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Buddhist Maha Vihara expecting over 50,000 devotees for Wesak

Two-day celebration in Brickfields to feature lighting of some 7,000 oil lamps and float procession through Kuala Lumpur.

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Monks at the Buddhist Maha Vihara making final preparations for the celebration tomorrow. – ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

Epitome of love

Devoted daughter on lifelong mission to repay irredeemable debt of sacrifice and affection by 'supermom' who worked as a cleaner, clothes washer and factory worker to provide for family.

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Initiative aims to engage male decision makers in boardrooms and C-suites as active partners in advancing women representation.

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Petronas-Petros issues to be ironed out

Federal, S'wak govts agree to swiftly finalise guiding principles to foster clearer coordination for effective collaboration between energy firms

BY AZURA ABAS
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PETALING JAYA: The federal government and the Sarawak administration have agreed to iron out all lingering issues between national oil giant Petronas and Sarawak's state-owned energy company Petroleum Sarawak Bhd (Petros) through direct negotiations.

The breakthrough came during a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Thursday at Perdana Putra, during which he met Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg.

Senior representatives from both Petronas and Petros were also present. In a statement, the Prime Minister's Office said both parties agreed to swiftly finalise a set of guiding principles aimed at fostering clearer coordination and paving the way for more effective collaboration between the two energy firms.

The move is expected to unlock untapped potential in Malaysia's energy sector, particularly in bolstering the country's capacity to supply commercial energy to Asean markets.

This aligns with both Putrajaya's and Sarawak's broader goals to position Malaysia as a key regional energy hub.

The meeting was described as "cordial and harmonious", with discussions rooted firmly in the spirit of federalism and mutual respect.

Both Anwar and Abang Johari reaffirmed their shared commitment to resolving outstanding issues through dialogue.

On April 30, Petronas confirmed that



Anwar and Abang Johari discussing relevant points prior to the meeting at Perdana Putra. - PIC COURTESY OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

its subsidiary, Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd (PCSB), received a notice from the Sarawak Utility and Telecommunication Ministry on gas processing and distribution activities.

The notice pertained specifically to operations at the Miri Crude Oil Terminal, which the state alleges are being conducted without the requisite licence under the Distribution of Gas Ordinance (DGO) 2016.

The notice stipulates that PCSB had 21 days from the date of issuance to obtain the necessary licence, and failure to comply could result in financial penalties under Section 21A of DGO 2016.

Additionally, PCSB is accused of violating Section 7(e) of DGO 2016, which mandates that any entity constructing, managing or maintaining gas pipelines and related infrastructure must secure a licence.

DGO 2016, with effect from July 1, 2018, has designated Petros as the state's sole gas aggregator.

The role entails the procurement, distribution and maintenance of the gas supply network in Sarawak.

The appointment of Petros as the sole aggregator is part of Sarawak's broader initiative to assert greater control over its natural resources.

In response to the notice, Petronas has stated that its subsidiary operates under federal law and complies with all applicable regulations. The company has expressed its commitment to constructive engagement with both federal and state governments to ensure regulatory clarity and operational continuity.

Petros was established on Aug 7, 2017 as a wholly state-owned oil and gas company.

The initiative formed part of Sarawak's strategy to enhance control of its resources, drawing upon its constitutional rights under the State List of the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution.

Sarawak's stance is also shaped by the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63).

The state government contends that certain rights enshrined in MA63, particularly those relating to natural resource management, have been eroded over time and is seeking their restoration.

Should the negotiations prove successful, the Petronas-Petros collaboration could become a pivotal force in unlocking Sarawak's energy potential, while also strengthening federal-state cooperation.

'Asean Summit vital to navigate trade dynamics'

KUALA LUMPUR: The upcoming 46th Asean Summit in Kuala Lumpur is expected to serve as a strategic platform for the region to navigate evolving global trade dynamics.

Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia Faculty of Economics and Muamalat professor Dr Nuradli Ridzwan Shah Mohd Dali said the summit could be a vital platform for Asean to coordinate its response to uncertainties arising from US trade policies while strengthening ties with emerging economic blocs like BRICS, the Gulf Cooperation Council and China.

"The Trump-era tariffs in 2018 had short-term impacts on Malaysia, particularly in market sentiment and export volatility, but stabilised within nine months.

"However, with the current 90-day suspension of US reciprocal tariffs, the unpredictability remains. Any escalation could dampen Malaysia's GDP growth, especially in export-reliant sectors."

Nuradli said Asean must now capitalise on regional frameworks such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership to strengthen intra-regional trade and present a united front.

"This is about reducing overdependence on any single market. Asean has a chance to lead by example through strategic regional integration. Leveraging proximity and existing trade agreements will help cushion member states from external shocks.

"In today's multipolar world, maintaining balanced relations with both Western and Eastern powers is essential. Diversification is no longer optional. It is critical for sustainable growth."

University of Tasmania professor Dr James Chin, an expert in Asian studies, offered a different perspective, arguing that the US reciprocal tariffs are unlikely to affect Malaysia's trade or economy in any significant way, Bernama reported.

"The 24% tax and other trade measures are clearly designed to push countries back to the negotiation table.

"Once new trade agreements are made, it could even open more doors for American companies in Malaysia. I don't foresee any long-term consequences. If anything, trade between Malaysia and the US could increase."

The 46th Asean Summit, scheduled to take place later this month in Kuala Lumpur, will bring together key regional leaders.

Be vigilant, M'sians in India, Pakistan told

SEREMBAN: Malaysians in India and Pakistan, particularly students, are urged to contact the respective high commissions and submit complete details to ensure effective communication and assistance if required, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.

He advised Malaysians to remain vigilant and steer clear of high-risk areas amid recent reports of cross-border attacks.

"Malaysians, especially students, should avoid visiting dangerous areas, particularly in Kashmir, and cancel any planned trips there.

"No Malaysians have been affected," he said after the launch of the Sekolah Kebangsaan Senawang 3 Parent-Teacher Association meeting yesterday.

He also called on India and Pakistan to halt further escalation of tensions. - Bernama

Japan hails Malaysia's regional decarbonisation efforts

KUALA LUMPUR: Japan sees Malaysia as playing a crucial role in advancing clean energy cooperation in Southeast Asia, particularly in its role as this year's Asean chair and co-host of the Asia Zero Emissions Community (Azec) ministerial meeting.

Former Japanese prime minister Fumio Kishida said Malaysia's leadership comes at a pivotal time for regional decarbonisation efforts, with numerous Azec-related projects already in progress.

Kishida, who was on a two-day working visit to Malaysia, is also the Supreme Adviser to the Parliamentary Association of Azec.

He said current Azec initiatives span areas such as power transmission,

distribution and renewable energy, which are expected to align closely with Asean's clean energy efforts.

"We expect these efforts to create strong synergies with Asean initiatives, including the Asean Power Grid concept."

Azec is a Japan-led initiative launched in 2022 to promote decarbonisation across Asia through regional collaboration, technology transfer and public-private partnerships. The initiative aims to balance climate action with sustainable economic growth, particularly in emerging economies.

Kishida, who is also the special envoy of the Japanese prime minister, said Tokyo sees Malaysia as a "very reliable partner"

that has taken active steps towards its energy transition, inspired partly by Azec.

"I see great potential for collaboration between our two countries in advancing decarbonisation," he said, adding that ongoing cooperation covers projects in carbon capture and storage, ammonia, sustainable aviation fuel and power grid development.

Kishida said site visits and engagement with businesses had reinforced the importance of the government taking the lead in building effective partnerships with regional counterparts.

He also emphasised the growing role of Japan's Azec Parliamentary League in promoting the initiative from a legislative perspective. - Bernama

Concerns over legality of Pamela Ling probe

Making arrests prematurely while investigation still on unjustified and risks violating rule of law: Ex-MACC chief

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
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PETALING JAYA: Former Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief Tan Sri Dzulkipli Ahmad has voiced concerns about the legality of the commission's investigation into Datin Seri Pamela Ling, particularly following her arrest, remand and subsequent disappearance.

Dzulkipli questioned whether due process was observed during the course of the investigation because Ling had already been arrested, remanded and had her statement recorded – actions that, under Malaysian law, firmly established her status as a suspect.

"Once someone has been arrested and remanded, further questioning in the same capacity is not permitted unless the individual is reclassified as a witness, and only with the DPP's approval," he said in a statement, adding that under the MACC Act, a person should only be arrested when there is sufficient evidence to support a formal charge.

"Making arrests prematurely while investigations are still ongoing may not only be unjustified but also risks violating the rule of law and the fundamental principles of justice."

"The MACC should adopt the same approach it used in other cases, such as that of Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri, who was

treated as a suspect but not arrested, and whose statement was simply recorded instead.

"Likewise, in the investigation involving Vivy Yusof and her husband, the founders of FashionValet, no arrests were made even though they were also suspects."

Dzulkipli said the examples reflect a more measured and lawful approach that should be consistently applied.

"It is imperative that all enforcement agencies, including the MACC, adhere strictly to due process and the legal safeguards enshrined under Malaysian law to ensure that individual rights are not violated under the guise of investigation," he stressed.

In response, the MACC defended the legality of its investigation into Ling and her husband, Sarawakian businessman Hah Tieng Siu, saying that all actions taken were within the bounds of the law.

It said the probe began in May 2024 over alleged corruption and money laundering. While Hah reportedly cooperated with authorities, Ling allegedly did not, despite being summoned, prompting MACC to obtain an arrest warrant from the Putrajaya Magistrate's Court on Dec 2 last year.

On Jan 8, in a joint operation with Singapore's Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, Ling was apprehended and brought back to Malaysia. She was remanded from Jan 9

to 11 before being released on MACC bail. On April 9, she was again summoned following the emergence of new leads in the investigation, and a court order was obtained requiring her to surrender her travel documents.

"However, Ling failed to attend on that day, and her lawyer subsequently lodged a police report regarding her disappearance on the same day."

"All actions were taken within the ambit of the law, including securing court orders and complying with procedural requirements," said the MACC, adding that allegations of misconduct were unfounded and that Ling's judicial review filing did not invalidate the ongoing investigation into her and her husband.

Previously, Ling had accused the MACC of misusing the MACC Act and anti-money laundering laws to pressure her into settling personal disputes with her estranged husband rather than pursuing legitimate investigative aims. She had also questioned the legal basis of her arrest and remand.

MACC maintained that its probe remains valid and that it continues to cooperate with police in efforts to locate Ling.

"Accordingly, the MACC urges all parties to refrain from speculation that could hinder the investigation or create confusion among the public."

"At this stage, our shared priority should be to provide full cooperation in locating and safely returning Ling. Continued cooperation with the authorities is essential to ensure this can happen smoothly and swiftly."

New push for gender parity in leadership

■ BY DEEPAKASHMI MANICKAM
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KUALA LUMPUR: In a bold step towards achieving gender-balanced leadership, the 30% Club Malaysia has launched the Men Allies for Parity initiative, marking its 10th anniversary with a renewed push for systemic change.

The initiative aims to engage male leaders in boardrooms, C-suites and policymaking roles as active partners in advancing women's representation at the highest levels of corporate leadership.

Announced during the club's anniversary celebration on Thursday, the initiative calls on men to pledge real, measurable actions to support gender parity through sustained leadership and accountability.

"The initiative shifts from advocacy to action, with male allies making a pledge to show their commitment to advancing women's representation in top decision-making roles, including boardrooms and senior management," said the club's chair and PwC Malaysia executive chair Nurul A'in Abdul Latif.

According to Securities Commission Malaysia, women currently hold 33.1% of board seats in the top 100 public-listed companies (PLC) on Bursa Malaysia, a significant rise from 14% in 2015. Across all the PLC, women now make up 28% of board members.

Nurul emphasised that the movement is about creating an environment where the best talent, regardless of gender, can thrive.

"This is not about tokenism or compliance. The Men Allies for Parity movement recognises the value that equity brings for both men and women."

"The support of men in our network is not just welcome, but essential on the path to parity," she said.

The Men Allies for Parity pledge outlines specific commitments, including endorsing high-potential women for leadership roles, ensuring women are considered in board and executive searches, setting internal representation targets and publishing transparent data on gender composition and career progression.

A light-touch monitoring framework is being developed to track progress through peer accountability and public transparency. Progress will be highlighted through case studies and success stories to promote learning and encourage broader adoption among companies.

The initiative aligns with the club's 2025 theme, Shaping an Inclusive Future, which envisions a future in which gender equality forms the foundation of organisational and societal success.

Also present was Securities Commission Malaysia executive chairman Datuk Mohammad Faiz Azmi.

The event was supported by key partners including Astro, Berjaya Corporation Bhd, Bursa Malaysia, Malaysian Institute for Development of Professionals, Nespresso Malaysia, Star Media Group, Sunway Bhd, Tropicana Corporation, TBWA Malaysia and Velesto Energy Bhd.

The 30% Club Malaysia, launched in May 2015, is part of a global business-led campaign that champions diversity, equity and inclusion, with a core focus on achieving at least 30% women's representation at senior decision-making levels, including boards and C-suites.

The club works to engage chairs, CEOs and key market influencers to drive inclusive leadership and foster a sustainable pipeline of women leaders.

Madani village projects benefit over 8,000 residents

TELUK INTAN: Ten projects under the Housing and Local Government's Ministry's Madani Village Adoption Programme have been completed, benefitting 8,670 residents in Kampung Bahagia here.

Minister Nga Kor Ming said RM2.5 million was allocated to upgrade essential facilities in the village, including a community hall and waste collection areas. All projects were completed by March 31.

"The projects include upgrading the fishermen's jetty (RM667,000), futsal court (RM697,000), *Geghotak Bahagia* beautification (RM480,000), irrigation and drainage improvements (RM200,000) and landscape repairs (RM200,000).

"We also built a landmark (RM96,000) and a sustainable waste collection centre (RM70,000)," he said during the village handing over ceremony yesterday.

Nga added that Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia contributed RM91.810 through its corporate social responsibility initiative to support one of the projects.

The funds were used to repair the jetty's roof and posts and install handrails – improvements that benefit the local fishing community and help boost the economy through fishing and rural tourism.

"The jetty supports 76 fishermen in Kampung Bahagia. In addition, a new bridge will be built under the Works Ministry to better connect the village to nearby towns," Nga said. – Bernama



Nga (left) and his entourage checking out the fisherman's jetty, which has been upgraded under the ministry's Madani Village Adoption Programme. Also present was Perak exco and Pasir Berdamar assemblyman Woo Kah Leong (second from right). – BERNAMAPIC



Mother's Day celebration of love and resilience

Residents at centre honoured with stories, gifts and memories as families and staff mark occasion with tributes

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
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PETALING JAYA: At an elder's care centre nestled in the heart of the city, Mother's Day is more than a celebration.

It is a tribute to strength, sacrifice and enduring love.

Here, every mother has a story and each one deserves to be told.

For Eunice Goh, 52, her daily visits are not just routine, they are a promise kept.

"My mom had a very serious case of osteoporosis and eventually became wheelchair-bound. I've been taking care of her for about two years. Before that, I looked after my father, who had kidney failure," Goh said at The Senior Care.

"I truly didn't want to send my mom away. But she was the one who made the decision. She told my sister to bring her here because she wanted me to have the freedom to live my life."

Though her mother now lives at the centre, Goh vowed to visit her every day and has faithfully done so for the past eight years.

Goh's mother, Tam Soo Hin, is now 85. To Goh, she is nothing short of a supermom.

"We didn't come from a wealthy family. My dad was a lorry driver and my mom worked as a cleaner. She cleaned houses, took home laundry for extra income and even worked in a factory. She really sacrificed a lot for us."

Goh reflected that it is rare these days to see a mother raise a family under such harsh conditions with such unwavering strength and love. While caregiving is not always easy, Goh considers it a gift.

"I'm just grateful that I get to care for her. Many elderly people feel abandoned, but my mom never made me feel burdened."

For Kai Fatt, 60, a corporate adviser whose 95-year-old mother Choo Toon also resides at the centre, strength is a recurring theme.

"She's incredibly strong. She used to



Although her mother now lives at the centre, Goh vowed to visit her every day and has faithfully done so for the past eight years. – AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

run a laundry shop for over three decades before becoming a full-time homemaker," he said.

After a serious fall that went unnoticed for hours, the family realised she needed full-time care.

"I try to visit her every day. I make her coffee exactly the way she likes it and bring it to her each time I visit."

At 96, Lam Leik Hua is the oldest resident at the centre.

She has three children, great-grandchildren and even a foster child she raised from a young age.

"I do miss my children. I can't remember the last time I saw them. They have their own families and grandchildren to care for. They call sometimes, but we don't talk much anymore," she said.

Lam finds comfort in her closest friend at the home, Choi Swee Ha, 80, a retired teacher from Petaling Jaya.

"I enjoy my time here, everyone is very friendly and kind. My family visits me at least once a week. Even my former students come to visit and sometimes take me out for lunch," Choi said.

For Chan Choo Sew, 79, independence was always a core part of her identity.

A former Ajinomoto employee and

avid driver, she recalled: "I started driving at 18 and continued until I was 78. I loved driving. I even drove to Singapore on my own."

However, after a fainting episode and hospital stay, her children decided it was no longer safe for her to live alone or drive.

"My son once told me he used to worry constantly when I was living alone. Now that I'm here, he can finally sleep peacefully knowing I'm well taken care of."

For Matron Tan, the nurse manager, the centre is more than just a workplace.

"It's a second home, not just for the residents but for their families and for us, the staff," she said.

"Every year, we celebrate Mother's Day with cake-cutting and handmade gifts. Even when families can't make it, our team steps in."

"The joy on their faces when they see the decorations or receive a simple gift is truly touching."

Sometimes the celebrations are modest – paper flowers, craft sessions or heartfelt cards – but the impact lasts far beyond the day itself.

"Even if it's just for a day, they feel remembered, loved and honoured. And that's what matters."

