



Inspiring evening with Jane Goodall

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Ethologist and conservationist who dedicates life to studying chimpanzees and advocating environmental protection captivates audience with personal experiences.

Final preparations for SPM in full swing

Students burn midnight oil ahead of defining moment of academic journey, driven by awareness good grades would be key to future success.

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Father donates life-saving kidney to son

Decision prompted by suffering seen due to stage five failure, haemodialysis trauma and memory of late wife afflicted with same condition.

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POETRY IN MOTION ... Two performers presenting the *igal-igal* traditional dance in a colourfully decorated boat at the 29th Semporna Regatta Lepa in Sabah yesterday. – **BERNAMAPIC**

Govt committed to fighting corruption

Graft-busting boosts public trust in *Madani* administration and enhances confidence among foreign investors, says political analyst.

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Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin graces *Istana Budaya* event

SHAH ALAM: The Tengku Permaisuri of Selangor Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin graced the Malaysian Traditional Orchestra Outreach: Sounds of Malaysia 2024 event organised by Istana Budaya at Plaza Alam Sentral on Saturday.

Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin's arrival at 8.45pm was greeted by Istana Budaya director-general

Zubaidah Mukhtar, its deputy director-general (operations) Johan Cruyff@Mohd Johari Md Nordin and RCD Concept Sdn Bhd director Datuk Seri Rozaimi Che Di.

The event performance director Ramli Lani said the show was aimed at entertaining and educating the community while introducing traditional music such as *inang*, *zapin*,

asli and *joget*, Bernama reported.

"The selection of songs is very important so that ideas and messages can be conveyed to the audience while attracting the interest of the younger generation to the beauty of traditional Malaysian music."

The performances were divided into four segments, with an opening presentation by Istana Budaya.

"The second segment featured the Juara Vokal Bukan Sekadar Rupa with Norhasmidar Ahmad belting out traditional songs while the third segment involved a medley of selected folk songs.

"The final segment featured a performance by guest artistes, namely *Anugerah Pendokong Seni Negara* 2006 recipient Datuk Andre

Goh and the 36th *Anugerah Bintang Popular BH* popular male winner Muhammad Khairul Baharuddin, also known as Khai Bahar."

Twenty-six traditional songs were performed, including *Tari Tualang Tiga*, *Ketipang Payung*, *Puteri Melayu*, *Halimun Malam*, *Asam Paya*, *Sireh Pinang* and folk ballads such as *Inang Renek*, *Ayam Didik* and *Jong Inai*.

KUALA LUMPUR: Having led the nation for just two years, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's government might still be "green", but reforms are already visible, particularly in the governance, political, economic and social spheres, said political analyst Prof Dr Ahmad Martadha Mohamed.

Citing corruption, he said the government has prioritised the issue.

"Regardless of whether they are from the elite group or are civil servants or ordinary persons, if found to be involved (in corrupt activities), they will be brought to justice without double standards."

Ahmad Martadha said the fight against corruption boosts public trust in the government and enhances confidence among foreign investors.

According to the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index released by Transparency International Malaysia in January, Malaysia scored 50 points in 2023, an improvement from 47 points the previous year.

He said another significant improvement was the reduction in political appointments within government agencies, boards and NGOs, which enhanced governance and minimised political interference in administrative matters.

He added that the government introduced various forms of assistance to alleviate the rising cost of living and ensure that only genuinely deserving groups, particularly the B40 segment, benefit from them.

"It is also reviewing the definition of the T15 income group, considering that the current threshold of approximately RM13,000, as set by the Statistics Department, is deemed too low."

Malaysia Cyber Consumers Association (MCCA) president Siraj Jalil said the government is actively implementing improvements to address cybersecurity challenges.

He said among these efforts is the amendment to the Personal Data Protection Act 2010 to strengthen the protection of Malaysians' data.

He added that the *Jelajah Anti Scam Kebangsaan 2024* programme, spearheaded by CyberSecurity Malaysia and supported by NGOs such as MCCA and Yayasan Digital Malaysia, is being conducted in states like Johor and Kedah to raise public awareness about online scams and preventive measures.

'Madani govt policies boost public, investor confidence'

➤ Reforms visible in governance, political, economic, cybersecurity and social spheres, say analysts

"The government has also enacted the Cybersecurity Act 2024 under the National Cyber Security Agency. This Act, which came into force on Aug 26, aims to enhance the nation's cybersecurity."

According to a MyCERT report,

there was a 13% rise in cybersecurity incidents in the first quarter of 2023, compared with the fourth quarter of 2022, Bernama reported.

Global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky reported that in 2023, its tracking system blocked 26.85 million

"internet-borne" attacks in Malaysia, averaging 74,000 attacks per day.

Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil had previously said the Online Security Bill was being introduced to address gaps or lacunae in the law, particularly the lack of a precise definition of crimes such as bullying, including cyberbullying.

National Organisation of Skilled Workers president Mohammad Rizan Hassan said technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Malaysia has experienced positive growth over the past two years.

He said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, in his capacity as National TVET Council chairman, is committed to shaping the TVET landscape.

"Collaboration with industry partners has provided students with real-world experiences, ensuring they are well-prepared for the job market.

"The emphasis on practical skills and hands-on training has boosted the employability of TVET graduates, leading to greater demand for skilled workers across various sectors," Mohammad Rizan said.



ATTENTIVE LISTENER ... Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming and Education Deputy Minister Wong Kah Woh (left) being briefed on salted eggs during the New Village Expo in Ipoh yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIC**

GE16 to see more young BN candidates

IPOH: Barisan Nasional (BN) will field many new faces, especially from among the youth, in the 16th general election (GE16), said its chairman Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

Ahmad Zahid said this is one of five steps to strengthen BN component parties to gain the people's support, Bernama reported.

"I believe we have no choice but to field new candidates, particularly youths. The by-elections in Nenggiri and Mahkota recently proved that this hypothesis is true.

"The suitability of a candidate is not only based on his young age, but also on his strong grassroots exposure, which can lead to a decisive victory," he said yesterday after officiating at the Perak BN Convention.

Also present were BN secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad and other component party leaders.

Anwar on three-day official visit to South Korea

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is on an official visit to South Korea from yesterday until tomorrow to further strengthen bilateral ties as the two nations prepare to celebrate 65 years of diplomatic relations next year.

The Foreign Ministry said Anwar's first official visit to South Korea since assuming office in November 2022 is at the invitation of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol.

It said Anwar is scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with Yoon at the Yongsan Presidential Office.

"Both leaders will take stock of Malaysia-South Korea bilateral relations that have significantly progressed in scope and substance since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1960.

"They are also expected to discuss regional and international issues of mutual concern and exchange views

on Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean and South Korea's chairmanship of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in 2025," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Anwar and Yoon will witness the exchange of three MoUs on cooperation in higher education, carbon capture and storage, as well as cooperative approaches (under the Paris Agreement).

Anwar is also set to deliver a special

address titled "Strategic Partners in a Complex World: Malaysia, Korea and the Future of Asia" at the Seoul National University.

He will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Li Kang, National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang and senior

government officials.

From January to September, Malaysia's trade with South Korea was valued at RM81.61 billion. From 1980 to June 2024, a total of 392 manufacturing projects with South Korean participation have been implemented.

In 2023, South Korea was Malaysia's eighth largest trading partner, with trade valued at RM111.07 billion. - Bernama

SPM students all set for 'pivotal' academic milestone

► Candidates nationwide to sit for examination on Dec 2, aiming for best results that could further education opportunities and shape career paths

BY HARITH KAMAL
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PETALING JAYA: The Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination marks a pivotal milestone for Malaysian students, serving as an important chapter in their school years and a gateway to their future aspirations.

With the SPM set to begin on Dec 2, candidates across the country are making their final preparations for what is often seen as a defining moment in their academic journey.

For many, the stakes are high, as the results could shape their career paths and further education opportunities. As the clock ticks, students are putting in every effort to ensure they are ready for this crucial moment.

Farhan Adrees, 17, from Sekolah Dato Abdul Razak, an all-boys boarding school in Negeri Sembilan, has found the weeks leading up to the SPM intense. Aspiring to pursue accounting, he knows that achieving the best results is key to his future success.

He said studying in one of the most prestigious schools in Malaysia means he has to prepare a lot to get the best results.

"I feel a little nervous, but I'm eager to sit for the exam. I'm starting the first few weeks

with the speaking test and the Science Practical Test, where I will demonstrate everything I've learned in the lab."

Farhan said the tight schedule at his boarding school is effective, saying it boosts his discipline and helps him to stay focused.

"Staying busy keeps me from overthinking, and after a full day, I'm guaranteed a good night's sleep."

He credits much of his motivation to his teachers and school, acknowledging that extra classes and mock exams have been helpful.

He also said success ultimately depends on each student's effort.

However, for some students, maintaining motivation and managing stress have been a challenge.

Nur Hayfaa Qistina, 17, admits that consistency is her biggest hurdle in preparing for the exam.

"There are days when I lack motivation or feel close to giving up, but I always remind myself to think of success."

"To manage stress, I talk to loved ones and seek advice from them. Having a strong support system, particularly from my family, is important for me. When my family sees me stressing out or staying up late, they comfort

me and occasionally treat me to something nice.

"They've fully supported me ever since the beginning, and I've set high expectations for myself to make them proud."

She also said her study methods are unique and also reflect her ability to adapt to modern tools. Unlike traditional approaches, she uses social media platforms like Telegram and TikTok to find effective notes and resources.

Often, she relies on technology, using an iPad to take notes and study on the go.

Nur Hayfaa said while technology can benefit studying, it must be used properly to avoid distractions.

Nur Iman Safia, 17, echoed similar sentiments, noting that the presence of gadgets and social media can sometimes be a distraction, causing her focus to be affected.

To counter this, she reverts to traditional methods, such as using pen and paper to take notes.

"I use my gadgets to study, but sometimes I just switch my study methods to stay focused."

All three students expressed wanting to make their families proud and achieve success.

Nur Iman wants to prove that her efforts have not been in vain.

"Making my family proud has always been my most important goal in life and I hope to get all As for my SPM."

The students will take their SPM examination over two months. It ends in Feb 6 next year.



The SPM examination, which begins on Dec 2, is often seen by students as a defining moment in their academic journey. – AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

'Four-and-a-half-day work plan hinges on rationale'

KOTA TINGGI: Johor's proposal to implement a four-and-a-half-day work week hinges on the state government's rationale, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said.

She said the state government must have valid reasons for the proposal, but declined to elaborate further, citing a lack of details on the plan.

However, the Pengerang MP expressed her personal view that technological advancements and rapid development have transformed traditional working norms.

"Nowadays, no one strictly works eight hours a day. Many people work beyond that

because of technology, like smartphones, enabling work outside standard hours," she said, adding that work hours often depend on the nature of a profession.

"Certain jobs demand more than eight to 10 hours a day, while some can be performed remotely. As we head into 2025, we must adopt a more open-minded approach, especially with technology evolving so rapidly," she said after a community dinner in Pengerang on Saturday night.

Last Thursday, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi announced that the state is studying a four-and-a-half-day work week for the public sector, following the move to revert state weekend holidays to Saturday and

Sunday starting Jan 1, 2025.

Onn Hafiz said the government is actively improving productivity and service delivery, including standardising operating hours for service counters across state and federal government offices as well as local authorities.

In 2022, a pilot study in the United Kingdom involving 61 organisations tested a four-day work week. Results showed significant benefits, including a 71% reduction in employee burnout.

According to the Chartered Management Institute, 89% of participating organisations continued with the shorter work week after the six-month trial, with some reporting revenue growth of up to 34%. – Bernama

11,000 UKM grads conferred degrees

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 11,010 graduates received their degrees at the 52nd Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Convocation, which began on Saturday. It ends on Dec 1.

The convocation ceremony at the Tun Abdul Razak Chancellor Hall will be held in 15 sessions, involving 4,409 Bachelor's Degree graduates, 2,549 Master's Degrees, 469 Doctor of Philosophy, 3,393 Postgraduate Diplomas and 190 Specialist Doctors.

UKM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Ekhwan Toriman said in a statement that this has brought the UKM alumni network to 240,462 as of this year.

"The convocation ceremony began with an opening ceremony conducted by the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan Tuanku Muhriz Tuanku Munawir, who is also the Chancellor of UKM," he said.

He added that UKM's convocation ceremony also involved the first graduates of two Postgraduate Diploma programmes, namely the Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme and the Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Embryology.

Meanwhile, three UKM academicians, namely Dr Rahmah Ismail, Dr R. Wickneswari and Datuk Dr Wan Ramli Wan Daud, were awarded the title of professor emeritus in recognition of their excellent services in their respective fields of expertise. – Bernama

Syariah amendments to be tabled next year

KOTA BHARU: The Kelantan government is expected to table amendments to the Syariah Criminal Code (I) Enactment 2019 in the state legislative assembly in 2025.

Deputy Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Mohamed Fadzli Hassan said the amendments would be tabled after the Main Committee on Amendments to the Syariah Criminal Code (I) 2019, comprising 12 members, discusses the matter.

He said the committee's scope and responsibilities include examining the impact of the annulment of 16 provisions on the existing enactment and forming a technical committee to conduct the study.

"This committee will also propose a draft to reinstate the 16 annulled provisions, including any related provisions," he said when replying to Zuraidin Abdullah (PAS-Chetok) at the Kelantan state legislative assembly yesterday.

On March 6, the Kelantan state legislative assembly, in its sitting, approved a motion to re-legislate the 16 offences in the Syariah Criminal Code Enactment (I) Kelantan 2019 which were declared null and void by the Federal Court on Feb 9. – Bernama

Panel to address rice shortage issue

SHAH ALAM: A special committee is being formed to tackle the ongoing shortage of locally produced white rice.

Agriculture and Food Security Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu said the ministry is collaborating with various parties, including the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry to resolve the issue.

"The committee is being set up, and my ministry secretary-general (Datuk Seri Isham Ishak) will prioritise the matter to seek the best solution," he said after officiating at the 2024 Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah) Selangor state convention yesterday.

He was responding to concerns raised by Hassan Abdul Karim (PH-Pasir Gudang) regarding the scarcity of locally produced white rice in the market, which was highlighted during the committee stage debate on the Supply Bill 2025 in the Dewan Rakyat recently. – Bernama



Cycling event to promote healthy lifestyle

PUTRAJAYA: With the aim of uniting cycling enthusiasts to practise a healthy lifestyle while experiencing the beauty of the environment, Putrajaya Corporation organised the Inter-Park Ride yesterday.

Its president Datuk Fadlun Mak Ujud said the event was introduced on May 30, 2010 and has now reached its 33rd edition, showing that it is always eagerly awaited by the public.

"The response was encouraging, with an estimated 800 participants registered for the event. With a safe cycling route, participants got to enjoy the landscape of the public park and the flora and fauna along the 25km route."

Earlier, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Dr Zaliha Mustafa flagged off participants of various ages and walks of life.

Fadlun said organising the event opens up space for participants to share their experiences on social media, namely as ambassadors introducing Putrajaya to the global stage by promoting local recreational and cultural locations.

"The organisation of the event shows Putrajaya Corporation's commitment to encouraging communities to adopt a healthy lifestyle and making Putrajaya a sustainable city." – Bernama

Networking event hailed by traders

LABUAN: Entrepreneurs participating in the inaugural Labuan Connect! event on Saturday described it as a valuable platform for increasing income and building stronger connections with Bernama.

Sarawak native and event exhibitor Shirley Dorina Anthony, 46, shared her excitement.

Dorina, who has been baking layered cakes, brownies and egg tarts for eight years, said she has participated in sales events organised by other agencies.

"As a full-time housewife, these events and online sales help supplement my family's income."

