0700	62.6400	62.4400
100 Hongkong Dollar	57.1800	54.3300	54.1300
100 Indian Rupee	5.2700	4.9500	4.7500
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0274	0.0248	0.0198
100 Japanese Yen	3.0120	2.9160	2.9060
100 New Taiwan Dollar	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	43.2500	39.6200	39.4200
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.5900	1.4900	1.2900
100 Philippine Peso	7.9700	7.5100	7.3100
100 Qatar Riyal	121.7300	115.5600	115.3600
100 Saudi Riyal	118.3100	112.3100	112.1100
100 South Africa Rand	24.5600	22.1700	21.9700
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5000	1.3800	1.1800
100 Swedish Krona	46.4400	42.2500	42.0500
100 Thai Baht	13.6600	12.1100	11.7100

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

## Banks Neutral

### Drivers of system loans growth



Source: Bank Negara, RHB Research

**BANK** Negara Malaysia's March 2025 statistics lend support to our view for a moderation in 2025 loans growth (vs 2024) but positively, asset quality remains intact. RHB Economics is more cautious on the global macroeconomic outlook due to uncertainties from US tariff policies.

System loans expanded 5.2% YoY (+1.1% QoQ, +0.6% MoM) in Mar 2025, with loans for the household sector (+6% YoY) outpacing the growth in business loans (+4%). Consumer loans for mortgages (+7%), hire purchase (+8%) and credit cards (+7%) stood above industry growth rates, while working capital loans grew at a slower pace (+4%). For business loans, the sectors with the fastest increase in loans growth include finance (+17%) and utilities (+8%), while construction recorded a decline (-8%). On an annualised basis, loans growth stood at 4.3% - below our system loans growth forecast of 5% YoY for 2025, which we keep unchanged for now.

Loan approvals suggest moderation in growth ahead. System loan applications YTD grew 6% YoY, mostly driven by demand from the business segment (+12%), while household loan applications was more muted (+1%). YTD system loan approvals grew by 4% YoY with a 7% increase in approvals for the business segment (households: +1%). Despite higher demand, system loan disbursements decreased (-1%) YTD but this should accelerate ahead given the abovementioned trends.

Asset quality remains intact, with system GLs down 8% YoY (-1% QoQ, -2% MoM). Improvements were observed across the board, with the exception of the finance (+5% YoY) and utilities (+3%) sectors. System GL ratio continued to improve, now down to 1.42% (Mar 2024: 1.62%, Dec 2024: 1.44%), followed by a similar decline in the LLC ratio to 91.2% (Mar 2024: 92.1%, Dec 2024: 92%).

We are NEUTRAL on the banking sector. - RHB Research, May 2

## UWC Bhd Buy. Target price: RM2.60



Source: Phillip Research

**FROM** our recent ground check, we continue to see strong activity levels at UWC's facility, with a healthy flow of orders in the front-end segment. The order book remains steady at RM160m, similar to Dec 24 level, with 40% derived from the front-end semiconductor, followed by 30% from the back-end, and the remaining 30% from life-science and other segments.

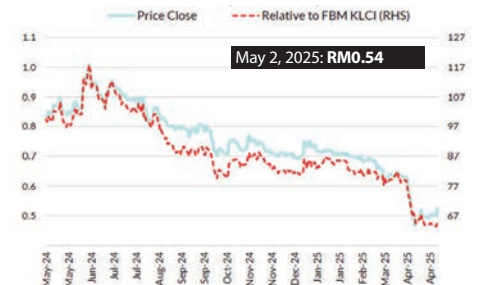
The US tariff announcement has had minimal impact on UWC's business, with only 15% of its operations directly exposed to the US market. The orders from its largest front-end customers remain unaffected. The front-end semiconductor margins are expected to be partly suppressed in the near term owing to the elevated costs associated with ongoing efficiency improvement. Nevertheless, production yield has seen notable improvement, rising from 30-40% in 2QFY25 to 50-60% currently.

The back-end segment remains sluggish, with existing orders continuing to slow and new product launches facing delays. UWC's weekly test handler orders have further declined to 6 units in Apr 25, down from earlier revised 8 units in Jan 25 and 12 units in Dec 24, due to the ongoing uncertainties surrounding US policy. However, UWC has noted an increase in enquiries from both existing and new back-end customers seeking relocation opportunities. Elsewhere, the Building 6 has been completed, and the ground floor is expected to be fully utilised for chamber production by mid May 25.

Despite a slowdown in the back-end semiconductor segment, we believe the increasing activity in the front-end will help mitigate the weakness in the back-end.

Maintain BUY and TP of RM2.60. - Phillip Research, May 2

## Tasco Bhd Buy. Target price: RM0.86



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

**TASCO**'s FY25 missed expectations, no thanks to lower-than-expected contributions from freight forwarding and contract logistics segments coupled with higher-than-expected tax expenses. We remain upbeat for FY26 and beyond, driven by volume recovery, higher contributions from new warehouses, and higher tax savings credits. TASCO also declared a final dividend of 1.25 sen/share.

4QFY25 revenue and net profit stood at MYR222.6m (-8.6% QoQ, -17.1% YoY) and MYR5.9m (-34.9% QoQ, -67.7% YoY), bringing FY25 core earnings to MYR39.9m (-36.9%). This came below our and Street's expectations at 76-88% of full-year forecasts. Meanwhile, EBITDA came in 10.7% lower YoY to MYR120.8m. The deviation was mainly due to lower-than-expected contribution from ocean freight (OFF) and contract logistics (CL) segments as well as higher tax expenses (MYR6.5m vs 4QFY24: MYR2.9m credit) from the reversal of deferred tax assets from unabsorbed Investment Tax Allowance in the prior year. Note that we stripped off the MYR8.4m write-off related to demolition of its old warehouse at Port Klang and unrealised FX loss of MYR1m to arrive at the core net profit.

International business solutions (IBS)'s 4QFY25 revenue of MYR92.6m fell 18% QoQ (-10% YoY), mainly dragged by the weaker air freight forwarding (AFF) and OFF divisions on the back of lower volumes.

Domestic business solutions (DBS)'s 4QFY25 revenue and PBT stood at MYR129.9m (flatish QoQ, -22% YoY) and MYR1.9m (-83% QoQ, -83% YoY). The sequential weaker quarter was dragged by cold supply chain (CSC) and CL divisions.

Maintain BUY, new RM0.86 TP from RM1. - RHB Research, May 2



**WEEKLY  
FOCUS**

**MONDAY**

Technology and  
social media

**TUESDAY**

Family  
and parenting

**WEDNESDAY**

Fashion  
and beauty

**THURSDAY**

Home  
and living

**FRIDAY**

Travel  
and leisure

**SATURDAY**

Food  
and beverage

# Credit crunch

**BNPL services place young shoppers at  
risk of overspending – P22**



**INSIDE**

**p23**

Smartphone built  
for hardcore usage

**p24**

How to keep online  
accounts safe

**p25**

Asterix, Obelix captivate  
new streaming audience



BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

**A**S Malaysia's digital economy flourishes, a new financial trend is transforming the way consumers shop: Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL).

Once seen as a niche payment option, BNPL has rapidly gained traction, especially among young Malaysians, thanks to its integration with major e-commerce platforms and mobile apps.

However, as usage surges, so do concerns over its long-term consequences, especially with the extent of its proliferation into businesses that reasonably should not offer it, such as a recent BNPL advertisement by a fried chicken fast food chain in Malaysia.

#### Big BNPL bang

In recent years, BNPL services such as Atome, Shopee PayLater, Grab PayLater and Pace have embedded themselves into Malaysia's retail and digital ecosystem.

These services allow consumers to split payments into interest-free instalments, often without the need for traditional credit checks.

This model has proven immensely popular among the country's youth. According to a 2023 report by Bank Negara Malaysia, the adoption of BNPL services is highest among those aged 18 to 30. The appeal lies in its simplicity and accessibility, especially for individuals who do not own credit cards or lack a formal credit history, but do own smartphones and internet access.

A key driver of BNPL's growth in Malaysia is its seamless integration into e-commerce apps. Platforms such as Shopee and Lazada offer PayLater options directly at checkout, creating a frictionless experience that encourages impulse purchases.

Meanwhile, Grab PayLater extends BNPL services beyond retail, letting users defer payments on ride-hailing, food delivery and in-store QR code purchases.



Retailers use BNPL to attract younger shoppers.

# Debt woes, online overspend

➤ Young consumers, lower income group lack financial maturity to manage BNPL

This level of integration has been shown to boost conversion rates and increase average basket sizes for merchants, according to industry insights from BNPL providers.

For brands, offering BNPL has become a competitive necessity, particularly in sectors such as fashion, electronics and beauty.

This is a financial model that thrives on technology. Algorithms assess eligibility in seconds using alternative credit scoring methods, while mobile apps make instalment management intuitive and accessible. With push notifications, gamified reward systems and personalised offers, many platforms nudge users towards frequent use without fully highlighting the financial risks.

Despite its perks, BNPL is increasingly being scrutinised for fostering unsustainable financial habits. As many BNPL providers do not report to central credit agencies, debts can accumulate unchecked, until missed payments trigger late fees or third-party collections.

#### Predatory for vulnerable demographics

The Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations has also voiced concerns, with CEO Saravanan Thambirajah highlighting that the younger generation are particularly prone to impulse spending via BNPL due to its "illusion of affordability".

The ease and accessibility of BNPL services disproportionately impact younger and lower-income Malaysians, who are often the least financially prepared to manage multiple instalment payments.

Often at the lower end of the economic spectrum and lacking financial literacy, these consumers are frequently targeted through social media advertising and in-app promotions, framing BNPL as a lifestyle upgrade rather than a loan.

According to data from Fintech News Malaysia, the majority of BNPL users report using the service for non-essential purchases, such as fashion items, gadgets and entertainment.

While some platforms have introduced spending caps or payment reminders, consumer education remains limited. However, as more Malaysians embrace these services, the risks of debt accumulation, along with financial, technology and social media illiteracy must not be ignored.

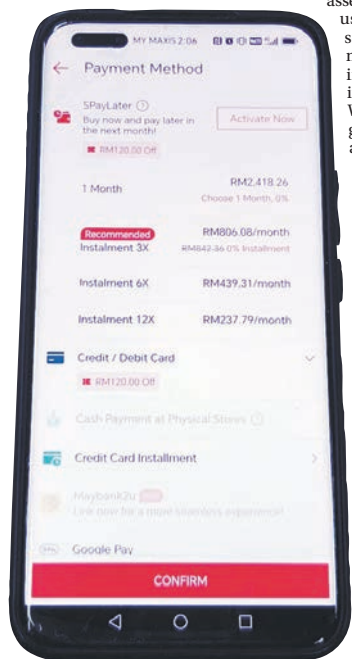
In a world of instant gratification with just a few swipes on our phones, the question remains: Are we buying convenience now and paying the price later?

To quote Jay-Z: "If you can not buy it twice, you can not afford it."

After all, just because you can buy now and pay later, does not mean you should.



Consumers with low impulse control are most at risk when it comes to BNPL payment schemes. – PICS FROM FREEPIK



BNPL options now appear at major online checkouts.

– YASMIN ZULRAEZ/  
THESUN

## GADGET REVIEW

BY JOHN TAN

**M**OBILE phones, these days, have a lot to offer when it comes to features. Be it cutting-edge camera technology or artificial intelligence (AI)-powered functionalities, customers are presented with various options to suit their lifestyles.

Inspired by high-performance tactical equipment, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G is built to withstand strong impact, making it ideal for outdoor adventures and everyday obstacles.

### Strong protection

Its durability and endurance are first evident in its upgraded double-tempering glass. Providing a 160% boost in drop protection, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G minimises the risk of screen cracks.

Its double-tempering glass, as compared to regular tempering glass, can withstand strong pressure and impact. Beyond physical protection, users can take comfort in not worrying about water or dust damage too.

With a built-in rating of IP69 and IP66, the device is protected from water and dust intrusion, including high-temperature and high-pressure water sprays.

All of its side openings are sealed with silicone rings and adhesives for an airtight barrier, while a dual-layer sealing method is utilised for the protection of critical components.

These features, therefore, come in handy if you are ever caught in the rain, taking a bath or busy washing dishes. Plus, its Splash Touch feature allows the screen to function accurately even when there are sprinkles of water.



Oppo A5 Pro 5G optimises AI LinkBoost 2.0 and Beaconlink technology to boost its connectivity.



The Oppo A5 Pro 5G's battery has a life-span of four years.



Oppo A5 Pro 5G can withstand strong water pressure.

# Built for longevity

➤ Oppo A5 Pro 5G designed to be resilient, reliable smartphone

### Robust battery life

Another stand-out feature is its battery capacity. While other mobile

phones require frequent charging or a stand-by power bank, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G allows users to go without one for a longer period.