New classrooms bring joy to students

TAWAU: After years of studying in rundown facilities, students of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK) Wallace Bay on Pulau Sebatik finally have reason to smile.

Two brand-new double-storey blocks, complete with 12 classrooms, an administration block and a surau, are now ready for use.

The new facilities were officially launched by Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek during her two-day working visit to the Kalabakan parliamentary constituency under the Parliamentary Follow-Up Action Programme, which began on Thursday.

Fadhlina said the redevelopment of SMK Wallace Bay reflects the government's strong commitment to providing a comfortable and conducive learning environment for students and teachers in rural areas.

"The Madani government is committed to expanding access to quality education. That's why we go into the interior, to ensure our children receive equal opportunities, comfort and fairness in their education," she said.

She also noted that out of 390 dilapidated schools in Sabah, 230 have already been rebuilt.

For SMK Wallace Bay principal Jumaan Mahmud, the new buildings are more than just upgraded infrastructure, they represent renewed hope and ambition for the younger generation on Pulau Sebatik.

"This transformation shows the government's dedication to rural communities, especially here in Sebatik. SMK Wallace Bay has a long history, having first opened on Feb 4, 1974," he said.

The redevelopment was part of the Education Ministry's initiative under the 11th Malaysia Plan in 2020.

The completed project was officially handed over by the Public Works Department on March 27 this year.

Jumaan also expressed gratitude to the ministry for recognising the unique challenges faced by students on the island, including commuting difficulties and the risk of school dropouts due to geographical barriers.

To address these challenges, the government has approved the construction of a new school hostel under the 12th Malaysia Plan.

Selangor ends overseas student sponsorships

SHAH ALAM: The Selangor government and the Selangor Zakat Board will no longer sponsor students for undergraduate studies in the Middle East, starting this year.

In a statement published on the Selangor Islamic Religious Department's (JAIS) official Facebook page yesterday, its director Datuk Mohd Shahzihan Ahmad said future sponsorships will focus on local institutions such as Universiti Islam Selangor or other universities within Malaysia.

However, sponsorships for master's and doctoral studies in Egypt, Jordan and Morocco will continue, Bernama reported.

"This decision aims to reduce the risk of students being influenced by elements that could affect their thinking and identity, especially among those pursuing Islamic studies in the Middle East," he said.

Mohd Shahzihan explained that private students who are not accepted into local institutions or who choose to study abroad may still pursue undergraduate Islamic studies in Egypt, Jordan or Morocco, but their cases will be fully managed by JAIS.

English camp in Kedah warms hearts of US teachers

JITRA: Two American teachers holidaying in Kedah were delighted to take part in a community programme with children from Kampung Keda Malau.

Lauren Chow, 32, and Bethany Greenbaum, 31, from Boston, said their five-day vacation took on new meaning after they were invited to share their experiences with rural students during the English Camp with the Keda Community held in the village.

"I'm very happy to be part of this camp and excited by how friendly the children

are. They're not afraid of outsiders," said Lauren when met during the programme on Friday.

Lauren, who speaks Malay, said she was thrilled to return to Kedah and contribute to a programme aimed at building children's confidence in using English.

"I taught English at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tunku Bendahara in Kodiang for two years, from 2015 to 2016, and I found that students in rural areas are actually very hardworking and brave," she said.

Bethany also shared her joy in seeing the children working hard to build confidence and communicate in a foreign language.

"This is the first programme of its kind that I've participated in. It's very interesting and I can see the enthusiasm of these children learning in a joyful environment," she said.

Lauren and Bethany are currently based in Indonesia, where they teach English tuition classes to school students. – Bernama

Grand Wesak Day planned at Buddhist Maha Vihara

Over 50,000 devotees expected at two-day event that will feature some 7,000 lamps, float procession

■ BY DEEPAKASHMI MANICKAM
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KUALA LUMPUR: Wesak Day, the most sacred day for Buddhists, will be observed nationwide tomorrow, with the Buddhist Maha Vihara in Brickfields expecting over 50,000 devotees and visitors during its two-day celebration.

Buddhist Maha Vihara honorary secretary Tilak Leslie described Wesak as the most significant event in the Buddhist calendar.

"It commemorates the birth, enlightenment and passing of Lord Buddha, all of which occurred on the full moon day of May."

Among the temple's signature events this year are the lighting of about 7,000 oil lamps and a float procession through the heart of Kuala Lumpur.

He said charitable initiatives would take centre stage, including blood and organ donation drives, as well as the Silent Mentor programme, which allows individuals to donate their bodies after death for medical education and research.

"The procession will take place on the evening of Wesak, starting at 6.30pm. It will cover an 11km route through Kuala Lumpur, reaching close to Bukit Bintang before looping back."

This year's float, themed "Buddha and Nature", draws inspiration from the story of Mukalinda, the serpent king who according to Buddhist scripture, shielded the Buddha from a storm during his post-enlightenment meditation.

The float will feature symbols of nature – lions, deer and trees – and a striking depiction of Mukalinda.

"It reflects Buddha's harmony with nature and the enlightenment that Wesak represents."

Tilak said in keeping with Buddhist principles of simplicity and conservation, the temple consciously avoids waste.

"Our Buddhist practices are quite simple and logical. We try not to be

wasteful and aim to conserve as much as we can."

He said preparations for the celebration began two months ago, especially for the float design and construction.

"Massive rains almost every other day slowed our progress but because we started early, we were able to manage."

He said vegetarian food would be served at the temple from today until May 13. Tomorrow, the temple will distribute approximately 4,000 free vegetarian meals and drinks to visitors.

"We currently have about 250 volunteers serving in three-hour shifts. Anyone can sign up as a volunteer through our Facebook page or at the temple office."

The temple is open to all segments of society, regardless of background.

"We also welcome non-Buddhists.

Wesak is a time for peace, reflection and charity. We appreciate everyone who comes to celebrate it with us. Come and observe, participate or volunteer. Let's hope for a peaceful and happy Wesak."

He added that *dana*, the practise of charity, is a central element of the celebrations.

"In Buddhism, charity can take many forms – giving food, money, blood, organs, even your body after death. It's part of our Buddhist DNA."

Among those preparing for the celebration is Sharon, 64, a lifelong volunteer at the temple, whose family has served the institution for generations. Her great-grandparents were among its early founders.

"We've been here every season, not just for Wesak," she said.

She recounted the temple's modest beginnings, how the Buddha statue was brought from Burma (Myanmar), the bells from Sri Lanka and how the sandy temple grounds have since transformed into a centre of worship and heritage.



Preparations were also in full swing for Wesak Day celebrations at the Thai Buddhist Chetawan Temple in Jalan Gasing, Petaling Jaya. – AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

Call for probe into cat abuse incident at Penang food court

GEORGE TOWN: Police have confirmed receiving two reports related to allegations of animal abuse involving a cat at the Cecil Street Market food court, which sparked widespread attention on social media.

Northeast police district chief ACP Abdul Rozak Muhammad said the first report was lodged by a 20-year-old woman at 4.05pm on Thursday, claiming she witnessed a food vendor choking a cat earlier that morning at around 8am.

"Following the report, a 55-year-old man, a food vendor at the food court, came forward to file a police report denying the accusations made against him," he said in a statement yesterday.

Abdul Rozak said the case has been classified as "Refer to Other Agency", with the matter handed to the Penang Island City Council for further action.

The incident, which was widely circulated on social media, triggered strong reactions from the public and animal rights supporters, many of whom called for a transparent investigation into the incident. – Bernama

Teen girl found drowned after falling through jetty floor

IPOH: A 15-year-old girl was found drowned after she reportedly fell through the floorboards at the Sungai Raja Hitam Jetty in Kampung Beting Luas, Changkat Keruing in Perak on Friday.

In a statement yesterday, a spokesperson for the Manjung District Civil Defence Force Operations Control Centre said the Changkat Keruing Volunteer Fire Brigade found her body at 7.52am.

"The victim's body was found floating about one kilometre from where she was believed to have fallen," the spokesperson said, adding that the remains were handed to police.

In the 10.30pm incident, the teenager from Kampung Baru Changkat Keruing allegedly fell into the river while walking along the jetty. – Bernama

'Reappointment of MACC chief vital, strategic move'

KUALA LUMPUR: The reappointment of Tan Sri Azam Baki as the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner is a critical and strategic move to ensure the continuity of the nation's anti-corruption agenda.

Malaysian Corruption Watch (MCW) president Jais Abdul Karim said in the current climate, in which corruption issues are becoming increasingly complex and challenging, leadership continuity at MACC is essential to maintain momentum in investigations, prosecutions and the promotion of integrity in both the public and private sectors.

"MCW believes this extension also offers an important opportunity to groom future leaders within MACC."

"It allows potential successors to gain hands-on experience, understand the intricacies of managing integrity-related crises and deal with the internal and

external pressures that come with leading an anti-corruption enforcement agency," he said in a statement yesterday.

Jais expressed hope that MACC would continue to be empowered through strong policy support, comprehensive administrative reforms and strategic approaches rooted in the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability.

On Friday, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar announced that His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim had consented to Azam's reappointment for another year, effective May 13.

"We are pleased to inform that in accordance with subsections 5(1) and (2) of the MACC Act 2009, His Majesty has consented to the reappointment of Tan Sri Azam Baki as chief commissioner of MACC for a one year-year term from

May 13, 2025 to May 12, 2026."

The statement also highlighted Azam's experience, commitment and achievements in leading MACC.

The 62-year-old has held the position since March 9, 2020, succeeding Latheefa Koya, with previous one-year reappointments in May 2023 and May 2024.

Born in Negeri Sembilan in 1963, Azam holds qualifications in Electrical Power Engineering from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, a Bachelor of Jurisprudence from Universiti Malaya and a Master's degree from Asia E-University.

He began his enforcement career in 1984 with the Anti-Corruption Agency (now MACC), serving as investigator, intelligence officer and prosecutor in Kelantan and Perak before rising through the ranks as intelligence director, investigation director and deputy chief

commissioner (Operations).

During his tenure, Azam has emphasised independent, transparent and evidence-based investigations while introducing key reforms, including institutional and legislative improvements, digital transformation using AI and blockchain technologies, and establishing the Anti-Corruption Tactical Squad for officer safety and operational efficiency.

Under his leadership, MACC has investigated high-profile cases, including the littoral combat ship scandal, money laundering and power abuse involving prominent political figures and corruption among enforcement personnel.

Azam has also championed grassroots anti-corruption education as a long-term preventive measure, aligning with the Madani governance framework's integrity focus. – Bernama



Growing zesty success through ginger farming

Side-hustle farmer initially grew vegetables such as bitter gourd, okra, spinach and chillies before settling on current cash crop

KUALA LUMPUR: As the cost of living continues to rise, more Malaysians are turning to side ventures to supplement their income, including one Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) employee who found promise in agriculture.

While many turn to gig economy jobs, 40-year-old Khairul Azwan Mohamad Hasbani chose to pursue farming, a field he has steadily grown into since 2019.

Born and raised in Sungai Besar, Selangor, Khairul Azwan initially cultivated crops such as bitter gourd, okra, bottle gourd, ridge gourd, water spinach, spinach, aubergine and chilli.

In October last year, he expanded into ginger cultivation, a decision that proved fruitful when his first harvest delivered impressive returns last month.

Operating his farm in Kampung Sungai Panjang, Sungai Besar, he said he prepared for the ginger venture by attending a three-day course organised by the Crop Industry Development Division at the Serdang Agricultural Complex last October.

"I also gathered knowledge from Google and YouTube and visited friends' farms to learn from their hands-on experience," he told Bernama.

"Honestly, I had no prior experience in planting ginger, so I sought guidance from the Sabak Bernam District Agriculture Office. They gave significant support, especially with funding. I just had to put the plan into action," he added.

He allocated 2.4ha for the project,



Following the success of his first harvest, Khairul Azwan plans to expand his cultivation area. - PIC COURTESY OF KHAIRUL AZWAN

although only 0.4ha was used in the initial phase, planting about 10,000 Thai ginger plants, which are highly sought-after in local markets.

"Young ginger can be harvested after three to four months, while mature ginger typically takes seven to eight months," he said.

Following the success of his first harvest, Khairul Azwan plans to expand his cultivation area.

The young ginger was sold to wholesalers and at nearby markets, fetching between RM7 and RM10 per kilogramme.

"Seeing the ginger harvest for the first time from my own efforts, I feel a deep sense of satisfaction and pride," he said.

He currently runs the farm with help from two workers.

The father of two shared that one of the main challenges in ginger farming is bacterial infections affecting the plants.

"My routine includes spraying insecticide two to three times a week," he said.

Despite the hard labour and harsh weather, he expressed gratitude for the strong support from his family, friends and the Sabak Bernam Agriculture Department.

The potential of ginger farming was recently highlighted by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who encouraged rural communities to seize the opportunity to cultivate the crop, which has strong demand in markets such as China, Europe and the US, particularly for cosmetics and pharmaceutical products.

Instant 'sea grapes' set for export in 2026

KUALA LUMPUR: Gamai Sdn Bhd, the producer of instant *latok* – a traditional seaweed delicacy also known as sea grapes – is targeting exports to the Philippines and Singapore next year, as demand for the product grows both locally and internationally.

Founder Fatimah Salleh said the company's latest innovation enables the seaweed to stay fresh for up to six months, a significant improvement from the fresh version, which typically wilts within days.

Fatimah, who also owns Restoran Ikan Bakar Semporna in Kepong, said the idea for instant sea grapes was born after customers frequently complained that the delicacy could not be transported home due to its perishability.

"Fresh sea grapes would typically last only two days at room temperature and exposure to unsuitable conditions causes it to wilt and lose its original taste."

"Most of my customers said they couldn't bring it back to their hometowns. That's when I came up with the idea for instant *latok*, which lasts up to six months," she told Bernama.

Priced at RM10 per pack, the vacuum-packed seaweed requires only two rinses or soaks in room-temperature water to rehydrate and double in size.

It is best enjoyed with the tangy, sweet and spicy sauce that comes with it.

Sea grapes are a light green seaweed that grows in coastal waters, particularly around Borneo.

Its grape-like clusters are known for their unique texture and briny flavour, often paired with a zesty sauce made from lime and chillies.

Fatimah said demand for sea grapes at her restaurant began surging in 2017 after the dish spread on social media among Malaysians eager to try the rare delicacy, which is not commonly available in Peninsular Malaysia.

The company now manages seaweed cultivation with a team of 15 workers, producing between 500kg and 700kg of sea grapes monthly.

Fatimah said the Philippines and Singapore were chosen as the company's first export markets following strong interest at trade exhibitions in both countries.

"We saw encouraging demand, especially from food lovers in the Philippines and Singapore. So we're planning to export *latok* there based on market needs," she said.

EDUCATION

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India, Pakistan **step up** attacks

US offers help on 'constructive talks'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India launched strikes and counter-strikes on military installations yesterday, prompting US calls for the neighbours to begin talks and defuse their escalating conflict, the most intense since 1999.

Fears that the countries' nuclear arsenals might come into play spiked when the Pakistan military said a top military and civil body overseeing its nuclear weapons would meet, but the defence minister later said no such meeting was scheduled.

Officials from both sides showed a willingness to take a step back.

Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ishaq Dar told local

television that if India stops here, then "we will consider to stop here".

The Indian military said yesterday that "all hostile actions have been effectively countered".

Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif played down any immediate nuclear threat, calling it a "very distant possibility".

"We shouldn't even discuss it in the immediate context," he told ARY TV. "Before we get to that point, I think temperatures will come down. No meeting has happened of the National Command Authority, nor is any such meeting scheduled."

Pakistan's information minister did not respond to a request for comment and the military said it had no immediate comment.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called Pakistan's Army Chief General

Asim Munir and India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar yesterday, urging both sides to de-escalate and "re-establish direct communication to avoid miscalculation".

"India's approach has always been measured and responsible and remains so," Jaishankar said on X.

Indian Wing Commander Vyomika Singh told a press conference India was responding to moves by Pakistani forces but would show restraint if Pakistan did so as well.

"The Pakistan military has been observed to be moving their troops into forward areas, indicating offensive intent to further escalate the situation," she said.

"Indian armed forces remain in a high state of operational readiness. Indian armed forces reiterate their commitment to non-escalation, provided it is

reciprocated by the Pakistan military."

As tensions remain high, residents across Pakistan and India have rushed to stockpile food and other essential supplies, while families living near the border fled to safer areas. Indian authorities have installed sirens in high-rise buildings in New Delhi, some 650km from the border.

Pakistan early yesterday said it had targeted bases in India, including a missile storage site, in response to attacks by the Indian military.

India said there was limited damage to equipment and personnel at four air force stations. The military said there were several high-speed missile attacks on air bases in Punjab state and that India had responded to the attacks.

Five civilians were killed in the attacks in the Jammu region of Indian Kashmir, regional police said. - Reuters



PEACEMAKERS — Buddhist monks chanting sutras among the stupas at Borobudur Temple, the world's largest Buddhist monument and a Unesco World Heritage Site in Magelang, Central Java yesterday ahead of Wesak Day. The occasion is the most sacred day for Buddhists, commemorating the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha Siddhartha Gautama, all traditionally believed to have occurred on the full moon day of the Vesakha month in the ancient Indian lunar calendar. - AFP/PIIC

Ex-president Duterte runs for mayor

DAVAO CITY: Former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte spends his days in a small, spartan room in detention at the Hague, awaiting trial for a bloody war on drugs.

But in his hometown of Davao City, Duterte is on the ticket for mayor in midterm elections tomorrow that he is widely expected to win, riding on support in the family stronghold, though it may not translate nationwide.

"I've seen what he accomplished as both mayor and president, from his fight against drug lords to what he did for the country," said Jennifer Maumbas, 28, a worker in a small cafe that displayed Duterte's visage on a banner.

"No matter what happens, we're solidly for Duterte."