Alinawati Kalik, 40, who operates a *colek buah* mixed fruit salad business, praised the event as a platform to connect small businesses with customers while learning more about Bernama.

Alinawati, a resident of Kampung Layang-Layangan, began her business in 2021 by creating homemade dipping sauces, Bernama reported.

"I started with three variants – sweet and spicy pepper, dried shrimp Thai and dried tamarind sauces. After some feedback, I added fruits with the dips."

Concert pays tribute to Pak Ngah

SEREMBAN: The "Karya Agung: Tribute to Pak Ngah" concert served as a grand homage to the legacy of the late Datuk Suhaimi Mohd Zain, fondly known as Pak Ngah, for his efforts in elevating the status of the unique *Irama Malaysia* music genre.

National Culture and Arts Department director-general Mohd Amran Mohd Haris said Pak Ngah's songs and music are steeped in artistic value and cultural heritage, inspiring the younger generation to appreciate and champion the masterpieces, Bernama reported.

"We want to ensure that the younger generation is exposed to his music."

Father donates kidney to son in ultimate act of love

BY **KIRTINEE RAMESH**
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➤ Decision prompted by suffering seen due to stage five failure, haemodialysis trauma and memory of late wife with same condition

KUALA LUMPUR: For father and son Ayub Abdul Ghani, 61, and Dr Mohamad Zulkifli, 28, Nov 19 will always remain in their minds as the day their bond transcended everything else and manifested in its truest form.

Their ordeal started years earlier when Mohamad Zulkifli was diagnosed with stage five kidney failure and had to spend the next four years on haemodialysis.

Seeing his son suffering, Ayub made the love driven decision to help. The act gave Mohamad Zulkifli a second chance to live a near-normal life and stands as a powerful example of parental sacrifice.

Mohamad Zulkifli's journey with kidney failure began when he

turned 24 years old. The next four years of his tertiary education at the International Islamic University of Malaysia in Kuantan, Pahang involved haemodialysis.

Eventually, the Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Medical Centre in Kuantan changed this to peritoneal dialysis, which is done at home.

"I was diagnosed with stage five kidney failure while pursuing my medical degree. I felt a sense of despair upon learning that I needed to undergo haemodialysis. Soon, I was admitted to the hospital. When I first started on haemodialysis, I felt

lethargic and dizzy but the symptoms settled down in time," said Mohamad Zulkifli, adding that his late mother was also diagnosed with kidney failure and underwent haemodialysis for five years before her death.

So, it came as no surprise that Ayub was devastated by his son's struggle and dependence on dialysis.

"Seeing him suffering was heartbreaking. After doctors explained the risks and benefits of the transplant, I had no hesitation to donate a kidney to him."

As a smoker, Ayub said it was not easy to quit the habit, especially since he had been smoking since his 20s.

"The process was difficult and required a lot of effort and motivation, especially from my family and doctors. It took time but I knew I had to do it."

On Nov 19, Mohamad Zulkifli had his transplant performed by surgeons at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital. This marked a turning point in his life, putting an end to travelling back and forth between Kuantan and Kuala Lumpur for medical appointments.

"I am grateful to have been given a second chance at life," he said, reflecting on how the transplant has given him hope of living a normal life.

For Ayub, his experience with the transplant forced him to quit cigarettes and become a strong supporter of the anti-smoking lobby.

"Quit smoking for your own sake and the well-being of those around you. It is never too late to make a change. I feel far healthier today after quitting cigarettes than I have ever felt."

"I also feel a tinge of sadness that my son's kidney failure was what prompted me to decide to finally give up cigarettes."

Not everyone is blessed to have a transplant in Malaysia as the gap between supply and demand for organs is notably large.

Data from the Malaysian Society of Transplantation (MST) showed that 9,608 child and adult patients are on the waiting list, with the highest demand being for kidneys.

Only 3,250 transplants have been carried out since 1975. Over the past 10 years, Malaysia performed between 80 and 180 kidney transplants a year, with living donors making up between 70% and 80% of the transplants.

MST vice-president and Hospital Kuala Lumpur transplant nephrologist Dr Mohamad Zaimi Abdul Wahab said about 382,020 individuals have pledged their organs, with the majority aged between 20 and 39.



Mohamad Zulkifli using an incentive spirometer to strengthen his lungs and aid his recovery after his operation at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital. – **AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN**

Bollywood singer to perform in Malaysia next month

KUALA LUMPUR: Popular Bollywood playback singer and legendary vocalist Udit Narayan, who is known for his timeless hits, is set to return to perform in Malaysia at the end of the year after his last performance here 12 years ago.

During a Zoom interview from Mumbai in India, he emphasised the importance of dedication and resilience in achieving success in the music industry.

"My advice to aspiring Malaysian singers is to embrace hard work and patience, and keep their ambitions alive."

The veteran singer, who has recorded over 25,000 songs in nearly

40 languages during his illustrious career of more than four decades, will perform at the Megastar Arena in Kuala Lumpur on Dec 28.

The concert is scheduled to begin at 7.30pm and promises to take music enthusiasts on a nostalgic journey through Bollywood's golden era, featuring hits from the 1990s to the present day.

Reflecting on his career, he noted the evolution of the music industry over the decades but stressed that staying authentic and passionate remains the foundation of lasting success.

Recounting his previous visit to

Malaysia, Udit said he has fond memories of the warm reception he received from the diverse communities here.

"Malaysians are very musical. They love Bollywood music, whether they are romantic melodies or high-energy tracks."

He acknowledged Malaysia's deep admiration for Bollywood megastar Datuk Shah Rukh Khan and hinted at including hit songs from Khan's films, such as "Tum Paas Aaye" from the film "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai", in his upcoming concert, as well as the A.R. Rahman composition "Kya Kare Kya Na Kare" from "Rangeela", which remains a

fan favourite.

He reminisced about his breakthrough in the Indian music industry with the iconic song "Papa Kehte Hain" from the movie "Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak" and his Tamil debut in the film "Kadhalan".

Promising a vibrant and engaging show for his Malaysian fans, he said he would be accompanied by a 20-member team, including his wife and fellow performers.

Tickets, priced between RM148 and RM1,466, are available through the My Ticket Asia platform and can be purchased at <https://myticket.asia/>. – Bernama

Flood situation mostly unchanged in three states

➤ Slight decrease in evacuees in Terengganu and Malacca while increase recorded in Kelantan

KUALA LUMPUR: The flood situation in Terengganu, Malacca and Johor remained largely unchanged while the number of affected residents in Kelantan had risen as of yesterday morning.

In Terengganu, the number of evacuees decreased from 250 on Saturday night to 228 as of 8am yesterday, with those affected placed at six temporary relief centres in Marang and Dungun districts.

The state Disaster Management Committee secretariat reported that 191 evacuees from 36 families were housed at four centres in Marang, namely Dewan Sivik Wakaf Tapai, SK Rawai, Dewan Sivik Mercang and SK Pengkalan

Berangan, while 37 evacuees from seven families were at two centres in Dungun, namely SK Tok Kah and Balairaya Alor Mak Bah.

According to the *InfoBanjir* portal, water levels at Sungai Chalok at Jambatan Chalok (F2) and Sungai Nerus at Kampung Bukit in Setiu exceeded the warning level while Sungai Terengganu at Rumah Pam Pulau Bahagia (F1) surpassed the alert level.

In Malacca, the number of evacuees slightly decreased from 231 from 64 families on Saturday night to 220 people from 60 families as of 8am yesterday.

The state Disaster Management Committee secretariat reported that 185 people from 49 families were housed at SK Tanjung Minyak 2 and 35 people from 11 families were staying at the Pantai Kundur Japerun office.

The evacuees were residents of Taman Rambai Jaya, Taman Rambai Utama, Kampung Bukit Datuk A, Kampung Pantai Kundur and Taman Rambai Indah.

Johor Disaster Management Committee chairman Tan Sri Dr Azmi Rohani said the flood situation in Johor remained unchanged,

with one centre still open at Balai Raya Batu Badak in Segamat and sheltering 11 evacuees from four families from Kampung Seberang Batu Badak yesterday.

He said five rivers in Johor were at warning levels, namely Sungai Kesang at Telok Rimba and Sungai Tangkak at Kampung Seri Ma'amor in Tangkak, Sungai Muar at Buloh Kasap in Segamat, Sungai Paya Dato' in Mersing and Sungai Pungai in Kota Tinggi.

In Kelantan, the number of evacuees increased to 76 yesterday morning, with a new centre at SK Gual To'Deh in Pasir Mas sheltering 32 victims from seven families.

According to the Social Welfare Department's Disaster Info portal, 44 evacuees from 12 families remained at SMK Beris Panchor in Bachok, Bernama reported.

InfoBanjir reported that the level at Sungai Golok in Rantau Panjang remained above the warning level at 8.73m as of 9am while Sungai Golok in Kuala Jambu in Tumpat, Sungai Melor in Bachok and Sungai Semerak in Pasir Puteh were above the alert level, at 2.09m, 7.04m and 2.14m respectively.

Law on illegal border crossing to apply to students

PASIR MAS: The law permitting the detention of Malaysians using illegal routes along the Sungai Golok-Rantau Panjang crossing, set to take effect on Dec 1, applies to everyone, including students.

National Security Council (NSC) Security Management deputy director-general Hamzah Ishak said Malaysians are only allowed to cross the Malaysia-Thailand border via three gazetted checkpoints in Kelantan.

"All border-related issues, including school students (using illegal routes from Sungai Golok to attend school in Rantau Panjang) under the jurisdiction of the Education Ministry, have been addressed.

"The ministry has developed strategies and plans. We must enforce this law to protect Malaysia's sovereignty and territorial integrity." Hamzah was speaking at a press conference

following a three-hour NSC meeting at the Rantau Panjang Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security Complex yesterday.

He said a mechanism would be discussed with the ministry to address the issue of students who live in Thailand but attend school in Malaysia.

He noted that the law must be implemented carefully, with the support of the parents of the students.

"*Insya-Allah*, if the parents are on board, there would be no issues and border openings would be coordinated with Thai authorities."

"Additional details on the matter will be shared by Kelantan police chief (Datuk Mohd Yusoff Mamat) as necessary."

Kelantan Education Department director Datuk Mohd Zamri Abdul Aziz said discussions

are ongoing to address the issue of students using illegal routes.

He said the department has explored several proposals, which have been submitted to Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek for consideration.

It was reported that nearly 500 students from Thailand use illegal routes across Sungai Golok daily to attend school in Malaysia.

On Nov 6, Kelantan police announced that effective Dec 1, they would detain Malaysians crossing the Malaysia-Thailand border using illegal routes, particularly along Sungai Golok.

Mohd Yusoff said the authorities would invoke Section 5(2) of the Immigration Act 1959/1963 to detain Malaysians using non-gazetted routes. – Bernama

Johor continues ban on sale of vape products, e-cigarettes

ISKANDAR PUTERI: Local authorities in Johor continue to enforce the ban on the sale of vape products and electronic cigarettes, and have not issued any licences for their sale.

State Housing and Local Government Committee chairman Datuk Mohd Jafni Md Shukor said the decision to prohibit the sale of such products has remained in effect since 2016.

He said the ban remains in effect on the sale and purchase of vape products, as well as gel or liquid flavours, particularly those containing nicotine.

On Jan 1, 2016, the state government implemented a law banning the use of vape products, including taking action against traders involved in the sale of such devices, following a decree by Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar prohibiting such activities in the state.

On Nov 19, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad announced that vape products would remain regulated under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024, which came into force on Oct 1.

He said while the federal government has opted not to ban the sale of vape products at the national level, state governments have the authority to set their own policies, including imposing sales bans through local authorities. – Bernama

Lorry driver arrested after fatal crash

KUALA LUMPUR: A lorry driver has been arrested after causing a crash that led to the death of a motorcyclist and injured a motorist in Jalan Kerinchi, Bangsar South here on Saturday.

Kuala Lumpur Traffic Investigation and Enforcement Department head ACP Mohd Zamzuri Mohd Isa said the 32-year-old driver was arrested at the Kuala Lumpur traffic police station and the incident is being investigated under Section 41(1) of the Road Transport Act 1987, Bernama reported.

The crash occurred when the lorry, which had been parked at a construction site to refill its brake fluid, suddenly rolled backward, breaking through a safety gate, entering the main road and striking a motorcyclist.

"A motorist was also hit by the lorry and sustained injuries to his forehead. We will apply for a remand order to continue the investigation," said Mohd Zamzuri.

RM64,000 watch stolen from shop

KUALA LUMPUR: A man posing as a customer is believed to have stolen a Rolex watch worth RM64,000 from a shop in Section 16, Subang Jaya in Selangor yesterday.

The individual reportedly waited outside the shop as two female employees opened the premises at 10.40am. He claimed to have made an appointment over the phone.

Subang Jaya district police chief ACP Wan Azlan Wan Mamat said after being allowed entry, the man asked the two employees several questions about the merchandise before suddenly rushing out, claiming he needed to fetch his employer.

He said the man is believed to have taken the "Rolex Datejust 36 Oystersteel and Yellow Gold" from a display rack.

The case is being investigated under Section 380 of the Penal Code. Those with information are urged to contact the Subang Jaya District Control Centre at 03-7862 7222 or investigating officer Insp Muhammad Fathurrahman Ampandi at 011-2939 5178. – Bernama

SHOW OF ARMS

... A visitor strikes a pose at the Defence Ministry's weapons exhibition in conjunction with two years of the *Madani* Government Programme at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday.

– BERNAMAPIC



Crowd pulling charm of 'padi field cafe'

IPOH: Delight in the savoury flavours of *punten*, a traditional Javanese dish, complemented by a freshly brewed cup of coffee while soaking in the serene beauty of endless green *padi* fields. This unique experience awaits visitors at Punten N Coffee, a charming cafe located in Felcra Seberang Perak.

Although simple, the dish comprising spindle shaped pressed rice served with green chili *sambal* holds a rich history and serves as the centrepiece of the cafe operated by the Padi Seed Centre of Felcra Plantation Services Sdn Bhd.

"Historically, *punten* was a staple packed meal for farmers, carried along with traditional *kampung* coffee as they worked in the fields.

"To recreate the ambience and honour that legacy, we have made *punten* the signature dish of this cafe. However, the traditional *kampung* coffee has been modernised with trendy specialty coffee, expertly brewed by skilled baristas," said Felcra Padi Seed Centre head Mohd Fikri Roslan.

The establishment of Punten N Coffee, an open-concept cafe, was initiated by Felcra Plantation Services chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Zaidi Md Zain. The initiative aims to utilise vacant lots effectively, preventing them from being idle while adding value to the company as part of its downstream projects.

"Alhamdulillah, since its opening in May, the cafe has achieved sales of over RM200,000," he said.

"In addition to *punten* and coffee, the cafe offers a range of dishes, including donuts, *keropok lekor* (fish crackers), Western cuisine and other snacks. All these are prepared by Felcra participants and local residents."

Mohd Fikri said the cafe has become a favourite spot for both locals and visitors from distant areas who discovered it through social media.

"The cafe provides a breathtaking backdrop, ideal for capturing memorable moments," he said, adding that TikTok posts showcasing the scenic views have garnered 1.6 million views.

"Most customers discover this cafe through reviews from visitors who dined here and captured memorable moments," he said. - Bernama

Hope for better world

■ DEEPALAKSHMI MANICKAM
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Over 1,000 attendees gathered at the Tzu Chi Jing Si Hall in Kepong for an inspiring evening with world-renowned ethologist and conservationist Dr Jane Goodall, who delivered a talk titled "Reasons for Hope".

Organised by Tzu Chi Foundation Malaysia and co-organised with Roots and Shoots Malaysia, which was founded in 2015, the event welcomed ambassadors, academics and environmental advocates.