Guaranteeing all-day use is a 5,800mAh battery with over four years of battery lifespan. Even with games on, smooth and long-lasting usage is promised.

Though demanding titles such as *PUBG* or *Fortnite* may warm up the phone, the battery and game performance are appropriate for a mid-ranger.

And when the battery runs out, users will not be burdened with the stress of waiting for long as there is an accompanied 45W Super Vooc Flash Charger.

The 45W Super Vooc Flash Charger enables the phone to be

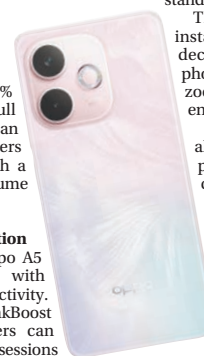
charged to at least 30% in 19 minutes. A full charge only requires an hour, giving users enough time to catch a short break and resume their online activities.

### Dependable connection

Additionally, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G comes with enhanced connectivity. With the latest AI LinkBoost 2.0 technology, users can indulge in seamless sessions of chatting with friends and playing games.

The AI LinkBoost 2.0 boosts signal reception and transmission, while a series of curated Oppo algorithms utilise smart detection to switch to the best network cell.

As such, users are able to stay connected no matter where they are despite the surrounding signal's condition. If users ever find



themselves in areas with no signal, connectivity is still available with Oppo's Beaconlink technology.

Through its Bluetooth, users can go on one-on-one voice calls at a range of up to 205 metres in open areas with improved stability and clarity, making it useful in remote locations.

### Mediocre camera performance

That said, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G is not without flaws. Its camera performance, for instance, may require more to rival other competitors.

While it possesses features such as a 50MP Ultra-Clear Main Camera, a 2MP Portrait Camera and built-in AI Portrait Retouching, the photos fall short when compared to industry standards.

The main camera, for instance, captures details decently. Yet, the noise in photos becomes visible upon zooming in, even with AI enhancements active.

The colour production is also not its strongest suit, producing washed-out colours in most shooting scenarios despite having good dynamic range.

The same can be said for its videos. The absence of Optical Image Stabilisation in its system leads to an abundance of noise in videos.

### Durability best offering

Overall, the Oppo A5 Pro 5G thrives in being a good mid-range smartphone. Despite falling short in its camera performance, it compensates with its durability and long-lasting battery.

Anyone who prioritises adaptability and affordability may want to seek the Oppo A5 Pro 5G at Oppo outlets nationwide.

## Spotify posts record profit in Q1 – thanks to 268m paying subscribers

**MUSIC** streaming giant Spotify last week reported a 12% rise in paying subscribers in the first quarter to 268 million, along with a record operating profit.

"The underlying data at the moment is very healthy: engagement remains high, retention is strong and thanks to our freemium model (of free and paying users), people have the flexibility to stay with us even when things feel more uncertain," Spotify chief executive Daniel Ek said in a statement.

The Swedish group had 678 million active users at the end of March, up by 10% from a year ago and in line with its guidance.

The number of paying subscribers, which account for most of Spotify's revenue, grew to 268 million, slightly higher than its guidance of 265 million.

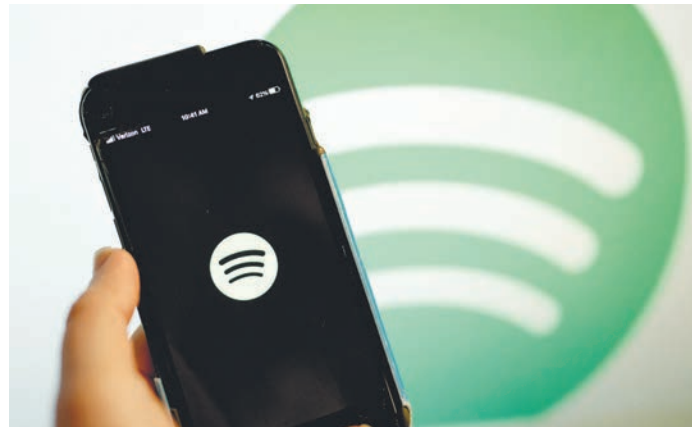
Operating profit soared 203% to €509 million (RM2.4 billion), but it was lower than its forecast of €548 million.

The figure "was below guidance as gross profit strength and lower personnel... and marketing costs were more than offset by €76 million in social charges," the group said.

Sales rose 15% to €4.19 billion. According to the *Financial Times*, Spotify is preparing to raise its prices in dozens of countries in Europe and Latin America this summer.

Spotify logged its first ever annual profit in 2024 of €1.1 billion, as it brought costs under control and raised fees for paying subscribers in several markets, including the US.

The Swedish company is among the winners on Wall Street since the start of the year, with its share price up 34%. – AFP



Spotify brings costs under control and raises fees for paying subscribers. – AFPIC

## How artificial intelligence tools can threaten cultural diversity

**ARTIFICIAL** intelligence (AI) is now widely used. Presented as an everyday ally, promising to make our lives easier and reimagine the way we write, it nonetheless carries a major risk. A US study claims that by imposing Western writing standards, AI could smooth out styles and erase cultural particularities.

To measure this threat, a team from Cornell University, led by Professor Aditya Vashistha, conducted an experiment with 118 American and Indian participants. Each of them was asked to write texts on cultural themes, with or without the help of an AI writing assistant. The aim was to observe the influence of AI on their respective styles.

It turns out that, while AI boosts writing speed, it also profoundly transforms personal styles. This phenomenon was particularly noticeable among the Indian participants, whose writing style became much more Americanised. To adapt to AI's suggestions, they often had to make numerous changes.

"When Indian users use writing suggestions from an AI model, they start mimicking American writing styles to the point that they start describing their own festivals, their own food, their own cultural artifacts from a Western lens," explained Dhruv Agarwal, a doctoral student at Cornell and first author of the study, quoted in a statement.

A detailed analysis of the texts shows that the Indian participants accepted 25% of AI's suggestions, compared to 19% for their American counterparts. At the same time, Indians were significantly more likely

to modify AI's suggestions to fit their topic and writing style to maintain cultural relevance. For example, AI typically suggested "Christmas" to evoke a favourite holiday, overlooking Diwali, one of the country's biggest festivals.

This bias is no mere anecdote. The authors denounce a veritable form of "AI colonialism", an insidious cultural domination in which Western standards are imposed to the detriment of other identities. And the consequences are far-reaching. By standardising the way they write, people could end up seeing their own culture through a foreign lens, to the point of altering their individual perception of it.

"This is one of the first studies, if not the first, to show the use of AI in writing could lead to cultural stereotyping and language homogenisation. People start writing similarly to others, and that is not what we want. One of the beautiful things about the world is the diversity that we have," said Aditya.

Aditya and colleagues are well aware of this and are calling for a change of direction. Cornell's Global AI Initiative is already looking to join forces with industry to build policies and tools that are more attentive to cultural specificities.

The stakes are immense. It is a question of safeguarding the richness and diversity of human expression, protecting the plurality of voices and imaginations, and preventing digital homogenisation. Indeed, defending cultural diversity in the face of AI is not just an ethical choice, it is a collective emergency. – ETX Studio



A study has indicated that while AI boosts writing speed, it also profoundly transforms personal styles.



It is recommended that you change your passwords to key accounts every three months.

## Protecting digital accounts

### » Tips to keep data safe, secure

**I**NTERNET users are constantly reminded to update their passwords in manage where identity theft and online scams are on the rise.

Here are some of the basic rules for protecting online accounts and data. Forget birthdays or your pet's name, choose complex passwords and remember to change them regularly. This, and several other steps can limit the risk of having your accounts hacked.

#### Stop using personal information

Avoid using passwords that are too simple or easily recognisable, such as your first name, the names of your children or your pet, your date of birth, sequences of numbers or letters such as "123456" or "qwerty," which are extremely popular but particularly vulnerable.

#### Change your passwords regularly

Another bad habit is reusing the same password for several services, or simply changing one character.

This is unwise, because hackers' first instinct is precisely to try their luck with the password they have just stolen on several other platforms. As a general rule, it is also advisable to change all your passwords every three months. It is tedious, but it seriously boosts security.

#### Use mnemonic strategy to help choose right password

The best way to compose and remember a complex password – made up of numbers, letters and even special characters – is to use a mnemonic technique. Just think of the first letters of each word in a sentence or song title, for example. However, remember to choose a different one for each separate online service, as each password must be unique.

#### Use two-factor authentication

Whenever possible, it is recommended to activate two-factor authentication, which

involves adding at least one additional step to logging in to an account. This can take several forms, such as a code sent by SMS or a personal question. This way, even if your password gets cracked, hackers would not be able to access your account.

Despite taking all these precautions, no one is entirely safe from having their data hacked or stolen one day. To find out if your phone number or email address has been compromised, simply go to the Have I Been Pwned website. It lists all the latest data reported stolen. Just type in your email address to find out if you have been affected. If so, do not panic! It does not necessarily mean that sensitive data is circulating online, but simply that your login is part of a leaked list. In all cases, you should immediately change the passwords concerned, even if the data breach dates back several months or years. – ETX Studio

## You can now shop online through ChatGPT

**CHATGPT** has added a new shopping function, enabling users to compare prices and directly access e-commerce sites by asking the chatbot a few simple questions.

As such, the platform takes position as a direct competitor to Google Shopping. Still, European internet users will have to wait a little longer to try it out.

OpenAI has unveiled a new shopping feature integrated directly into ChatGPT, transforming its artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot into a truly personalised online shopping assistant. This innovation enables users to search for products,

get tailored recommendations, consult reviews and compare prices, all without advertising or sponsored content.

Unlike Google Shopping, this is a much more intuitive conversational shopping experience. Indeed, users can ask the assistant very simple questions in natural language, such as "what is the best espresso machine under RM1,000 that comes close to the taste of coffee in Italy?"

In response, users get product suggestions, with images, accompanied by reviews and prices. They can then click on the links to buy the products in question.

OpenAI says the results displayed are organic, with no advertisements or paid placements, offering a more neutral alternative to existing platforms.

All ChatGPT subscribers – whether free or paying users – can now access this new feature. The first categories covered include fashion, beauty, electronics and home goods. As is often the case with new features, users in the European Union will have to wait a little longer to try this shopping experience, as OpenAI has to comply with specific local data protection regulations. – ETX Studio



OpenAI says the results displayed are organic, with no advertisements or paid placements. – ALL PICS FROM PEXELS

# Rap mogul facing life in prison

ONCE hip-hop's flashy impresario, Sean "Diddy" Combs now sports unruly, gray hair and only appears publicly in court, where he will be a regular starting today as his federal sex crimes trial gets underway in New York.

Jury selection will kick off the blockbuster proceedings, the next chapter for the once-powerful mogul, whose efforts in recent years to rebrand as "Brother Love" were thwarted by a criminal indictment and a mountain of civil suits alleging he committed harrowing sexual abuse.

The 55-year-old founded the Bad Boy record label in 1993, with proteges including the late Notorious B.I.G. and Mary J. Blige, and is frequently credited with moving hip-hop into the mainstream.

Combs, who has used various monikers over the years, including Puff Daddy and P Diddy, amassed vast wealth, not least from his ventures in the liquor industry.

But despite his efforts to cultivate an image of a smooth party kingpin and businessman, the federal criminal case and multiple civil suits describe Combs as a violent predator who weaponised his fame to victimise men and women.

He has no major convictions but

## Sean 'Diddy' Combs sex crimes trial starts today

has long been trailed by allegations of physical assault, dating back to the 1990s.

One of the key elements in the New York trial will be his relationship with singer Cassie, whose real name is Cassandra Ventura.

The pair met when Ventura was 19 and he was 37, after which he signed her to his label and they began a romantic relationship.

In late 2023, she opened the floodgates against Combs with a litany of allegations against him, including a 2018 rape.

Though that case was quickly settled out of court, a string of similarly lurid sexual assault claims followed – including one in December by a woman who alleged Combs and others gang-raped her when she was 17.

Combs has denied every accusation against him, but the case has left his reputation and legacy in tatters.

### Dark shadow over global fame

Born Sean John Combs on Nov 4, 1969 in Harlem, the artiste entered the industry as an intern in 1990 at Uptown Records where he

eventually became a talent director.

He gained a reputation as a party planner, which would be central to his brand as his fame rose.

In 1991, he promoted a celebrity basketball game and concert at the City College of New York that ended in a stampede, leaving nine people dead.

The event was over-capacity by the thousands and resulted in a string of lawsuits, with Combs blamed for hiring inadequate security.

He was fired from Uptown, and founded his own label Bad Boy Records.