Duterte's arrest in March, following a request by the International Criminal Court, was a major blow to his powerful family, whose popularity surged after he swept to power in 2016 from his position as a maverick, crime-busting mayor.

As president, the tough-talking Duterte upended Philippine foreign policy and launched a "war on drugs" that rights groups say killed significantly more than a police estimate of 6,000.

Yet his influence beyond Davao is far less certain, as the polls shape as a test of how far incumbent President Ferdinand

Marcos Jr has managed to subdue the Dutertes' political machine.

The Duterte name has a mythic status in Davao, but perhaps less nationwide, said Ederson Tapia, a specialist in public administration at the University of Makati.

"All indications are that they still have a solid base," he said.

Duterte's daughter, Vice-President Sara Duterte, is seen as a potential contender in the 2028 presidential elections, but is besieged by political woes of her own.

Marcos' candidates remain ahead in polls and appear poised to dominate the Senate race, despite the sympathy generated for the Duterte camp. - Reuters

Seoul party drops presidential candidate

SEOUL: South Korea's conservative party dropped its presidential candidate against his will yesterday, beginning a process to instead nominate outsider and former prime minister Han Duck-soo less than a month before the election.

The June 3 presidential poll will decide who replaces Yoon Suk Yeol, who was removed from office over his declaration of martial law in December, sending South Korea into a period of political turmoil.

Yoon's People Power Party (PPP) had initially chosen Kim Moon-soo, a former labour minister who won the party's primary last week, but it announced yesterday that his nomination was cancelled.

Instead, the party said it was nominating Han, who had initially launched his presidential bid as an independent. The former prime minister joined PPP yesterday.

"In the end, efforts to unify under a single candidate have failed. It is deeply regrettable and heartbreaking," said Kwon Young-se, the PPP's interim leader.

He said they "needed a competitive candidate to run as the People Power Party's official nominee".

Han's nomination is expected to be finalised today. - AFP

Xi pledges to help Myanmar rebuild

MOSCOW: China's President Xi Jinping pledged on Friday to support Myanmar in its rebuilding efforts following an earthquake.

Xi met Myanmar's State Administration Council Chairman Min Aung Hlaing in Moscow on the sidelines of Russia's Victory Day celebrations.

Xi expressed his support for Myanmar pursuing development "suited to its national conditions, safeguarding its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national stability, and steadily advancing its domestic political agenda".

Xi said he hoped Myanmar would take "concrete measures to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects in Myanmar, and intensify efforts to combat cross-border crimes".

The earthquake has enabled Min Aung Hlaing to re-establish ties with regional powers, with offers of millions in aid and relief supplies. - Reuters/AFP

'Israel not involved in Gaza food distribution'

No timetable for aid op, says US envoy

TEL AVIV: Israel will not be involved in food distribution under a US-led plan for the Gaza Strip but would provide "necessary military security", Washington's ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee said on Friday.

Despite imposing a now two-month-long blockade of aid on Gaza, which it says is aimed at putting pressure on Hamas, Israel has asserted there is no humanitarian crisis in the territory.

"The Israelis are going to be involved in providing necessary military security because it is a war zone, but they will not be involved in the distribution of the food, or even in the bringing of the food into Gaza," Huckabee told reporters in Jerusalem.

The US-led initiative, which the State Department said on Thursday would be led by a new foundation to distribute aid, has been met with international criticism as it appears to sideline the

United Nations and existing aid organisations, and would overhaul humanitarian structures in Gaza.

Senior Hamas official Basem Naim said the plan risks "militarising aid".

Huckabee called upon the United Nations, "every NGO" and "every government" to take part.

"We invite concerned people to join this process," he said.

He offered no timetable for the aid operation or any details about the non-governmental foundation that would be involved.

Huckabee said there were "several partners who have agreed to be a part of the effort", without naming them.

Israel imposed a blockade on Gaza on March 2 amid an impasse in talks with Hamas, and resumed its military offensive on March 18, ending a two-month truce.

Huckabee said under the US plan, Israeli forces would provide security "at a distance from the distribution point to protect them from the ongoing calculus of the war", with "security at

the distribution points provided by contractors".

In Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, crowds of Palestinians jostled for position, holding cooking pots, bowls and serving dishes aloft in hopes of getting a hot meal at a distribution point before it closed.

Israel accuses Hamas of diverting aid sent to Gaza. While Huckabee also blamed the group, he said there was "obviously a humanitarian crisis".

"That's why we need a humanitarian aid programme going in".

Amnesty International voiced alarm over the aid plan, saying in a statement "a foundation contributing to Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territory would be in violation of international law".

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA, which has been criticised by Israel and the United States, said it was "very difficult" to imagine any operation to deliver humanitarian aid in Gaza without its presence. – AFP

Judge pauses plans for mass layoffs

WASHINGTON: A US judge has temporarily blocked several federal agencies from proceeding with the mass layoffs of government workers ordered by President Donald Trump in February.

District Court Judge Susan Illston of California ordered a two-week pause on Friday, writing that the administration's moves to slash the federal workforce likely required approval from Congress.

"The court holds the president likely must request Congressional cooperation to order the changes he seeks, and thus issues a temporary restraining order to pause large-scale reductions in force in the meantime," Illston wrote in the order.

Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has directed federal agencies to prepare workforce reduction plans as part of wider efforts by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to downsize the government.

In a Feb 11 executive order, Trump called for a "critical transformation of the federal bureaucracy" and directed agencies to cut workers who are not designated essential.

A coalition of unions, non-profit groups and six city and county governments last week sued Trump, DOGE and federal agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, arguing that they had exceeded their authority by implementing the mass layoffs without congressional go-ahead.

"The administration's unlawful attempt to reorganise the federal government has thrown agencies into chaos, disrupting critical services," the plaintiffs said in a joint statement.

"Each of us represents communities invested in efficiency of government – laying off employees and reorganising functions haphazardly does not achieve that." – AFP

Pentagon purges military libraries

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon on Friday ordered the identification and sequestration of materials in the libraries of US military academies and war colleges that contain information on subjects such as diversity, anti-racism and transgender people.

The move is the latest step by the Defence Department to target pro-diversity content and programmes – an effort that led to the removal of troves of documents and images from its website and swept up articles on African American pioneers such as the Tuskegee Airmen.

"Educational materials promoting divisive concepts and gender ideology are incompatible with the department's core mission," said a memo to senior Pentagon leaders, military commanders and other officials.

The memo directs officials to "promptly identify any department and library materials potentially incompatible with this core mission," and sequester it for review and "determine an appropriate ultimate disposition for those materials".

It said a committee of "knowledgeable leaders, educators and library professionals" had compiled a list of search terms to identify materials for review.

In a separate memo on Friday, Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth gave the secretaries of US military departments 30 days to certify that the country's military academies will not consider race, ethnicity or sex for purposes of admissions.

The academies must "offer admission based exclusively on merit", Hegseth wrote in the memo. – AFP



(From left) Merz, Macron, Zelensky, Ukraine First Lady Olena Zelenska and Starmer pay their respects to the victims of war at the Memorial for the Fallen at the Independence Square in Kyiv. – APFIC

European leaders meet Zelensky to show support

KYIV: The leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Poland met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for talks yesterday in a show of unity a day after Russia's Vladimir Putin hosted his allies at a Victory Day parade in Red Square.

The summit will discuss a US and European proposal for a 30-day ceasefire in the Russian war on Ukraine that if refused by Moscow would see them jointly impose new sanctions, a French diplomatic source said, adding that the step had not been finalised.

The visit by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, President Emmanuel Macron, Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Prime Minister Donald Tusk is the first time the four leaders have travelled together to Ukraine.

"Alongside the US, we call on Russia to agree to a full and unconditional 30-day ceasefire to create the space for talks on a just and lasting peace," the four leaders said in a joint statement.

As their train pulled into Kyiv, the screen on the platform announced the arrival of the "Bravery Express". Zelensky accompanied them as they paid their respects at a memorial in central Kyiv to honour Ukrainian soldiers killed in the war.

The visit comes at an unpredictable diplomatic moment in Russia's more than three-year-long war against Ukraine. US President Donald Trump is pushing for a rapid peace after tearing up the policies of his predecessor.

After engaging directly with Russian

officials, clashing publicly with Zelensky and briefly cutting vital military aid to Ukraine, the Trump administration has patched up ties with Kyiv and signed a mineral resources deal.

Trump has threatened to step up sanctions against Russia, but he has also said he could abandon the peace effort if there is no breakthrough. On Thursday, he called for a 30-day ceasefire and Zelensky said he would be ready to implement it immediately.

The European Union has also joined the call for the ceasefire.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia supported the implementation of a 30-day ceasefire, but with due consideration of "nuances". – Reuters

theSun day

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HAPPY

*Mother's
Day*

Love

weaves its way home

“No one in my circle of friends had gone through IVF, so I didn’t have anyone to refer to. The medication threw my hormones off balance and unfortunately, my first attempt at IVF failed,” shares Nurul Afidah Zulkifli, co-founder of one of Malaysia’s most successful homegrown labels, Mimpikita, as she reflects on her journey with in-vitro fertilisation (IVF).

While she often shares delightful snapshots of her children on Instagram and highlights the latest Mimpikita collections, few know that this petite mother chose IVF as her path to motherhood. Her candid account reveals that the journey was fraught with pain and solitude.

Behind her cheerful demeanour, Nurul acknowledges that the emotional ups and downs of the IVF process are significant and often accompanied by unspoken stress. Discussions surrounding IVF, miscarriage and pregnancy challenges remain sensitive topics for many, often avoided in public conversations. However, these issues are very real for millions of women worldwide and as society progresses, the dialogue is gradually becoming more open.

While IVF has shed much of its previous stigma, it continues to be an emotional and physical challenge for many women. The World Health Organisation reports that one in six couples globally faces infertility, with IVF recognised as one of the most effective treatments.

In Malaysia, recent statistics indicate that around 15% of couples within the community encounter fertility issues, underscoring the need for increased awareness about IVF and reproductive health. For Nurul, her journey began after five years of marriage. As many of her friends welcomed children, she and her husband faced questions about their delay in starting a family.

“I decided to try IUI at 30, but unfortunately, it didn’t work. I also tried several alternative treatments, such as visiting traditional massage therapists and different gynaecologists, but still, no luck. Eventually, I decided to pursue IVF at 32.”

But the challenges did not cease there. Lacking prior experience with IVF and insufficient physical and mental preparation, her initial attempt fell short of her expectations.

“The medication disrupted my hormones and I was under immense stress throughout the injection and egg retrieval process. Unfortunately, my first IVF attempt failed even before the embryo transfer could take place, with no clear explanation as to why it didn’t work. I accepted it as not being rezeki at that time.”

All eight of her embryos perished before they could be transferred and the prospect of repeating the process felt overwhelming. In light of this, Nurul firmly stated that fertility struggles should never be a source of shame, no matter where a woman is in her journey.

“I went straight home and cried a little, feeling angry one minute and despairing the next. We were so frustrated and back in limbo again. Our lives remained on hold and we kept asking, ‘When would this all end?’ We didn’t know what we were doing and assumed that IVF would work the first time. My husband and I learned the hard way just how difficult IVF is.”

Love weaves its way home

In this special Mother's Day feature, we take a deeply personal look into Nurul Zulkifli's emotional IVF journey and how it shaped her path to motherhood and success

BY AQILAH NAJWA JAMALUDDIN



Nurul with Adam Nael, Adel Noah and Aidan Eidris.



The second time, I was mentally, physically and emotionally prepared."

Nurul, co-founder of Mimpikita

All smiles ... one happy family

A 2019 study from the University of Malaya revealed that women in Malaysia undergoing IVF faced significantly elevated levels of stress, anxiety and depression compared to those receiving other medical treatments. The psychological toll was particularly pronounced for women who had experienced multiple unsuccessful IVF attempts.

Since the introduction of IVF in Malaysia during the 1980s, an increasing number of licensed fertility centres have embraced this approach. Many are turning to scientific advancements to help them start families, as success rates and accessibility continue to improve. However, experts caution that individuals considering IVF should seek legal advice before making a decision.

"The second time, I was mentally, physically and emotionally prepared. My sisters ran the business for two months while I focused on myself. My team was briefed. My husband, as always, supported me every step of the way. My mother, too, cooked for me. That kind of support is priceless. And it was during that time that I learned I was pregnant!"

Nine months later, she welcomed not just one but a pair of twin boys, Adam Nael and Adel Noah in 2016. Then in 2020, she welcomed her third child, Aidan Eidris, whom she conceived naturally, a blessing that fulfilled her long-held prayers.

"I never imagined I could manage both business and motherhood," she reflects.

"Motherhood has undeniably made me feel more vulnerable, both emotionally and physically. There were moments when I doubted my ability to excel in either role. However, I have come to view vulnerability as a source of strength. It has taught me the importance of slowing down when needed, seeking assistance and leading with empathy."

Nurul shares that her dual roles as a mother and chairwoman of her brand share commonalities. She believes both experiences enhanced her leadership skills, making her more patient, intuitive and compassionate. These are qualities that a highly emotional woman can cultivate in today's fast-paced world.



Hard at work, heart at home.

"When I'm at work, I focus on the business; I switch to mum and wife mode at home. I try my best to be present for my family. Thankfully, my husband is very hands-on and I have my family to help when I need extra hands. I live just five minutes from the office, so I can cook daily and check on the kids whenever possible. It's a balancing act, but I make it work."

Mimpikita was founded in 2008 by Nurul and her two sisters, Amirah and Syahira. The trio aspired to create timeless pieces that embody the modern woman who appreciates effortless yet chic modest design. Thus, the brand was born, establishing a lasting legacy that

would resonate with fashion enthusiasts worldwide, both in Malaysia and beyond.

Having been featured in *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Forbes*, this fashion brand is undoubtedly one of the major favourites among the locals. With a strong emphasis on the 'Malaya' aesthetic and design, Nurul articulates that their vision is deeply rooted in storytelling.

"Our inspiration largely stems from our heritage, culture and the everyday beauty of being Malaysian. The 'Malaya' aesthetic embodies a fusion of nostalgia and modernity, where tradition seamlessly intertwines with contemporary design, creating an authentic and effortless feel."

Nurul also mentioned that she and her sisters believe their creations should be visually appealing and have a purpose and meaning.

"We are committed to designs that evoke emotions and resonate with people. This philosophy has been instrumental in shaping Mimpikita's identity, enabling us to distinguish ourselves while remaining connected to our roots."

Beloved by many Malaysian A-listers, including Neelofa, Nur Fazura, Hanis Zalikha and Scha Alyahya, Nurul acknowledged that Mimpikita has cultivated a loyal fan base over the years, which has allowed them to understand their audience's demands and preferences better. Begun as a design-focused brand, it has blossomed into a vibrant sisterhood community, embraced by celebrities and fans.

For Nurul, this circle of celebrity mothers is far more than just a network, it is a lifeline. These women have become her trusted confidantes in a world that demands a delicate balance between career and family. United by shared experiences, they offer not just advice but a community that understands the complexities of navigating both motherhood and public life.

"Community has always been central to Mimpikita. From the outset, we view our friends and fans as more than just purchasers; they are part of our extended family. Their support and inspiration have been invaluable over the years. Additionally, we prioritise giving back whenever possible through partnerships, initiatives or by designing pieces that honour the women who wear them," expresses Nurul enthusiastically.

In discussing the empowerment of women and the evolving narrative of modern motherhood, Nurul shares that her experiences with the challenges of physical and emotional health during IVF have profoundly influenced her views on family and motherhood. She strongly advocates sharing the realities and educating others about IVF.

"Whatever you are feeling is valid. Take your time to do thorough research and make sure you're ready. Be prepared physically and mentally and remember to take it one day at a time."

With the abundance of fertility clinics, therapists and media coverage surrounding IVF and infertility, we want to emphasise that those currently facing these challenges do not have to navigate them alone. Educating yourself about this topic is crucial for your well-being and those around you.

As you navigate the journey of motherhood, remain steadfast in the role you embrace, for there is nothing more exquisite than the experience of motherhood, a vocation that is revered and celebrated by many," Nurul concludes with grace.

Unconditional love, always

Mums don't ask for much, but they give everything. This Mother's Day, we look at ways to celebrate the incredible woman who gave you life, love and possibly that slightly dramatic streak

BY SIMON VELLA

THERE'S no job quite like being a mum. She's your first cheerleader, confidante, therapist, nurse, negotiator, chef, PA and occasionally your sternest critic. Through all of it, she's the woman whose love doesn't come with terms, conditions or monthly instalments.

From school drop-offs and doctor's visits to heartbreak pep talks and career advice, a mother's support system runs quietly in the background, relentless and invisible like the WiFi, only far more reliable. So when Mother's Day rolls around, why not put in the effort to make her feel seen, heard and for once, waited on?

Let's be honest, she's probably already told you not to get her anything. "I don't need anything," she'll say, waving your ideas away with the same hand that used to fix your collar before school. But here's the truth: it's not about extravagant gifts. It's about attention. Thought. Time. A reminder that everything she does hasn't gone unnoticed.

A picnic it is

If you're planning something later in the day, consider skipping the usual restaurant run and opting for something more personal, like a picnic. It doesn't need to be elaborate. A few of her favourite dishes, a comfortable blanket and a shady spot at a local park will do just fine. In Kuala Lumpur, places like Taman Tugu, Desa ParkCity or Perdana Botanical Gardens offer a lovely setting, especially if you get there before the midday heat kicks in. If mum's not keen on the outdoors, a living-room picnic with candles and family photos works just as well.

Feeling sentimental?

Then it's time to bring out the big guns: a video tribute. Gather family, friends, neighbours and anyone who knows her and ask them to record short clips describing their favourite memories with her or what they admire most about her. Stitch them together with a bit of music and a heartfelt



ending and you've got something that may just earn you "child of the year". If that's too techy, go analogue. Write a list titled "Lessons I Learned from Mum". Frame it or better yet, read it aloud over dinner. Tears are guaranteed, especially if your siblings chip in their own contributions.