Roots and Shoots is a youth-led action programme. Aimed at young people of all ages, it was originally founded in 1991 by Goodall under the Jane Goodall Institute and promotes the values of compassion and respect for all living things, as well as intercultural understanding

Environmental conservation icon Jane Goodall delivers profound message at Tzu Chi Foundation event

and solidarity among all peoples.

Goodall, who has dedicated her life to studying chimpanzees and advocating environmental protection, captivated the audience with her personal experiences.

She highlighted the importance of learning from nature and recognising humanity's impact on the environment.

"Chimps have taught me the arrogance of humanity in claiming superiority over nature, reminding us to embrace humility and respect the interconnectedness of all living beings."

Goodall said if we are intelligent, we would not destroy our world

and this is a reminder of humanity's responsibility to safeguard the planet.

She added that it is important people are inspired to change for the better by telling them powerful stories.

"It's really important to reach their hearts, and we should do that by telling stories to people as they have a major impact and can inspire them."

"I wake up every day and do what I do because I have grandchildren and I care about them as well as the animals, insects, trees and the future of the world. As long as I live, I'll keep doing what I do. If my body fails, I'll

gradually slow down. I just pray my mind stays healthy."

She said people find hope in different ways. It is easier for some while for others, especially those who grew up in tough environments, it is harder. But their experiences often make them more determined not to give up.

Roots and Shoots has empowered countless young people to address environmental and humanitarian challenges through community-driven initiatives.

Goodall said by focusing on youth engagement, the organisation inspires the next generation to take action for a better world.

"Young people who want to help the planet should begin by volunteering. It's a way to understand the challenges people face today and work towards making the world a better place."

The evening concluded with Goodall delivering a powerful call to action that echoed throughout the hall when she said: "Together we can, together we will, together we must save the world."

The event also showcased the continued efforts of Tzu Chi Foundation Malaysia, with its commissioner Yeo Kar Peng highlighting the organisation has been actively promoting environmental conservation since 1995, inspired by the call of Dharma Master Cheng Yen, who founded Tzu Chi in Taiwan in 1966.

Yeo said over the years, the foundation has established more than 160 recycling centres and over 1,000 recycling points nationwide, fostering community participation in waste reduction and sustainable practices.

Guests at the talk included US ambassador Edgard D. Kagan, Philippine ambassador Maria Angela Abrera Ponce and representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.



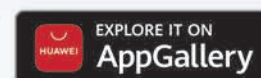
Goodall highlighted the importance of learning from nature and recognising humanity's impact on the environment. - ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

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Wong warns of dangerous world amid global instability

➤ Situation is now changing, says S'pore PM

SINGAPORE: "Everyone is worried because we are in a far more dangerous world today," Prime Minister Lawrence Wong said as he reflected on the evolving global landscape.

Speaking at the People's Action Party (PAP) Conference yesterday, Wong shared insights from high-level meetings at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Peru and the G20 Summit in Brazil.

His speech highlighted the precarious state of global geopolitics, marked by wars, strained superpower relations and rising instability.

"There are major wars raging in Europe and the Middle East. The US-China relationship is in a more challenging place, and there are many moving pieces geopolitically where things can easily go wrong," said Wong, who also serves as deputy secretary-general of the PAP.

For decades, he said, "all of us have benefited from an American-led Global Order".

"We say this is Pax Americana in Latin. It means a world with America as the dominant power supported by multilateral institutions, like the United Nations, the IMF, the World Bank, the International Court of Justice and so on ... shaping international norms and behaviours.

"Now, the situation is changing. America is still pre-eminent but it no longer wants to be the world's policeman. Donald Trump has just been re-elected to office based on an America first (policy)."

Wong said Trump's mandate "reflects the growing sentiment among the American public that they are paying too high a price to uphold this Global Order ... too high a price and yet not enjoying the commensurate benefit."

At the same time, he said there are other rising powers like China and India.

"But they too are focused on their own domestic issues and they are not yet in a position to take on larger global responsibilities."

Thus, he said, "the world is in flux."

"The established norms are fading, but a new order is not yet in place. Amid this vacuum of global leadership ... we can expect more conflict and instability in the world because state and non-state actors will be emboldened to test boundaries. Often with little or no consequence."

Wong said the world has already seen this in Ukraine, where there has been an egregious breach of the UN Charter and territorial sovereignty.

"Also in the Middle East where there has been a horrendous attack followed by a cataclysmic humanitarian tragedy," he said.

Wong suggested that the major powers of the world "should come together, coordinate their positions and work together for the larger good".

"Stop the conflicts. Stop the wars. Tackle shared challenges like nuclear proliferation. Otherwise, we can't look forward to a shared future," he said.

He added that unfortunately, there is deep suspicion and mistrust between America and China.

"Each regards the other as a strategic threat and both are taking steps to enlarge their spheres of influence and to strengthen their own positions. So, it will get harder to find common ground.

"These dynamics will be with us for some time.

"We are not talking about one or two years, and then things will improve. I think we will have to grapple with this perhaps for the next decade or beyond.

"It means we will find it more difficult to make a living and keep ourselves safe.

"Other countries may test our limits and we must be ready to stand firm and defend our interests. At the same time, we must redouble our efforts to make friends with everyone. Big and small, near and far."

Wong also told party members that this would be the last PAP biennial conference before the general election.

"It will be next year," thus confirming for the first time that the election will be held in 2025.

Singapore's last general election was in July 2020. – Bernama

'Assassination threat a national security matter'

MANILA: The Philippine security council will verify an alleged assassination threat by Vice-President Sara Duterte against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, a top official said yesterday, describing it as a "matter of national security".

Duterte, in a strongly-worded briefing on Saturday, said she had spoken with an assassin and instructed him to kill Marcos, his wife and the speaker of the Philippine House if she were to be killed.

"I have talked to a person. I said, if I get killed, go kill BBM (Marcos), (first lady) Liza Araneta, and (speaker) Martin Romualdez. No joke. No joke. I said, do not stop until you kill them, and then he said yes," Duterte said in the profanity-laden briefing.

She was responding to an online commentator urging her to stay safe, saying she was in enemy territory as she was at the lower chamber of Congress overnight with her chief of staff. Duterte did not cite any alleged threat against herself.

National Security Adviser Eduardo Ano said the government considers all threats to the president as "serious", vowing to closely work with law enforcement and intelligence communities to investigate the threat and possible perpetrators.

"Any and all threats against the life of the president shall be validated and considered a matter of national security," Ano said in a statement.

In response to Duterte's threat, Marcos' presidential security

command said it had tightened its protocols in guarding the Philippine leader and the national police chief had ordered an investigation.

Police chief Rommel Francisco Marbil said he had called for an immediate probe, adding that "any direct or indirect threat to his life must be addressed with the highest level of urgency".

The Presidential Communications Office said any threat to the life of the president must always be taken seriously.

However, Duterte told reporters later on Saturday: "Thinking and talking about it is different from actually doing it," adding that there was already a threat to her life.

"When that happens, there will be

an investigation on my death. The investigation on their deaths will be next."

Duterte and Marcos were once political partners who won an overwhelming mandate to lead the nation's top two offices in 2022. The alliance crumbled this year over policy differences, including foreign policy and former President Rodrigo Duterte's deadly war on drugs.

Marcos' congressional allies are separately investigating the elder Duterte's war against drugs that led to more than 6,000 killed in anti-drug operations and alleged corruption over the younger Duterte's use of public funds during her tenure as education secretary. Both have denied wrongdoing. – Reuters

BRIEFS

FIRE RIPS THROUGH MANILA SLUM

MANILA: Raging orange flames and thick black smoke billowed into the sky yesterday as fire ripped through hundreds of houses in a slum here. Fire department officials said around 1,000 houses were razed in Isla Puting Bato village. There were no reports of casualties. The structures housed around 2,000 families. Village resident Leonila Abiertas, 65, lost almost all her possessions, but managed to save her late husband's ashes. "I only got the urn with the ashes," Abiertas said. Fire and disaster services deployed 36 trucks and four fire boats while the airforce sent in two helicopters to help extinguish the fire. – AFP

'BALI NINE' PRISONERS TO BE REPATRIATED

SYDNEY: The remaining members of the "Bali Nine" drug gang could be released from Indonesia and returned to Australia. Police arrested the nine Australians in 2005, convicting them of attempting to smuggle more than 8kg of heroin from Bali. Trade Minister Don Farrell said Australia was pushing to repatriate the five men. He said: "They would continue to serve their sentence in Australia." Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran were executed in 2015. Tan Duc Thanh Nguyen died of cancer in 2018, months before Renae Lawrence was released after her sentence was commuted. Matthew Norman, Si Yi Chen, Michael Czugaj, Scott Rush and Martin Stephens are in jail. – AFP

LAOS 'SADDENED' BY ALCOHOL DEATHS

BANGKOK: The Laos government is "profoundly saddened" by the deaths of foreign tourists from drinking alcohol contaminated with methanol and pledged to prosecute those responsible. Two Danes, two Australians, a Briton and an American have died after visiting Vang Vieng, an idyllic town that is popular with foreign backpackers. The government has been "conducting investigations on the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice", it said in its official comments published on the Foreign Affairs Ministry website on Saturday. – Reuters



Landmine victims, government officials and representatives from other countries take part in a march at Angkor Thom for the banning of landmines in Siem Reap yesterday. – AFP/PIIC

Survivors and sniffer dogs join anti-mine march

SIEM REAP: Survivors and sniffer dogs joined hundreds of people at Angkor Wat yesterday for a march against landmines after the US decision to send anti-personnel mines to Ukraine.

Participants, including landmine victims and deminers, repeatedly chanted for "a mine-free world" during the 4km walk around the famed temple complex in Siem Reap.

The march was held a day before an anti-landmine conference convenes in Cambodia, which is awash in unexploded ordnance.

Hundreds of delegates are expected in Siem Reap to assess progress on the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, which neither Russia nor the United States are party to.

The march and conference come

after Washington announced this week that it would send anti-personnel landmines to Ukraine in a major policy shift that was criticised by human rights campaigners.

Landmine victims said they fear the casualties that could come of the decision.

"There will be more victims like me. I am sad and feel shocked," said Horl Pros, a former soldier who lost his right leg to a landmine in 1984.

When asked about the supply of US mines to Ukraine, Vice-President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority Ly Thuch said: "We regret that any country, any people continue to use landmines. Anti-personnel mines are not good for our humanity." – AFP



Developing nations blast US\$300b climate deal

▶ Trump pledges to remove US from pact

BAKU: Countries at the COP29 summit in Baku adopted a US\$300 billion (RM1.3 trillion) a year global finance target yesterday to help poorer nations cope with impacts of climate change, a deal its intended recipients criticised as woefully insufficient.

Some delegates gave the deal a standing ovation in the COP29 plenary hall. Others lambasted wealthy nations for not doing more and criticised the Azerbaijan host for hurriedly gavelling through the contentious plan.

"I regret to say that this document is nothing more than an optical illusion," Indian delegation representative Chandni Raina told the closing session of the summit, minutes after the deal was gavelled in.

"This will not address the enormity of the challenge we all face. Therefore, we oppose the adoption of this document."

UN climate chief Simon Stiell

acknowledged the difficult negotiations that led to the agreement but hailed the outcome as an insurance policy for humanity.

The agreement would provide US\$300 billion annually by 2035, boosting rich countries' previous commitment to provide US\$100 billion per year in climate finance by 2020. That earlier goal was met two years late, in 2022, and expires in 2025.

The summit cut to the heart of the debate over financial responsibility of industrialised countries - whose historic use of fossil fuels has caused the bulk of greenhouse gas emissions - to compensate others for worsening damage from climate change.

It also laid bare divisions between wealthy governments constrained by tight domestic budgets and developing nations reeling from corruption.

Yesterday's deal failed to set out detailed steps for how countries will act on last year's UN climate summit pledge to transition away from fossil fuels and triple renewable energy capacity this decade.

The roster of countries required to contribute - about two dozen industrialised countries, including the US, European nations

and Canada - dates back to a list decided during UN climate talks in 1992.

European governments have demanded others contribute, including China, the world's second-biggest economy, and oil-rich Gulf states.

The agreement includes a broader goal of raising US\$1.3 trillion in climate finance annually by 2035 - which would include funding from all public and private sources and which economists say matches the sum needed to address global warming.

Countries also agreed on rules for a global market to buy and sell carbon credits that proponents say could mobilise billions more dollars into new projects to fight global warming, from reforestation to deployment of clean energy technologies.

Securing the climate finance deal was a challenge from the start.

Donald Trump's US presidential election victory this month has raised doubts that the world's largest economy would pay into any climate finance goal. Trump has called climate change a hoax and promised to again remove the US from international climate cooperation. - Reuters

Protest forces coal ship to abort port call

SYDNEY: A climate change protest off the coast of New South Wales state forced an inbound ship to turn back from the country's largest terminal for coal exports yesterday, the port operator said.

New South Wales police said 170 protesters were arrested yesterday for refusing to move from the shipping channel near the Port of Newcastle.

The port, some 170km from the state capital Sydney, is the largest bulk shipping port on Australia's east coast.

A Port of Newcastle spokesperson said disruption due to the protest was "minimal" but that an inbound vessel "aborted due to people in the channel and has been rescheduled to come in".

Port operations would continue as normal if police were able to keep the shipping channel clear, he said. Police said the harbour remained open despite "some serious disruptions".

The climate activist group Rising Tide, which organised the 50-hour protest that started on Friday, said the vessel forced to turn around was a coal ship.

Three people were arrested on Saturday after being removed from the water.

Climate change is a divisive issue in Australia, the world's second-biggest exporter of thermal coal and the largest exporter of coking coal.

A similar protest in November last year disrupted operations at the Port of Newcastle, forcing all shipping movements to cease temporarily. - Reuters



Climate activists marching on a Busan street on Saturday to demand stronger global commitments to fight plastic waste. - REUTERS/PIC

Misinformation fine plan abandoned

SYDNEY: Australia's government said yesterday it had dropped plans to fine internet platforms up to 5% of their global revenue for failing to prevent the spread of misinformation online. The Bill was part of a wide-ranging regulatory crackdown by Australia, where leaders have complained that foreign-domiciled tech platforms are overriding the country's sovereignty, and comes ahead of a federal election due within a year.

"Based on public statements and engagements with Senators, it is clear that there is no pathway to legislate this proposal through the Senate," Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said in a statement.

Rowland said the Bill would have "ushered in an unprecedented level of transparency, holding big tech to account for their systems and processes to prevent and minimise the spread of harmful misinformation and disinformation online". Some four-fifths of Australians wanted the spread of misinformation addressed, said the minister, whose centre-left Labor government has fallen behind the conservative opposition coalition in recent polling.

The Liberal-National coalition, as well as the Australian Greens and crossbench senators, all opposed the legislation. - Reuters

US charges linked to only one contract, says Adani CFO

NEW DELHI: A US bribery indictment of Indian billionaire Gautam Adani is linked to one contract of Adani Green Energy that makes up some 10% of its business, and no other firms in the conglomerate are accused of wrongdoing, the group's CFO said on Saturday.

On Wednesday, Gautam Adani, one of the world's richest men, and seven others were indicted for fraud by US prosecutors over their alleged roles in a US\$265 million (RM1.2 billion) scheme to bribe Indian officials to secure power-supply deals.

Adani has denied all allegations calling them "baseless".

Group CFO Jugeshinder Singh sought to defend the allegations on Saturday saying none of Adani's 11 public companies "are subject to indictment" or "are accused of any wrongdoing in the said legal filing".

The allegations in the US indictment relates to "one contract of Adani Green, which is roughly 10% of overall business of Adani Green", Jugeshinder said on X.