Thus began his quick ascent to the top of East Coast hip-hop.

His disciple The Notorious B.I.G. became the genre's king following the release of his landmark debut album *Ready to Die* in 1994, up until his shock murder in 1997.

Combs boasted a number of major signed acts and production collaborations with the likes of Blige, Usher, Lil' Kim, TLC, Mariah Carey and Boyz II Men.

He was also a Grammy-winning rapper in his own right, debuting with the chart-topping single *Can't*



Combs has long been trailed by allegations of physical assault.

*Nobody Hold Me Down* and his album *No Way Out*.

The single *I'll Be Missing You* was a tribute to Biggie and an instant hit, with other major tracks including *It's All About The Benjamins* and *Been Around the World*.

He built an image as a brash hustler with unapologetic swagger, a major producer who also ventured into Hollywood, reality television and fashion and had high-profile romantic links with the likes of Jennifer Lopez.

For more than a decade beginning in 1998, his lavish White Parties were the toast of the showbiz A-list party circuit.

As recently as two years ago, he hammed it up for cameras at Manhattan's flashy Met Gala, where he was a regular.

The high-profile fundraiser coincidentally will take place on today, the same day that lawyers start questioning the prospective jurors who will determine Combs's fate. – AFP

## Netflix embraces Gallic heroes

FRANCE'S beloved comic book heroes Asterix and Obelix are set for their latest incarnation in a Netflix mini-series, hoping to win over new fans, notably in the US and Asia.

The plucky Gallic rebels, created by illustrator Albert Uderzo and writer Rene Goscinny in 1959, have a vast following thanks to the original comic books that have sold around 400 million copies.

A series of big-budget French films – the latest in 2023 took them to China in *Asterix & Obelix: The Middle Kingdom* – has also helped expand their reach.

But warrior Asterix and his powerful but dim-witted sidekick Obelix are yet to conquer viewers in the US and Britain, which have their own comic book and animated hero characters from Marvel, Disney and other staples.

"Often unfortunately in these markets, the Asterix films tend to be released in arthouse cinemas," said Celeste Surugue, head of the Editions Albert Rene publishing company that owns the rights to the original comics.

Although the tales of Roman-era adventure have a following in Australia and New Zealand, Asia also remains a global weak spot for the potion-swilling Gallic underdogs.

"The strength of a streaming platform is that access to viewers is not limited by distribution," Surugue said.

Netflix has released the new five-part animated mini-series based on the 1966 book *Asterix and the Big Fight* in 190 countries, with 38 different language versions including Mandarin, Korean and Arabic.

It is directed by Alain Chabat, 23 years after his success with the



Chabat attending the *Asterix & Obelix: The Battle of the Chiefs* preview series at the Cirque d'Hiver in Paris last Tuesday. – ALL PICS FROM AFP

*Asterix & Obelix: Mission Cleopatra* film, starring Gerard Depardieu and Monica Bellucci, which remains one of the best-selling films in France of all time.

### Great job

Netflix has past form with Asterix, having experimented with streaming rights for *The Middle Kingdom* film in 2023, which featured French A-listers Marion Cotillard and Vincent Cassel but suffered from generally poor reviews.

The platform has also helped bring other French productions to a global audience, overcoming the traditional aversion of English speakers to subtitles with hit shows such as *Lupin* and *Call My Agent*.

While creating the dubbing for the new Asterix series, it was able to rely on the 120 different translations of the original French comics, as well as the foreign-

language versions of the previous films.

"They have done a great job," Surugue said.

*Asterix and the Big Fight* is set in the year 50BC with Asterix and Obelix's indomitable village still the last Gallic holdout against Roman occupation.

The duo oversee the resistance, including a fight between their chief Vitalstatistix and a local Roman-backed rival, while struggling with the loss of the recipe for the magic potion that gives the villagers their super-human strength.

"I always liked *The Big Fight* for the dynamic with the Gallo-Romans. Here, there are truly invaders, resistance fighters and collaborators," director Chabat told reporters in March.

The 41st Asterix album, *Asterix in Lusitania*, will be released in October in 18 languages and is set in Portugal. – AFP

## Conductor building bridges to pop

AS the full moon rose, conductor Gustavo Dudamel's signature theatrics were projected with a front-facing view to a spellbound audience, his baton whipping his orchestra into Richard Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*. It was perhaps an unlikely spectacle at Coachella, but one that generated a huge, enthusiastic crowd.

Under Dudamel's direction for the past 17 years, the Los Angeles Philharmonic has cultivated an air of cool, fostering a relationship with pop and celebrity. So it was only natural that the 44-year-old take his act to California's Coachella, one of the world's highest-profile music festivals.

The orchestra delivered, launching into a mesmerising set that included classics like Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, film themes like John Williams' *Imperial March* from *Star Wars*, and a genre-spanning array of guests, including country star Maren Morris, Icelandic jazz-pop singer Laufey, LA's own Becky G and EDM DJ Zedd. The finale saw Dudamel's baton conjure bars from one LL Cool J, a genre-blending *pas de deux* that mirrored a rap battle.

"This place represents a culture," Dudamel said of the festival, ahead of his and the Phil's first performance, which they reprised during Coachella's final weekend.

"This is what I believe is the mission of art, this identity. The identity of a new generation, hungry for beauty," he explained.

Over the years, observers have marvelled over – or criticised – Dudamel's ties with Hollywood and his efforts to unite the classical world with music of the Hot 100 variety. But for the conductor – whose talent was shaped by Venezuela's illustrious *El Sistema* musical education programme – working across genres is "the most natural thing", he said.

In his youth, "my father had a salsa

band, and I grew up listening to that and going to the orchestra, and it was always natural to just enjoy music – whatever it was, a bolero, a rock band. There are different styles of music, but music is one," Dudamel recalled.

Johanna Rees, the vice president of presentations at the LA Phil, said cross-genre collaborations are in part about drawing in fresh audience members.

Some in the classical music world have balked at this notion, considering it a dilution or cheapening of the art form. But such criticism misses the expansive possibilities ingrained in the process of collaboration, Rees said.

The prime sunset slot at Coachella served as a capstone ushering in Dudamel's final year of his nearly two-decade run in LA – the product of "years of dreaming, breaking walls and connecting more not only with styles of music but with different people's identities", he said. It is an ethos the maestro aims to bring to the eminent New York Philharmonic when he officially assumes his post as that company's next director in the 2026-2027 season. – AFP



Dudamel will be New York Philharmonic director for the 2026-2027 season.

## Study links chemicals in plastic to cardiovascular deaths

**DAILY** exposure to chemicals used for many plastic household items could be linked to more than 356,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease worldwide in 2018, according to a study published last week.

The study published in the *Lancet eBioMedicine* journal, led by researchers at NYU Langone Hospital in New York, focused on a phthalate chemical called DEHP, used to make food containers, medical equipment and to soften plastic.

"DEHP exposure contributed to 356,238 deaths, or more than 13% of all global mortality from heart disease in 2018 among men and women ages 55 through 64," a statement said.

About 75% of the deaths occurred in the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, the study found.

The authors said countries such as India and China had higher death tolls, potentially due to "rapid industrialisation", "a boom in plastic production but with fewer manufacturing restrictions than other regions".

They stressed the need for global regulations to reduce exposure.

"By highlighting the connection between phthalates and a leading cause of death across the world, our findings add to the vast body of evidence that these chemicals present a tremendous danger to human health," said Sara Hyman, lead author of the study.

Phthalates have been known for decades to be "hormone disruptors" that affect a person's endocrine system. They have been previously linked to obesity, heart disease, some cancers and fertility problems.

They can be found in thousands of consumer items, including plastic containers and wrapping, beauty care products and toys.

"When these chemicals break down into microscopic particles and are ingested, studies have linked them to an increased risk of conditions ranging from obesity and diabetes to fertility issues and cancer," they said.

Negotiations for an international treaty against plastic pollution have so far failed, following one meeting in December in Busan, South Korea. A new session is to be held on Aug 5-14 in Geneva. — AFP



Women need to prioritise their well-being as a healthy mum is the cornerstone of a healthy family.

## Mothers' health matters

### ➤ Essential check-ups every woman needs

**M**OTHERS often put their families first, sidelining their health in the process. But just like in an airplane emergency, where you must put on your oxygen mask before assisting others, prioritising personal well-being is crucial.

A healthy mother means a healthier family. Taking care of yourself ensures that you can continue to provide love and support to those who depend on you.

This article highlights key health concerns that mothers should pay attention to, along with expert insights on why early detection and proactive care are essential.

#### Understanding postpartum recovery and hormonal changes

The postpartum period, also known as the puerperium, is the phase after childbirth when a mother's body gradually returns to its pre-pregnancy state. This stage is crucial for physical and mental well-being, yet many women overlook potential health issues during this time.

Common issues to watch for:

- **Postpartum depression**  
Many new mothers experience "baby blues", but some may develop more severe postpartum depression, which can cause persistent sadness, anxiety and fatigue.
- **Thyroid imbalances**  
Thyroid disorders can emerge or worsen after

childbirth, leading to symptoms such as fatigue, weight fluctuations and mood changes.

#### ➤ **Menstrual irregularities**

Hormonal changes can cause irregular or heavy periods, affecting overall reproductive health.

#### Transition phase that many women face when going into menopause

Perimenopause is the phase before menopause when hormonal shifts begin, leading to changes in the menstrual cycles and overall well-being. While this transition typically occurs in the late 40s, some women may notice symptoms as early as their mid-30s.

Common symptoms that women may face include:

- **Generalised joint pain**
- **Non-specific pains over the joints and muscles**
- **Hot flashes and night sweats**  
Sudden explosion of heat that may occur over the face and neck during the day or night.
- **Mood swings**  
Hormonal fluctuations can contribute to irritability, anxiety and emotional highs and lows.
- **Bone loss**  
Women may experience accelerated bone loss, increasing the risk of osteoporosis.

#### Overcoming bladder and pelvic health challenges

Women's urinary health is often overlooked, yet it plays a crucial role in overall well-being. Due to anatomical and hormonal factors, women are more prone to urinary tract issues,

which can worsen over time if left untreated

Common issues to watch for

#### ➤ **Urinary incontinence**

The involuntary loss of bladder control, which can range from mild leaks to severe urgency.

#### ➤ **Frequent UTIs**

Women have a higher risk of developing urinary tract infections, which can cause discomfort and recurring health issues.

#### ➤ **Pelvic floor disorders**

Weak pelvic muscles can lead to conditions like pelvic organ prolapse and incontinence.

Preventative screenings, lifestyle adjustments and early intervention can make a significant difference in a mother's health journey. Regular check-ups and self-care practices are vital for overall well-being.

Remember, when you invest in your health, you are also investing in the well-being of your family. Take the time to put on your oxygen mask first — because a thriving mother leads to a thriving family.

As a mother, it is easy to put your health on the back burner while caring for your family. But neglecting routine check-ups can lead to long-term health issues that could have been prevented.

Take control of your well-being by scheduling a health screening. From postpartum recovery to perimenopause and bladder health, early detection is key to staying strong for yourself and your loved ones. Make your health a priority today — because a healthier you means a healthier family.

**This article is contributed by**  
Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur.

## One in 10 with prediabetes tends to develop Type 2 diabetes in 12 months

**PREDIABETES** is a growing health concern affecting an estimated one in four Malaysian adults, with most remaining unaware, due to the lack of symptoms.

According to the International Diabetes Federation Diabetes Atlas 2021, 3.5 million (15.5%) of Malaysian adults have impaired glucose tolerance, indicating the presence of prediabetes.

To address this issue, the Stand Against Prediabetes (SAPd) Programme was established by the Malaysian Endocrine & Metabolic Society in collaboration with seven other medical and allied health societies, with support from Merck Malaysia.

Following this, a nationwide community pharmacy prediabetes screening was launched under the Check, Confirm, Consult, Change campaign. This effort is further strengthened with support from Roche Diagnostics, enhancing its reach and impact.

Currently, 735 pharmacies across

Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak are participating in this screening initiative. These include Alpro Pharmacy, AM PM Pharmacy, BIG Pharmacy, FirstCare Pharmacy, Health Lane Pharmacy, HTM Pharmacy, Mega Kulim Pharmacy, Farmasi Murni, Pure Pharmacy, Straits Pharmacy, Sunlight Pharmacy and Vision Pharmacy.

"Prediabetes is defined as having high blood glucose level but not high enough to be considered as having Type 2 diabetes. Nevertheless, this intermediate phase puts an individual at high risk of developing it eventually. Research shows that one in 10 people with prediabetes progressed to Type 2 diabetes within a year, while up to over a 10-year period, a staggering seven-in-10 may end up developing diabetes," said SAPd chairperson Emeritus Professor Dr Chan Siew Pheng.