Show your world

Consider taking her to your workplace if you want to do something unexpected. It might sound odd, but giving her a glimpse into your daily routine – the desk you sit at, the colleagues you speak of, the printer that's never working can be deeply meaningful. It connects her to your adult life, especially if you're no longer living at home. Afterwards, take her out for a long lunch and let her be part of your world for a change.

Now, a quick word to all the dads

Mother's Day isn't just a day for kids to celebrate their mum. It's also about the mother of your children and she deserves just as much thoughtfulness. Let her sleep in. Keep the kids busy. Organise a mini pampering session. Better yet, sneak the children away to make a photo album, a handmade card or a quick painting project.

Just make sure you clean up after. The last thing mum needs is to emerge from her nap and find the living room looking like a craft explosion.

There's also something beautiful about helping her reconnect with herself. Arrange a brunch with her best friend or

encourage her to spend a few hours doing something she loves, uninterrupted. It shows you pay attention to the things that matter to her outside of family life and yes, you'll score massive brownie points with her bestie too.

As for what not to do. Avoid disappearing with your mates, bingeing on sports all day, or gifting her something that benefits you too (looking at you, "family blender"). Don't forget the other mothers in your life, your mother-in-law or any woman who's played a nurturing role. One bouquet goes a long way in keeping family WhatsApp groups happy.

Ultimately, it doesn't matter whether you go big or keep it simple. A handwritten note, a cup of tea made without being asked or just a day where she gets to be herself, not a to-do list in human form, can mean the world.

She's never asked for much. Just your happiness, your health and the occasional call back. This Mother's Day, give her a little something extra in return – your time, your gratitude and a quiet moment where she feels absolutely, utterly loved.



Let her sleep in. Keep the kids busy.

In their words: A mother's love



As a mother, I've learned that love is both a foundation and a catalyst for growth. Every lesson, every sacrifice, is a step toward shaping a future where my children can thrive and lead."

Jasmine Ng, single mom of two, technopreneur



When my mom had a stroke, my siblings and I came together, but what moved me most was how our children, including my own, stepped in with such care and compassion. Motherhood has taught me that we don't just raise kids – we raise thoughtful individuals who show up for others. The greatest reward for me as a mother is the privilege of caring for my own mum and raising sons who now help care for her too. A good upbringing doesn't just raise good kids. It lays the foundation for a more caring, connected society."

Fazlyn Kamal, mother of two boys and 11 cats



To me, being a mother is both a blessing and a divine responsibility. It is a sacrifice wrapped in joy, duty carried with love. To nurture a life is no small task, it is a miracle entrusted by God. And in that sacred role, I've found purpose, strength and grace."

Vasugi Lechumanan, mum of two, Carnatic music teacher



On Mother's Day, the paramount joy lies in seeing our children happy, safe, and healthy. My heartfelt wish extends not just to my son but to all children worldwide, especially those in Gaza. Let's come together in prayer, mothers everywhere, to protect and cherish each other's well-being and that of our beloved little ones."

Zuhaila Sedek, mother of one, peace lover



Motherhood, to me, is a precious gift – one I nearly missed, having married at 29 and welcoming my two children at 30 and 31. I've loved every moment of watching them grow, even if I'm far from the perfect mom. I probably pampered them more than I should, showering them with hugs, "I love yous", toys, outings and holidays. I've always encouraged them to think for themselves and find their own path. While I stressed the importance of education, I never pressured them, trusting they would thrive once they discovered what they love. Now, at 20 and 19, they're doing just that and I couldn't be prouder."

Noryani Ismail, mother of two, PR practitioner

Half truths, misquotes & other myths we love to repeat



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

MYTH: Owls can spin their heads in a full circle

TRUTH: Owls can rotate their heads up to 270 degrees

Owls can spin their necks dramatically, which often gives people the false impression that they are doing a full circle. The truth is that owls have 14 neck vertebrae, allowing for extreme rotation without damaging blood vessels or arteries. As they can turn 270 degrees to the right and left, owls have a 540-degree range of motion.

Evidence: According to the International Owl Centre, it is physically impossible for an owl looking straight ahead to turn its head 360 degrees without getting injured. Owls are limited to turning their heads 270 degrees in one direction.

MYTH: Paper is bad for the environment

TRUTH: Paper is a highly recycled and renewable material

Unlike plastic, paper is biodegradable, recyclable and made from a renewable resource. The belief that using paper leads to deforestation totally ignores how the paper industry operates today. Most paper comes from managed forests, where trees are replanted on

a regular basis. In fact, more demand for paper often leads to more trees being planted.

Evidence: According to the Forest Stewardship Council, responsible forestry practices maintain biodiversity and increase forest cover. Forest areas in North America and Scandinavia regions have been growing despite high paper use. Paper use also boasts a global recycling rate of over 60%.

MYTH: Swallowed chewy gum stays in your stomach for seven years

TRUTH: Swallowed gum does not remain in your body

This myth likely began as a warning to stop children from swallowing gum. Swallowed gum moves through the digestive system like most indigestible substances (e.g. coins or plastic bits) and exits the body in a few days.

Evidence: The Mayo Clinic and paediatric gastroenterologists confirmed no 7-year gum pile-up in the stomach. Also, medical reviews in paediatrics documented rare cases of constipation caused by excessive gum swallowing.



MYTH: Your body needs to detox with juice cleanses or special diets

TRUTH: Liver and kidneys detox your body naturally

The detox products that promise to flush toxins out of your body are widely sold in markets nowadays. In reality, these are often unnecessary and unregulated. The body has a built-in detoxification system, primarily

located in organs such as the liver, kidneys and intestines. Unsupervised intake of juice cleanses may deprive you of essential nutrients or spike your blood sugar.

Evidence: A 2014 review in the *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics* found no clinical evidence supporting detox diets. Rather than downing quick liquid fixes, dietitians recommend whole foods instead.



MYTH: Stepping over someone will stunt their growth

TRUTH: Stepping over someone will not affect their height at all

This superstition is widespread in Malaysia and similar beliefs can be found in other cultures. The elderly often make this remark to encourage children to behave appropriately and avoid mischief. The idea is that stepping over a person, especially a younger one, is considered disrespectful or unlucky and in the

case of this myth, it is believed to stunt the growth of the person who is stepped over. This belief likely comes from the idea that stepping over someone is considered a rude and disrespectful act in traditional societies.

Evidence: Paediatricians and growth studies have shown no correlation between physical obstruction and height development. Overall growth is primarily influenced by genetics, nutrition and overall health, not by where you walk or how you step.

WELCOME to Malaysia, where self-defence is becoming more than just a skill – it's a movement. The emergence of female-only martial arts gyms, particularly SheFights, has put a spotlight on the growing interest among women to take their safety and fitness into their own hands.

Founded by the passionate Faeznur Farok, SheFights is more than just a gym – it's a sisterhood dedicated to empowering women through the art of combat.

A personal journey sparking a movement

Faeznur's journey into the world of martial arts began with a passion that soon transformed into a lifeline. Her experience in martial arts grew alongside her personal struggles, notably during a challenging divorce.

"Training became my anchor," she reflects, explaining how martial arts helped her rebuild her confidence and sense of purpose.

"That experience reinforced my belief in the power of martial arts, not just as a sport, but as a tool for healing and empowerment".

It was during this process that she noticed a critical gap. Women all around the country were eager to train but often felt intimidated in male-dominated spaces. Recognising this need, Faeznur launched SheFights as a haven where women could train confidently, free from judgment. What commenced as small self-defence workshops rapidly scaled into a full-fledged gym, catering specifically to the unique needs of women. "I wanted to create a space where women could train confidently, feel safe and build strength together," she shares, emphasising the essence of community at SheFights.

Breaking barriers: The need for a female-only gym

The decision to establish a female-only gym arose from the collective experiences of many women. Faeznur noted that several women hesitated to join mixed-gender gyms due to past negative experiences or simply a desire for an environment that facilitated their personal growth. SheFights addresses these issues head-on, creating a comfortable and supportive space where women can focus solely on their training.

"Many women are looking for a space where they can train without feeling self-conscious," Faeznur states, pointing out how the community at SheFights actively encourages personal development. The gym's environment fosters openness, allowing members to ask questions and push their limits without feeling pressured to prove themselves.

Empowerment through training: More than just a workout

Self-defence plays a crucial role in addressing broader societal issues concerning harassment and violence against women. Faeznur believes that self-defence is about awareness and confidence as much as it is about physical capability.

"When women feel equipped to handle themselves, they're less likely to be targeted," she explains.

By instilling knowledge and empowering them with practical skills, SheFights promotes a preventive approach to personal safety.

Training women to fight back stronger

BY ASHRAF WAHAB

"When a woman learns to fight back, she carries herself differently. She's more assertive and self-assured." This newfound confidence radiates into all facets of life, enhancing women's interactions in both personal and professional realms.

SheFights offers a diverse range of martial arts disciplines tailored to address specific needs. From Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, which teaches smaller individuals how to control larger opponents, to the confidence in striking offered through boxing and Muay Thai, members are empowered to defend themselves effectively. The emphasis on real-life self-defence scenarios is particularly crucial, equipping women with skills that extend far beyond the gym.

A supportive sisterhood

Beyond physical training, SheFights cultivates a sense of community that sets it apart.

"It's a sisterhood," Faeznur describes, noting the camaraderie among members who share in each other's struggles and successes. Many women arrive at the gym feeling vulnerable, having faced harassment or assault. As they train and build relationships, they regain control over their bodies and confidence in their capabilities.

Success stories from the SheFights community illustrate this transformative process. Women who once felt fearful or uncertain have emerged empowered, capable of navigating the world with a renewed sense of safety and assurance. This supportive network is what Faeznur considers the most rewarding aspect of her work, a place where women not only grow stronger physically but also emotionally and socially.

Facing challenges head-on

While SheFights is thriving today, Faeznur faced scepticism when establishing the gym. Some questioned the necessity of a female-focused training space, doubting whether it could succeed in a landscape dominated by mixed-gender gyms. Yet, the growing community and positive responses have validated her vision.

"The response from our community has been incredible and that speaks for itself," she affirms.

Running a gym also entails conventional business challenges, such as funding and logistics, but Faeznur's unwavering passion has motivated her to overcome these obstacles. Her dedication to providing a safe space for women has driven her to achieve meaningful growth for her project.

I wanted to create a space where women could train confidently, feel safe and build strength together."

Faeznur, founder of SheFights



Taking the first step

For many women, the thought of stepping into a martial arts gym can be daunting.

"Just start! You don't need to be fit or experienced. Everyone starts somewhere," Faeznur encourages anyone hesitant to take the plunge.

The most challenging part can indeed be walking through the gym doors, but the supportive environment at SheFights ensures that every woman feels welcome. Members range from beginners to seasoned martial artists, united by their desire to grow.

The Future of SheFights

Looking ahead, Faeznur has ambitious plans for SheFights.

"The dream is to open more locations and make self-defence training accessible to more women across Malaysia," she shares excitedly. In addition, she envisions leadership programs for seasoned members to become trainers and mentors, creating a cycle of empowerment within the community.

Regular workshops and special events, including the upcoming SheFights Retreat, promise to enhance the offerings available to women. These initiatives focus not only on martial arts and self-defence but also integrate wellness aspects into training, fostering a holistic approach to empowerment.

An empowering message for women

As Faeznur looks to expand SheFights, she leaves a powerful message for women: "You are stronger than you think. Strength isn't just physical; it's mental, emotional and spiritual."

In an era where women's empowerment is gaining momentum, self-defence and fitness have become essential tools for navigating life confidently. SheFights proves that when women unite, support one another and find strength in their community, they can overcome barriers and embrace their power.

For anyone looking to embark on a journey of self-discovery and resilience, SheFights welcomes you with open arms. With each punch, kick and grappling move, women aren't just learning self-defence; they're reclaiming their power and embracing their strength. Potentially changing their lives forever, one training session at a time.



Self-defence plays a crucial role in addressing broader societal issues concerning harassment and violence against women.



The power of colour analysis

Beyond style, it's a powerful tool for enhancing both appearance and self-confidence

BY HANNEF ESQUANDER

CLOUR is more than just what you wear. It has the power to transform how you look and feel. Wearing the right shades can brighten your complexion, make you look healthier and more vibrant and even create a youthful appearance. According to Michelle Chan, a Colour Me Beautiful (CMB) Malaysia-certified consultant, understanding your best colours allows you to express your unique style, enhance your body shape and build confidence in your personal and professional life.

With a background in event planning, Chan sought to develop new skills that complemented her first profession, leading her to train as a personal stylist and branding expert with CMB. "I'm passionate about helping people look and feel better. Enabling individuals to build self-confidence through how they present themselves is incredibly rewarding," says Chan.



Chan suggesting headscarf colour options to her client.

“As soon as I draped her with the right shade of colour, her complexion instantly brightened and her confidence soared. It was as if a light bulb had been switched on.”

Chan, CMB Malaysia-certified consultant



CMB offers group analysis.

Operating her business in Kelana Jaya, Petaling Jaya, Chan works with clients from all walks of life, including doctors, CEOs and high-level executives who want to elevate their personal and corporate image. Her expertise extends beyond individual consultations – she also conducts public speaking engagements for groups of up to 150 people, focusing on personal branding and confidence-building.

How colour analysis works

“Colour analysis is the process of determining which shades complement an individual’s skin tone, hair colour and eye colour. When you wear the right colours, your complexion looks healthier, your eyes appear brighter and your overall appearance is more polished. Understanding one’s palette makes dressing effortless and shopping more straightforward. It helps individuals avoid impulse purchases that remain unworn in their wardrobe and makes outfit coordination easier,” Chan explains.

The impact of colour extends beyond aesthetics, it affects personality and self-confidence. Chan takes a personalised approach with her clients, considering factors such as profession, lifestyle and individual style preferences. When you wear the right colours, they do not just enhance your appearance; they also boost your confidence.

She recalls a touching moment with a teenage client who arrived with her mother in tears.

“As soon as I draped her with the right shade of colour, her complexion instantly brightened and her confidence soared. It was as if a light bulb had been switched on. Many clients who were initially reluctant to experiment with colour find themselves



Clients from all over the world.

eager to update their wardrobe after discovering their best shades,” says Chan.

The CMB approach

CMB has been the global leader in colour analysis, personal styling and image consultancy for over 42 years. Chan explains that their modern approach goes beyond the traditional four-season system, which was upgraded in 2006 to a more flexible and adaptable tonal system.

For first-timers, colour analysis begins when clients book an appointment online or by phone. The consultation takes place at CMB’s headquarters or the client’s location for corporate or group sessions. Seated in front of a mirror with natural or artificial light, clients answer a questionnaire about their age, job and personality.

Chan uses CMB’s signature colour drapes to assess how different shades interact with the client’s skin tone. Based on this, she selects the most flattering colours, with more specific shades hand-picked from hundreds of available fabric swatches. At the end of the session, she provides an overall analysis and guides clients to build a wardrobe that enhances their look.

“Our 138-colour drapes are the key tools in identifying a person’s best colour palette. Accurate colour tones are essential in determining the most flattering shades. CMB also provides seasonal trend updates, helping clients incorporate new fashion trends into their wardrobe while working with existing pieces,” she explains.

It is important to note that colour analysis is not a one-time process because as we age, our skin, hair and eye colours change, which can make certain colours look ‘off’ over time. Many CMB clients return after 20 years for a reassessment and colour review.

From reluctance to radiance

“One of the most memorable transformations was with a doctor and business owner who initially wore muted hijabs and no makeup. After our colour analysis, I advised her to switch to bold, bright hijab colours that complemented her pale skin tone and big eyes. I also recommended a brighter lipstick shade and the change was instant! She embraced her new look and now even calls herself ‘Dr Pinky’ on social media,” she recalls.

Some of us are still hesitant about embracing colour. Chan suggests starting with accessories. Adding colour through scarves, handbags or statement jewellery is easier and less intimidating. For men, it could be a stylish watch, sunglasses or a bag in their accent colours.

Many celebrities who always look effortlessly stylish have a deep understanding of their best colours or work with a personal stylist. A well-dressed person’s clothing always complements their natural colouring, body shape and individual style. Each season brings new trending colours, but choosing shades that enhance your features is the key to looking your best.

“Instead of wearing a colour just because it’s popular, find your version of that colour. If red is in trend, don’t just pick any red – choose a shade that makes you glow.” With the right colours, anyone can look and feel their best, radiating confidence and style in every aspect of life,” Chan leaves readers with this takeaway.

TURMERIC isn't new. It has long been revered in traditional Indian and Southeast Asian systems of medicine, such as Ayurveda and Jamu, where it's used to treat everything from wounds and respiratory issues to digestive troubles and skin conditions. What's changed is how modern science is now beginning to validate what generations have practised for centuries. From turmeric shots at juice bars to curcumin-infused skincare and wellness supplements, it's become the golden child of natural health trends – but beneath the hype lies genuine substance.

The active ingredient in turmeric is curcumin, a powerful polyphenol responsible not only for its vibrant yellow-orange pigment but also for its impressive pharmacological properties. Curcumin is both a potent antioxidant and an anti-inflammatory compound. It works at a cellular level to neutralise free radicals, reduce oxidative stress and modulate inflammatory pathways – the same ones linked to conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, metabolic syndrome and some neurodegenerative disorders. It's been studied for its ability to inhibit specific molecules like NF-κB, which play a major role in chronic inflammation.

Turmeric doesn't perform miracles overnight and is not a one-stop solution. But when incorporated regularly into your diet or supplement routine, curcumin can have a cumulative effect. It supports the body's internal systems quietly and steadily, helping regulate digestion, immune function and emotional balance. The key lies in consistency and how it's consumed, ideally with black pepper to enhance absorption or in formulations that increase its bioavailability. It's not just a spice anymore, it's a daily ritual in many health-conscious households for a reason.