The US prosecutor charges are the biggest setback for India's US\$143

billion Adani Group, which was last year hit by Hindenburg Research's allegations of improper use of offshore tax havens, claims the company denied.

The US indictment has already had a significant impact on the business. The group entity's shares have plummeted, some global banks are considering temporarily halting fresh credit to Adani and Kenya has cancelled two deals with Adani worth over US\$2.5 billion. Adani, which has several other global projects, is also charged with misleading US investors

about Adani Green's compliance with antibribery principles and laws. Jugeshinder said on Saturday they became aware of the "specificity" of the US charges only two days ago.

"We were aware that something is afoot," he said, adding the company disclosed as much to investors in its US\$750 million 2024 bond offering, about US\$175 million of which was raised from financial institutions in the United States.

The US indictment, however, says the bond offering "contained false and misleading assurance about, among

other things, the Indian Energy Company's (Adani Green's) 'corporate governance' and touted maintaining transparency and compliance in every aspect."

The charges also put the spotlight on Sagar Adani, a director at Adani Green and millennial scion of the company who kept track of alleged bribes to Indian officials on his mobile phone.

Jugeshinder said the group would make a more detailed comment once it has legal approval as the matter is before the courts. - Reuters

55 killed in Beirut airstrikes

➤ Gaza offensive claims 19 more lives

BEIRUT: Lebanon said Israeli air strikes on Saturday killed more than 55 people, many of them in central Beirut, as Israel's defence minister vowed decisive action against Hezbollah in a call with his US counterpart.

On Israel's second front, the more than 13-month war with Hamas in Gaza, rescuers said pre-dawn Israeli air strikes and tank fire killed 19 people and wounded more than 40.

Hamas' armed wing said an Israeli hostage, captured during the group's attack in October last year which triggered the war, had been killed. Israel's military said it could neither "confirm nor refute" the claim.

After nearly a year of limited cross-border exchanges of fire, in which Lebanon's Hezbollah said it was acting in support of Hamas, Israel escalated airstrikes against Hezbollah targets in Lebanon on Sept 23.

A week later it sent in ground troops to southern Lebanon.

One strike on Saturday in the heart of Beirut brought down a residential building and jolted residents across the city.

The strike on the working-class Basta neighbourhood killed at least 20 people and wounded 66, Lebanon's Health Ministry said in a revised toll.

"We saw two dead people on the ground ... The children started crying and their mother cried even more," said Samir, 60, who lives in a building facing the one destroyed.

The attack in the capital was followed by others in the city's southern suburbs after calls by the Israeli military to evacuate.

Israel has not commented on the strike in central Beirut but said it had again hit Hezbollah targets in the city's southern suburbs, a stronghold of the group.

A military statement said that over the past week, the air force "struck dozens of Hezbollah command centres, weapons storage facilities, and terrorist infrastructure in the Dahieh area".

A Lebanese security source said the central Beirut strike had "targeted a leading Hezbollah figure", but a Hezbollah lawmaker, Amin Sherri, denied to Lebanese media that any official was present at the time of the attack.

Similar strikes carried out without warning outside of Hezbollah's traditional bastions, which include southern Beirut but

not the centre, have tended to target senior figures.

The Health Ministry said Israeli airstrikes also hit eastern Lebanon, killing 24 people including 13 in the town of Shmostar overlooking the Bekaa Valley, another Hezbollah stronghold.

In Lebanon's south, at least 14 were killed including five in the coastal city of Tyre, the ministry said.

In a telephone call with Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz on Saturday, Washington's Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin "reiterated US commitment to a diplomatic resolution in Lebanon that allows Israeli and Lebanese civilians to return safely to their homes on both sides of the border", a Pentagon spokesperson said.

A spokesman for Katz said he commended the US efforts towards "de-escalation in Lebanon" and underscored that Israel would "continue to act decisively in

response to Hezbollah's attacks on civilian populations in Israel".

United States envoy Amos Hochstein was in Lebanon and Israel last week, meeting both countries' senior officials, to try to negotiate an end to the war.

After talks in Beirut he said a deal was "within our grasp" but as he headed to Israel both sides put out statements that dented hopes of rapid progress.

Lebanon says more than 3,670 people have been killed in the country since October 2023. Most of the deaths have been since September this year.

Israel's military offensive in Gaza has killed at least 44,176 people, most of them civilians, according to data from the territory's Health Ministry.

In the pre-dawn darkness of Gaza on Saturday, one strike killed seven people including children at a house in the Zeitun area of Gaza City, said civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal.

AFPTV footage showed victims being brought in to Al-Ahli Arab

Hospital including a bloody and dust-covered man, as a boy on a bed beside him struggled to reach the man and called for his father.

In southern Gaza, another strike killed six people, three of them children, Bassal said, and civil defence late on Saturday said six more were killed in an airstrike in Nuseirat refugee camp, central Gaza.

The United Nations and others have decried humanitarian conditions, particularly in northern Gaza.

The trickle of aid entering Gaza was the principal basis cited by the International Criminal Court in the arrest warrants it announced on Thursday for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defence minister Yoav Gallant, alleging starvation as a method of warfare and other crimes.

Abu Obeida, the spokesman for Hamas' armed wing, said on Saturday a female hostage had been killed in north Gaza.

Israel's military said it was examining the information. - AFP



An Israeli missile hits a building in the Chiyah district of Beirut's southern suburbs. - REUTERS/SPIC

Gunman shot dead, 3 hurt in Amman shooting

AMMAN: A gunman was dead and three Jordanian policemen injured after a shooting early yesterday near the heavily fortified Israeli embassy in the capital Amman, a security source and state media said.

Police shot a gunman who had fired at a police patrol in the affluent Rabiah neighbourhood of the Jordanian capital, the state news agency Petra reported, citing public security, adding investigations were ongoing.

The gunman, who was carrying an automatic weapon, was chased

for at least an hour before he was cornered and killed just before dawn, according to a security source.

Communications Minister Mohamed Momani described the shooting as a terrorist attack that targeted public security forces in the country.

He said in a statement that investigations into the incident were under way.

"Tampering with the security of the nation and attacking security personnel will be met with a firm response," Mohamed said, adding

that the gunman had a criminal record in drug trafficking.

Jordanian police cordoned off an area near the heavily policed embassy after gunshots were heard, witnesses said. Two witnesses said police and ambulances rushed to the Rabiah district, where the embassy is located.

The area is a flashpoint for frequent demonstrations against Israel. The kingdom has been the scene of some of the biggest peaceful protests across the Middle East over Israel's war against

Palestinian group Hamas in Gaza.

Many of Jordan's 12 million citizens are of Palestinian origin, they or their parents having been expelled or fled to Jordan in the fighting that accompanied the creation of Israel in 1948. Many have family ties on the Israeli side of the Jordan River.

Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel is unpopular among many citizens who regard the normalisation of relations as betraying the rights of their Palestinian compatriots. - Reuters

Putin signs law letting fighters write off debts

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin on Saturday signed a law that allows those who sign up to fight in Ukraine to write off unpaid debts worth almost US\$100,000 (RM446,793).

The new legislation will be a strong motivation for some to join up, experts said, as Russia seeks new ways to recruit fighters for the nearly three-year conflict.

The new legislation will allow those who sign a one-year contract to fight in Ukraine after Dec 1 to free themselves of existing bad debts. It also covers their spouses.

The law concerns debts where a court order for collection was issued and enforcement proceedings began before Dec 1, 2024.

The total amount of unpaid debt that can be covered is 10 million rubles, around RM428,921 at current rates.

Parliament approved the Bill earlier this month.

Russia has high interest rates for loans and many Russians have almost no cash savings, although the proportion of home owners is relatively high.

"Previously (for those fighting) there was only provision for taking repayment holidays on loans," said Sergei Krivenko of advocacy group Citizen Army Law.

The legislation applies to those who are conscripted for national service and those mobilised for the "special military operation". - AFP

BRIEFS

RUSSIA REMOVES COMMANDER

MOSCOW: Russia has removed a senior general in Ukraine for giving misleading reports about the progress of the war. Russian media reported that Colonel General Gennady Anashkin, the commander of the Southern Grouping, had been removed from his command, though there was no official confirmation. Bloggers have complained about the command around Siversk where they said poorly supported Russian units were thrown into deadly battles for little apparent tactical gain. An unidentified Defence Ministry source said Anashkin had been moved as part of a "planned rotation" of personnel. - Reuters

PAKISTAN LOCKS DOWN ISLAMABAD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's capital was put under a security lockdown yesterday ahead of protests by supporters of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan calling for his release. Highways leading to Islamabad through which supporters of Imran, led by members of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, are expected to approach the city and gather near the parliament, have been blocked. Most major city roads have also been blocked while mobile phone services have been suspended. Gatherings of any sort have been banned and messaging services restricted. - Reuters



SCAN ME

COMMENT by YS Chan

Must there be a tour guide during an excursion?

YES, ever since the licensing of tour guides was introduced in 1975 when I was automatically granted a licence.

In June 1973, I entered the travel industry by joining a tour company, and my first day was spent observing a full-day sightseeing bus tour in and around Kuala Lumpur.

On my second day, I was the tour guide for the same sightseeing tour that runs daily, as most passengers were picked up from various hotels in the city, with many of them booked by receptionists who were paid handsome commissions for making reservations by phone.

Several months later, a tour guide training course was organised by the Kuala Lumpur Tourist Association (KLTA) which I attended and easily passed.

It was the seventh course conducted by KLTA, with the first in 1964.

Decades later, I was the organising chairman of tour guide courses for the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents, or Matta, and organised the 23rd Kuala Lumpur tour guide Course in 1993 and the first tour guide courses in Langkawi and Ipoh in 1994.

From 1990 to 2000, I was a part-time lecturer and examiner for tour guide courses organised by various companies, academies and associations.

During this period and earlier, tour guide courses were largely lecture-based and on average, half the candidates failed practical tests.

After practical training was incorporated and the course duration extended, most would obtain a tour guide licence.

Even so, their quality can vary greatly as it is more than memorising and sharing facts.

Their character, interpretation and communication skills are far more important.

In 1992, I managed 15 tour guides, 15 tour bus drivers and 15 tour van drivers, all full-time employees, while part-timers were regularly hired.

We were so busy that most of them worked non-stop and often pleaded to be given a rest day or a break from outstation assignments.

But over the past three decades, in-house tour guides were few as most of them prefer to work freelance with

popular ones always in demand while those troublesome are avoided.

The weakest ones accept assignments to work as a "sitting guide" to earn a living, albeit miserably.

Hiring a sitting guide is just to comply with regulations that there must be a licensed tour guide on board a tour bus with passengers.

He or she would just sit in the bus like any other passenger and another person, usually the tour leader, would play the role of tour guide.

In such an arrangement, the tour leader not only delivers the running commentaries during the sightseeing tour, he also grabs the shopping commissions normally paid to the tour guide.

Incidentally, the bus driver and the tour company may also get a share of shopping commissions.

While conducting training for travel agents and tour operators, I often pointed out that a tour guide or tour leader may earn even more from handling a tour group than the tour company that organised the group tour or handled services such as airport transfers and sightseeing tours.

In the mid-1990s, I worked for a leading outbound tour company and their tour leaders doubled up as tour guides while the tour bus traversed several European countries.

These tour leaders cum tour guides received huge commissions from shopping and introducing various services.

Recently, the Malaysian Tourism Federation questioned the requirement for tour buses to be accompanied by a licensed tour guide, even though hire-and-drive passenger vans and multi-purpose vehicles used for e-hailing were exempted and their drivers often act as tour guides.

Meanwhile, Kota Kinabalu Warisan information chief Samuel Wong stirred

local sentiments by asking whether the RM5.62 billion in tourism revenue for the first nine months of 2024 in Sabah had benefited foreign industry players more than Sabahans.

He pointed out that there are numerous foreign-owned tour agencies, hotels, restaurants and tour guide services in the state and asked whether regular checks are conducted on illegal vans, Grab drivers and even Airbnb hosts offering unlicensed tour services.

Now, back to the heading: Must there be a tour guide on board a tour bus with passengers?

It will be a resounding yes from the Malaysian Tourist Guides Council and all the respective state tour guide associations plus sympathisers in the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry.

It will be a big no from the Malaysian Tourism Federation and all the travel associations, as their members are from travel and tour companies.

This argument has been ongoing for many years and it is just a matter of time before the powers that be finally act to change for the better.

Ultimately, customers should have the biggest say regarding the compulsory use of tour guides.

If they want a knowledgeable tour guide conversant in their language, then they ought to be given the best available so that they enjoy the tour and have a great memory of their stay.

But if they do not wish to pay a few hundred ringgit a day for the service of a tour guide, then it is unfair to impose on them.

We hardly see Malaysians travelling on their own in tour buses on domestic tour packages as they are sensitive to extra costs such as paying for a tour guide.

There are also instances when a tour guide is not wanted.

For example, privacy is needed when

a group of corporate executives is on a field study trip and wishes to discuss freely on board without an outsider observing intently or eavesdropping on their plans and strategies.

Some years ago, I witnessed the Tourism Malaysia director-general flatly refusing to reconsider by hanging on to what he had picked up decades ago that tour guides can make or break a tour.

That was true before the new millennium when outbound tour operators held sway.

This was because they decided which destinations to be included in their thick tour catalogues and their customers could only visit countries that were included.

But in the new millennium, the majority of travellers do not join tour groups and can easily book airline tickets on their own.

The do-it-yourself arrangements can practically cover all other services such as airport transfers, accommodation at hotels or short-term rental accommodations, road, rail and ferry transport, food and beverage, entrance tickets and entertainment, and navigation using smartphones.

Soon, there will be apps for tourists to buy premium, standard or budget all-inclusive travel packages, allowing customers the option to book services on the spot, as done in e-hailing, without the risk of incurring cancellation charges if booked in advance and then unutilised.

With continued advancement and adoption of artificial intelligence, the need for tour operators and tour guides will be further reduced.

With rapid changes taking place, it would be impossible to keep pace if the ministry and industry were to keep holding on to antiquated laws and mindsets.

"I often pointed out that a tour guide or tour leader may earn even more from handling a tour group than the tour company that organised the group tour or handled services such as airport transfers and sightseeing tours."

Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

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COMMENT by Dr Azmawati Mohamad Nor and Nurfarahira Ahmad Yaccob

The silent struggle for parenthood

THE dream of becoming parents is a fundamental part of human life. However, for some couples, the path to parenthood is filled with challenges that test their patience and emotional strength.

Infertility, often a quiet and deeply personal struggle, can leave couples feeling an overwhelming sense of emptiness and loss.

This emptiness is not just sadness; it is a deep emotional gap that can cause significant stress if left unaddressed.

The journey through infertility is complex and requires understanding and support from society, family, and most importantly, the couples themselves.

For couples facing infertility, the experience can be emotionally draining, bringing feelings of guilt, frustration and isolation.

Many feel a sense of failure, questioning their ability to fulfil what they see as a basic part of marriage and adulthood.

Often, this guilt is internalised, with one or both partners blaming themselves or their bodies for not meeting expectations.

Frustration grows with each unsuccessful attempt to conceive, turning a hopeful journey into a prolonged ordeal.

Seeing friends, siblings or colleagues easily build their families can intensify feelings of inadequacy and being left behind.

This comparison fosters deep loneliness as it seems like others cannot truly understand their struggles.

The process of trying to conceive is often physically and emotionally exhausting.

Fertility treatments, while offering hope, come with high costs - both financial and emotional.

Hormonal therapies can affect mood and energy, while medical procedures can be invasive and stressful.

Each treatment cycle feels like a gamble and repeated failures can sap the couple's energy and resolve.