More research found that ignoring prediabetes can also lead to other serious complications such as cardiovascular disease, vision loss,

nerve damage and chronic kidney disease.

"This can be prevented with early detection and lifestyle intervention, as well as medication, if necessary. You can easily check your risk level by using the SAPd's online risk checker. Otherwise, visit a pharmacy for a simple finger prick test to check if your blood glucose level is elevated, which is  $\geq 5.6$  mmol/L (fasted) or  $\geq 7.8$  mmol/L (random)," added Chan, who is a senior consultant endocrinologist.

So far, over 65,000 individuals have undergone a finger prick blood glucose test at the participating pharmacies. Among those tested, more than 14,000 individuals were found to have abnormally high blood glucose levels.

Chan highlighted that although a finger prick test is convenient in informing your risk, it cannot diagnose prediabetes.

"If you find that your blood glucose level is high, the next step is to undergo a proper blood test — a HbA1c or a fasting plasma glucose



Take the first step in prevention by getting a finger prick test. — 1232RFPIC

test, which can be arranged through your doctor or a diagnostic lab, to confirm if you have prediabetes," she said, adding that working closely with your doctor is important in reclaiming your health.

"If your blood test results indicate a prediabetes diagnosis, it is vital to consult with your doctor. They can guide you through your specific

needs to manage your condition and bring back your blood glucose level to normal. Regular follow-ups will help track your progress and provide the encouragement needed to stay on course towards better health," Chan emphasised.

This prediabetes screening campaign will continue until June 2025.



SCAN ME

Sun Classifieds

MONDAY  
MAY 5, 2025  
T: 03-7784 6888  
F: 03-7785 2625  
E: sunconnects@thesundaily.com

248Others

OLD LIQUORS  
WANTED



Highest Price  
Whole Malaysia

JEFF  
012-227 1175

322Notices

NOTICE

ANYONE WHO KNOWS THE WHEREABOUTS OF  
PELVINDER SINGH A/L  
NARINDER SINGH &  
ANNE DHIVANAYAKI A/P  
VELAYUTHAM PLEASE  
CONTACT:  
  
MESSRS SHARIF & KHOO  
ADVOCATES & SOLICITORS  
NO. 6, JALAN TUNKU  
HASSAN,  
70000 SEREMBAN,  
NEGERI SEMBILAN  
  
TEL NO.: 06-7611257

322Notices

IN THE MATTER OF  
COMPANIES ACT, 2016  
AND  
IN THE MATTER OF  
MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT  
SDN. BERHAD  
Registration Number:  
197801004869 (41837-D)  
  
[IN MEMBERS'  
VOLUNTARY WINDING UP]  
  
NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN  
pursuant to Section 459 of  
the Companies Act, 2016  
that a Final Meeting of the  
Company will be held at  
25 Beach Street, 10300  
Georgetown, Pulau Pinang on  
5 June 2025 at 10:00 a.m.  
for the following purposes:

1. To receive an account from  
the Liquidator showing  
the manner in which the  
winding up has been  
conducted and to hear any  
explanations that may be  
given by the Liquidators.

2. To consider, and if thought  
fit, pass the following  
resolution as an Ordinary  
Resolution:-

"That the books, accounts and  
documents of the Company  
and of the Liquidator, shall  
be kept by the Liquidator at  
0-26-A1 Gurney Tower Office,  
10 Persiaran Gurney, 10250  
Georgetown, Pulau Pinang,  
for a period of three (3)  
months from the date of Final  
Meeting and that thereafter  
such books, accounts and  
documents may be destroyed  
by the Liquidator."

Dated this 5th day of May, 2025

M THADA GANTHAAVE  
@ GAN BENG LIANG  
Liquidator

302Jobs

theSun  
Malaysian Paper

WE ARE  
HIRING

1 MEDIA SALES - Specialist

Job Description

- Building and sustaining strong working relationship with advertising agencies and clients.
- New business development and business retention.
- Conceptualise, plan and execute creative and innovative marketing campaigns to enhance brand visibility and engagement.
- Create, develop and continuously improve marketing material, presentations and proposals that showcase our products/services effectively.

Requirements

- SPM level with at least two years of experience.
- Diploma or Bachelor's degree in business, marketing or other related fields.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply, training will be provided.
- Good communication, presentation, problem-solving and organisational skills.
- Passionate in client servicing.
- Possess own transport and willing to travel.
- Able to start work immediately.

Office  
based in  
Petaling Jaya  
(Five-day week)

2 MEDIA SALES -  
Representative/Agent (Freelance)

Requirement

- Minimum one year sales experience in classified ad, print and digital advertising.
- Those without sales experience but with media advertising knowledge may also apply.
- Attractive commission package and incentives.
- Able to start immediately.
- Central, Northern, Southern, East Coast and Sabah/Sarawak.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to : [thesun.hr2@gmail.com](mailto:thesun.hr2@gmail.com)

322Notices

PERISYTHARAN JUALAN  
DALAM MANKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI  
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1264-12/2024

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 21245/2022 (bertarikh: 11/08/2022) ke atas semua bahaian tanah yang dipung di bawah Pajakan Negeri 5961/MI/2/3 besertakan Petak Asasarak 4217, A225, & A226, Makin 12, Daerah Kulim, Kedah

Dalam perkara mengenai Astar 83 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012

ANTARA

PUBLIC BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 19650100672(6463-H)) ...PLAINTIF

DAN

CHOD BING YAO (No. Kad Pengenalan: 90072023509) ...DEFENDAN

LELONG AWAN

Pada Hari Isnin, 26 Mei 2025, Pada Jam 9:00 pagi,  
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG,  
KOMPLEKS MANKAMAH KUANTAN, PASANG DARI, MAKAMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua lampiran, bebanan serta mengenai aset dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://elelong.kchakmah.gov.my/biddedweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:

No. Hakmilik: : Geran No. Hakmilik 41127

No. Lot: : Lot 44 Seksyen 6

Mukim / Daerah / Negeri: : Bandar Padang Serai / Kulim / Kedah

Pegangan: : Hakmilik Kekal

No. Petak/No. Tingkat/ :  
Bangunan: :  
Keluasan Tanah: : 1399.0000000000000000 meter persegi

Pemilik Berdaftar Syarat Nyata: : CHOD BING YAO

Sekatan Kepentingan: : Tidak

Sebatan / Lain-Lain: : Kawasan Rizab

Kawasan Rizab: : Kawat Persempitan atas Tanah dinasihatkan oleh PUBLIC BANK BERHAD pada 23/06/2022 dengan Nomor Perserahan 4634/2022

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:

Hartanah tersebut adalah Rumah Teres yang berlatar pos di No. 481, Jalan Dami 1/1, Taman Dami, 09400, Padang Serai, Kedah.

HARGA RIZAB:

Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "superfornama sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 250,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: DUA RATUS LIMA PULUH SEMBILAN RIBU DUA RATUS SAJAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang bermat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama PUBLIC BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERA sebelum tarikh lelong awan. Bakal harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada PUBLIC BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila bertembung dengan:-

Firma Guaman: : TOR THEAM HOCK & CO.

Alamat: : NO. 155, 1ST FLOOR  
MEDAN KIRIK SATU  
TAMAN INDEANAWASH, 13600, PG, MY  
No. Telefon: : 04-3981917  
No. Faks: : 04-3981921  
No. Rujukan: : TTP/PPB/LR-247/2023/OSY/DURA

322Notices

IN THE MATTER OF  
THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016  
AND  
IN THE MATTER OF  
LATITUDEPAY MALAYSIA SDN. BHD.  
(Registration No.  
202101042103(1442403-H))  
(In Members' Voluntary Liquidation)

At a General Meeting of the  
abovementioned Company duly convened  
and held on 1st May 2025, the following  
resolutions were duly passed:-

"THAT the company will be liquidated  
by way of members' voluntary winding  
up."

"THAT Lee Ewe Hock of Wiema Golden  
Eagle Realty, 11th Floor, South Block,  
No. 142-A, Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala  
Lumpur be appointed as Liquidator to  
act for the purpose of winding-up the  
company's affairs and distributing its  
assets."

"THAT the Liquidator may exercise any  
powers in accordance with Section  
456 and Eleventh Schedule of the  
Companies Act 2016."

PENG AI  
Chairman

Dated this 5th day of May 2025

IN THE MATTER OF  
THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016  
AND  
IN THE MATTER OF  
LATITUDEPAY MALAYSIA SDN. BHD.  
(Registration No.  
202101042103(1442403-H))  
(In Members' Voluntary Liquidation)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the  
creditors of the abovementioned  
Company, which is being wound up  
voluntarily, are required on or before  
5th June 2025 to send in their names  
and addresses with particulars of their  
debts or claims at each time and place  
as shall be specified in such notice, or  
in default thereof they will be excluded  
from the benefit of any distribution  
made before such debts or claims are  
proved.

LEE EWE HOCK  
Liquidator  
Wiema Golden Eagle Realty  
11th Floor, South Block  
No 142-A, Jalan Ampang  
50450 Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: +60 3 702 5222

Dated this 5th day of May 2025

322Notices

Pickles Auctions

Bank Repossessed bikes and cars for sale at auction. Auctions are conducted via eBidding on Wednesday - 7th May from 9.35am onwards. All are invited to join our PUBLIC AUCTION. Viewing inspection on Tuesday - 6th May at 9.30am - 5.30pm.  
All unsold bank repossessed vehicles will be reactioned on the following Wednesday until the vehicles are sold.  
Download Pickles Auctions app to view all auction listings or visit [www.pickles.my](http://www.pickles.my)

Reg no	Make/Model	Reg no	Make/Model	Reg no	Make/Model
DKH277	2009 PERODUA VIVA 850 EX (M)	W4959	2016 HONDA CIVIC 1.5 TC-P	WC8048K	2015 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L CVT
JKF3009	2007 HONDA CITY 1.5 DSI (A)	PMS1972	2013 TOYOTA VELLFIRE 2.4	YK1716	2016 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
CD4619	2013 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 EX (A)	WVN666	2012 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT VR (A)	WD3051A	2016 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
WYK449	2013 PERODUA MYVI 1.3 EX (A)	BMH9417	2013 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L (A)	W5252P	2014 NISSAN LUVIA X-GEAR 1.6L (A)
RNE1184	2014 VOLKSWAGEN POLO HB	VF3057	2016 PROTON SAGGA FL 1.5 S (M)	VW0141	2017 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
W6093M	2008 TOYOTA HARRIER CBA-AJUSOW (A)	ET8862	2018 HONDA CITY 1.5 S HYBRID	BMR2016	2014 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 AV
W4679L	2013 LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER EVOQUE	VDJ1334	2019 PERODUA ARUZ 1.5 (A) ADV	W95558D	2014 BMW 118I F20
W3098P	2016 MERCEDES-BENZ C200-W205A	VBG7179	2017 TOYOTA INNOVA 2.0 G (A)	W95668M	2015 PERODUA MYVI 1.3 X (A)
W30811	2021 BMW X1 SDRIVE20I	QP2626	2015 MERCEDES-BENZ C200 W205	B339999	2008 HONDA CIVIC 1.8L VTEC (A)
UR6369	2022 MINI COOPER S COUNTRYMAN	VDU2207	2019 FORD RANGER 2.0 WILDTRAK	JRT7442	2010 VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.2
W87309	2014 JAGUAR XF 2.0 T4 XF LUXURY	KKX9050	2020 MAZDA CX-5 2.0 HYBRID	JPE4146	2012 HONDA ACCORD 2.0 VTI-L (A)
VD34597	2021 MITSUBISHI CANTER F88P6G80G3	WRD4482	2008 CHEVROLET CAPTIVA 2.0 (A)	PMT1636	2015 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A) FL
BU2293	2020 PROTON X70 1.5D EXC 2WD	WJ3299	2019 PROTON SATRIA NEO 1.6 (M)	VW7452	2017 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
W6460	2017 PROTON PERSONA 1.6L CVT	WYD7014	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	W97935	2017 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
W8763X	2014 VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.8	JN65072	2012 PROTON PERSONA 1.6 (A)	WKK199	2012 AUDI A4 1.8 TFSI
OBK403	2022 HONDA RS-X Bupati	PK67844	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	W6459P	2015 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
NP8013	2022 SUZUKI PAJERO 150P1	JG6777	2017 PROTON SAGA FL 1.6L CVT	PP3657	2013 MAZDA X-TRAIL 2.0 (A)
KTF3450	2024 YAMAHA Y15ZR	PLG7523	2014 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 CVT	VE301	2016 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
W2045A	2014 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 CVT	W2045	2014 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 CVT	W67843	2017 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
VJ6582	2022 HONDA RS-X	QDE 8384	2014 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 (A)	PLD7705	2013 MAZDA BT-50 2.2 (A)
W35187	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (M)	W35187	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (M)	ANW4992	2014 PROTON BEZZA 1.3 (M) (A)
WC3567W	2016 PROTON PERSONA 1.6 (A)	WC3567W	2016 PROTON PERSONA 1.6 (A)	W3759W	2014 HONDA CIVIC 1.8S
JDD2724	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	JDD2724	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	BP68887	2017 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.6L (A)
JPM4691	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	JPM4691	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	W91913	2015 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
JR63505	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	JR63505	2013 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	W21685	2014 TOYOTA VELLFIRE 2.4 (A)
QMS316A	2010 MAZDA CX-7 (A)	QMS316A	2010 MAZDA CX-7 (A)	JTM2859	2019 PERODUA MYVI 1.3 X (A)
WC8487A	2015 PROTON PERSONA 1.6 (A)	WC8487A	2015 PROTON PERSONA 1.6 (A)	PKU1220	2012 HONDA CIVIC 2.0S
JPD2919	2013 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L CVT	JPD2919	2013 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L CVT	W91913	2015 PERODUA ALZA 1.5 AV (A)
WJ3299	2019 PROTON SAGGA FL 1.6L CVT	WJ3299	2019 PROTON SAGGA FL 1.6L CVT	QJ3848	2014 HONDA HR-V 1.8 V
JY7373	2015 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L CVT	JY7373	2015 PROTON EXORA FL 1.6L CVT	BCC5509	2018 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5V (A)
JW248	2016 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 CVT	JW248	2016 PROTON SAGA FL 1.3 CVT	NYC2382	2014 HONDA ACCORD 2.0 VTI-L (A)
JPW5383	2012 HONDA CIVIC HYBRID	JPW5383	2012 HONDA CIVIC HYBRID	W52263	2017 NISSAN X-TRAIL 2.0L CVT
WJ5147	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)	WJ5147	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)	WJ5147	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
SAB7520K	2012 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.6L (A)	SAB7520K	2012 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.6L (A)	WJ5147	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)
JG6467	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5V (A)	JG6467	2014 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5V (A)	RP74685	2017 NISSAN NP300 NAVARA 2.5SE (A) 4WD
W3565A	2014 MERCEDES-BENZ C200	W3565A	2014 MERCEDES-BENZ C200	SM2032	2014 MERCEDES-BENZ C200
W4230X	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	W4230X	2014 PROTON PREVE 1.6L CVT	UC2223	2022 MERCEDES-BENZ EQA 250
BNB669A	2016 PROTON RS SATRIA NEO	BNB669A	2016 PROTON RS SATRIA NEO	VJA1131	2023 MERCEDES-BENZ C200
JPL7427	2013 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.8L (A)	JPL7427	2013 NISSAN GRAND LIVINA 1.8L (A)	DR665	2013 MERCEDES-BENZ C200
KB6576	2015 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)	KB6576	2015 NISSAN ALMERA 1.5E (A)	RAB3612	2023 MERCEDES-BENZ C200