Eases inflammation

Chronic inflammation is linked to everything from joint pain to skin flare-ups.



Golden touch: Ways turmeric supports health & healing

It's been stirred into curries, brewed into teas and even blended into lattes. But beyond the colour and earthy kick, turmeric has earned a place in many kitchens and medicine cabinets for good reason

Curcumin is a natural anti-inflammatory, helping soothe the body from within. Many people with arthritis or post-exercise soreness turn to turmeric tea or capsules for daily relief.

Aids digestion

Turmeric has long been used to support digestion and relieve bloating. It encourages bile production, which helps break down food more efficiently. A small pinch of turmeric in warm water before meals is still a common practice in many Indian households.

Supports immunity

Thanks to its antibacterial and antiviral properties, turmeric helps keep your immune system on its toes. It doesn't replace your flu jab, but it may help your body respond better to everyday threats, especially when the weather (or air conditioning) plays tricks on you.

Lifts your mood

Curcumin has been studied for its potential antidepressant effects. While it's not a replacement for professional treatment, it may support overall brain function and emotional balance when taken consistently.

Fights oxidative stress

Packed with antioxidants, turmeric helps your body combat the effects of pollution, poor sleep and general wear and tear. Antioxidants neutralise free radicals, which accelerate ageing and inflammation over time.

Promotes heart health

Curcumin may help improve the lining of blood vessels and reduce inflammation throughout the cardiovascular system. While more research is ongoing, early signs point to turmeric being a helpful ally in supporting long-term heart function.

Spoonfuls of wisdom, sprinkled with science

ALWAYS pair turmeric with a pinch of black pepper to boost your body's ability to absorb curcumin. The compound in pepper, piperine, can increase curcumin's absorption by up to 2,000%, a small kitchen hack that makes a big difference.

In Malaysia, turmeric is part of the culinary and cultural landscape. From traditional gulai to nasi kunyit, it's already part of our weekly diet; we just don't always realise its health potential. You can also add it to smoothies, teas, soups, scrambled eggs and roasted vegetables. Turmeric milk with honey, black pepper and ginger is a soothing drink that's incredibly comforting on rainy evenings or recovery days.

As always, moderation is key. A small amount taken consistently does more good than large doses taken once in a while. For those on medication, particularly blood thinners or during pregnancy, it's wise to check with your doctor before starting high-dose supplements.

Turmeric is more than a wellness trend. It's a tradition rooted in generations of wisdom and increasingly backed by science. Whether it's part of your cooking or your cup of tea, this golden spice may be the simplest way to add healing to your day.



Feeling a bit bloated? Turmeric has been a go-to remedy for settling the stomach for generations.

PITCHING an advertising idea is part Broadway show, part therapy session and part gladiator duel. On pitch day, a creative director becomes a magician pulling rabbits (or grand ideas) out of hats, while account managers pray the client audience gives a thumbs-up instead of a fateful thumbs-down. It's high drama in a corporate conference room, complete with props, heartfelt monologues and the occasional song and dance – literally. Suppose you've seen a normally buttoned-up ad executive perform an impromptu interpretive dance to illustrate a campaign concept (I have and it's hard to forget). In that case, you'll know there's almost nothing we won't do to sell an idea.

The showmanship factor

In my early days, I learned that a little showmanship goes a long way. A memorable pitch sticks in the client's mind. Bold visuals, engaging stories and even humour can make an ordinary marketing plan feel like the next big thing. A pitch isn't just about informing – it's about performing.

However, showmanship isn't about empty flash. It works best when rooted in genuine insight about the brand or audience. The juggling creative director? He was making a point about balance and energy in sports and the idea landed (quite literally, in one case). So, by all means, bring passion and maybe a prop or two, but make sure they actually reinforce your message, not just your ego.

Gritty and real

In the heat of pitching, it's easy to get carried away by our own hype. But there's a fine line between enthusiasm and over-promising. Clients have a keen nose for nonsense. If you claim your idea will double their sales overnight and cure baldness, they'll smile politely and show

The art of selling ideas without selling your soul

BY HARMANDAR SINGH

you the door right after dessert.

I've learned that honesty, sprinkled with a pinch of optimism, is more effective than hyperbole. Admit if something is experimental or if certain results will take time. Clients appreciate a straight shooter who can manage expectations while still painting an exciting vision. Think of it like dating: it's great to impress, but you eventually have to be yourself or the relationship will sour.

Accept and rebound

Not every pitch ends in victory. Sometimes, you pour your heart into a grand performance – fireworks, jingles, emotional testimonials – only to have the client choose the other agency that came in with a plain PowerPoint and a lower price. It stings. Rejection in the advertising world is inevitable (ask any creative with a drawer full of "brilliant ideas that never saw the light"). The key is to take it in stride, learn from it and not burn bridges. A failed pitch can be a funny story for later, once the pain subsides and the karaoke at the after-party kicks in.

When a pitch goes south, I allow myself exactly one evening to mope (often involving a comforting beverage). The next morning, it's back to the drawing board – quite literally. In this business, resilience is as important as creativity. You win some, you lose some, but you always live to pitch another day.

Hey! Know this

- **Know your story:** Before throwing in flashy effects, video montages, or that last-minute augmented reality gimmick your intern cooked up, stop and ask: What are we really trying to say? A great pitch is based on a clear and compelling idea. Without that, all the bells and whistles are just ... noise. I've seen teams walk into the room with a show-stopping deck. Cinematic transitions, moving type and mood lighting, only to fumble through the actual insight. Clients aren't just dazzled by polish. They're looking for something that aligns with their brand and business. So, start with the core. Polish the message before you polish the PowerPoint.
- **Engage, don't enrage:** Yes, energy and passion are infectious – but like perfume, a little goes a long way. No one wants to feel ambushed by a pitch that feels more like a circus act than a business conversation. That doesn't mean you shouldn't be theatrical or inventive – please, do! But keep the client at the heart of it. Make the story relatable. Don't just talk at them, talk with them. Ask questions. Read the room. Know when to pause. And whatever you do, leave the confetti cannons at home. Unless you're pitching for a kid's party brand, in which case ... maybe.
- **Be confident, not arrogant:** There's a fine, invisible line between confidence, arrogance and pitches are where that line gets trampled all the time. Confidence says, "I believe in this idea and here's why it matters to your brand." Arrogance says, "This is the only idea that matters and if you don't like it, you're wrong." One invites collaboration. The other invites polite smiles and "We'll get back to you." The best creative minds I know present with clarity, conviction and openness. They're ready to fight for a good idea, but also wise enough to tweak it if that's what it takes to make it work.
- **Leave your soul intact:** Let's talk about integrity. Because in advertising, where everyone's trying to sell something, it's easy to slip into exaggeration. But long-term relationships aren't built on smoke and mirrors. Clients remember those who over-promise and underdeliver. They also remember the ones who gave it to them straight. I've had pitches where we lost the account but gained respect and guess what? That client came back a year later. Your credibility is your currency. Don't sell what you don't believe in. Don't claim your campaign will solve poverty, world hunger and last quarter's earnings slump. Keep it real. Keep it bold. And above all, keep it yours.

Here's one more for the road ... lose the fear of losing: Great pitches don't always win. And that's okay. The goal isn't just to win; it's to build a body of work you're proud of. To stand for something. Even in failure, a good pitch sharpens your thinking, builds your resilience and sometimes even earns quiet respect from the very client who said no. So don't be afraid to go big. Just go honest too.



This series is based on Harmandar Singh's Rainmaker book. A seasoned advertising veteran and marketing expert, he has spent decades making brands and people famous (and sometimes furious).

FOOD and motherhood are forever entwined. Before we had recipe books, we had mothers improvising, sharing, tasting and teaching. Their cooking wasn't just about feeding the family, creating memories, offering care and making a home.

This mother's day, surprise your mum with a homemade treat – breakfast in bed, an afternoon tea spread or a refreshing drink with a handwritten note. Below are three easy yet thoughtful recipes that are perfect for the occasion. Bake one, make all three or add your family twist.

And if she's no longer here, cook her favourite dish, raise a glass in her honour and share her stories. Because in every cherished recipe, she lives on. We've chosen a special bake for the occasion.

From the soft, pandan-scented layers of traditional *seri muka* to café-style baked eggs with spinach and feta, and finishing with a zesty lemon and raspberry tea cake, each dish is simple to prepare and full of heart.



Recipe 1: Lemon & raspberry tea cake

A soft, zesty loaf that's perfect for tea time, brunch or dessert

Ingredients

- 200g unsalted butter, softened
- 200g caster sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 200g self-raising flour
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 100g fresh or frozen raspberries
- Pinch of salt

Glaze

- 100g icing sugar
- 2-3 tbsp lemon juice
- Optional: extra raspberries & zest for garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 170°C. Line a loaf or 20cm round tin.
2. Cream butter and sugar. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.
3. Fold in flour, salt, zest, lemon juice and vanilla.
4. Gently mix in the raspberries.
5. Bake for 45-50 minutes, until golden and a skewer comes out clean.
6. Cool before glazing with lemon icing.

Pro tip: Toss the berries in a bit of flour to prevent them from sinking.

Taste of her cooking still speaks loudest

BY CECILIA FONG

Wholesome recipes for a heartfelt Sunday celebration

Recipe 2: Baked eggs with spinach & feta

A wholesome, café-style brunch dish

Serves: 2-3

Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- 200g of baby spinach
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 100g feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp cream or milk
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Optional: cherry tomatoes, herbs, chilli flakes

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Sauté the garlic in olive oil and add the spinach, cooking until it is wilted. Season lightly.
3. Spoon into 2-3 small ovenproof ramekins.
4. Crack eggs on top, drizzle with cream and sprinkle with feta.
5. Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until the egg whites are set but the yolks are still runny.
6. Garnish with herbs or chilli flakes. Serve with crusty bread.

Optional variation: Add mushrooms or smoked salmon.



Recipe 3: Seri Muka (Glutinous rice & pandan custard layer cake)

A classic kuih with layers of love

Ingredients

For the bottom layer (glutinous rice):

- 300g glutinous rice, rinsed and soaked for at least 4 hours or overnight
- 200ml thick coconut milk
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 pandan leaf, knotted

For the top layer (pandan custard):

- 3 large eggs
- 120g caster sugar
- 250ml coconut milk
- 100ml pandan juice (blend 5-6 pandan leaves with water and strain)
- 60g all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- Pinch of salt
- A few drops of green food colouring (optional, for a richer green)

Instructions

1. Prepare the glutinous rice layer:
 - Drain the soaked glutinous rice. Steam with the pandan leaf, coconut milk, and salt for about 30-35 minutes, stirring halfway.
 - Once cooked, remove the pandan leaf. Press the rice firmly into a lightly greased 8-inch square tin to form an even base.
2. Make the pandan custard layer:
 - In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and sugar until well combined.
 - Add pandan juice, coconut milk, salt, flour and cornflour. Mix until smooth; strain if necessary.
 - Pour the custard mixture gently over the pressed rice.
3. Steam the layered kuih:
 - Steam over low heat for 30-35 minutes until the top is set.
 - Leave to cool completely before cutting into diamond or square pieces.

Tips & touches

- Use a clean plastic knife or an oiled blade to slice neatly.
- Garnish with a few toasted coconut flakes or edible flowers for a fancy twist.
- Pack in a paper box lined with banana leaf for that nostalgic *kampung* charm.

A little effort, a lot of heart

IT'S not the perfection of the dish that matters – it's the love behind it. Whether you're serving mum a slice of homemade cake, a hearty brunch or her favourite childhood kuih, she'll remember most of the time and care you put into it. So this Sunday, let the kitchen be your way of saying thank you for the meals she made, the moments she created and the love she continues to give, every day.



The bodywork of the RR has been reworked and the new design is called the 'aggressive speedy shape' concept.

Pure riding pleasure

Lightweight 2025 Honda CBR250RR sportbike way ahead of the competition

BY WAHID OOI

You can be forgiven for thinking this is more than a 250cc sports bike



The digital instrument cluster has a motorsport derived feel to it.

WE keep hearing that “sportbikes are dead” and “people want naked and adventure bikes.” If so, why do we see the Honda CBR250RR and its smaller CBR150RR sibling, plus those of other brands everywhere?

Truth is, there are many sportbike fans out there but midrange and full-on superbikes are just too expensive for many, this writer included.

Smaller capacity and quarter-litre sportbikes are still selling well. Apart from the Honda, there is the Kawasaki Ninja 250R, Ninja ZX-25R, Yamaha YZF-R25, Suzuki Gixxer SF250, KTM RC 250 along others – all fighting in this popular segment.

These bikes are a wonderful step for new riders to experience the intricacies of riding a sportbike before embarking on bigger ones. It is much safer too.

However, technological updates in this segment are limited compared to models of higher capacities in order to keep them affordable to the buying public.

But, Honda is seeking to edge ahead of the competition with the CBR250RR.

What is it?

As we mentioned earlier, it is a light-

weight, quarter-litre sportbike. Honda has heavily revised the model that was actually launched in mid-2024. Outwardly, it looks much sharper despite retaining the overall silhouette of its predecessor. The revisions are:

- The engine remains the same 249.7cc, DOHC, 8-valve, parallel-twin.
- The engine's compression ratio is raised to 12.5:1 from 12.1:1 by reducing the combustion chamber volume from 7.55 cm³ to 7.0 cm³.
- The inlet port throat diameter was enlarged from 21.4 mm to 21.6 mm.
- Updated valve timing and lift.
- Optimised piston and oil ring tension to reduce friction.

These updates produce a 1kW (1.34hp) increase of maximum power over the previous model, and bringing it to 31kW (41.6hp) at 13,000RPM and 25Nm of torque at 11,000 RPM.

The Assist and Slipper Clutch feature stays, but is now complimented with a quickshifter.

The front suspension is upgraded with 37mm Showa Separate Function Fork – Big Piston (SFF-BP) upside-down forks.

On the electronic front, the 2024 Honda

CBR250RR has a ride-by-wire throttle which in turn offers three ride modes, namely Sport+, Sport, and Comfort.

The bodywork has been reworked for what Honda calls “aggressive speedy shape” concept, leading to a 6% reduction in air resistance. Curb weight is now 169kg.

So, it is not the case of *kejuruteraan coverset* (fairing engineering), as netizens like to say.

By comparison, this new CBR250RR's engine is the most powerful in the segment and bested only by the Ninja ZX-25R's four-cylinder engine.

However, the Honda's engine sees its peak torque arrive much earlier at 11,000RPM, while the Ninja hits peak torque much later at 14,500RPM.

Riding the CBR250RR

For the sportbike fan in this writer, the feel of climbing aboard a lightweight sportbike is pure pleasure.

Low front end, tall rear, and long reach to the handlebars put you in a sporting crouch. Remember to support your weight with your core muscles (those around the tummy and back) rather than your arms and shoulders.

Starting the engine released a much rawer sound from the engine this time. It sounded more err... European, for want of a better word instead of the usually quiet Japanese engine.

Blip the throttle and the revs jump instantly, almost as quickly as a two-stroke engine's. Interesting.

As we mentioned earlier, there are three power modes now, but the bike will always begin in SPORT regardless if you had set it to COMFORT or SPORT+ before shutting turning it off.

Having just swapped it with the CB650R, I thought I could use a little more power so I immediately switched to SPORT+, and gave it a lot - as in lots - of throttle.

The engine roared instantaneously and bike and rider flew down the street outside the Boon Siew Honda Service Centre in Kepong.

It surely snapped my head back! And get this: It did not even run into the rev limited in 1st gear.

Thankfully, the Nissin brakes were pretty strong (for a single front disc), bringing things to a control.

So I switched the power mode back to



Seat shape is purposeful yet comfortable.



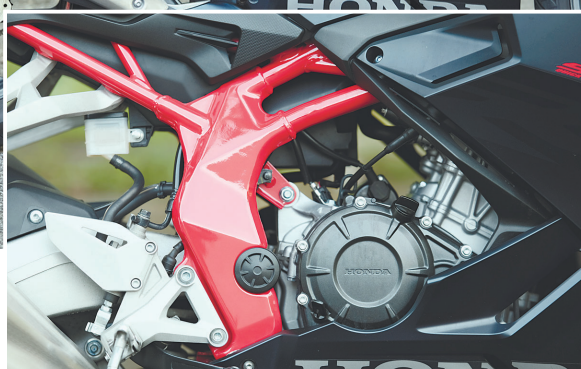
Switch quality feels fantastic.



Front forks are not adjustable but they have a great feel to them.



The RR now comes with an awesome new quickshifter.



The engine makes its 41.6hp at a screaming 13,000rpm.



The front suspension is upgraded with 37mm Showa Separate Function Forks.

SPORT. The engine sounded calmer and throttle response was distinctly smoother.

Further down the road...

Okay, time for traffic light GP. Not that we wanted it but that guy next to us on an ahem... "Quarter Bike" had a sport pipe on and kept revving his engine. It sounded modified as his engine has that characteristic piston slap sound.

So okay, SPORT+ mode selected, 1st gear in, wait for the light, revs up slightly... Then full throttle as we slipped the clutch.

The CBR250RR's engine howled (yes, howled) as we blasted off the line almost as quickly as that CB650R and CBR650R last week.

I kid you not, the CBR250RR has such a hard acceleration that I kept wondering if Honda had slipped in a 400cc engine.

Into 2nd with the quickshifter... smooth, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th. No one in the mirrors. Bye!

In traffic

The bike did not exhibit the kind of front-heavy behaviour despite the crouched riding position like heavier bikes do when proceedings got slower.

Instead, it just flowed beautifully with a minimal amount of countersteering pressure. Remember what we said about the pleasures of riding a lightweight sport-bike? This is one.

The engine came through beautifully as we could ride in 3rd and 4th gears while lane-splitting down Jalan Tuanku Halim.