Adding to these personal struggles is the weight of societal expectations.

In many communities, especially in Malaysia, having children is considered essential to a successful marriage and family life.

Couples often face intrusive questions such as "When are you having a baby?" or unsolicited advice on what they "should be doing".

While sometimes well-meaning, these remarks can feel like painful reminders of their challenges.

Worse, some couples encounter judgment or stigma as if infertility reflects a personal failing.

Older relatives may express disappointment and societal norms may perpetuate harmful ideas, such as linking a woman's worth to her ability to bear children.

These pressures amplify a couple's anxiety, making it even harder to cope.

Infertility can also strain relationships, even in strong marriages.

Differences in how each partner copes, unmet expectations and poor communication can create conflicts.

One partner may withdraw emotionally, while the other internalises blame.

This often leads to cycles of misunderstanding and resentment.

However, these challenges can also strengthen relationships.

Open communication, empathy and a willingness to share emotions can help couples turn adversity into growth.

When they navigate this journey together, they often emerge with a deeper bond and greater resilience.

For many couples, infertility brings a profound sense of loss, not just of the chance to become parents but of the future they had imagined.

Watching others celebrate pregnancies and milestones can deepen



For many couples, infertility brings a profound sense of loss, not just of the chance to become parents but of the future they had imagined.

"The journey through infertility is complex and requires understanding and support from society, family and the couples themselves."

feelings of inadequacy and isolation, leading them to question their worth.

The societal pressures surrounding childbearing add another layer of complexity.

In cultures such as Malaysia, having children is seen as central to personal and marital fulfilment.

Couples often face invasive questions, unsolicited advice or even judgment. These external pressures make it harder to reconcile personal struggles with societal expectations.

Beyond the emotional toll, infertility often imposes financial and physical burdens.

Fertility treatments are expensive and physically demanding, involving hormonal therapies and invasive procedures.

Many couples endure a relentless cycle of hope and disappointment, with no guarantee of success.

Despite these challenges, couples who face them together often build stronger, more understanding relationships.

Empathy, mutual support and open communication are key to navigating the emotional ups and downs.

A call for understanding

Infertility is more than a medical condition; it is an emotional and social experience that affects every part of life.

Recognising its many dimensions is crucial to offering meaningful support.

By fostering awareness and compassion, society can help lighten the burden and remind couples that their value is not defined by their ability to have children.

With empathy, understanding and proper support, the journey through infertility can become one of resilience, growth and hope.

Assoc Prof Dr Azmawati Mohamad Nor and Nurfarahira Ahmad Yaccob are from the Faculty of Education in Universiti Malaya. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

COMMENT by Eric S. Margolis

Will Trump go after the war party?

IN 54 BC, Marcus Licinius Crassus, a rich, ambitious Roman businessman, was named governor of the wealthy province of Syria.

Crassus had been sharing power in Rome with Pompey and Julius Caesar. Call him the Donald Trump of his day.

Crassus decided to invade neighbouring Parthia, which is today Turkiye and Iran.

At the battle of Carrhae, retreating Persian horse archers loosed arrows over the back of their horses, giving us the literary term for a parting shot, "Parthian shaft".

The moribund Biden administration lost its own Parthian shaft this week by having Ukraine fire US-supplied ATACMS tactical missiles with the help of US military technicians.

A handful of British Storm Shadow and French Scalp air-launched missiles were also fired at Russia.

This was clearly an act of war between nuclear powers.

Russia responded by launching one of its new hypersonic missiles

with multiple warheads at Dnipro, Ukraine.

The new Russian medium-range missile carried conventional, not nuclear, warheads.

But the message was loud and clear: all of Western Europe was in range.

One must ask, what was the lame-duck Biden administration doing?

Clearly, it was trying to provoke an even larger war with Russia.

The outgoing administration is still filled with fanatical Russia-haters.

In fact, the Pentagon, CIA, NSA and the rest of America's 18 national security agencies were packed with dunderheads who thought we were still fighting the Cold War and yearned to break up Russia into little Balkanised mini-states such as what happened to Yugoslavia.

So, the low IQ Biden administration has managed to get itself into a real, unwinnable war in Ukraine and the genocidal disaster in Gaza that also threatens to drag the US into war with Iran (former Parthia) while a huge

conflict with China looms just over the geopolitical horizon.

Meanwhile, Israel's extreme right-wing government of fanatical settlers and nouveau rightists seems to be acquiring most of the levers of power in the US.

And this is before the uber-Israeli-first Trump & Co. enters office.

Fools should not be allowed to play with matches.

Biden's foolish neocons can still cause a lot of mayhem before January 20.

Trump keeps vowing to uproot Washington's deep-seated neocon "secret government" that is the real power behind the scenes.

But he is really part of this cabal and seems to share its views.

Perhaps Trump will keep his word and begin to break the war party's grip on power before they manage to ignite a nuclear war with Russia.

Eric S. Margolis is a syndicated columnist. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

LETTERS letters@thesundaily.com

Online safety, everyone plays a role

RECENTLY, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim met with TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew who gave an assurance that the platform would step up efforts to combat cyberbullying and scams. This is a welcome development.

Of late, too many Malaysians have fallen prey to scammers.

These are real problems that affect people from all walks of life, and they need serious attention.

TikTok's commitment to collaborate with our government is a welcome move.

Initiatives such as these can help make the digital space safer for everyone, which is something we can all agree on.

With TikTok's (and presumably other platforms such as Facebook and X) willingness to work with the authorities, the next question is whether licensing for social media is truly necessary.

The government has mandated these platforms to be licensed come next year.

So far, these social media platforms have resisted the government's plans and this impasse has created a lot of

uncertainties, especially with authorities threatening to pull the plug on errant companies as a last resort.

Take small businesses and content creators, for example.

Many Malaysians rely on platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and TikTok to run their businesses.

It is how they reach customers, build their brands and stay competitive.

If the government bans these platforms, won't that trickle down to users and impact these hardworking entrepreneurs?

It is also worth noting that platforms such as TikTok are already stepping up to tackle harmful content without the need for licensing.

At the end of the day, ensuring a safe digital space is something everyone wants.

But as we move forward, let's make sure the solutions don't end up creating more challenges, especially for the people who rely on these platforms the most.

Mohd Akmal Sulaiman
Malacca

PMB Investment, Bank Islam enter into strategic partnership

➤ Islamic fund management firm aims to increase sales by 10-20% within the next year

BY AIMIE SHAZRIE
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KUALA LUMPUR: PMB Investment Bhd, an Islamic fund management company under Pelaburan Mara Bhd, has set a target to increase fund sales by 10-20% within the next year after entering into a partnership with Bank Islam Bhd.

PMB Investment acting chief investment officer Hang Tuah Amin Tajudin said the collaboration with Bank Islam introduces five new funds, leveraging the lender's network of 135 branches to cater to a broad customer base, from retail investors to affluent clients.

"These funds are designed to be inclusive. Our goal is to make these investment opportunities accessible to everyone, from mass-market customers to high-net-worth individuals," Hang Tuah said at their memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing ceremony recently.

He said the five funds launched through the partnership include PMB Investment's high-performing Shariah Index Fund and Shariah Equity Fund, both of which have garnered industry accolades.

"These are among our top 19 funds. We are optimistic that their appeal will attract more investors to Bank Islam,



Zaharah (left) and Hang Tuah signing the documents, witnessed by Mizan and Mohd Idzwan (right).

helping us reach our one-year growth target," Hang Tuah said.

Bank Islam wealth management division director Zaharah Muttalib said after acknowledging the competition from fintechs, Bank Islam sees value in its personal approach, particularly for new investors. "Many first-time investors still seek in-person guidance, making branch visits beneficial. However, we anticipate that more experienced investors will adopt digital channels, and we are preparing to support that shift."

To encourage retail participation, she said, the initial investment entry for these funds is set at RM1,000, with subsequent investments beginning at RM500.

"Our primary distribution channel will be our branches, where relationship managers and personal bankers can engage directly with customers," she noted, underlining the importance of face-to-face interactions.

While both institutions recognise the growing influence of digital channels, their current focus remains on physical branches.

"Our business is largely physical for now. We aim to have our online platforms ready within a year," said Zaharah.

Meanwhile, PMB Investment has appointed Bank Islam as an Institutional Unit Trust Adviser (IUTA) to promote and distribute the fund management company's unit trusts across Malaysia.

As the eighth IUTA in PMB Investment's distribution network, Bank Islam will leverage its extensive branch network to market and distribute five PMB Investment unit trust funds of PMB - Dana Al-Aiman, PMB Dana Bestari, PMB Shariah Index Fund, PMB Shariah Equity Fund and PMB Shariah Cash Management Fund.

The MoU signing was witnessed by PMB Investment chairman Datuk Mohd Idzwan Izuddin Ab Rahman and Bank Islam group chief business officer Mizan Masram.

Mohd Idzwan said that under the collaboration, Bank Islam will contribute to PMB Investment's asset under management target of RM2 billion in 2025.

Zurich Takaful's MediAfy+ offers protection against healthcare issues

PETALING JAYA: Zurich Takaful Malaysia Bhd has introduced MediAfy+, a medical plan designed to offer comprehensive protection, ensuring Malaysians are prepared for unexpected health challenges.

The plan, when paired with Takaful Term 80, provides an annual coverage limit of up to RM1 million.

With Takaful Term 80, customers will be provided medical coverage that extends up to age of 80, making it ideal for individuals seeking a balance of affordability and comprehensive protection.

Zurich Takaful Malaysia CEO Nur Fatimah Mustafa said, "Healthcare protection is not just about covering medical bills. It's about giving people the confidence to live life fully, knowing they are prepared for the unexpected. MediAfy+ represents Zurich Malaysia's commitment to providing solutions that truly care for what matters, offering comprehensive protection with the flexibility that today's customers seek."

MediAfy+ provides extensive healthcare coverage, including pre- and post-hospitalisation, outpatient services and global emergency support for medical, travel, car and home needs. With an impressive annual limit of RM1 million and no lifetime cap, it offers robust financial protection.

Meanwhile, in response to overwhelming demand, Zurich Takaful Malaysia has announced the launch of "Year End Campaign - Cashback Syok" till Dec 30. This campaign offers customers the opportunity to benefit from MediAfy+ with Takaful Term 80 and, as an added incentive, customers will receive up to two months' cash back depending on the contribution mode.

Bank Muamalat, CGC launch halal portfolio guarantee scheme with RM70 million fund

PETALING JAYA: Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd and Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC) have collaborated to launch the Halal Portfolio Guarantee-i Scheme aimed at providing a robust financial safety net for small and medium-sized enterprises in Malaysia.

The groundbreaking initiative, with a fund of RM70 million, is designed to promote syariah-compliant financing solutions and stimulate economic growth within the halal industry.

The scheme will offer guarantees for financing facilities extended to SMEs engaged in halal-related businesses, ensuring that they have access to necessary funds while adhering to Islamic principles. The partnership reflects a commitment to supporting the growth of the halal economy, which is increasingly recognised as a vital sector contributing to Malaysia's economic development, Bank Muamalat said in a statement.

The scheme is also designed to

offer accessible and affordable financing to businesses in various sectors. It is open to a wide range of industries, including manufacturing, retail, services and halal-related sectors. The financing terms are designed to be flexible, with maximum tenures of up to seven years for SMEs and three years for micro SMEs.

Bank Muamalat president and CEO Khairul Kamarudin said the introduction of the scheme reflects its commitment to empowering small and micro businesses in Malaysia.

"In response to the call of the government and Bank Negara Malaysia to support SMEs, which representing nearly 97% of all business establishments in Malaysia, Bank Muamalat has shown unwavering support through various initiatives, including tailored financing solutions and partnerships with key industry players to provide SMEs with the resources and support they need to

thrive in a competitive market.

"By collaborating with CGC, we aim to increase access to financing and provide businesses with the opportunity to grow while adhering to the principles of Islamic finance. This programme is part of our broader strategy to support the national economy and contribute to sustainable business development," he stated.

CGC president and CEO Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak said, "By providing comprehensive financing solutions for operational expenses, capital investments, and halal certification costs, Bank Muamalat and CGC can significantly promote the growth and development of competitive and dynamic Malaysian MSMEs involved in halal businesses. This very important strategic partnership is well aligned with the national agenda to strengthen Malaysia's position in the global halal market."

Hong Leong AM introduces syariah-compliant Dana Dividen

PETALING JAYA: Hong Leong Asset Management Bhd (Hong Leong AM) has launched Hong Leong Dana Dividen, a syariah-compliant equity income and growth fund designed to provide investors with the opportunity for both capital growth and regular income distribution.

Hong Leong AM CEO Chue Kwok Yan said, "Through the launch of this new fund, we are excited to offer investors a product that aligns with their values while providing the potential for regular income and long-term capital growth. By focusing on companies that uphold syariah principles and adhere to strong ethical business practices, the fund aims to deliver both financial and socially responsible benefits."

He added that they are committed to supporting investors in meeting their financial goals by providing access to a diversified portfolio of syariah-compliant equities and equity-related securities, with a particular emphasis on companies

which have good dividend payout policies or the potential to have good dividend policies and higher dividends.

"This allows investors to not only potentially grow their capital but also benefit from a steady income stream," he said.

Hong Leong Islamic Asset Management Sdn Bhd (Hong Leong Islamic AM) CEO Noor Aini Shaik Awab said, "As the external fund manager for Hong Leong Dana Dividen, our focus is on identifying well-managed, syariah-compliant companies with solid growth potential."

Hong Leong Islamic AM is the appointed external fund manager for the fund, which is distributed through Hong Leong AM offices and Hong Leong AM agency force nationwide. Each unit is priced at RM0.5000 during the initial offer period until Dec 1. The minimum initial investment is RM1,000 while the minimum additional investment amount is RM100.



BY HAYATUN RAZAK
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KUALA LUMPUR: Berjaya Hartanah Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Berjaya Land Bhd, has launched OAKA Residences, a luxury residential development in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur, with a gross development value (GDV) of RM373 million.

Berjaya Land Bhd executive director Tan Tee Ming said they expect a third of the development to be sold within six months.

"We have a handful of bookings at the moment. And 10% of our previous buyers will end up buying quite soon," he told reporters at the launch on Friday.

The confidence stemmed from the location in Bukit Jalil as highly desirable among Malaysians because of its strategic location near Kuala Lumpur city centre and its abundance of greenery that combines a balance between urban accessibility and natural tranquility.

"Bukit Jalil is a thriving neighbourhood, and with OAKA Residences, residents can enjoy easy access to top-notch amenities, renowned educational institutions and healthcare facilities. We are excited to introduce OAKA Residences as a vibrant, well-connected urban sanctuary in Bukit Jalil. It's all about enhancing convenience, making daily life smoother, and providing everything residents need right at their doorstep," Tan said.

He added that Berjaya's developments in Bukit Jalil stand out due to their proximity to the Bukit Jalil Golf Course.

"As the company owns the golf course and golf club, all their residential projects in the area are strategically located around it, ensuring that buyers enjoy exclusive golf course views. This feature distinguishes Berjaya's properties from competitors in the area," he said.

Tan said Berjaya has been developing properties in Bukit Jalil for over 20 years. He mentioned that properties in the area, including earlier Berjaya developments, have seen significant appreciation in value over time.

"Buyers not only enjoy quality

Berjaya Hartanah launches OAKA Residences in Bukit Jalil

➤ RM373m GDV freehold luxury residential development offers 350 low-density units designed for modern, family-oriented living, each with private lanai or balcony

living spaces but also benefit financially, as their property investments here typically increase in value," he added.

Berjaya Land Bhd group CEO Syed Ali Shahul Hameed said OAKA Residences represents a significant milestone as its 15th development in Bukit Jalil.