For more information contact us at  
016-6999170 | 012-5553727 (WhatsApp)  
[www.pickles.my](http://www.pickles.my) | [info@pickles.my](mailto:info@pickles.my)

PICKLES ASIA SDN BHD [1231292-D]  
Lot 1 9391, Batu 8 3/4, Jalan Klang Lama,  
Taman Desaria, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

Scan QR to download  
Pickles Auctions App



322Notices

DALAM MANKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI  
KUALA LUMPUR  
PERISYTHARAN JUALAN  
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN SYARIKAT  
NO. PA-28NCC-43/03/2025

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 079952/201900555 (bertarikh: 25/03/2019) ke atas semua bahaian tanah yang dipung di bawah Pajakan Negeri 5961/MI/2/3 besertakan Petak Asasarak 4217, A225, & A226, Makin 12, Daerah Kulim, Kedah

DAN

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 455(1)(e) dan 466(1)(a) Akta Syarikat 2016

DAN

Dalam perkara Kandah-Kaedah (Penggunaan) Syarikat 1972

ANTARA

DAN MAJLIS SDN BHD  
(No. SYARIKAT: 199101021170  
(231481-M))

...Pempetisyen

DAN

POSITIVE PLATFORM SDN BHD  
(No. SYARIKAT: 200801013626 (814914-K))

...Responden

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA  
LELONG AWAN

Pada Hari Rabu, 14 Mei 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,  
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS  
MANKAMAH KUANTAN, PASANG DARI, MAKAMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua lampiran, bebanan serta mengenai aset dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://elelong.kchakmah.gov.my/biddedweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:

No. Hakmilik: : Pajakan Negeri 5961/MI/2/3 besertakan Petak Asasarak 4217, A225, & A226

No. Lot: : Lot 1 A659

Mukim / Daerah / Negeri: : 12 Bandar Daya / Pulau Pinang

Pegangan: : Hakmilik Pajakan

No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan: : 3 / 2 / M1

Keluasan Tanah: : 0.00000000000000000000 meter persegi

Pemilik Berdaftar Syarat Nyata: : HO CHIN YUEH LEW SON MEI

Sekatan Kepentingan: : Tanah yang diberikan ini tidak boleh digadaikan, cagah, pajak, pajakan kecil atau sebarang bentuk urusnaga juga tanpa mengandungi kebenaran bertulis daripada Pihak Berkuasa Negeri

Bebanan / Lain-Lain: : Kawasan Rizab

Kawasan Rizab: : Kawat Persempitan

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:

Hartanah tersebut adalah 2 duplex condominium unit together with three car park bays as accessory parcels' yang berlatar pos di Unit No. 118-B-02-08, Block B3, Putra Place Condominium, Persiaran Bayan Indah, 11900, Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang.

HARGA RIZAB:

Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "superfornama sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 725,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: TUJUH RATUS DUA PULUH SEMBILAN RIBU SAJAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang bermat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERA sebelum tarikh lelong awan. Bakal harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila bertembung dengan:-

Firma Guaman: : GH&Z & L

Alamat: : 19TH FLOOR, PLAZA WUE NO 9, LEBUH FAROUHAN,  
10200, PG, MY  
No. Telefon: : 04-2831588  
No. Faks: : 04-283188/267433  
No. Rujukan: : 071231/BLU/LA/24

322Notices

DALAM MANKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI  
KUALA LUMPUR  
PERISYTHARAN JUALAN  
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO. PA-38-1264-12/2025

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 079952/201900555 (bertarikh: 25/03/2019) ke atas semua bahaian tanah yang dipung di bawah Pajakan Negeri 5961/MI/2/3 besertakan Petak Asasarak 4217, A225, & A226, Makin 12, Daerah Kulim, Kedah

DAN

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 455(1)(e) dan 466(1)(a) Akta Syarikat 2016

DAN

Dalam perkara Kandah-Kaedah (Penggunaan) Syarikat 1972

ANTARA

DAN MAJLIS SDN BHD  
(No. SYARIKAT: 199101021170  
(231481-M))

...Pempetisyen

DAN

POSITIVE PLATFORM SDN BHD  
(No. SYARIKAT: 200801013626 (814914-K))

...Responden

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA  
LELONG AWAN

Pada Hari Rabu, 14 Mei 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,  
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS  
MANKAMAH KUANTAN, PASANG DARI, MAKAMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua lampiran, bebanan serta mengenai aset dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://elelong.kchakmah.gov.my/biddedweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:

No. Hakmilik: : Pajakan Negeri 5961/MI/2/3 besertakan Petak Asasarak 4217, A225, & A226

No. Lot: : Lot 1 A659

Mukim / Daerah / Negeri: : 12 Bandar Daya / Pulau Pinang

Pegangan: : Hakmilik Pajakan

No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan: : 3 / 2 / M1

Keluasan Tanah: : 0.00000000000000000000 meter persegi

Pemilik Berdaftar Syarat Nyata: : HO CHIN YUEH LEW SON MEI

Sekatan Kepentingan: : Tanah yang diberikan ini tidak boleh digadaikan, cagah, pajak, pajakan kecil atau sebarang bentuk urusnaga juga tanpa mengandungi kebenaran bertulis daripada Pihak Berkuasa Negeri

Bebanan / Lain-Lain: : Kawasan Rizab

Kawasan Rizab: : Kawat Persempitan

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:

Hartanah tersebut adalah 2 duplex condominium unit together with three car park bays as accessory parcels' yang berlatar pos di Unit No. 118-B-02-08, Block B3, Putra Place Condominium, Persiaran Bayan Indah, 11900, Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang.

HARGA RIZAB:

Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "superfornama sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 725,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: TUJUH RATUS DUA PULUH SEMBILAN RIBU SAJAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang bermat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERA sebelum tarikh lelong awan. Bakal harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila bertembung dengan:-

Firma Guaman: : GH&Z & L

Alamat: : 19TH FLOOR, PLAZA WUE NO 9, LEBUH FAROUHAN,  
10200, PG, MY  
No. Telefon: : 04-2831588  
No. Faks: : 04-283188/267433  
No. Rujukan: : 071231/BLU/LA/24

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245  
(1439545-A))

...PETITIONER

DI MENDI DAVA SDN. BHD.  
(COMPANY NO.: 200101030494  
(566253-A))

...RESPONDENT

NOTICE OF WINDING-UP  
ORDER

In the matter of FORTUNE  
ADVISORY SDN. BHD.  
(Company No.: 202101039245

## IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND

IN THE MATTER OF STEVEN J. LEACH, JR. & ASSOCIATES SON, BHD. (Registration No.: 199401001452 (287130-P)) (In Members' Voluntary Winding Up)

## NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Final Meeting of the members of the abovementioned Company will be held by way of telephone conference (demed held at No. 40-1C, Jalan Jurureka U1/40, Seksyen U1, Hicom Glenmarie Industrial Park, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor) on 9 June 2025 at 10:30 a.m. for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Liquidator's Statement of Accounts showing the manner in which the winding-up has been conducted and to receive any explanation thereon.
2. To authorise the manner in which the books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator shall be disposed off.

Yiap Tiew Kuang  
Liquidator

Dated: 5 May 2025.

## Notes:

A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a member of the Company. The instrument appointing a proxy must be deposited at No. 40-1C, Jalan Jurureka U1/40, Hicom Glenmarie Industrial Park, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor not less than 48 hours before the time for holding the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

## DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI KUALA LUMPUR. DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA (BERAGIAN DASAR) PENGULINGAN SYARIKAT NO. WA-28NCC-376-04/2025

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 464(1) dan 465(1)(b), (a) Akta Syarikat 2016

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Mark Walker (Defendant) Sdn Bhd (No. Pendaftaran: 201501017135 (1142469-M))

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Keadah-kedah (Penggunaan) Syarikat 1972

ANTARA

SHANGPAC SDN BHD (NO. PENDAFTARAN: 199501005008 (334204-A))

... PEMPERTISYEN

DAN

MARK WALKER DRINKS SDN BHD (NO. PENDAFTARAN: 201501017135 (1142469-M))

... RESPONDEN

## PENGKALAMAN PETISYEN

NOTIS adalah dengan ini diberikan bahawa suatu petisyen untuk pengalangan syarikat yang dinamakan di atas oleh Mahkamah Tinggi telah pada 14 April 2025 diserahkan oleh Shangpac Sdn Bhd dan bahawa Petisyen tersebut adalah diserahkan untuk dibicarakan di hadapan Mahkamah Tinggi di Kuala Lumpur (Mahkamah Insolvency) Dapuan 11) pada 30b Julai 2025 pada jam 9.00 pagi, dan petisyen yang mempunyai syarikat tersebut yang bertaklidat untuk menyongok atau membangkang pembuatan perintah sepelemana yang diminta dalam Petisyen bolehlah hadir sewaktu perbicaraan samada secara sendiri atau melalui peguamcara bagi tujuan tersebut, dan sesialan petisyen akan diberikan kepada petisyen atau penyanyony syarikat tersebut yang menyanyony oleh penandatangan di bawah ini apabila bayaran yang ditetapkan dibuat untknya.

Aalamat Petisyeny adalah di No. 6, Jalan Wawasan 14, Taman Perindustrian Sungai Kapar Indah, Batu 6 Off Jalan Kapar, 42200 Kapar, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Peguamcara Petisyeny adalah Teyuan Yong Dan Rakan-Rakan di No. 12-1, Tingkat 1, Jalan Tiaru 20(KU), Bandar Baru Klang, 41150 Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

LL.