It had enough torque allowing us to modulate the throttle without the fear of it stalling. You just need to open the throttle to speed things up quickly.

In the rain...

That is what the COMFORT mode was for. The thunderstorm came out of nowhere, and since the SPORT+ mode was a bit too frisky, we switched to COMFORT.

The throttle response became much, much softer, and there was a slight lag before the power came on, compared to the other two modes.

Being a lightweight bike, there was not much concern when riding through wet corners as the tyres are less stressed.

Plus with the smooth throttle, we could open up sooner in corners than we would normally dared to.

Corner blasting...

Unfortunately it rained and rained in the few days we had the bike, so there was no chance of testing the bike up Genting Highlands.

Still, there were plenty of corners in around the city, namely the Suke Highway and the Duke Highway from Hospital Kuala Lumpur leading to Gombak.

While we needed more countersteering forces to get bigger bikes to turn, the CBR250RR hit corners at almost heart attack-inducing entry speeds.

Lighter weight means you can carry more entry and mid-corner speeds by letting the bike roll into corners, rather than downshifting for engine braking.

All you need to do is look through a corner, line it up, steer and the bike flies through. Nope, it did not even need lots of hanging off to achieve it.

Another advantage of this bike is its low seat height. Despite looking tall in pictures, we could plant both feet comfortably on the ground when we stopped.

So, a low seat entails a lower centre of gravity, which translates to a bike that favours cornering speed – the turn and burn approach – rather than a brake-turn-

burn technique.

The suspension has also improved dramatically as the front absorbed bumps well, but it was the forks that impressed the most. It had the bike holding our chosen lines regardless of road surface.

Lest we forget, the swingarm is aluminium, not steel like on most 250cc sport-bikes (apart from the KTM RC250).

The stock tyres were alright, but we were thinking how much better the bike would be if fitted with ultra-sticky rubber!

Conclusion

The 2025 Honda CBR250RR has really got it going: super punchy engine, smooth quickshifter, distinct ride modes, nice suspension, great handling, and... did we mention the engine already...? And oh yeah, it still looks great after all these years.

The only complaint we had was the clutch engagement zone which was waaay at the end of the clutch lever's movement.

But this can be easily rectified and it did not impede on the overall experience of riding the bike.

The RR retails for **RM27,999** (not on-the-road), it's definitely worth it.

Driver-centric performance models

Sapura, Yaris bring motorsport engineering, rally-honed capabilities to public roads

UMW Toyota Motor Sdn Bhd expanded its Gazoo Racing family today with the launch of two new performance models – the GR Supra Track Edition and the GR Yaris Automatic Variant.

Both vehicles brought motorsport engineering and rally-honed capabilities to public roads, further strengthening Toyota's commitment to delivering exhilarating, driver-centric experiences.

The GR Supra Track Edition continued the brand's proud four-decade legacy, offering sharper handling, refined chassis control, and purposeful, track-ready styling.

Meanwhile, the GR Yaris Automatic Variant introduced a newly developed 8-speed Gazoo Racing Direct Automatic Transmission, broadening the reach of the GR brand to a wider range of enthusiasts without sacrificing its competitive motorsport heritage.

The GR Supra Track Edition stood as the flagship of Toyota's GR lineup, evolving into an even more focused machine

through a series of comprehensive upgrades.

Powered by a 3.0-litre inline six-cylinder turbocharged engine producing 388PS and 500Nm of torque, the model was available with a choice of a six-speed manual or an eight-speed automatic transmission with paddle shifters. Acceleration figures confirmed its potency, with the automatic variant achieving 0-100kph in 4.1 seconds, while the manual version managed the sprint in 4.3 seconds.

The GR Supra Track Edition was priced from RM698,000.00.

Alongside it, the GR Yaris Automatic Variant made its debut, marking a significant milestone for the rally-inspired model first launched in 2021. Building on the momentum from the recently introduced face-lifted manual variant, the automatic ver-

sion brought enhanced accessibility without diluting the core performance ethos of the GR brand.

Developed with insights from the Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team, the 8-speed Gazoo Racing Direct Automatic Transmission delivered remarkably swift and precise gear shifts.

Unlike conventional automatics that reacted primarily to vehicle movement, this system was engineered to anticipate driver intent, creating a more connected and intuitive driving experience.

The GR Yaris Automatic Variant retained its 1.6-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine – the most powerful of its kind – produc-

ing 300PS and 400Nm of torque. It could sprint from 0-100kph in just 5.2 seconds.

New to the variant was the introduction of Launch Control, designed to optimise engine torque and traction for more aggressive, controlled takeoffs. This feature worked in tandem with the newly developed automatic transmission and motorsport-calibrated paddle shifters to deliver a rally-inspired driving experience during everyday use.

The GR Yaris Automatic Variant was priced at RM325,600.00.

Both the GR Supra Track Edition and GR Yaris Automatic Variant were now available through GR Garage dealerships nationwide, complete with a five-year unlimited mileage warranty and comprehensive aftersales support.



On the road to Neue Klasse

ON its journey toward the Neue Klasse era, the BMW Group presented the innovations of its next-generation vehicles at Auto Shanghai 2025.

At the heart of BMW's presentation were two key innovations: the BMW Panoramic iDrive smart display and operating system, and the lightning-fast Heart of Joy central computer.

BMW introduced the Panoramic iDrive in a version developed specifically for the Chinese market. In collaboration with local technology partners, BMW tailored its Operating System X to Chinese users, offering exclusive digital functions available only in China.

The Panoramic Vision display projected content across the full width of the windscreen, creating an entirely new interactive experience. Approximately 70% of the software in the Chinese version consisted of locally developed and adapted code, reflecting BMW's commitment to its "China for China" strategy.

Exclusive features included an AI-powered BMW Intelligent Personal Assistant, developed through collaboration with Chinese tech giant Alibaba. Over the course of the year, BMW

planned to further enhance this system with "AI Reasoning by Deepseek," enabling seamless integration between the vehicle and the outside world.

BMW also debuted the Heart of Joy central computer, capable of processing information ten times faster than previous systems, achieving millisecond-level latency. It was responsible for driving dynamics such as propulsion, braking, charging, recuperation, and partial steering functions.

BMW unveiled the Heart of Joy inside the BMW Vision Driving Experience, a high-performance test vehicle developed as a "rolling laboratory." This one-off machine generated up to 1.2 tonnes of downforce and 3G of lateral forces, levels comparable to Formula 1 cars.

Although the Vision Driving Experience was not intended for production, the Heart of Joy system would power all Neue Klasse all-electric BMW models starting with the launch of the iX3 from the new Debrecen plant in Hungary later this year. A China-specific version, developed by BMW's Shanghai design team, would follow in 2026, produced at BMW's Shenyang plant.

New G9 showcases 66 enhancements

XPENG displayed the 2025 iteration of its flagship electric SUV, the G9, at the Auto Shanghai 2025, showcasing a total of 66 enhancements over its predecessor. According to Xpeng chairman He Xiaopeng, the updated model is anchored by the introduction of the brand's next-generation Turing AI intelligent driving system – an innovation that eliminates the need for LiDAR and significantly enhances autonomous driving capabilities.

The new G9 retains the foundational design of the current model, continuing with the X Robot Face 3.0 styling language. The SUV measures 4,891 mm in length, 1,937 mm in width, and 1,680 mm in height, while maintaining a wheelbase of 2,998 mm, making it slightly bigger than the Xpeng G6 that we have in our Malaysian market.

Aesthetic updates include new electric suction doors, an automatic tailgate, and updated 20-inch five-spoke alloy wheels. Xpeng will also offer a special "Black Warrior" edition, finished entirely in black, includ-

ing blacked-out rims, emblems, and fenders, to cater to buyers seeking a more aggressive appearance.

The 2025 G9 is equipped with Xpeng's proprietary Turing AI driving system, which replaces LiDAR with a sensor suite comprising 11 cameras, three millimetre-wave radars, and 12 ultrasonic sensors.

This setup reportedly increases visual perception distance by 125% compared to the previous system, while improving object recognition speed by 40%. Both stationary and moving obstacles can be identified with high precision, marking a leap forward in autonomous functionality.

The updated G9 offers both rear-wheel drive (RWD) and all-wheel drive (AWD) variants.

Battery options include 79 kWh and 93.1 kWh packs, offering China Light-Duty Vehicle Test Cycle (CLTC) ranges of 625km, 680km, and up to 725km. These figures represent modest improvements over the 2024 G9, which had claimed ranges of 570km, 650km, and 702km, respectively.

Isuzu starts D-MAX EV production in Thailand

ISUZU MOTORS LIMITED has officially begun production of its first fully electric 1-tonne pickup truck, the D-MAX EV, at its manufacturing facility in Thailand. This marks a significant milestone for the Japanese automaker as it expands its portfolio of carbon-neutral vehicles.

The electric D-MAX, first revealed as a prototype at the 45th Bangkok International Motor Show in March 2023, has now entered mass production. Initial manufacturing focuses on the left-hand drive version destined for European markets, with shipments scheduled to commence in the third quarter of 2025. Production of the right-hand drive variant is expected to begin by the end of 2025, with sales in the United Kingdom planned for 2026. Further market expansion will follow, based on regional demand.

Designed to match the capabilities of its diesel-powered counterpart, the D-MAX EV features a full-time



four-wheel drive system equipped with newly developed electric axles at the front and rear.

This setup delivers the smooth and immediate acceleration characteristic of electric vehicles, while also maintaining low levels of noise and vibration. With its robust frame and body structure, the electric pickup offers a high towing capacity and payload performance, ensuring suitability for both commercial and private use.

Powering the D-MAX EV is a 66.9 kWh lithium-ion battery, which provides a WLTP-rated driving range of 263km on a full charge. The dual-motor system generates a combined output of 188hp along with 325Nm of torque. Acceleration from 0 to 100kph is achieved in 10.1 seconds, while top speed is limited to approximately 129kph.

With the launch of the D-MAX EV, Isuzu signals its commitment to a sustainable future while preserving the strength and practicality that have long defined its vehicles.

Potential preview of the Next-Gen Proton X70

GEELY has given us a close-up of the 2025 Monjaro L, known in its home market as the Xingyue L, during a special preview at its test drive facility in China. The updated SUV could signal the arrival of the next-generation Proton X70 in Malaysia, given the close alignment of Geely and Proton's product strategies.

Physically, the Monjaro L has grown slightly in size compared to its predecessor. The new model measures 4,770mm in length, 1,895mm in width, and stands 1,689mm tall, with a wheelbase stretching 2,845mm. These dimensions place it marginally above the current Proton X70, suggesting more interior space and a bolder road presence.

The exterior design receives a modest refresh. The most prominent change comes in the form of a vertical bar front grille that now protrudes outward slightly, flanked by Geely's revised silver emblem.

The signature LED headlamps and the shape of the front bumper's air intake remain largely unchanged, but a new set of 20-inch multi-spoke alloy wheels

adds a more premium stance.

Geely has yet to confirm whether the 2025 Monjaro will be sold as a new variant or completely replace the existing version, although indications point toward the latter.

Geely will offer two specific trims: the two-wheel-drive "Lanxing" edition and the all-wheel-drive "Wangyue" variant. Additionally, a new body colour option called "Stone Green" has been introduced to expand the SUV's visual palette.

While more interior upgrades may follow, Geely has yet to disclose further revisions to cabin materials or infotainment features.

The possibility of this updated SUV forming the basis for the next Proton X70 seems increasingly likely. If so, Malaysian buyers can look forward to a more spacious, powerful, and tech-forward SUV that builds on Proton's growing reputation for offering high-value, globally engineered models.



Ora 03 GT to launch in Malaysia

Sportier, more dynamic version of popular Good Cat model signals GWM's commitment to EV sector

GWM MALAYSIA is preparing to introduce the high-performance Ora 03 (Good Cat) GT to the Malaysian market, following its recent appearance at Auto Shanghai 2025. The sportier and more dynamic version of the popular Good Cat signals GWM's continued push into the electric vehicle (EV) sector, with the company confirming that bookings will open soon and deliveries are expected in the coming months.

The Ora Good Cat GT made a strong impression following its successful debut in Thailand and is set to bring a heightened level of excitement to Malaysia's EV landscape. GWM Malaysia sees the launch as a crucial step in strengthening its electrification strategy and expanding its growing range of electric models in the country. Although pricing and full specifications have yet to be announced, expectations are high for the new model to appeal to design-conscious and performance-oriented buyers.

With an emphasis on sportier styling and enhanced performance, the Ora Good

Cat GT departs significantly from the standard model. The exterior design features a striking black and yellow dual-tone finish, complemented by carbon-fibre-style accents that give the vehicle a more aggressive appearance. Larger 18-inch alloy wheels fitted with distinctive

yellow brake callipers and revised front and rear bumpers further reinforce its athletic stance.

Inside the cabin, the Good Cat GT has been upgraded with premium Alcantara upholstery and GT-branded sports seats, aiming to deliver a more dynamic and premium driving experience.

Performance

improvements are also notable, with the GT variant delivering 169hp and 250Nm of torque, a significant boost over the standard model's 141hp output. The model is powered by a 57.7 kWh battery, offering an estimated range of 460km based on the NEDC testing cycle. While this figure is slightly lower than that of the regular Good Cat, the reduction is attributed to the model's sportier tuning and performance upgrades.

Positioned to compete against rivals such as the BYD Dolphin and MG 4 EV, the Ora Good Cat GT seeks to differentiate itself with its distinctive design and youthful appeal. GWM Malaysia believes the model's unique combination of sporty aesthetics and enhanced driving performance will allow it to carve a strong niche in the increasingly competitive Malaysian EV market.

Further announcements regarding pricing, detailed specifications, and test drive opportunities are expected in the near future. The Ora Good Cat GT is poised to become one of the year's most anticipated electric vehicle launches,

strengthening GWM's presence and influence in Malaysia's rapidly evolving automotive sector.



Answers will be posted on Sunday, May 18

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

PIXAGRAM
Example

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



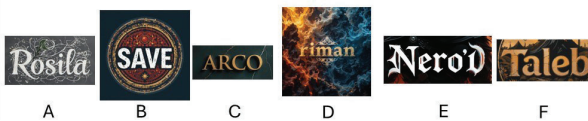
Pixagram is Picture Anagram. Find the words based on the pictures shown and match them with answers that have the same letters.

PIXAGRAM 6

q1 q2 q3 q4 q5



Answers are to be chosen from A to F



CHAIN LETTER 6

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

- Q1. English league team _ _ _ _ _
Q2. Tanzanian national park _ _ _ _ _
Q3. Malaysian state capital _ _ _ _ _
Q4. Disney ogre _ _ _ _ _
Q5. Himalayan mountain _ _ _ _ _

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



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

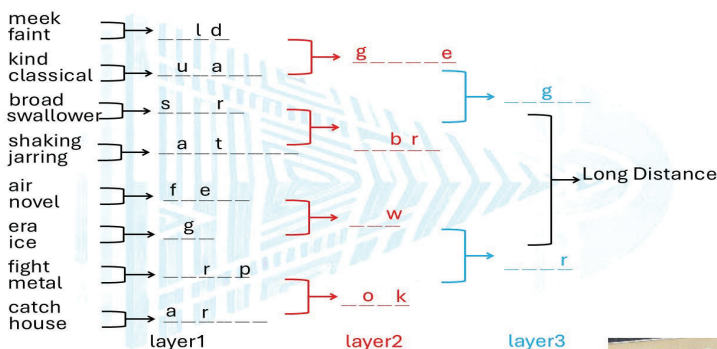
P
S
Y
C
H
R
A
M
M
E
6

Example: satellite blue → ---

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

Find out the 8 words in layer 1,
4 words in layer 2 and 2 words in layer 3.

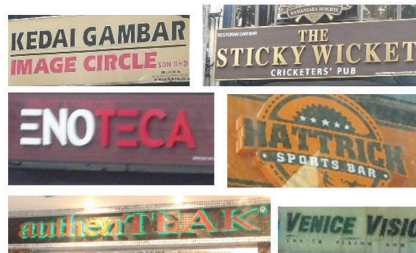
The two words in layer 3 should match the definition given.



STREET PIX 6

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

- Q1: Organic compound returned _____
Q2: Sounds true _____
Q3: An example could be pulling a rabbit out _____
Q4: Side-gate made of wood? _____
Q5: City view _____



MEMES:

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

A me down B hand
(a synonym for used clothing passed from elder child to younger child) (term used in economics)

MEMES: 6

There are 5 categories: "Star Trek" feature(1), Irritation(1), Storage(1), Vehicle(1), Deal-making(1). Write the correct phrases.

A B C D E

TO-PIX

Part 1: Identify Words based on picture clues

Part 2: Subject the Words to the Operation mentioned

An Example is given below

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

TOPIX 6



STEP 1 _____
Step 1 words are less than 6 letters long.
STEP 2 Operation: Take out one letter and rearrange to get female animals.
STEP 2 _____

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

Your weekend horoscope

**ARIES**

March 21 – April 19

You are exploring new financial opportunities, opening doors to fresh possibilities. You are eager to reconnect with old friends, sparking inspiration for creative projects. This surge of enthusiasm can fuel meaningful endeavours. Stay focused on this energy.

**TAURUS**

April 20 – May 20

You are learning valuable lessons from a close relationship, gaining deeper insights. You are embracing a fresh start as you address challenges with confidence. A significant decision awaits, offering a chance to grow. Trust your instincts to guide you forward. The best time is yet to come.

**GEMINI**

May 21 – June 20

Your timeless values inspire others, fostering harmony at work. Agreements are forming, paving the way for positive outcomes. An unexpected call brings exciting opportunities. Approach it with openness to unlock its full potential. Do not be afraid to take a leap.

**CANCER**

June 22 – July 22

You are stepping into your strength, mastering new aspects of yourself. You are exploring various interests, discovering what truly excites you. This curiosity fuels your motivation and stability. Keep pursuing your passions with purpose.