"As pioneers in transforming this vibrant locale, we remain committed to enhancing its growth and prestige. Building on the success of The Tropika. We are confident that OAKA Residences embodies Berjaya Land's unwavering pursuit of excellence, innovation, and superior quality. We are optimistic that this distinguished development will captivate discerning buyers and stand as a hallmark of sophistication within a flourishing community," he added.

The freehold development spans 2.2 acres, offering 350 low-density units designed for modern, family-oriented living. Each unit features a private lanai or balcony with sizes from 882 square feet (two-bedroom) to 1,509 square feet (three-bedroom), with prices starting from RM880 per square foot. Each unit



Berjaya Land group executive director Datuk Abdul Rahim Mohd Zin (right) and executive director Tan Tee Ming hitting the gong to launch OAKA Residences in Berjaya Property Gallery, Bukit Jalil. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

comes with two to three dedicated car park slots.

Key amenities include an infinity pool, a rooftop sky garden with a pavilion for gatherings, a children's playground, and a half-court basketball court, all catering to a multigenerational lifestyle. OAKA Residences also features pet-friendly living.

OAKA Residences has easy access to shopping, dining, and recreational options, including Pavilion Bukit Jalil Mall, Tropika Commercial Retail and Bukit Jalil Golf and Country Resort. The development is also close to educational institutions such as International Medical University and



Abdul Rahim (right) and Tan posing in front of a scale model of OAKA Residences. – BERJAYA HARTANAH PIC

Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation.

Additionally, Columbia Asia Hospital is located within a 1km radius, offering residents easy access to top-quality medical care, further enhancing the appeal of OAKA Residences's prime location, which is connected to major highways such

as Shah Alam Expressway, Maju Expressway and Kuala Lumpur-Seremban Expressway. Public transit is also accessible with three light rail transit stations located within a 3km radius.

OAKA Residences is now open for viewing by prospective homeowners.



A lion dance performance during the official launch of OAKA Residences. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN



RPGT self-assessment likely to trigger challenges

WITH any self-assessment system, the responsibility to file the correct tax return to pay the correct taxes is passed on to the taxpayer. Any failure to do so will result in tax adjustments and accompanying penalties.

A self-assessment system is much more onerous on the taxpayer because the burden of understanding tax laws and complying with regulations now lies totally with the taxpayer. Ignorance of the law cannot be used as an excuse, and it is expected that either the taxpayer understands the laws, rules and regulations, or obtains the necessary advice to guard against any misreporting.

Self-assessment started in Malaysia in the early 2000s, beginning with corporates and continuing in 2024 for the Capital Gains Tax. In 2025, this will be extended to Real Property Gains Tax (RPGT).

The Inland Revenue Board (IRB) has done a good job so far in supporting the self-assessment system by providing guidance to taxpayers and tax advisers on how the various laws should be interpreted. This has been done

through public rulings, guidelines, practice notes, etc.

Problems

Despite the IRB giving its views on how the laws should be interpreted, a taxpayer may not necessarily agree with the positions taken by the board. The taxpayer would look at the law and pay only the minimum amount of tax that is required to be paid under the legislation. The IRB may take a different position to collect the tax. Both parties may have merits to support their respective positions, but since the IRB has the power to issue the assessment, the winner in such battles is the IRB and this can only be resolved after paying the taxes and taking the matter to court.

With the introduction of the self-assessment system for RPGT filings, we anticipate many battles, and the biggest one will be whether the transaction will be subjected to RPGT or income tax. It is very common for taxpayers to argue that their property is of an investment nature, which should be taxed as a capital gain rather than income tax, while the IRB has a tendency to argue otherwise and bring it to income tax. The dispute is based on what are the characteristics of the transaction and, in technical terms, it comes under what we call "badges of trade".

The other common problem that will arise is when you are dealing with Real Property Company (RPC) shares. Although the legislation around RPC shares is contained in a single Paragraph 34A, the treatment

of this issue is very complex, and the disputes that will arise in an e-filing will increase since the interpretation of the law by the IRB and taxpayers will be very different, and an example will be the treatment of bonus shares, rights issues, the determination of an RPC, and the related complexities around this legislation.

Similar problems will also arise in determining the acquisition costs and disposal values. This is a complex piece of legislation that deals with exchanges of properties, how trustees and executors should be dealing with the properties, issues around leases, contingent liabilities and options, etc.

How to avoid the problems

When taxpayers prepare their RPGT returns, they need to exercise

extreme vigilance in filling in the right information and understanding the law. Since taxpayers do not file these returns on an annual or regular basis, it is advisable for taxpayers to appoint professionals to file their RPGT returns.

In the event a taxpayer takes a position that is challenged by the tax authorities, the taxpayer must be prepared with the necessary evidence that will dovetail with the supporting law.

We anticipate a significant increase in the number of challenges from the IRB with the introduction of the self-assessment system for RPGT.

This article is contributed by
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TAX MATTERS
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'Embrace AI as tool for innovation and growth'

BY HAYATUN RAZAK
 sunbiz@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Businesses need to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool for innovation and growth, despite ongoing concerns about the technology's potential risks, experts said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia Putra Business School Professor Dr Ida Md Yasin said AI can bring more benefit than harm if understood and managed properly.

She said humans cannot stop many of the changes happening around them, including AI.

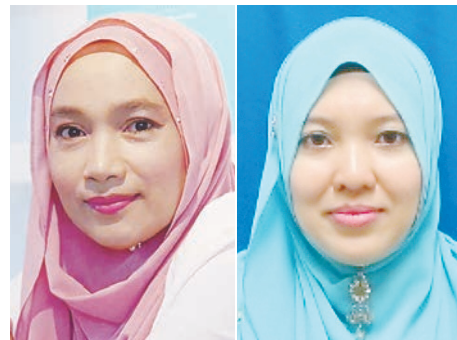
"Since it's already part of our world through digitalisation, we need to embrace it, even if it scares us," she told SunBiz.

Ida acknowledged that people fear AI will take jobs, enable creation of fake content, as well as lead to fraud.

"But we can overcome these fears through knowledge and learning," she said, adding that "if we learn more about AI, we understand its dos and don'ts - what we should and shouldn't do".

This understanding, Ida said, makes us more comfortable with AI. "That's what I mean by embracing AI. We can't ignore it," she explained.

Ida drew a parallel to the initial fear surrounding globalisation. "People initially feared that globalisation would take away jobs and harm us," she said. "But ultimately, by embracing it, we learned what to do and not



Ida

Mahfuzah

do, and we benefited."

AI is no different, Ida said. "Although we're afraid, if we learn what AI is about, its limitations, and its advantages, we can see that it can bring more benefit than harm."

With any decision, there are always positive and negative implications, she stated. "There's rarely a straightforward answer. We need to weigh the outcomes - if the positives outweigh the negatives, pursue it; if not, reconsider."

Ida likened AI to a knife in the household. "A knife can be used for good or bad. You need it to prepare food, but it can also cause harm. It's how we handle it that matters."

Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka senior lecturer Siti Nurul Mahfuzah Mohamad noted that AI has been around for a long time, although awareness among businesses about the technology is just catching up.

"We already use AI in many areas. Vehicles like Tesla, robotics in factories, manufacturing, and education. For business, healthcare, and other industries, AI is prevalent," she said.

In business, for example, companies use AI for trend prediction and strategic planning. "They can use technology for predictions or social media, video editing, and marketing," she added.

Mahfuzah said AI supports rather than replaces human jobs. "Humans bring unique expertise and intelligence," she explained, referring to subject matter expertise. "Each person has their own strengths, whether visual, linguistic, or interpersonal. Students, for instance, might use generative AI tools to support different skill areas, like math or presentation."

AI, she said, is just a tool that assists based on the user's needs. "Each user's behaviour and interests shape their use of AI. Generative AI learns user preferences based on search history and interactions."

For journalists, educators and leaders, Mahfuzah noted, they all have specific platforms tailored to their fields that can support their work.

"Everyone needs to be aware of technology advancements. We can't reject technology; instead, we should use it ethically and responsibly. Content should be verified and, when needed, approved by management. Let's focus on positive uses rather than fearing the negatives."

Google, Microsoft applaud M'sian approach to building AI infrastructure

KUALA LUMPUR: Google has applauded Malaysia's approach to building artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Google vice-president of government affairs and public policy Karan Bhatia said in the recent Apec Summit in Peru that the approach to building such infrastructure was the reason Google is investing US\$2 billion (RM8.9 billion) in a data centre in Malaysia.

In May 2024, Google announced the investment of US\$2 billion in Malaysia, including the development of its first data

centre in the country and a Google Cloud region to meet the growing demand for cloud services locally and around the world, as well as AI literacy programmes for students and educators. Google's investment is expected to generate over US\$3.2 billion in economic impact and create 26,500 jobs by 2030.

Meanwhile, Microsoft vice-president of data and AI Zia Mansoor praised Malaysia's efforts with the National Artificial Intelligence Roadmap that has been created. "It's very comprehensive. It's looking at the AI infrastructure. It's looking at skilling. How are you skilling all Malaysians around AI

technology?" he said at the Apec CEO Summit Peru 2024 held recently.

He added that the roadmap creates an AI centre of excellence in the government, in which the government uses AI technology. "To me, those are such important conditions,"

On Nov 15, Anwar held a discussion with Google in the capital of Peru, focusing on data centres and AI. He said that appropriate attention needs to be given to strengthening the AI and data centre ecosystem, especially in terms of the relevant rules and regulations to prevent data leakage and exploitation with malicious intent. - Bernama

RHB and CGC sign Malaysia's first LCTF portfolio guarantee agreement

PETALING JAYA: RHB Banking Group has signed a RM400 million portfolio guarantee agreement with Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Bhd (CGC) that includes a RM100 million allocation to the Low Carbon Transition Facility (LCTF).

The agreement marks Malaysia's first LCTF portfolio guarantee aimed at assisting small and medium enterprises in transitioning to a low-carbon economy. The LCTF is a financing facility introduced by Bank Negara Malaysia to encourage and support SMEs to adopt sustainable practices for business resilience.

RHB, being the first bank in Malaysia to sign a LCTF portfolio guarantee with CGC, has demonstrated its dedication to providing comprehensive green financing solutions.

Under the agreement, SMEs will benefit from up to 80% guarantee coverage from CGC, with LCTF financing options available up to RM5 million across four pillars - SME Green Renewable Energy Financing, SME Green Commercial Property Financing, SME Green Working Capital Financing, and SME Green Capex Financing for Equipment and Machinery.

As of June 2024, the group has approved more than RM411 million to SMEs under Bank Negara Malaysia's LCTF.

RHB Banking Group managing director/CEO Datuk Mohd Rashid Mohamad said, "Our partnership with CGC represents a major step forward in empowering SMEs to embrace sustainability. By providing essential financial support and risk coverage, we enable SMEs to adopt green practices and contribute to Malaysia's green growth agenda. This collaboration is vital to achieving our goal of delivering RM1.6 billion in green financing to our customers by year-end, of which we have achieved 59% as at June 2024."

CGC president and CEO Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak, said, "Financial institutions and development financial institutions play a critical role in supporting the Low Carbon Transition Facility by providing financing at competitive rates, while CGC provides support by offering its guarantee thus reducing the risk for FIs and DFIs which in turn will enable them to have greater outreach to Malaysian MSMEs."

Allianz Malaysia displays resilience amid challenges

➤ Group posts higher insurance revenue for third quarter and nine months



PETALING JAYA: Allianz Malaysia Bhd recorded insurance revenue of RM1.44 billion for third quarter ended Sept 30, 2024 (Q3'24), an increase of 10.3% or RM134.5 million compared to the preceding year's quarter ended Sept 30, mainly due to higher contribution from general and life segments.

Year to date, the group recorded insurance revenue of RM4.15 billion, representing a 14.2% or RM516.4 million increase compared to the same period in the year before.

"We have continued to record positive results in the third quarter amid a challenging landscape. Our resilience and core strengths are reflected in our performance, and we will continue to push on as we enter the last quarter of the financial year," said CEO Sean Wang (pic).

The group's general insurance subsidiary, Allianz General Insurance Co (Malaysia) Bhd, recorded insurance revenue of RM826.9 million, an increase of 17% or RM120 million compared to the preceding year's quarter ended Sept 30.

Year-to-date insurance revenue grew by 16.1% to RM2.36 billion for the financial period ended Sept 30, 2024 against the same period of the preceding year.

The growth momentum from the topline continued for the general business subsidiary. Allianz General recorded RM2.57 billion in gross written premiums representing a 14.2% increase compared to the same period of the previous year. This surpasses the market average of 7.2%. The growth was mainly

contributed by strong growth in the motor business across both agency and franchise channels.

The life insurance subsidiary, Allianz Life Insurance Malaysia Bhd, registered insurance revenue of RM613.6 million, an increase of 2.4% or RM14.5 million compared to the preceding year's quarter ended Sept 30. Year-to-date, it recorded insurance revenue of RM1.79 billion for the financial period ended Sept 30, 2024, an increase of 11.8% or RM189.1 million compared to RM1.6 billion in the financial period ended Sept 30, 2023.

Allianz Life outperformed the market with 16.4% year-to-date growth in annualised new premiums compared to the same period in the preceding year.

Recently, Allianz Life embarked on an agency transformation project, Kingmaker, with a target to double its business performance over the next five years. Kingmaker focuses on increasing agency manpower and improving agency professionalism while leveraging on digitalisation to automate processes for increased efficiency.

"Kingmaker represents our commitment to the future we envision for Allianz Life, which is to be the best-in-class insurer in the country. We are focusing on providing our agents with the tools and resources needed to uplift their productivity. After one year, we are already seeing some promising results from the project and we will endeavour to meet our targets in the coming years," said Allianz Life CEO Charles Ong.

Tex Cycle Q3 pre-tax profit soars 120% year-on-year

PETALING JAYA: Tex Cycle Technology, a waste management and recycling solutions provider, reported profit before tax (PBT) of RM3.4 million for its third quarter ended Sept 30, 2024 (Q3'24), indicating substantial growth of 120% from RM1.5 million respectively in the preceding year's corresponding quarter (Q3'23).

The growth is driven largely by heightened sales demand in the recovery and recycling division.

The Q3'24 results show a substantial revenue increase of about 27.7% to RM10.6 million, up from RM8.3 million in Q3'23, attributed primarily to the expansion and enhanced performance of its recovery and recycling services division.

Quarter-on-quarter 2024, Tex Cycle's revenue rose to RM10.6 million in Q3 from RM8.3 million in Q2, a growth of 28.8%. Profit before tax also saw an uplift, increasing from RM2.8 million in Q2 to RM3.4 million in Q3, a growth of 19.3%.

The improvements reflect the successful implementation of strategic initiatives aimed at expanding Tex Cycle's core business areas and enhancing operational efficiencies.

Group CEO Gary Dass Anthony Francis said, "Tex Cycle has demonstrated exceptional resilience and strategic acumen in navigating the complex market dynamics this quarter."

"Our focused approach on core business efficiencies and strategic investments has not only driven substantial growth but also strengthened our market position. This performance underscores our commitment to sustainability and value creation for all stakeholders."

WARRANTS WATCH

MyEG back on investors' radar amid strong quarterly earnings

LAST week saw a slight increase in overall warrants market turnover, which rose by 0.6% to RM566.1 million. Overall, turnover was lower for warrants over the FBM KLCI and Hong Kong-listed stocks, though turnover for warrants over US indices saw a sharp increase.

Nonetheless, Hang Seng Index (HSI) warrants led the market, making up 78.5% of the total turnover for the week while warrants over Malaysian stocks followed, contributing 16.5% to the week's activity.