Teyuan Yong Dan Rakan-Rakan Peguamcara Petisyeny

NOTA - Bahawa sesiapa yang bercadang untuk hadir di perbicaraan petisyen tersebut hendaklah menyerahkan atau mengirni secara pos kepada Teyuan Yong Dan Rakan-Rakan notis berikutan berkenaan mial tersebut. Notis tersebut hendaklah menyatakan nama dan alamat orang tersebut, atau jika sebuah firma, nama dan alamat firma tersebut, dan hendaklah dibandatangani oleh orang tersebut atau firma, atau peguamcaranya (jika ada) dan hendaklah diserahkan atau jika ada, hendaklah dikirim melalui pos dalam jangka masa yang memadai untuk sampai ke alamat tersebut di atas tidak lewat dari jam 12.00 tengahari pada 28b Julai 2025.

Pengkalan Petisyeny ini dikeluarkan oleh Teyuan Yong Dan Rakan-Rakan Peguamcara bagi Petisyeny berkenaan untuk penyanyony di No. 12-1, Tingkat 1, Jalan Tiaru 20(KU), Bandar Baru Klang, 41150 Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan. Tel: 03-33427207/9 Fax: 03-33414002 AG/Pop/Lai Ruj: SSK/MWDSB/34912/2025/AG

## Ryu clings to two-shot lead at Black Desert Championship

SOUTH KOREA'S Ryu Haeran, who has led the Black Desert Championship since the opening round, will take a two-stroke lead into yesterday's final round after posting a 4-under-par 68 on Saturday in Ivins, Utah.

Ryu leads China's Yin Ruoning, who is two back after vaulting up the leaderboard with an impressive bogey-free 10-under 62, the lowest round of this year's event at the Club at Carlton Woods' Nicklaus Course.

Esther Henseleit of Germany is three shots off the lead following her 4-under 68 on Saturday, with the trio of Thailand's Chanettee Wannasana (67) and Ariya Jutanugarn (69) and Taipei's Hsu Wei-Ling (69) four shots back of Ryu.

China's Liu Yan (65) on Saturday, Japan's Rio Takeda (65) and Canada's Brooke M. Henderson (66) are six shots back of the lead.

Ryu, who is seeking her third victory on the LPGA Tour, opened her round with a bogey – one of three on the day – but added four of her five birdies on the front nine and sank an eagle on the par-4 11th hole.

"Today was such a long day because too many winds today and then the course is more

firmer than last two rounds," said Ryu, who sits at 18-under-par 198. "So I just want to keep staying on the fairway, but that's too hard for me."

Yin, who was tied for 24th after two rounds, sank 10 birdies – five each on the front nine and back nine – to put herself into

title contention. She hit four straight birdies on Nos. 12-15 and missed only one green and one fairway in regulation in the third round.

"I did not," Yin said when asked if she thought she would shoot a 62. "Honestly, did not see that coming. But after the first day here and shoot pretty low, I was like, 'OK, that's doable.' I just tried to put the ball on the fairway, green, and make some putts." – Field Level Media



Aryna Sabalenka celebrates with the trophy after winning the women's singles final. – REUTERS/PIC

# 'Like a dream'

## Dominant Sabalenka captures third Madrid title

**WORLD NO. 1** Sabalenka said her sensational form this year is "like a dream" after defeating Coco Gauff 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) yesterday to win her third Madrid Open title.

Last year's runner-up cruised past the American, ranked fourth, in the first set before digging deep in the second to triumph in a tie-break, sealing victory as Gauff double faulted.

Sabalenka recorded her tour-leading 31st victory this season on the Madrid clay, adding the WTA 1000 trophy to titles in Brisbane and Miami.

It was the sixth final she has reached this year and the 37th of her

career, the fourth in five years at Madrid.

"(Getting to six finals) sounds crazy, to be honest... I work hard and I know that if I bring my game and if I fight for every point that I'm capable of that," Sabalenka told reporters.

"But to actually like do it for real, I was like, okay, this is cool. This is ... like a dream."

"I really hope that I'm going to keep doing what I'm doing and keep playing the way I'm playing right now."

Last year Sabalenka was beaten by Iga Swiatek in the showpiece, whom Gauff thrashed in the semifinal on Thursday.

The Pole is struggling for form, which gives Sabalenka little

competition for the world No. 1 spot and makes her a leading contender for the French Open, the site of Swiatek's last title almost a year ago.

"You know, like now probably Iga is not doing well, which is absolutely fine, and I know that she's going to come back," continued Sabalenka.

"I'm just working for the future, like trying to improve my game as much as I can, just so I'm ready for whoever is going to bring the challenge on court."

"Overall there's a lot of positives to take (but I'm) obviously disappointed with maybe how I played today," Gauff told reporters.

"I feel like I could have showed up better." – AFP

## Bengaluru duo edge past Chennai in IPL thriller

AN incredible final over from Yash Dayal and Romario Shepherd's late batting blitz helped Royal Challengers Bengaluru scrape past Chennai Super Kings by two runs in an IPL thriller to move top of the table on Saturday.

In-form Virat Kohli, who made 62, and fellow opener Jacob Bethell put on 97 runs to lay the foundations of Bengaluru's 213-5 in their home at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

West Indies' Shepherd boosted the total with his 14-ball 53 – the IPL's second fastest fifty. The quickest 50 is in 13 balls by Yashasvi Jaiswal in 2023. Chennai's 17-year-old opener Ayush Mhatre attempted to trump

the effort as he blasted 94 off 48 balls as part of a 114-run stand with Ravindra Jadeja, who hit 77 not out, but the team finished on 211-5.

Left-arm medium pace bowler Dayal kept his calm in the last over when Chennai needed 15 to win.

He sent back skipper MS Dhoni and despite getting hit for six by impact player Shivam Dube off a no-ball, he gave away just 12 runs as Bengaluru moved closer to a playoff spot.

"I felt I should have converted a couple of more shots, and ease the pressure, so I will take the blame for it," said the 43-year-old Dhoni. "Shepherd in the death overs was

excellent – whatever we were bowling, he was able to hit it for maximum runs."

Shepherd, who hit six sixes, tore into Khaleel Ahmed in the 19th over to smack 33 runs off the left-arm pace bowler and then got the team 21 runs in the 20th.

Player of the match Shepherd said: "I had my opportunity today, was waiting for it for a long time. Wanted to give the team a good finish."

Five-time champions Chennai, who are already out of the playoff race, slumped to their ninth defeat in 11 matches to stay rock bottom of the 10-team standings. – AFP

## Second-string PSG beaten by Strasbourg

**STRASBOURG** kept alive their hopes of qualifying for next season's Champions League with a 2-1 win Saturday against a Paris Saint-Germain side showing 10 changes from their midweek victory away to Arsenal.

A Lucas Hernandez own goal put Strasbourg ahead on 20 minutes and Felix Lemarechal doubled the home side's lead in first half stoppage time in Alsace, although Bradley Barcola pulled one back for PSG just after the break.

Liam Rosenior's in-form Strasbourg are now unbeaten in 12 games going back to early February and this victory lifts them up to fourth in the table ahead of the rest of the weekend's fixtures.

"Despite all the changes, PSG still put out a strong team," said Englishman Rosenior.

"We had to fight for every ball in the heat. The players ran for each other, celebrated winning tackles and headers.

"We have shown that courage all season. We are the second-best team in 2025 behind PSG.

"The progress my players have made is superb. You have to suffer to the maximum to beat a team like Paris, but it was worth it."

PSG have already wrapped up a fourth consecutive Ligue 1 title and saw their unbeaten record domestically this season come to an end last weekend.

Coach Luis Enrique therefore rested all of those who started the 1-0 win away to Arsenal in the first leg of their Champions League semifinal Wednesday, with the exception of Portuguese midfielder Joao Neves.

"We finished with five academy players on the pitch, all very young, but I am satisfied with what I saw," said Luis Enrique.

"Now we have to be ready and immerse ourselves in what we have coming up this week."

Strasbourg are now just a point behind second-placed Marseille and sit only goal difference behind third-placed Nice, 1-0 winners against Reims on Friday. — AFP

## Napoli six clear in Serie A

**NAPOLI** moved six points clear at the top of Serie A after yesterday's 1-0 win at Lecce, a match which was briefly stopped by home fans' fiery protest against the league following the death of a beloved club physio.

Antonio Conte's team are one step closer to a second league title in three seasons thanks to Giacomo Raspadori's well-struck freekick in the 24th minute.

Napoli await the result of champions Inter Milan's home clash with Verona later to see just how far they will be ahead of their closest challengers with three matches remaining in the season.

Inter have made wholesale changes from the team which drew 3-3 at Barcelona midweek, with the second leg of their Champions League semifinal coming up on Wednesday.

And Napoli look good to claim a fourth league crown after a fourth straight win without conceding a goal and ahead of three closing fixtures against Genoa, Parma and Cagliari who are all in the bottom half of the table.

"I can't deny that it was a big step (towards the title)," said Conte told DAZN.

"I was worried about this match against a tough team and in a particular atmosphere. I have a team which can find a way to win in all sorts of situations... but we can't get complacent."

Earlier, Como secured a fifth consecutive win in Serie A for the first time in their history with a 1-0 success which moved Cesc Fabregas' team into 10th place.

Parma are almost assured of safety however with a six points separating them from the drop zone, with Cagliari a point ahead in 14th even after a 2-1 home loss to Udinese. — AFP

# Kane's party on ice

Leipzig's injury time goal prevent Bayern sealing 34th Bundesliga title

**BAYERN MUNICH** and Harry Kane's German Bundesliga title party was delayed by at least a day after RB Leipzig's Yussuf Poulsen scored a stoppage-time equaliser in a 3-3 home draw on Saturday.

With Kane sitting in the stands due to a yellow card suspension, Bayern fell two down by halftime, Leipzig scoring twice in teeming rain in Saxony through Benjamin Sesko and Lukas Klostermann.

Bayern then scored twice in 46 seconds through Eric Dier and Michael Olise to level things up with just under 30 minutes remaining.

Leroy Sane looked to have completed the comeback and clinched the title, hitting an unstoppable shot from the right of goal on 83 minutes.

But Poulsen, brought on with 30 minutes to go, chipped the ball over goalkeeper Jonas Urbig in the fifth minute of stoppage time to snatch a draw.

"This sport is fun," said veteran Bayern midfielder Thomas Muller, who will leave the club in the summer.

"It's a little weird after that late equaliser. I

feel like a champion but we're not there quite yet.

"We need to sort out our feelings and make things clear next week."

Despite the draw, defending champions Leverkusen's chances of overtaking Bayern remain close to impossible with two more weekends of the season to come.

Leipzig grabbed the lead 11 minutes in when Sesko pounced on a mistake from Urbig, who slipped while well outside of his penalty box, allowing the Slovenian to hit a long-range shot home.

Klostermann doubled Leipzig's lead shortly before halftime, heading in from a David Raum freekick.

Leipzig, who needed a win to boost their hopes of

Champions League football next season, were in control and looked on track for victory until Bayern shocked the hosts with two rapid-fire goals.

Dier headed in from a corner, his third goal in his past four games, before Olise made the most of a Leipzig defensive mistake to level the scores.

Sane's late goal sent Bayern's bench wild.

As the clock wound down, a beaming Kane made his way down from the stands to the sidelines, ready to collect the first title of his career.

Poulsen was however sent through on goal by Xavi Simons and coolly chipped the 'keeper to delay Bayern's party.

Borussia Dortmund continued their late season top-four march, beating Wolfsburg 4-0 at

home thanks to braces from Serhou Guirassy and Karim Adeyemi.

Dortmund, as low as 11th this season, went up to fourth with the victory and will stay there if Leverkusen beat Freiburg.

"We're Dortmund, we have to play the Champions League next year, it's not a question. Now we've had some good results, we have to go for it," Guirassy told Sky Germany.

Elsewhere, Union Berlin came from two goals down to draw 2-2 at home against Werder Bremen, denting the visitors' hopes of European football next season.

Borussia Monchengladbach's European hopes also took a hit with a wild 4-4 home draw against Hoffenheim.

Nick Woltemade scored with two minutes remaining to send Stuttgart to a 1-0 win at St Pauli. — AFP



Bayern Munich's Eric Dier (centre) scores his team's second goal against RB Leipzig. — AFP/IC

## Barca stay on Liga title track, Atletico limp on

**BARCELONA** moved a step closer to the La Liga title as they came from behind to beat already-relegated Real Valladolid 2-1 yesterday to extend their lead on rivals Real Madrid.

The Catalan giants heavily rotated with Wednesday's Champions League semifinal clash at Inter Milan their priority and fell behind to Ivan Sanchez's early deflected goal.

However second half strikes by Raphinha and Fermin Lopez powered Barca seven points clear of second-place champions Madrid, who host Celta Vigo ahead of the Clasico on May 11.