**LEO**

July 23 – Aug 22

Your ideas are simmering, ready to shine in due time. You are cautiously moving forward, protecting your vision with care. You feel a sense of calm, focusing on steady progress. Take one step at a time to clear your path. Regulate your impatience.

**VIRGO**

Aug 23 – Sept 22

You are embracing a new challenge, eager to expand your horizons. Your forward-thinking mindset lays a strong foundation for growth. Stay mindful of workplace dynamics to maintain balance. Your progress inspires admiration from those around you.



Windows of feng shui

Home ventilation for clarity, prosperity

WINDOWS are often called the “eyes” of a home in *feng shui* and ventilation represents its ability to “breathe”. Together, they regulate the quality of *qi* (energy), ensuring fresh energy flows throughout the living space. Just as humans need clean air to stay healthy, a home requires proper airflow and unobstructed windows to maintain clarity, prosperity and well-being.

When windows are dirty, blocked or poorly maintained, energy can stagnate, leading to sluggish progress in life, career stagnation and even, health issues. Similarly, poor ventilation can trap stale *qi*, making the home feel heavy, uninviting or uncomfortable. By ensuring proper air circulation and clear windows, you create an environment that supports mental clarity, financial growth and harmonious relationships.

Keeping windows clean for clear vision and opportunities

Windows act as a home's connection to the outside world, influencing how opportunities and resources flow into life.

► Regular cleaning of windows ensures clarity in thinking and decision-making. Dust, dirt or smudges can block the flow of good energy, creating a sense of confusion or stagnation in one's career and personal life.

► Ensure windows are not obstructed by large furniture or heavy curtains. While privacy is important, overly darkened or blocked windows can limit energy flow, leading to a lack of motivation or reduced opportunities.

► If possible, allow natural light to enter during the day. Sunlight represents yang energy (*yang qi*), which enhances vitality, creativity and productivity.

Fresh air circulation for vibrant qi

A home with poor ventilation accumulates stale *qi*, which can negatively impact health, mood and energy levels.

► Open windows daily, even for a short period, to allow fresh air to replace stagnant energy. This is especially important in air-conditioned homes where airflow can be restricted.

► If windows cannot be opened regularly, use air purifiers or fans to enhance circulation. Stuffy environments trap negative energy, leading to feelings of fatigue, mental fog or lack of motivation.

► Be mindful of musty or unpleasant odours. Unpleasant smells often indicate stagnant *qi*, which can reflect underlying issues in health or personal life. Using natural fragrances such as essential oils or indoor plants can help refresh the energy.

Window placement and its influence on energy

The location and direction of windows affect how energy enters and moves through a home.

► Large windows facing scenic views enhance positive energy. They allow *qi* to enter, symbolising broad opportunities and openmindedness.

► Small or poorly placed windows may limit fresh energy. If windows are too small or positioned awkwardly, using mirrors strategically can help reflect light and create an illusion of space.

► Windows directly facing another building or wall may block good *qi*. Keeping such windows open for airflow or placing plants nearby can help counteract energy stagnation.

Managing wind and air flow for balance

In *feng shui*, *qi* should move in a gentle and nourishing way – neither too fast nor too slow.

► Avoid strong wind rushing directly through the home, as it can scatter energy. If a home has excessive wind exposure, using curtains or partitions can help regulate the airflow.

► A completely airtight home can create heavy, stagnant energy. Ensure there are at least small openings where air can circulate naturally, allowing a continuous and balanced energy exchange.

This article is contributed by feng shui consultant Daniel Siew

**LIBRA**

Sept 23 – Oct 22

You are reigniting a spark of passion, rediscovering what drives you. You feel a renewed sense of purpose, supported by a generous ally. This week marks the start of exciting ventures. Embrace these opportunities with optimism. You might just find the light.

**SCORPIO**

Oct 23 – Nov 21

You are breaking free from old thought patterns, gaining clarity. You are open to new perspectives, illuminating your path forward. Your financial choices are guided by wisdom this week. Trust your intuition to lead you to abundance.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Nov 22 – Dec 21

You are triumphing over challenges, finding clarity in the process. You are rebuilding with resilience, stronger than before. This journey of growth leads to lasting success. Celebrate your victories as you move forward.

**CAPRICORN**

Dec 22 – Jan 19

You are embracing honesty and trust in your relationships. Misunderstandings are opportunities to deepen connections. Your patience ensures a smooth and rewarding week. Take time to communicate clearly.

**AQUARIUS**

Jan 20 – Feb 18

You are boldly pursuing a significant decision, driven by conviction. You are uncovering new insights as you navigate this path. Your choices reveal exciting possibilities. Surround yourself with trustworthy allies to amplify your success.

**PISCES**

Feb 19 – March 20

You are recharging after a busy week, ready for a fresh start. Seeking wisdom from a mentor brings clarity to your plans. Listen thoughtfully to their guidance. Careful steps now pave the way for steady progress. A little patience will benefit you.

This is contributed by Mystic Kali Tarot



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COCO GAUFF (pic) survived a scare at this year's Italian Open, coming back from a set down to beat qualifier Victoria Mboko 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 as Aryna Sabalenka and Carlos Alcaraz both cruised through their opening matches.

World No. 3 Gauff will play Magda Linette in the third round in Rome after prevailing despite being far from her best in a match which signalled more progress from her up-and-coming opponent.

Canadian Mboko played with a maturity which defied the 153 places separating her from Gauff in the world rankings in a prime-time clash on centre court.

"It was a tough match, Victoria came out playing some tough tennis, I knew she was going to do from watching some of her previous matches," said Gauff.

"But overall I'm just happy that I was able to step up my game."

Current world No. 1 Sabalenka swept past Russia's Anastasia Potapova 6-2, 6-2 in just over an hour.

Sabalenka will play Sofia Kenin in the next round after the American beat another Russian in Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in

Coco survives scare in Rome

straight sets, 6-3, 6-0.

The 27-year-old Sabalenka has reached the final of her last four tournaments, winning both in Madrid and in another 1000 series in Miami.

"I know that if I bring my best game and my fight spirit on court, I know that I can win this tournament," Sabalenka told reporters.

Emma Raducanu got off to a flying start with a 6-2, 6-2 win over

Jil Teichmann,

a lucky loser

who replaced

Ekaterina

Alexandrova

following the

Russian's

withdrawal with a shoulder injury.

Alcaraz got past Dusan

Lajovic 6-3, 6-3 in one hour

and 23 minutes in his

first match since suffer-

ing a thigh injury in his

Barcelona Open final

defeat to Holger Rune

last month.

The Spaniard showed

some signs of ring

rustiness with 22

unforced errors but

saw off

Serbian

qualifier

Lajovic

and was

positive

about his

come-

back dis-

play.



Gauff holds nerve to join Sabalenka in Italian Open third round

"It was a great performance, a great level, which was surprising for me a little bit but I'm just really happy," said Alcaraz.

Reigning Rome champion Alexander Zverev also strolled into the next round, beating Argentina's Camilo Ugo Carabelli 6-2, 6-1 in the last match of the day on centre court.

Home hope Lorenzo Musetti opened his week, his first in the top 10 of the men's world rankings, with a 6-3, 6-2 win over qualifier Otto Virtanen.

Musetti, losing finalist in Monte Carlo last month, has the USA's Brandon Nakashima next and could face Daniil Medvedev in the last 16 after the 2023 Rome champion easily saw off Britain's Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-2 to set up a third-round clash with Alexei Popyrin. - AFP

'Hitman' Rohit the leader of India's cricket dreams

ROHIT SHARMA rose from humble beginnings to captain cricket-mad India and redefined Test batting with his ability to score big hundreds as he dominated opposition attacks.

The 38-year-old called time on his Test career this week after playing 67 matches and scoring 4301 runs including 12 centuries since his debut in 2013.

Rohit quit T20 international cricket in 2024 after lifting the World Cup and earlier this year led India to an ODI Champions Trophy title in Dubai.

He will continue to play the ODI format but his declining batting form in the five-day format prompted his decision to call time on a career divided into two halves.

As a youngster Rohit studied on a scholarship because his family was unable to afford monthly fees of a few dollars.

He overcame all odds to become a cricketing superstar, especially in the white-ball game, his feats including taking his country to World Cup glory in 2024.

He is also the only batsman to have scored three double-centuries in one-day internationals.

Prior to his drop-off in form, Rohit gave India real firepower at the top of the innings and his selfless approach allowed the rest of the batsmen to play freely.

But the man dubbed the 'Hitman' for getting to big scores quickly in spectacular style failed to get past 10 runs in any of his five innings during India's tour of Australia late last year.

He described his performances as "disturbing" while there was also mounting criticism about his decisions as captain.

Rohit was also way below his brilliant best in the 3-0 Test series whitewash at home to New Zealand in November.

Just months before that, he lifted the World Cup in Barbados after India edged out South Africa by seven runs in a thrilling final to finally deliver the cricket-crazy nation a global title again.

Rohit signed off as India's highest scorer in the shortest format, plundering 4,231 runs including five centuries in 159 matches since his T20 debut in 2007.

A five-time IPL winner for Mumbai Indians, Rohit took over the captaincy of the white-ball national team in 2021 from Virat Kohli. A year later, Rohit became Test skipper too.

He left a lasting legacy in the shortest format, having featured in all nine editions of the T20 World Cup. - AFP

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- Minimum of one year of experience in Building Maintenance or Safety & Health.
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ON SUNDAY MAY 11, 2025

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SPORTS

INSPIRED by Rory McIlroy completing a career Grand Slam at the Masters, Jordan Spieth hopes to finish his own career Slam in next week's PGA Championship at Quail Hollow.

Spieth won the 2015 Masters and US Open and captured the 2017 British Open but the 31-year-old American will make his ninth attempt at the career Slam and chase his first win since the 2022 PGA Heritage tournament.

It's a drought similar to that endured by McIlroy, who failed 10 times to complete the career Slam at Augusta National until he captured the green jacket last month, his first major win since 2014.

"Not only did he complete it but the time it took him to complete it, it was obviously a very challenging week for him. It was harder than maybe anybody ever trying to win a Masters," Spieth said.

"To be that far from his most recent major as well, and then to go do it, it was very inspiring."

Spieth, who underwent left wrist surgery

Spieth seeks career Slam at Quail Hollow

last August, fired a final-round 62 at last week's Byron Nelson. He will play on the same Quail Hollow layout where he was 28th in his first shot at the career Slam in 2017.

Spieth has had five top-four major finishes since his last major win, including a share of third at the 2019 PGA at Bethpage Black.

The fact Spieth must chase history on a different course every year adds another layer of difficulty, McIlroy said, compared to what he had to achieve at the Masters, always played at Augusta National.

"It's hard, I think, for Jordan having to do.

You have to go back to the same tournament every year

for Jordan, but not the same golf course," McIlroy said.

"It's a little bit of a different proposition for him rather than me having to go back to the same venue every year.

"As much as you try to get yourself in the right frame of

mind to just try to win the golf tournament and then let everything else happen, it's in there. Consciously or subconsciously, you feel that.

"You know that you're not just trying to win another tournament, you're trying to become part of history, and that has a certain weight to it.

"I've certainly felt that at Augusta over the years. I'm sure Jordan has felt that a bit going into each PGA that he's had a chance to do the same thing."

There's also a longshot possibility of a calendar slam by McIlroy, a "Rory Slam" adding the PGA, US Open and British Open to a 2025 trophy haul that already includes Pebble Beach, The Players Championship and the Masters.

Second-ranked McIlroy has won four times at Quail Hollow in PGA Tour events. He was the US Open runner-up in 2023 and 2024 and this year's Claret Jug will be decided at Portrush, a Northern Ireland course McIlroy knows well. — AFP

'I always had hope'

McIlroy reveals 'defeating own mind' key to long-awaited Masters breakthrough

BY PHIL CASEY

RORY MCILROY believes "defeating my own mind" was key to winning the Masters and will take "nothing but positive vibes" into next week's US PGA Championship.

McIlroy's thrilling victory at Augusta National made him just the sixth player to complete a career grand slam and came on his 11th attempt to join Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods in golf's most exclusive club.

It was a victory which many observers had doubted would ever happen given McIlroy's long major drought, especially after he had failed to convert a two-shot lead late in the final round of last year's US Open at Pinehurst.

And the World No. 2 almost squandered a five-shot lead with eight holes to play before beating Ryder Cup teammate Justin Rose with a birdie on the first playoff hole.

"I always had hope," McIlroy insisted. "I wasn't going to show up at Augusta and feel like I couldn't win."

"The week that I feel like that I'll go up there for the Champions Dinner and swan around in my green jacket, but I won't be playing."

"Yeah, I always had hope. I always felt like I had the game. And I think, as everyone saw on that back nine on Sunday, it was about getting over."

"I don't know what the right phrase is, but defeating my own mind was sort of the big thing for me and getting over that hurdle."

"Look, I'm just glad that it's done. I don't want to ever have to go back to that Sunday afternoon again. I'm glad that I finished the way I did and we can all move on with our lives."

McIlroy enjoyed a deliberately low-key week of celebrations after the Masters, both in England — to see the house he is having built — and

Northern Ireland, where he admitted he and mother Rosie were "both a mess for a few minutes" as the emotions kicked in.

The world No. 2 then finished 12th in the defence of his Zurich Classic title with close friend Shane Lowry before fulfilling more media obligations in New York, but is keen to get back to business as usual, especially now he is free of what he called the "burden" of chasing the career grand slam.

McIlroy has also won four times at Quail Hollow, which hosts next week's US PGA Championship.

"I'm obviously going to feel more comfortable and a lot less pressure, and I'm also going back to a venue that I love," McIlroy said when asked about the year's second major.

"It's nothing but positive vibes going in there next week with what happened a few weeks ago and then with my history there and how well I've played at Quail."

"Yeah, it probably will feel a little bit different. I probably won't be quite as on edge as I have been for the last few years when I've been at major championships."

"I'll probably be a little bit better to be around for my family and I'll be a little more relaxed. I think overall it will be a good thing." — The Independent



Thomas flying comfortably under radar

THE last time a major championship was played at Quail Hollow, Justin Thomas used a final-round 68 for a two-shot victory over a pack of contenders at the 2017 PGA Championship.

With the PGA Championship returning to the same site next week, Thomas ought to be one of the favourites after a recent victory showed he had found his top form.

Yet Thomas' odds at major sportsbooks sit between 20-1 and 22-1, as most of the attention is concentrated on two of his peers: Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy. That suits Thomas just fine.

Early this week Thomas was posed a question not about external expectations, but rather the difficulty of not getting too excited about his own chances.

"To be perfectly honest, Rory winning the Masters probably helped with that... rightfully so. Scottie winning last week. Those two deserve all the spotlight and the favouritism that they'll probably have next week," Thomas said. "So I'm sure that is and was helpful for me."

"Yeah, I'm sure I might feel a little bit differently when I get [to Quail Hollow], but like I said, I think I've been fortunate to have a couple of my peers play well that they may steal some of that from me."

McIlroy is the winningest player on tour so far in 2025, and the Northern Irishman captured the Masters last month to complete the career Grand Slam and end a decade-long major drought.

Scheffler hasn't won at the same torrid pace he did in 2024, but last week he shot 31-under 253 to run away with the CJ Cup Byron Nelson — tying Thomas' PGA Tour scoring record.

Sandwiched between those tournaments was the RBC Heritage, where Thomas won his first tournament in almost three years. McIlroy, Scheffler and Thomas are three of the most recognisable faces on the PGA Tour, with a combined nine major titles.

"I appreciate that to be mentioned in the same sentence and same area, if you will, as Rory and Scottie," Thomas said.

"Obviously I think a lot of myself and my game and my accomplishments and know that I've done that."

"But like pretty much all of us, we all downplay everything of what we've done and what we probably feel of ourselves."

Thomas added that watching McIlroy complete the ultimate achievement in golf was "huge," not only for the sport, but for himself.

"It was inspiring to me," he said. "Obviously it's not like I didn't realise I wanted to win a grand slam before that, but just that it's even more motivating." — Field Level Media

AFTER a game that pushed emotions to extremes, an exhausted Simone Inzaghi became philosophical.

"Yes, we suffered," the Inter Milan manager said, before hailing his side's jaw-dropping 7-6 aggregate win over Barcelona. "But there is no final without a little suffering."

That's at least for anyone on the pitch, or those with an emotional connection to either club. For everyone else, such exertions just created full enjoyment; total spectacle; complete glory... an "epic" as the Spanish newspapers proclaimed.

This was just one of those matches – let alone the entire tie – that is so immersive it becomes a celebration of the pure game as it's played, no matter everything else around it. This is why football is the most popular sport in the world.

Que locura – "what a madness" – a member of the Barcelona contingent could be seen mouthing after four hours of absorbing football.

That's another way to sum it up. To take Inzaghi's point and turn it on its head, though, there's arguably no final that has gone to these extremes.

Run through it now. How many truly great Champions League finals have there been over the last few years, or even this millennium? Arguably only 2005.

As for great semifinals, this is just the latest of a sensational series. There is a crude list of the 10 best in the Champions League era below, but they are heavily open to argument and it could have gone on even longer.

Honourable mentions must go to Monaco vs Chelsea 2003-04 and Dynamo Kyiv vs Bayern Munich 1998-99, let alone Lionel Messi's masterclass against Bayern Munich in 2014-15.

It was said on these pages after the scarcely believable comebacks of 2018-19 that the Champions League at that level was like the best of high-quality prime time TV, with a cinematic quality that producers of that year's final *Game of Thrones* – or pretty much any prestige series would envy.

And it was all unscripted. This is why figures like Todd Boehly see future Netflix-style platforms in football, amid constant attempts to try and engineer and perpetually recreate something that is organic and

dependent on the build-up of stakes.