Warrants over MY E.G. Services (MyEG) returned to investors' focus last week as the underlying traded within a range of RM0.885 to RM0.930. The stock was actively traded on Thursday after the company reported

Top MyEG warrants by volume traded:

Warrant name	Volume (mil)	Issuer	Exercise level	Expiry date
MYEG-C7S	5.3	Maybank	RM0.900	30 May 2025
MYEG-C7P	4.6	Macquarie	RM0.790	30 Apr 2025
MYEG-C7D	4.0	Macquarie	RM0.800	14 Feb 2025
MYEG-C59	7.7	Kenanga	0.88	30 Aug 2019
MYEG-C7V	3.2	Macquarie	RM0.940	30 Jun 2025
MYEG-C7J	2.0	AmBank	RM1.00	5 Jun 2025

its earnings, posting a 62.5% and 27.8% increase in net profit and revenue, respectively, for the third quarter of the year.

The strong performance was boosted by contribution from Web 3.0 application service fees on the Zetrix blockchain platform and fair value

gain from its investment in HeiTech Padu, among others. As a result, MyEG's stock price ended the week up 2.8% to RM0.910. During this period, call warrants MYEG-C7S, MYEG-C7P, MYEG-C7D and MYEG-C7V were among the most actively traded MyEG warrants.

Other than that, warrants over 99 Speed Mart and Gamuda were also popular among investors. 99 Speed Mart's share price rose 2.6% week-on-week (w-o-w) to RM2.39, with its top traded warrants by volume being 99SMART-CB and 99SMART-CR. Meanwhile, Gamuda's share price reached an intraweek low of RM8.70 before bouncing back to finish the week at RM9.17, up 5.4%. GAMUDA-C2K and GAMUDA-C2S were the top traded Gamuda warrants by volume.

On the foreign front, HSI futures saw volatility over the week, recording two red days out of five and trading within a relatively tight range of 19,799 to 19,135. However, prices ended the week on a bearish note, closing 1.1% lower w-o-w to 19,212.

Among the HSI warrants that were actively traded were HSI-PWBB, HSI-CWAN and HSI-HZW. Other than that, other warrants over foreign index underlyings that saw interest include calls NDX-CI and NIKKEI-CI, and puts NDX-HJ and SP500-H51.

To view the full list of structured warrants available on Bursa Malaysia, visit malaysiawarrants.com.my.

Provided for Malaysian residents' information only. It is not an offer or recommendation to trade and is not research material. You should make your own assessment and seek professional advice. The warrants will not be offered to any US persons.

PA Resources kickstarts FY25 with higher revenue of RM159.7m in Q1

PETALING JAYA: PA Resources Bhd, an aluminium extruder company, reported first quarter revenue of RM159.7 million for the financial year ending June 30, 2025 (Q1'25), reflecting an 8.8% increase compared to the previous quarter and 23.4% growth year-on-year.

The improvement was driven by a rise in sales quantity and increase in

productivity.

The group posted profit after tax of RM4.6 million. The decline was mainly due to translation loss of RM18.1 million recorded in the current quarter. This unrealised loss arising from book value rate at RM4.729 per US dollar against translation rate at RM4.119.

Commenting on sales growth,

group managing director Tan Sri Lau Kuan Kam said this underscores PA Resources' strategies to capitalise on growth in the global aluminium extrusion market. "While we faced currency volatility, we took proactive measures to manage the currency volatility among others by entering into forward contracts on our revenue and also keeping in dollar cash for purchase

of materials. All these measures had mitigated the unrealised losses."

He said the global aluminium extrusion market is expected to double by 2034, driven by increasing demand in key sectors such as construction, automotive, aerospace, agriculture and renewable energy.

"PA Resources is well-positioned to capitalise on these growth oppor-

tunities. We are on track to expand capacity by up to 50% through our new plant, with funding primarily sourced from borrowings and internally generated funds. Additionally, the recent granting of a zero-dumping rate status on our aluminium extrusion products exported to the USA will further enhance our pricing competitiveness."



Inflation inches up to 1.9% in October

➤ Increase driven by food & beverages and personal care

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia's inflation inclined to 1.9% in October 2024 with the index points standing at 133.4 as against 130.9 in the same month of the previous year.

The increase of inflation in October 2024 was driven by the higher increase in the main groups of food & beverages (2.3%) and personal care, social protection & miscellaneous goods & services (3.4%).

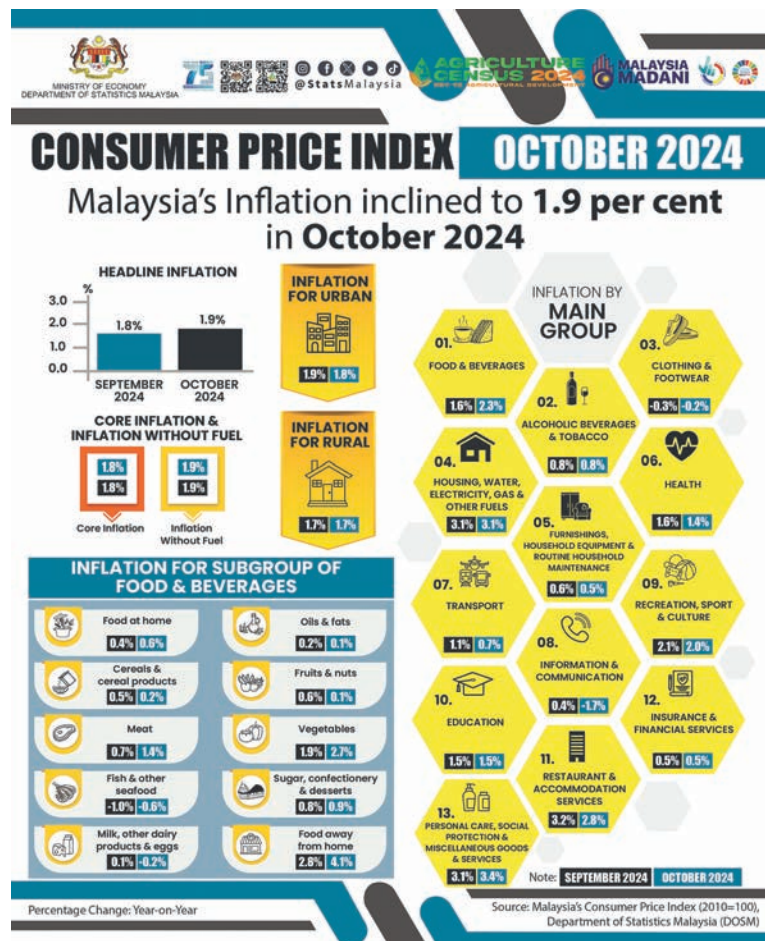
Meanwhile, restaurant & accommodation services (2.8%); recreation, sport & culture (2.0%); health (1.4%); transport (0.7%) and furnishings, household equipment & routine household maintenance (0.5%) increased at a slower rate.

Chief Statistician Malaysia, Datuk Sri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin informed that inflation for information & communication decreased to negative 1.7% in October 2024 (September 2024: 0.4%). This was due to the decline in inflation for main subgroup of information & communication services at negative 1.8% (September 2024: 0.8%).

Clothing & footwear remained at a negative territory and posted negative 0.2%.

Meanwhile, housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels (3.1%); education (1.5%); alcoholic beverages & tobacco (0.8%) and insurance & financial services (0.5%) increased at the same rate as the previous month.

The food & beverages group which contributes 29.8% of the total CPI weight increased by 2.3% in October 2024 (September 2024: 1.6%). The main subgroup of food at home increased by 0.6% (September 2024:



0.4%) mainly due to the inflation in the expenditure class of meat which recorded an increase of 1.4% (September 2024: 0.7%).

Chicken as the largest component (32.6%) in the expenditure class of meat recorded an increase of 3.6% (September 2024: 1.3%). Based on data collected by Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DoSM), the average price of standard chicken in Malaysia for October 2024 was RM10.63 per kilogramme as compared to RM10.02 per kilogramme in October 2023

(September 2024: RM10.47).

Meanwhile, the average price of standard chicken in Peninsular Malaysia for October 2024 was RM9.68 per kilogramme as compared to RM9.32 per kilogramme in October 2023 (September 2024: RM9.38).

Inflation for the expenditure class of vegetables recorded an increase of 2.7% in October 2024 (September 2024: 1.9%). Among the vegetables that recorded a significant year-on-year increase in October 2024 were french beans, 9.8% (September 2024:

-1.9%), long cabbage, 9.5% (September 2024: 6.1%) and green spinach, 9.0% (September 2024: 4.6%).

The weather uncertainties in the main planting areas are also affecting the current supply in the domestic market. This is due to the high rainfall since the end of September 2024, which resulted from the monsoon transition phase, also impacting crops and agricultural activities.

According to the Malaysian Meteorological Department, the monsoon transition phase will continue until early November 2024 and it is expected that the prices of certain vegetables will remain high.

Besides, the main subgroup of Food away from home edged up to 4.1% as compared to 2.8% in the previous month. Among the items that recorded a higher increase in October 2024 were pizza, cooked chicken and cooked fish.

Furthermore, inflation for transport eased to 0.7% in October 2024 as compared to 1.1% in September 2024. The increase was contributed by the main subgroup of operation of personal transport equipment which increased to 1.0% in October 2024 (September 2024: 1.4%).

Among the items that recorded a lower increase were diesel, 15.0% (September 2024: 16.7%). In October 2024, the average price for diesel in Peninsular Malaysia was RM2.95 per litre as compared to RM2.15 per litre in October 2023 (September 2024: RM3.04). However, the average price of diesel for Sabah, Sarawak and Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan remained at RM2.15 per litre.

In addition, the average price of Unleaded petrol RON97 in October 2024 decreased to RM3.19 per litre as against RM3.47 per litre in October 2023 (September 2024: RM3.28).

Mohd Uzir said that with regards to inflation at the state level, most of

the states recorded increases below the national inflation level of 1.9%. However, inflation for four states were above the national inflation level namely Penang (3.1%), Pahang (2.7%), Selangor (2.3%) and Sarawak (2.1%).

All states registered an increase in the inflation of food & beverages.

The highest rate was recorded by Selangor at 3.8%, followed by Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya (2.9%), Johor (2.4%), Penang (2.4%) and Pahang (2.3%).

Meanwhile, other states showed an increase below the national inflation of food & beverages of 2.3% in October 2024.

The overall monthly inflation for October 2024 increased to 0.2% as against in September 2024.

This was driven by the increase in the main groups of food & beverages (0.8%), followed by personal care, social protection & miscellaneous goods & services and education that recorded an increase of 0.2% in October 2024 respectively.

However, this was offset by a decline in the information & communication group (-0.2%); transport (-0.2%); furnishings, household equipment & routine household maintenance (-0.1%) and recreation, sport & culture (-0.1%).

Meanwhile, core inflation increased at the same rate at 1.8% in October 2024 as compared to September 2024.

The increase was due to personal care, social protection & miscellaneous goods & services (3.4%); food & beverages (3.2%) and restaurant & accommodation services (2.8%).

In comparison to inflation in other selected countries, inflation in Malaysia (1.9%) was lower than inflation in Vietnam (2.9%) and Philippines (2.3%). However, the rate was higher than Indonesia (1.7%), Republic of Korea (1.3%), Thailand (0.8%) and China (0.3%).

PKNS to launch 12 property projects in 2025

CYBERJAYA: The Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) is set to launch about 12 projects with a gross development value (GDV) of RM1.5 billion in 2025, reflecting its commitment to advancing Selangor's property market, said group CEO Datuk Mahmud Abbas.

Speaking at the PKNS Pilih Karnival at Selangor Cyber Valley (SCV) here on Saturday, he said six projects are slated for launch in the first half of 2025, followed by another six in the latter half.

For 2024, the corporation targets a GDV of between RM800 million and RM1 billion, further strengthening its presence in the competitive real estate sector.

"PKNS has evolved significantly from its early days of building flats 50 to 60 years ago. Today, we are moving into the higher and mid-level market segments, a shift necessitated by the competitive nature of the industry," he said, adding that the focus now is to cater to diverse community needs.

Mahmud explained that the corporation has developed three types of housing products in

Cyberjaya to meet various demographic needs.

They include affordable apartments priced between RM300,000 and RM400,000 each that cater to young buyers or smaller households, he said.

Meanwhile, the Aludra Residensi townhouses, priced at RM500,000, offer flexibility with a bundled option of a larger unit priced at RM1 million, providing 2,000 sq ft of living space.

"For those seeking high-end homes, we have Azhara, designed for larger families and offering upgraded features. We aim to accommodate people at different life stages - those who are single, families with one child, or even larger families," he added.

The ongoing PKNS Pilih Karnival serves as a platform to promote the corporation's projects and create awareness about its transformation in property development.

"This carnival highlights how PKNS has transitioned into a developer of mid-tier and high-end housing while continuing to uphold its commitment to community needs," Mahmud said.

Moving forward, PKNS plans to

concentrate its development efforts in Cyberjaya while expediting other essential projects across Selangor.

This year alone, the state-owned development arm has three more project launches in the pipeline, underscoring its active role in driving urban development.

"We are on track to ensure sustainable growth while maintaining profitability. Our strategy includes leveraging subsidiaries to build homes in the RM500,000 to RM600,000 range, meeting demand in various segments," he said.

In July this year, Mahmud was reported as saying that PKNS planned to grow its revenue, totalling RM2 billion at present, by fourfold by 2030 through the growth of its various businesses.

The corporation was established on Aug 1, 1964.

The two-day carnival at the SCV sales gallery, which ended yesterday, marked the last leg of the PKNS Pilih Karnival series for 2024 after being held at various locations in Selangor over the past five months. - Bernama

Bumi Armada reports net profit of RM211.3 million for Q3

KUALA LUMPUR: Bumi Armada Bhd, reported group revenue of RM551.9 million for the third quarter (Q3) 2024 financial results, lower compared to the previous quarter mainly due to lower revenue from a variation order for Armada Olombendo FPSO and the weakening of the US dollar against the ringgit.

Group net profit of RM211.3 million for Q3 2024 was also solid, however, it decreased compared to Q2 2024 mainly due to foreign exchange losses arising from translation of intercompany balances and fixed deposits denominated in foreign currency and lower share of results of joint ventures and associates.

The group returned to a net current asset position of RM1,050.4 million as at Sept 30, 2024 following the successful refinancing of the sukuk murabahah loan of RM1.5 billion via syndicated facilities with a six-year tenor at an aggregate amount of up to US\$400 million (RM1.6 billion).