Barca coach Hansi Flick kept just two players who started the blockbuster 3-3 first leg draw with Inter on Thursday in his side — Pedri Gonzalez and Gerard Martin.

Flick brought in his German

compatriot Marc-Andre ter Stegen in goal, after a long injury lay-off, for his first appearance since September.

"He showed how good he is, how he can perform and it's good to see that," said Flick, confirming Wojciech Szczesny would return against Inter and next weekend against Real Madrid.

"I was really looking forward to playing this game and it's always better with a win for the team," Ter Stegen told DAZN.

It did not start in dream fashion for the goalkeeper — within six minutes Ter Stegen was picking the ball out of his net.

Martin's shot from the right of the area deflected off Ronald Araujo and looped past Ter Stegen, into the far top corner.

Barca debutant Dani Rodriguez suffered a shoulder injury which needed heavy bandaging, and Flick took the midfielder off for teenage sensation Lamine Yamal levelled for the Catalans with his

dangerous cross pushed to the edge of the box by Ferreira.

Substitute Raphinha picked up the loose ball and slid home his 16th league goal of the campaign.

Seven minutes later Barca took the lead, with Martin sliding the ball across for Lopez to finish from just inside the area to clinch a vital victory.

"When you make nine changes in the line-up, it's not easy for these guys who came in," admitted Flick.

"In the end I'm satisfied with three more points and we gave some players less minutes, and this is good for me."

Atletico Madrid were held to a dull 0-0 draw at relegation-battling Alaves.

Diego Simeone's side have little to play for in the final weeks of the season, sitting third with Champions League qualification virtually assured and leaders Barcelona nine points ahead of them.

Alaves, however, moved provisionally 16th, three points clear of the relegation zone with an important point against their illustrious visitors.

"Neither side could get the upper hand... the game was played in the middle of the pitch without any danger," admitted Simeone.

Ayoze Perez struck twice for Villarreal as they beat Osasuna 4-2 to close in on Champions League qualification for next season. — AFP



Fermin Lopez. — AFP/IC

Leeds players celebrate after winning the English Championship. — REUTERS/PC



# 'Pretty special'

Leeds clinch Championship title

**A**N incredible Championship title race came to a fitting end on Saturday, running all the way into stoppage time before Leeds United finally pipped Burnley to the post.

Manor Solomon's last-gasp winner at relegated Plymouth Argyle meant Leeds matched the Claret's win over playoff chasing Millwall, just as the home fans at Turf Moor were gearing up for an almighty party.

For the first time ever, two teams reached 100 points in the same Championship campaign, with Leeds' superior goal difference proving decisive.

With Birmingham City also finishing with 111 points in League One, it is the first time in the Football League's 137-year history that three sides have earned a century of points in the same campaign.

Burnley had seen records tumble, including a Championship-best 30 clean sheets - equalling Port Vale's Football League record set in 1953-54 - and have conceded just 16 goals.

They have not lost at home all season, have been beaten only twice in the league, and have been unbeaten in 33 Championship games since losing at Millwall in November.

It seemed unlikely they would not return to the Premier League as champions, as manager Scott Parker admitted.

"If you'd have said to me you'd reach 100 points, 33 games unbeaten, 16 goals conceded and you wouldn't win the league I'd have said 'no chance', Parker told *BBC Radio Lancashire*.

"We've done remarkably this year. I'm so proud. We came into today hoping it would go our way, but wanting to win the game and get to 100 points. We did that."

Meanwhile, where Burnley have thrived as a defensive unit, Leeds shone in attack. With 95 goals, they were by some distance the top scorers in the division. Joel Piroe (19), Dan James (12) and Solomon (10) have all reached double figures this season.

"I can't put into words what I'm feeling right now. It is a dream come true to score the

winning goal and take this Championship," an emotional Solomon told *BBC Radio Leeds* at fulltime.

"Throughout the season we've shown we deserve this trophy and to finish in the first spot. I'm so glad it happened.

"We all knew what was happening at Burnley and we knew we needed to score. It paid off and the ball went into the net. It will take me a few days to digest what happened today, right now I'm going to celebrate."

Like Parker, Leeds boss Daniel Farke has vast experience of getting out of the Championship. He did so as champions with Norwich City in 2019 and 2021.

Farke told *BBC Sport*: "Of course I'm happy that we won this game in the final stages and are officially allowed to label ourselves as champions and the best team this season."

"It feels pretty, pretty special in the dressing room and I'm very happy for my players and staff, it means so much for them, and also our supporters."

Meanwhile, Coventry City sealing a Championship playoff spot is just the beginning for the West Midlands club and they will not get carried away after their remarkable turnaround this season, manager Frank Lampard said.

Coventry will now play fourth-placed Sunderland in the two-legged playoff semifinal after beating Middlesbrough 2-0 at home on Saturday.

"We came in at 17th in November, so firstly I thank my staff because when you come in you want to make quick impact. Every day they work, support, they're good at things that I'm not so good at and all those things," Lampard told *talkSPORT* on Saturday.

"And then existing staff and players, to do the uplift from 17th to come fifth and get to the playoffs, it's a big achievement."

"But it's only a start, we're not over-celebrating here, we're saying thanks to the fans because they support us all season. To make those strides as a club, I think everyone should be happy tonight." — Reuters/Agencies

## Hasebe blames errors for ACL final loss

**KAWASAKI FRONTALE** coach Shigetoshi Hasebe was left ruing his side's defensive errors as the Japanese club slipped to a 2-0 loss to Saudi Arabia's Al-Ahli in the Asian Champions League Elite final yesterday.

The expensively-assembled Saudi Pro League side won the title for the first time through first-half efforts from Galeno and Franck Kessie, but it was mistakes in the build-up to both goals that left Hasebe shaking his head.

"For us, if we could play as we planned, we could have won," he said. "We showed that in the last two games, but tonight it didn't work so we have to do more in the future."

"This result is not what we expected. They played well. We conceded two goals and they deserve to be champions."

"Al-Ahli could show their strength in the first half and we couldn't show ours. The key was the second goal that we conceded."

"I don't think they did anything special against us tonight," said Hasebe. "We made

mistakes when we conceded the goals.

"When we conceded the second goal at that time we had 10 players on the pitch. If I think about it now, maybe I could have replaced another player in that position. That could have been my mistake."

Kawasaki went into the decider as underdogs despite defeating Qatar's Al-Sadd in the quarterfinals and Cristiano Ronaldo's Al-Nassr in the last four, with Al-Ahli's foreign imports the difference between the sides.

Hasebe, though, felt defensive inadequacies that saw his backline concede twice in each of the three matches they played in Jeddah in the finals phase of the competition were to blame.

"The individual levels might be different but I believe both the individual and the team are very important," he said.

"We showed our skill in the last game, but in every single game we played here we conceded two goals. That's something we need to improve in the future." — Reuters

## TOTO SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

**DRAW NO:** 5962/2025 **DATE:** 04/05/2025 (SUN)  
**STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.**  
196901000990 (84203)

### TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	5678
2nd Prize	6727
3rd Prize	2983

Special	Consolation
4440 2053	5575 4180
1952 5488	1586 0669
0483 4567	2914 1687
4863 7789	2445 0783
0276 3520	9938 6194

### 4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 12,963,051.23**

5678 6727	6727 5678
5678 2983	2983 5678
6727 2983	2983 6727

Jackpot 2 **RM 554,538.67**

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

### 4D Zodiac

1st Prize	5678	+	BOAR
2nd Prize	6727	+	
3rd Prize	2983	+	
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

### TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D	1ST	56278
2ND	88373	4TH 6278
3RD	60739	5TH 278
		6TH 78

6D	1ST	921476
2ND	92147	or 21476
3RD	9214	or 1476
4TH	921	or 476
5TH	92	or 76

### TOTO GAMES GIVES YOU MORE WINNING CHANCES!

<b>SUPREME</b>	8 13 18 20 25 30
----------------	------------------

Jackpot **RM 38,242,136.00**

<b>POWER</b>	11 25 34 41 53 55
--------------	-------------------

Jackpot **RM 12,581,196.37**

<b>STAR</b>	9 15 18 33 38 42 + 39
-------------	-----------------------

Jackpot 1 **RM 5,444,280.90**

Jackpot 2 **RM 100,000.00**

### Toto 4D Jackpot 2 (i-System)

**RM 117,217**

won on 03/05/2025!

Visit [www.sportstoto.com.my](http://www.sportstoto.com.my) for eResults and more info.



## WINNING NUMBERS damacai

Draw Date: 04/05/25 (Sun) Draw No: 5909/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER 1+3D	
1st Prize	7768
2nd Prize	5556
3rd Prize	7955
Starters	Consolation
5576 1910	9070 6363
9414 9054	0244 6224
2961 9188	6331 1308
6669 3532	2112 5487
3033 3958	5746 1898

1+3D Jackpot	
Jackpot 1	RM2,779,736.10
7768 + 5556	5556 + 7768
7768 + 7955	7955 + 7768
5556 + 7955	7955 + 5556
Jackpot 2	RM141,770.20

3+3D Bonus	
1st Prize Bonus	RM170,000.00
2nd Prize Bonus	RM1,012,611.00
3rd Prize Bonus	RM2,081,506.00
Starters	Consolation
465 576 231 910	839 070 116 363
919 414 119 054	190 244 106 224
732 961 899 188	236 331 571 308
806 669 493 532	142 112 005 487
873 033 673 958	175 746 331 898

3D	
1st Prize	768
2nd Prize	556
3rd Prize	955

Jackpot	RM630,633.30
768 + 556 + 955	556 + 955 + 768
768 + 955 + 556	955 + 768 + 556
556 + 768 + 955	955 + 556 + 768

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.  
**1+3D J1 RM35.288m and 1+3D J2 RM1.854m won on 3/5/25!**

The Community Chest is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental charitable organisation which supports education for the sole benefit of the Malaysian community and is primarily funded by the profits of Da Ma Cai.  
Pan Malaysian Pools Sdn. Bhd. (171888-01) [www.damacai.com.my](http://www.damacai.com.my)  
dmcGO play anywhere: [www.dmcGO.com.my](http://www.dmcGO.com.my) or call 03-2333 2000

## RESULTS &amp; STANDINGS

**ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE:** Arsenal 1 (Rice 34) **Bournemouth** 2 (Huijsen 67, Evanilson 75), **Aston Villa** 1 (Telemeans 12) **Fulham** 0, **Everton** 2 (Beto 26, McNeil 35) **Ipswich** 2 (Enciso 41, Hirst 79), **Leicester** 2 (Vardy 17, Ayew 44) **Southampton** 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Liverpool</b>	34	25	7	2	80	32	82
Arsenal	35	18	13	4	64	31	67
Man City	35	19	7	9	67	43	64
Newcastle	34	19	5	10	65	44	62
Chelsea	34	17	9	8	59	40	60
Nottm Forest	34	18	6	10	53	41	60
Aston Villa	35	17	9	9	55	49	60
Bournemouth	35	14	11	10	55	42	53
Fulham	35	14	9	12	50	47	51
Brighton	34	13	12	9	56	55	51
Brentford	34	14	7	13	58	50	49
Crystal Palace	34	11	12	11	43	47	45
Wolves	35	12	5	18	51	62	41
Everton	35	8	15	12	36	43	39
Man Utd	34	10	9	15	39	47	39
Tottenham	34	11	4	19	62	56	37
West Ham	34	9	9	16	39	58	36
<b>Ipswich</b>	35	4	10	21	35	76	22
<b>Leicester</b>	35	5	6	24	29	76	21
<b>Southampton</b>	35	2	5	28	25	82	11

**CHAMPIONSHIP:** Bristol City 2 Preston 2, Burnley 3 Millwall 1, Coventry 2 Middlesbrough 0, Derby 0 Stoke 0, Norwich 4 Cardiff 2, Plymouth 1 Leeds 2, Portsmouth 1 Hull 1, Sheffield United 1 Blackburn 1, Sunderland 0 QPR 1, Swansea 3 Oxford 3, Watford 1 Sheffield Wednesday 1, West Brom 5 Luton 3.

TOP 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Leeds</b>	46	29	13	4	95	30	100
<b>Burnley</b>	46	28	16	2	69	16	100
<b>Sheff Utd</b>	46	28	8	10	63	36	90
<b>Sunderland</b>	46	21	13	12	58	44	76
<b>Coventry</b>	46	20	9	17	64	58	69
<b>Bristol City</b>	46	17	12	17	59	68	68

**LA LIGA:** Alaves 0 Atletico Madrid 0, Villareal 4 (Perez 2, 39, Barry 33, Pepe 71) **Osasuna** 2 (Garcia 66, Oraz 81-pen), **Las Palmas** 2 (Ramirez 45+2-pen, McBurnie 83) **Valencia** 3 (Duro 22, 58, Suarez 75-og), **Valladolid** 1 (Sanchez 6) **Barcelona** 2 (Raphinha 54, Lopez 60).