The very stakes are also important as to why the semifinals are so epic. To continue the theme, it is like the penultimate episode of a series being more explosive than the finale.

There is a rationale for that, amid the emotion of the teams and Inzaghi's philosophy. With a final, you're on the stage, so the stakes are felt all too keenly. It is why so many are gripped by tension for the first hour or so.

With the semifinal, you're on the brink of the stage. It's almost there but it's not quite the same.



ments as to why they are up there as the greatest ever.

There's Real Madrid's aura of invincibility against Manchester City, Anfield's atmosphere against Barcelona, Manchester United's defiance against Juventus, the sheer tension of two Chelsea vs Barcelona semifinals.

One of the many remarkable elements about this semifinal was that it just never let up. There were no lulls, no drop-offs.

The closest you could say that it had to one was in the period between Dani Olmo's soaring

drama, of the manner that would be enough to emotionally move you on its own. Like all of the best sporting drama, such spectacle was elevated by the grandest of storylines.

There was a vintage clash of styles, the different make-ups of the squads, the resurgence of both clubs, journeymen enjoying their day against young talent creating careers, as distilled in the duel between the mercurial teenager Lamine Yamal against the show-stopping 36-year-old Yann Sommer and arguably even a morality tale in terms of the stories behind the scenes at both clubs.

Not even Manchester City vs Real Madrid 2022-23 quite went to these lengths. That tie only reached such a height at the end of the second leg.

It's remarkable to think that Barcelona only led for six minutes over all that time, and three of those were injury time before Acerbi's equaliser.

You could argue that they didn't deserve to win. But that absurd high line created so much high drama.

Hansi Flick got a lot wrong but one thing right. "Tonight when they arrive home and look in the mirror, they can be very proud," he said of his team.

If you were to have one absurd quibble amid something close to sporting perfection, it was that there was no final, final crescendo, that last big moment in extra-time. We'd already been spoiled with a stoppage-time equaliser... and then some. And that's kind of the point.

You can't lay this out like a script. It's spontaneous sport that can only organically evolve out of what has come before.

And there is little like the elements involved in a Champions League semifinal. This may have surpassed them all. We didn't suffer. We just enjoyed. – The Independent

Epic at the San Siro

Inter Milan's jaw-dropping 7-6 aggregate win against Barcelona to reach the Champions League final a celebration of the pure game

BY MIGUEL DELANEY

There is less to lose.

Even more importantly, there's often something to be made up. Second legs have invariably been the superior match because they are set up by the first, creating incentive.

From there, as well as actual stadiums filled with fans rather than corporates, there's almost this emotional contagion that infuses the action.

In some cases, as we saw in 2018-19, the chaos of one semifinal tie can directly influence the feeling of the next.

Put short, teams feel they may as well just go for it. That could be seen in cancer survivor Francesco Acerbi's 93rd-minute equaliser.

There was abandon, that was a contrast to the late angst that could be witnessed in the final minutes of the same team's last final appearance, in 2022-23.

That rising crescendo also raises another point as to why this semifinal might have been the greatest ever, if you even want to go there. The truth is it's hard not to as you dwell on the drama.

All of the semifinals men-

GREATEST CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEMIFINALS

10. Tottenham Hotspur 3 Ajax 3 (2018-19)
9. Real Madrid 3 Juventus 4 (2002-03)
8. Atletico Madrid 2 Bayern Munich 2 (2015-16)
7. Chelsea 1 Barcelona 1 (2008-09)
6. Chelsea 3 Barcelona 2 (2011-12)
5. Manchester United 4 Juventus 3 (1998-99)
4. Liverpool 4 Barca 3 (2018-19)
3. Inter 3 Barca 2 (2009-10)
2. Manchester City 4 Real Madrid 6 (2021-22)
1. Barcelona 6 Inter Milan 7 (2024-25)

header for 2-2 on the night and Raphinha's fine volley to make it 3-2 when Inter looked done, but that still involved heroic defending; the desperate moments when players are throwing everything into it. This had everything.

It kept twisting and ratcheting up. Over the full three and a half hours, there were at least 10 dramatic shifts in momentum.

Most of them were supreme goals, but not all. In scorelines alone, there was 2-0, 2-2, 3-2, an immediate 3-3, 2-0 again, 2-2, 2-3, the final equaliser and then that winner.

And this wasn't just pure football

tioned above were epics, with incredible moments and passages of play that each form fine argu-



Arteta's Arsenal delusion

... and why other clubs dislike them

BY MIGUEL DELANEY



Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta. - REUTERS/SPIC

Champions League finals.

Some of the financial differences are admittedly influenced by Arteta's indecision over a forward, which has now been the club's recurring issue for two seasons. That has to be rectified, but it is at least something explainable and solvable.

Arsenal are clearly close. They maybe weren't quite as close as Arteta made out here. That isn't necessarily something to be laughed at, though. - The Independent

ON A night when Arsenal couldn't do enough, there were more of those moments when Mikel Arteta doesn't help himself.

Paris Saint-Germain had beaten Arsenal 3-1 on aggregate, to only extend this feeling that they are Europe's most exciting - and probably best - side. Despite that, Arteta came out with the following.

"I don't think there's been a better team in the competition", before saying that was "especially across 160 minutes" of the semifinal.

That was on top of the curious pre-game comments where Arteta had said Liverpool had won Premier League with fewer points than his own team had managed in the previous two seasons. A mere glance at points-per-game records illustrated this to be nonsense.

It didn't go down brilliantly within Liverpool, and it is one reason why Arteta has not exactly been one of the Premier League's more popular managers.

Staff at some clubs openly dislike him, and you can't but notice a certain public glee at Arsenal's disappointment. At least part of that is down to the manager.

It wasn't a glee shared on the PSG bench, however. Some of their staff told Arteta they thought Arsenal were excellent.

Luis Enrique said the same, even if he wouldn't go as far as agreeing they were the better team.

Arteta did go as far as saying Gianluigi Donnarumma was "the difference".

"When you analyse both games, who has been the best player? The MVP has been the same player, the goalkeeper."

One of the issues with statements like that is that no one wants to really give it credence after a tie where you were beaten by two clear goals, amid a League season where you have dropped from 2.34 points per game to 1.9.

There's a perception of being in denial, or even delusion. It has certainly played into some opinions about Arteta.

At the very least, PSG always looked like they had more to give, that their attackers could go to another level.

And yet that is precisely why Arteta's staff would insist there is actually credence in what he has said.

While PSG had such a wealth of options that a rampant Ousmane Dembele was left on the bench, Arsenal had a No. 8 playing as a stand-in centre-forward.

Despite that, their xG (Expected Goals) was far superior - 3.14 to 1.74 on the night, 5.11 to 3.08 for the tie - and they felt they created at least seven high-quality chances. Even with some of their lower-quality chances, then, Donnarumma made fine saves.

Arsenal, not for the first time this season, were missing that edge.

"To win a competition, you need that," Arteta added.

Where there might be more measured criticism is in whether this is connected to some of the season's wider issues.

Injuries have sapped Arsenal of so

much attacking intensity, but there is a fair debate to be had about Arteta's response.

In seeking to compensate for his team not being able to attack in the same way, there might have been too much compromise in terms of excessive caution and an over-reliance on set-pieces.

There were many quips within the game about the reliance on Thomas Partey's long throws. Those within Arsenal would argue that this was essential to mitigate the very effects of those injuries.

They did score 89 goals in 38 games from a high-pressing approach last season but if you try and play the same way without the same players, you will collapse.

There are no clearer examples than Manchester City this year and Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool over 2020-21 and 2022-23. The latter went from 2.42 points per game to 1.76, and didn't even make the Champions League.

In other words, you have to look at other options.

The strident argument is that a perceived caution is not by choice. Otherwise, the effect of these injuries would be much worse.

That's also why he says some of the eyebrow-raising things he says. They are messages to his players, so as to fortify belief and not give excuses. A certain "delusion" is almost necessary.

For Arteta's part, too, some people in football might not like him but the vast majority do greatly respect him as a coach.

Enrique made that abundantly clear as he said "it was the match we suffered the most". "They are a great team."

And for all the derision towards many of Arteta's comments, there is that extra context.

He has restored Arsenal to being a serious side, that competes at this kind of level. That is something many people thought beyond the club when he took over, and they were a basketcase.

It's sometimes remarkable in football how you get more criticism the closer you get to the summit.

Many will point to the huge expenditure but, on the last published accounts, Arsenal only had the fifth highest wage bill in the Premier League.

They were £80 million (RM360m) behind Manchester City and £58 million (RM261m) behind Liverpool. People may scoff at mere mention of that but the fact of the matter is that there is a 90% correlation between wage bill and League finish.

It is the financial metric that matters most because it reflects the going rate and a club's ability to match it.

Arteta's staff would similarly point to how it took both City and PSG billions before they got to their first

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	8796 9307
	0629 0220
	7026 5664

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1513 7584	7584 1513








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3RD	9	4	0	0	4	
	6TH				0	9

6D

	1ST	6	1	6	1	0	5
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Starters	Consolation
9880 5017	7915 0713
6435 5780	4722 2880
8794 4571	2028 8070
0452 8287	9322 8404
5662 0369	6164 4469

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6113 + 9350	9350 + 6113
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647 349 +	OK	RM1,012,611.00
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
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Starters	Consolation
999 880 495 017	977 915 260 713
526 435 555 780	404 722 372 880
618 794 414 571	272 028 518 070
670 452 958 287	669 322 708 404
535 662 080 369	106 164 584 469

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
113	349	350

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Big treat for Manchester United fans

MANCHESTER UNITED fans in Malaysia can look forward to seeing the club's biggest stars live in action as the Red Devils' full senior squad will travel for the highly anticipated clash against the Asean All-Stars at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil on May 28.

United head coach Ruben Amorim confirmed the development during a press conference ahead of their league clash against West Ham tomorrow.

"I was consulted. We cannot say nothing after this season, so we need to help the club because the club wins some more money."

"We are going to connect with our fans around the world and that is important, especially when we lose and we disappoint our supporters during this tough season."

"So, I think it is the least we can do. And we are going to take all the team, the young kids also, and we'll have the staff there."

"We had a lot of changes in the staff so we're trying to build something as a family. I think it is also a good thing," he said as quoted by the club's official website www.manutd.com.

Asked if he will take all of the senior players as well, Ruben said: "Yes, yes." Despite a challenging season in the English Premier League, United showed remarkable resilience in their Uefa Europa League campaign, progressing to the final where they will face fellow English side

Tottenham Hotspur at the San Mames Stadium in Bilbao, Spain on May 21.

The last time United played in Malaysia was during the 2009 pre-season tour, beating Malaysia XI twice, 3-2 and 2-0, respectively on July 18 and 20 at the National Stadium.

The 13-time PL champions are also scheduled to travel to Hong Kong as part of their pre-season tour to play against the Hong Kong national team at the Hong Kong Stadium on May 30. - Bernama



RESULTS & STANDINGS

ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFF
(Semifinal, 1st leg): Coventry 1 Sunderland 2.

SERIE A: AC Milan 3 (Gimenez 73, 90+2, Pulisic 78) **Bologna 1** (Orsolini 49).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Napoli	35	23	8	4	55	25	77
Inter Milan	35	22	8	5	73	33	74
Atalanta	35	20	8	7	71	31	68
Juventus	35	16	15	4	52	32	63
Roma	35	18	9	8	50	32	63
Lazio	35	18	9	8	58	45	63
Bologna	36	16	14	6	54	41	62
AC Milan	36	17	9	10	50	40	60
Fiorentina	35	17	8	10	53	35	59
Como	35	12	9	14	45	48	45
Torino	35	10	14	11	39	40	44
Udinese	35	12	8	15	38	49	44
Genoa	35	9	12	14	30	43	39
Cagliari	35	8	9	18	36	51	33
Verona	35	9	5	21	30	63	32
Parma	35	6	14	15	40	54	32
Lecce	35	6	9	20	24	57	27
Venezia	35	4	14	17	28	49	26
Empoli	35	4	13	18	27	55	25
Monza	35	2	9	24	25	63	15

Note: Top 4 qualify for Champions League; 5th for Europa League; 6th for Conference League; bottom three relegated.

BUNDESLIGA: Wolfsburg 2 Hoffenheim 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B. Munich	32	23	7	2	93	32	76
Leverkusen	32	19	11	2	68	37	68
E. Frankfurt	32	16	8	8	63	43	56
Freiburg	32	15	7	10	46	49	52
Dortmund	32	15	6	11	64	49	51
RB Leipzig	32	13	11	8	51	45	50
Mainz	32	13	9	10	49	40	48
Bremen	32	13	8	11	50	56	47
M'gladbach	32	13	6	13	55	54	45
Stuttgart	32	12	8	12	57	51	44
Augsburg	32	11	10	11	34	45	43
Wolfsburg	32	10	10	13	55	40	40
Union Berlin	32	9	10	13	47	37	37
Hoffenheim	32	7	11	15	46	64	32
St Pauli	32	8	7	17	26	37	31
Heidenheim	32	6	7	20	33	60	26
Holstein Kiel	32	6	7	19	48	75	25
Bochum	32	5	7	20	30	63	22

Note: Top 4 qualify for Champions League; 5th for Europa League; 6th for Conference League. Bottom two relegated, third-last goes into playoff against third-placed Bundesliga 2 team.

CHAMPIONS

No fairytale ending

Scratch pair Tang Jie-Wen Tse fall short in Taipei

MALAYSIA'S interest in Taipei Open 2025 ended after national mixed doubles pair Tang Jie-Chan Wen Tse were denied a place in the final in their maiden tournament yesterday.

The semifinals action of Super 300 tournament held in Taipei Arena saw the scratch pair and seventh seeds go down 11-21, 15-21 to Indonesian fourth seeds Jafar Hidayatullah-Felisha Alberta Nathaniel Pasaribu in 38-minutes.

Tang Jie-Wen Tse are expected to be in action at the 2025 Malaysia Masters from May 20-25, which is likely to be their final tournament as a pair.

Tang Jie will then regroup with his established partner, Toh Ee Wei for the Singapore Open from May 27-June 1.

In March, the Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) confirmed that Tang Jie-Ee Wei had been temporarily split following proposals from the coaching panel, including (national doubles coaching director) Remy (Mainaky) and mixed doubles head coach Nova Widianto, during the recent performance committee meeting.

Tensions between the pair reportedly began during the Paris 2024 Olympics, where they were eliminated in the quarterfinals after losing 19-21, 14-21 to South Korea's Kim Won Ho-Jeong Na Eun.

As such, Tang Jie-Wen Tse partnerships while Ee Wei was temporarily paired with Loo Bing Kun.

Last month, BAM, however, announced that Tang Jie and Ee Wei would resume their partnership following a request from both players and after extensive discussions between them and the coaching panel.

In other badminton news, the future of the national top women's doubles pair Pearly Tan-M. Thinaah with Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) will be decided after

their return from the Thailand Open 2025, which kicks off from Tuesday to May 18.

BAM deputy president 1 Datuk V. Subramaniam said both players have yet to sign and accept a new contract with the association.

"With the permission of our president we will call them for one more final discussion that is to inform them the decision."

"Now they are away in Thailand, so when they come back (final discussion) probably anytime next week," he told a press conference after the 80th BAM annual general meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Subramaniam said the matter must be resolved quickly and reminded players against using contract negotiations as leverage.

"We also don't want players to hold us at ransom because that must be very clear, if that is not clear, then we are creating a disease."

"So, all the other players have discussed and settled (new contract) except the both of them (Pearly-Thinaah)," he said.

Speculation has been rife that Pearly and Thinaah, whose contracts with BAM ended last December, plan to leave the national governing body.

The world No. 4 pair will open their Thailand Open 2025 campaign against Japanese duo Hina Osawa-Akari Sato.

In the meantime, Subramaniam said the council meeting had agreed on the need for greater transparency regarding player earnings.

Similar to international practices such as in football where players' salaries are publicly known, he said there may come a time when BAM will need to explain the financial aspects to the public.

He said any such disclosure, however, would be made after discussions with the players and when deemed necessary. - Bernama

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Winning Results

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4D Classic

1st Prize **5753**

2nd Prize **6526**

3rd Prize **0317**

SPECIAL	CONSOlation
9097 7483	2443 2703
4423 0339	0259 1530
2244 2449	0557 3595
5456 4744	0365 6552
2330 3748	8875 9434

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM14,349,014.88**

PARTIALLY WON

5753 + 6526	5753 + 0317
6526 + 5753	6526 + 0317
0317 + 5753	0317 + 6526

Jackpot 2 **RM352,123.46**

PARTIALLY WON

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2	4	5	7	14	25	30	34
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3	24						

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Jackpot 1 **RM11,794,816.35**

Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM179,664.08**

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	5 3 2 6 1 7	
GROUP 2	53261	OR 32617
GROUP 3	5326	OR 2617
GROUP 4	532	OR 617
GROUP 5	53	OR 17
	OR 26	
GOLDEN NUMBER	17	

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to www.magnum4d.my for more info. THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY.



SCAN ME

Barcelona's Raphinha celebrates scoring their third goal with Frenkie de Jong. - REUTERS/PIC

One for the ages



Story on page 13

Inter Milan and Barcelona produced a legendary semifinal. The Italians prevailed in a thrilling finale at the San Siro to reach the Champions League final after an engrossing 7-6 aggregate victory – but where does it rank in Champions League history?



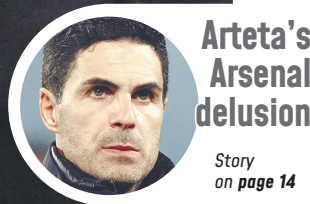
Inter Milan's Davide Frattesi (left), Francesco Acerbi and coach Simone Inzaghi celebrate after the match. - REUTERS/PIC



'I always had hope'

Story on page 12

"Yes, we suffered ... But there is no final without a little suffering."
– Simone Inzaghi



Arteta's Arsenal delusion

Story on page 14