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Barcelona</b>	34	25	4	5	91	33	79
<b>Real Madrid</b>	33	22	6	5	66	31	72
<b>A. Madrid</b>	34	19	10	5	56	27	67
<b>A. Bilbao</b>	33	16	12	5	50	26	60
<b>Villarreal</b>	34	16	10	8	60	47	58

**SERIE A:** Cagliari 1 (Zortea 35) **Udinese** 2 (Zarraga 27, Kristensen 67), **Inter** 1 (Asllani 9-pen) **Verona** 0, **Lecce** 0 **Napoli** 1 (Raspadori 24), **Parma** 0 **Como** 1 (Strefezza 79).

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Napoli</b>	35	23	8	4	55	25	77
<b>Inter Milan</b>	35	22	8	5	73	33	74
<b>Atalanta</b>	34	19	8	7	67	31	65
<b>Juventus</b>	34	16	14	4	51	31	62
<b>Bologna</b>	34	16	13	5	52	37	61

**BUNDESLIGA:** Borussia Dortmund 4 Wolfsburg 0, RB Leipzig 3 Bayern Munich 3, Borussia Monchengladbach 4 Hoffenheim 4, Union Berlin 2 Werder Bremen 2, St Pauli 0 Stuttgart 1.

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>B. Munich</b>	32	23	7	2	93	32	76
<b>Leverkusen</b>	31	19	10	2	66	35	67
<b>Frankfurt</b>	31	16	7	8	62	42	55
<b>Dortmund</b>	32	15	6	11	64	49	51
<b>Freiburg</b>	31	15	6	10	44	47	51

**FRENCH LIGUE 1:** Strasbourg 2 Paris Saint-Germain 1, Toulouse 2 Rennes 1, Saint-Etienne 1 Monaco 3.

TOP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Paris SG</b>	32	24	6	2	85	33	78
<b>Monaco</b>	32	17	7	8	61	37	58
<b>Marseille</b>	31	18	4	9	66	43	58
<b>Nice</b>	32	16	9	7	60	39	57
<b>Strasbourg</b>	32	16	9	7	53	39	57

**CHAMPION/PROMOTED**  
**PLAYOFFS** **RELEGATED**

# China down South Korea

## Host clinch record-extending 14th Sudirman Cup title

**C**HINA beat South Korea 3-1 in the Sudirman Cup final to capture a record-extending 14th title at the biennial mixed team competition in the Chinese city of Xiamen yesterday.

Having won the last three Sudirman Cup editions, China were favourites against four-times winners South Korea and got off to a winning start from world No. 2 mixed doubles pair Feng Yanzhe and Huang Dongping.

Feng and Huang recovered from a second

game blip to beat South Korean duo Seo Seung-jae and Chae Yu-jung 21-16, 17-21, 21-15 in one hour and 24 minutes.

However, that lead did not last long as women's top-ranked player and Paris Olympic champion An Se-young levelled the tie by defeating world No. 2 Wang Zhiyi 21-17 21-16.

An shifted gears when they were tied at 17-17 in the opening game to race away, and while the second game was once again a close affair, the 23-year-old maintained her composure to take the win in 57 minutes.



China's Feng Yanzhe (left) and Huang Dongping in action.  
— AFPIC

## SHORTS

### M'sian lawn bowlers reign again

**MALAYSIA** maintained their dominance in lawn bowls by retaining the overall champions title at the 16th and 14th U-25 Asian Lawn Bowls Championships 2025, held from April 27 until Saturday in Clark, the Philippines.

The national squad concluded their campaign with an impressive haul of seven golds, two silvers and one bronze, confirming Malaysia's position as a lawn bowls powerhouse in Asia.

Malaysia Lawn Bowls Federation (MLBF) president Datuk Awalan Abdul Aziz commended the team for winning seven of the 11 gold medals contested, one of their best performances ever.

He attributed the success to the intensive training conducted on the Royal Malaysian Air Force's natural grass lawn in Sendayan, which closely resembles the surface at Clark Bowling Green, the tournament venue.

"Congratulations to the team of hardworking athletes, coaches and the management. In short, I couldn't ask for more! I am really proud of them."

"I hope we can maintain the same momentum for future big international tournaments, especially the World Cup in November this year and the Commonwealth Games next year," he said in a statement today.

The seven gold medals were won in the men's team events (pairs, triples and fours), women's team events (singles and pairs) and U-25 events (women's singles and mixed pairs).

### Danish Iftikhar's surprise 100m win

**YOUNG** Johor sprinter Danish Iftikhar Muhammad Roslee scored an upset at the Kuala Lumpur Super Series Athletics Championship by

winning the men's 100-metre (m) sprint at Merdeka Stadium yesterday.

The 18-year-old beat both 2017 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games 100m gold medalist Khairul Hafiz Jantan and national sprinter Jonathan Nyepa by securing the gold in 10.57 seconds (s), ahead of second-placed Jonathan (10.66s) and Penang sprinter Tan Zhi Hang, who was third (10.70s).

"Alhamdulillah. The other sprinters really put up a huge challenge. I can only do my best, the rest I leave to Allah."

"I have done my best as this is the fastest (this season)... it's my best season and I'm satisfied but I will try to do better," he told reporters after the race, adding that the win came as a surprise as he had only focused on running his best time.

Meanwhile, Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli had little problem winning the women's 100 m sprint with a time of 11.72s, an achievement she described as a good start for this season.

Sabah sprinter Nur Aishah Rifina Aling came in second (11.80s) while national sprinter Azreen Nabila Alias finished third (11.83s).

### Aira wins Bermuda Open

**NATIONAL** squash player Aira Azman lived up to her top-seed status by winning the 2025 Bermuda Open after defeating Egypt's Hana Moataz in the final early this morning.

In the match held in Devonshire, Aira, ranked 30th in the world, won 3-0 (12-10, 11-3, 11-6) in just 27 minutes.

The triumph also marked a personal milestone for Aira as it was her first-ever win over Moataz, ranked 38th in the world.

In the semifinals, Aira overcame her sister, Aifa Azman.

Aira stumbled in the early stages, losing the opening set 4-11, before winning the next three sets 11-4, 11-8, and 11-6.

Roared on by the home crowd as they played their 16th straight Sudirman Cup final, China went 2-1 up after men's world No. 1 Shi Yuqi crushed 42nd-ranked Jeon Hyeok-jin 21-5 21-5 in just 33 minutes.

All the pressure was on world No. 3 women's doubles pair Baek Ha-na and Lee So-hee to keep the tie alive for the South Koreans, who last won the competition in 2017.

But top-ranked women's double duo Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning had other plans, sealing the tie 3-1 with a 21-14 21-17 victory, throwing their rackets on the ground in celebration in front of the adoring home support at the arena. — Reuters

Magnum Corporation Sdn Bhd (8272-D)

**Winning Results**

Full payment guaranteed



Draw No: 199/25 Date: 04/05/2025

### 4D Classic

1st Prize **2675**

2nd Prize **1455**

3rd Prize **8705**

SPECIAL	9475	5232	4501
0864	9475	5232	4501
6204	4156	8654	5817
1119	4805	0697	5078
4885	0395	0856	5349
6011	5480	6043	9900

### 4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM12,307,929.70**

2675 + 1455	2675 + 8705
1455 + 2675	1455 + 8705
8705 + 2675	8705 + 1455

Jackpot 2 **RM285,098.72**

**WON**

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

Play smarter. Get rewarded with MyMagnum 4D app!



### Magnum Life

2	3	5	8	10	26	29	36
+							
12	31						

**Grand Prize**

RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 20 years

**2nd Prize**

RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 100 days

### Jackpot Gold

Jackpot 1 **RM11,641,398.23**

Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM140,358.06**

**PARTIALLY WON**

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	7	5	5	0	5	
GROUP 2	7	5	5	0		OR 5 5 5 0 5
GROUP 3	7	5	5			OR 5 5 0 5
GROUP 4	7	5				OR 5 0 5
GROUP 5	7	5				OR 5
						OR 5 5
GOLDEN NUMBER	0	6				

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to [www.magnum4d.my](http://www.magnum4d.my) for more info. THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY.



# Gunners **rocked** by Cherries

*Arsenal endure dismal warm-up for huge Champions League clash and Villa boost top five bid*

**A**RSENAL suffered a blow ahead of their Champions League showdown with Paris Saint-Germain as Evanilson fired Bournemouth to a historic 2-1 victory, while Aston Villa boosted their top five bid with a 1-0 win against Fulham yesterday.

Mikel Arteta's side took the lead through Declan Rice's first half opener on his 100th appearance for the club.

But Dean Huijsen equalised in the second half and Evanilson completed the comeback to give Bournemouth their first ever away win over Arsenal.

Beaten 1-0 by PSG in the Champions League semifinal first leg last Wednesday, Arsenal will need a much-improved performance in the second leg in Paris this Wednesday.

The second-placed Gunners also still require six points to guarantee Champions League qualification for next season via a top five finish in the Premier League.

Arsenal finished as runners-up behind Manchester City for the last two seasons and the Champions League is their last hope of a trophy this term.

They last reached the Champions League final in 2006 and have never won the tournament.

"We should have put the game to bed. We defended really poorly, nowhere near the standards that we are used to," Arteta said.

"We wanted to generate the momentum and a really positive vibe today and we haven't.

"What we have created is frustration, rage and anger. Make sure we use that on Wednesday."

Unai Emery's side are back in the hunt to finish in the Premier League's top five thanks to Yuri Tielemans' 12th-minute header at Villa Park.

Seventh-placed Villa extended their unbeaten run on home turf to 20 games in all competitions, lifting them level with sixth-placed Nottingham Forest and fifth-placed Chelsea on 60 points.

After bouncing back from their dismal FA Cup semifinal loss to Crystal Palace last weekend, Villa will hope their rivals falter over the weekend as the top five race heads for a dramatic climax.

"If we weren't winning today, forget it

completely," Emery said.

"Today, we got more or less to be close to Europe. Wow, fantastic, brilliant. The best gift we can achieve after it is the Europa League or Champions League.

"We will fight for it, Europe, and hopefully we can fight for the Champions League."

Southampton wasted a chance to avoid a share of the lowest points total in Premier League history as Jamie Vardy's 199th Leicester goal inspired a 2-0 win at the King Power Stadium.

Leicester manager Ruud van Nistelrooy was a relieved man after his side ended their long wait for a home goal in the Premier League on Saturday.

"The performance provided the three points," said Van Nistelrooy.

"The first goal was finished in style and it gave us that lead that we needed, and the first goal, of course, at home in a long, long time. We were ready to break that cycle today."

The former Manchester United and Netherlands striker added: "It was a relief to go ahead in the game - I can't remember the last time that we did.

"Obviously, going two up was great and was a boost for the team and also everyone in the stadium.

"For me, it was important that I saw a team today that was fighting to do well and wanted to break a cycle of home games (without scoring), that wanted to get a clean sheet and wanted to improve and be in the best place possible for next season."

Southampton interim boss Simon Rusk said: "The first goal just seemed to knock the confidence out of the team," said.

"Maybe that's a result of the season as a whole in that it seemed to be a step too far psychologically perhaps."

He added: "We can try and affect confidence levels as much as we can, but the reality is we're working together as a group that's won two games all season.

"We are away from home in the Premier League against a team with seven more points than us (before kickoff) and I expected a difficult game." - AFP/Reuters

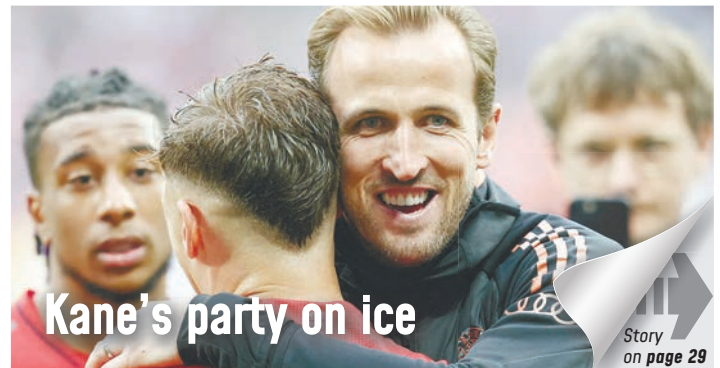


Bournemouth's Julian Araujo (top) vies with Arsenal's Leandro Trossard during their English Premier League match. - AFPPIC



**'Like a dream'**

Story on page 28



**Kane's party on ice**

Story on page 29