The proceeds from the facilities were applied towards the

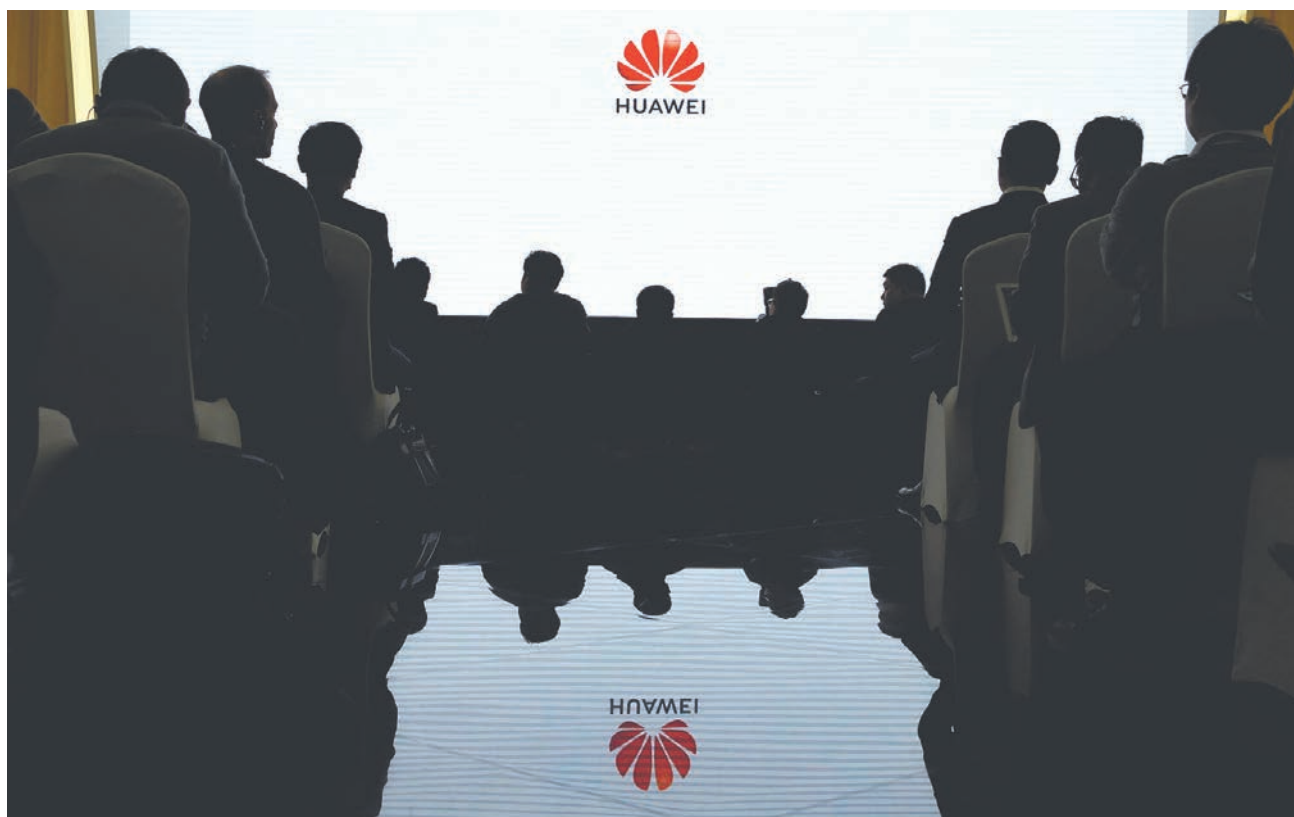
redemption and settlement of the sukuk murabahah loan and all its related cross currency and interest rate hedge liabilities.

The group cash balance remained robust at RM1.1 billion at the end of the quarter.

The future firm vessel order book at the end of Q3 2024 amounted to RM10.2 billion, with additional optional extensions of up to RM9.5 billion.

Commenting on the results and recent announcements, Bumi Armada CEO Gary Christenson said: "On top of another solid operational performance, we are delighted at the 2-year contract extension for our Armada TGT1 FPSO vessel in Vietnam and the recent award of a Flare Gas Recovery System project for EnQuest Heather Limited on the Magnus Platform.

"The non-binding memorandum of understanding with MISC Bhd regarding a potential merger between us and their offshore business unit is an exciting development."



People attending a product presentation at the Huawei office in Beijing. – REUTERS/PIC

Huawei to mass-produce newest AI chip in early 2025

➤ Telecoms conglomerate is a focus of bitter US-China trade and security tensions

BEIJING: China's Huawei plans to start mass-producing its most advanced artificial intelligence chip in the first quarter of 2025, even as it struggles to make enough chips due to US restrictions, said two people familiar with the matter.

The telecoms conglomerate has sent samples of the Ascend 910C – its newest chip, meant to rival those made by US AI chipmaker Nvidia – to some technology firms and started taking orders, the sources told Reuters.

Huawei is at the heart of US-China friction over trade and security.

Washington has imposed a series of curbs on Huawei and other Chinese companies, arguing that their technological progress poses a national security risk to the US.

Beijing, which is trying to make the world's second-biggest economy self-sufficient in advanced semiconductors, denies such claims.

The restrictions have hampered Huawei's ability to get the yield – the proportion of chips that come off the manufacturing line fully functional – of its advanced AI chips high

enough for them to be commercially viable.

The 910C is being made by top Chinese contract chipmaker Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp (SMIC) on its N+2 process, but a lack of advanced lithography equipment has limited the chip's yield to around 20%, said one source who was briefed on the results.

Advanced chips need yields of more than 70% to be commercially viable.

Even Huawei's current most advanced processor, the SMIC-made 910B, has a yield of only around 50%, forcing Huawei to slash production targets and delay filling orders for that chip, the sources said.

TikTok's Chinese parent, ByteDance, ordered more than 100,000 Ascend 910B chips this year but had received fewer than 30,000 as of July, a pace too slow to meet the company's needs, Reuters reported in September.

Other Chinese technology companies that have ordered from Huawei have complained of similar problems, sources have said.

US curbs include barring China since 2020 from obtaining extreme ultraviolet lithography (EUV) technology from Dutch manufacturer ASML, used to make the world's most sophisticated processors.

"Huawei knows there is no short-term solution, given the lack of EUVs, so it will give priority to strategic government and corporate orders," the source said.

ASML has also stopped shipping its most advanced deep ultraviolet lithography (DUV) machines to China due to rules imposed by US President Joe Biden's administration last year.

Some fabs have also been restricted from buying older ASML DUV models.

SMIC demands a premium of up to 50% for chips made on its advanced nodes, which are less advanced than those of Taiwanese chip-making giant TSMC, and are made using enhanced ASML DUVs.

Huawei has supplemented its SMIC-made chips with ones made by rival TSMC, according to analysts and sources.

TSMC notified the US Commerce Department several weeks ago that one of its chips had been found in a Huawei 910B process.

The US has placed Huawei on a trade list that requires suppliers to obtain licenses to ship any goods or technology to the company.

Washington has since clamped down further, ordering TSMC to halt shipments of advanced AI chips to Chinese customers, in a move targeting the diversion of chips to Huawei.

US authorities are planning export controls on the semiconductor industry that will further restrict shipments for Chinese firms.

Donald Trump, who was president from 2017 to 2021 and will return to the White House in January, has made tough-on-China trade policies core to his economic agenda. – Reuters

China EV maker Xpeng expected to break even later next year

SHANGHAI: Chinese electric car maker Xpeng is expected to break even sometime later in 2025, its president Brian Gu said, betting that strong demand for its new models and expanding into new overseas markets will improve its profitability.

Meeting the goal Xpeng first set in 2023 could make it the first China automaker to turn profitable mainly on EV sales.

Rivals BYD and Li Auto are profitable but they rely on hybrids for the majority of total car sales.

"I think we are indeed entering the super cycle," said Gu in an interview with Reuters by phone.

"I think sometime in next year, probably towards the later part or the end of next year, we will see as reaching the break even point.

"We are in a very confident position to see that becomes more likely."

Xpeng has forecast fourth-quarter revenue above Wall Street estimates, thanks to the introduction of new models Mona 03 and P7+.

It said the momentum will extend to the fourth quarter and 2025.

The company is also being helped by the roll-out of Chinese government subsidies of up to US\$2,800 (RM12,500) each for trading in older cars for EVs and more fuel-efficient cars.

Xpeng will launch four new models next year and will ramp up expansion in overseas markets apart from North America, where Chinese EVs face 100% tariffs, a de facto ban, said Gu.

Revenue from tech services, which nearly doubled in the third quarter from a year ago driven by its partnership with Volkswagen, accounted for more than 12% of Xpeng's total revenue.

The company is also working closely with Volkswagen and hopes to expand the technology service partnership with the German automaker to other areas in and outside China, Gu said. – Reuters

Thai Beverage's annual profit slips on rising marketing costs

SINGAPORE: Singapore-listed Thai Beverage reported a full-year profit last week that fell 1%, hurt by an increase in marketing costs at the company's spirits and food businesses.

Earlier this year, the company said it plans to divest its real estate assets and become a pure-play drinks and food firm.

ThaiBev, one of Southeast Asia's largest beverage makers, reported a profit attributable of 27.22 billion baht (RM4.5 billion) for the year ended Sept 30, compared with 27.43 billion baht a year earlier.

The company's spirits business reported a profit attributable of 20.77 billion baht for the year, down 6%, due to an increase in marketing costs and raw material prices.

ThaiBev's beer business reported a profit attributable that rose 10% to 2.74 billion baht.

The company, chaired by billionaire Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi, also announced a final dividend of 0.47 baht per share for the year. – Reuters

Alibaba combines e-commerce arms

SHANGHAI: Alibaba Group will integrate its domestic Chinese and international e-commerce platforms into a single business unit run by one leader for the first time, the company said in a stock exchange filing last week.

The Alibaba E-commerce Business Group, as the unit will be called, brings together the Taobao and Tmall Group and the Alibaba International Digital Commerce (AIDC) Group.

AIDC groups cross-border player AliExpress, wholesale B2B site Alibaba.com and other regional platforms operating in different parts of the world, from Southeast Asia to Turkiye.

Its chief, Jiang Fan, a former head of Tmall demoted in 2020 after an online scandal, has

been tapped to lead the new unit, reporting to Alibaba group chief executive Eddie Wu.

Wu announced the new business unit in a letter to employees posted on Alibaba's intranet.

"The e-commerce industry in China and around the world is entering a new era, and the global supply chain capabilities, fulfillment capabilities and consumer service capabilities will determine the future competitive landscape," Wu wrote in the post, which was shown to Reuters.

Alibaba split into six business units in 2023, in the biggest revamp of its 24-year history.

Prior to this latest amalgamation of two of those groups, Wu had also been CEO of the Taobao

and Tmall Group and Alibaba's cloud division.

Alibaba's e-commerce platforms have been under pressure both at home and abroad as aggressive new players such as PDD Holdings' Chinese platform Pinduoduo and international site Temu, along with ByteDance's domestic Chinese Douyin and international TikTok, gain market share selling low-cost goods.

In April, co-founder Jack Ma expressed support for the internet giant's restructuring efforts, and acknowledged past mistakes in a lengthy memo to employees.

The turnaround efforts have seen some success, with the international division growing rapidly under Jiang's leadership. – Reuters

Uncertainty clouds US holiday shopping season

➤ Consumers keep big spending on tight leash and vigilantly compare prices

NEW YORK: Retailers are in for a mixed holiday season this year ahead of Black Friday and Christmas, marked by watchful consumers keeping big spending on a tight leash and vigilantly comparing prices on their mobile phones to look for the best deals on apparel, electronics and toys.

Against this backdrop, bellwether Walmart lifted annual sales and profit targets last week, and said a majority of its customers were maintaining holiday plans year over year.

Walmart has managed to gain market share as its ultra-low prices on groceries and a wide range of discretionary goods attract upper-income households to its superstores.

On the other hand, rival Target's forecasts for the holiday quarter were significantly subdued, with executives saying demand remains weak for higher-margin items such as home goods and electronics.

Despite a rate cut from the US Federal Reserve, the first in four years, consumer spending on non-essential items has remained uninspiring, and industry analysts expect a deal-heavy holiday shopping season yet again.

Overall holiday shopping is expected to grow at its slowest pace in six years, according to separate reports from the National Retail Federation and Deloitte.

This year, there are just 26 days between Black Friday - which has traditionally marked the beginning of the holiday shopping period, and Christmas, compared with 31 days last year.

"The fourth quarter will be fun to watch. And the calendar is not our favourite with fewer days between Thanksgiving and Christmas. And I suspect when all that's said and done, it will be similar to the kind of momentum that we've seen in the first three quarters," said Walmart CEO Doug McMillon on a post-earnings call.

The shorter calendar prompted retailers to try and pull forward some demand earlier in the year, offering heavier discounts as early as July, around the back-to-school shopping season.

Gen-Z consumers, more comfortable



Shoppers parking at a Walmart store ahead of Black Friday in the American town of North Reading.

– REUTERS/SPIC

shopping on phones, are driving a shift towards mobile spending, and are likely to influence families to do the same over the holidays, said Minkyung Kim, assistant professor of marketing at Carnegie Mellon University.

Mobile phones are expected to account for 53% share of online spending from November through December, reaching a total of US\$128.1 billion (RM572 billion), according to a forecast from Adobe Analytics which measures online consumer transactions from 5,000 shoppers.

Online spending growth is expected to jump to 8.4% from 4.9% last year, according to Adobe's forecast, with mobile spending growth expected to jump a "staggering" 12%.

Influencers promoting brands on social media have played a critical role in shaping consumer sentiment and shopping patterns.

"I expect that trend to continue, particularly with the advancement of artificial intelligence," Kim added.

"These younger consumers are growing in their spending power and they're early in their career development, so to get them as loyalty members and familiar and comfortable regularly shopping with your brand is very

important to growing revenue over time," said Wedbush analyst Seth Basham.

In fact, spruced-up loyalty programmes with perks such as same-day or free delivery, personalised marketing and quicker check-outs at stores allowed Target and Walmart to induce an early splurge during back-to-school shopping, and the retailers plan to continue to make these programmes more appealing as holidays approach.

Target's 20% growth in same-day delivery, driven by its refurbished rewards programme, contributed to double-digit growth in digital comparable third-quarter sales - one of the only bright spots for Target this year.

Walmart also began offering its US\$98 Walmart Plus membership at about half price from Oct 28 through Dec 2, and reported a fourth straight quarter of double-digit growth in global membership income.

"The big change that we'll concentrate on this holiday is how much fight there will be for that new incremental customer. I think because of that you'll see increased targeted promotions just try to get new customers at an accelerated rate," said M Science analyst John Tomlinson. – Reuters

UK antitrust regulator to rethink remedies in growth drive

LONDON: Britain's antitrust regulator said last week it would focus on "truly problematic mergers" and rethink its approach to agreeing remedies that could allow more deals to go ahead to support the government's growth mission.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) was singled out by Prime Minister Keir Starmer last month when he promised to scrap regulation that was holding back economic growth.

Speaking to investors, he said: "We will make sure that every regulator in this country - especially our economic and competition regulators - takes growth as seriously as this room does."

CMA CEO Sarah Cardell said the regulator must "evolve" while staying true to its mandate to promote competition for the benefit of consumers.

"We must deliver a regime that leaves no one in any doubt that the UK is open to business," she said at the Chatham House Competition Policy 2024 Conference.

She said the goal was simple - every deal that was capable of being cleared either unconditionally or with effective remedies should be.

"Only a truly problematic merger, where the harm to businesses and consumers cannot be effectively addressed through remedies, should not proceed," she said.

The CMA has played a bigger role in merger control since Britain left the European Union.

It blocked Microsoft's US\$69 billion (RM308 billion) acquisition of Activision Blizzard in 2023 before it reversed its decision after the companies offered concessions.

After facing criticism over the case, the CMA announced an overhaul of its merger assessment. – Reuters

Deere forecasts weak annual profit as farm incomes sag

NEW YORK: Deere & Co forecast lower-than-expected 2025 profit last week, as slumping farm incomes and inflationary pressures affect demand for the company's tractors and other agricultural equipment.

A decline in farm incomes, high interest rates and an uncertain economy have compelled farmers to reassess large expenses on agricultural machinery and forced dealers to limit inventory restocking.

US farm income is expected to fall for a second consecutive year in 2024, as farmers grapple with corn and soybean prices hovering near four-year lows.

"Amid significant market challenges this year, we proactively adjusted our business operations to better align with the current environment," CEO John May said.

For 2025, Deere expects net sales to fall about 10% to 15% across all its machinery segments.

A slump in equipment volumes has also forced smaller rivals CNH Industrial and AGCO to trim their profit expectations for the rest of 2024.

The world's largest farm-equipment maker expects profit for fiscal year 2025 in the range of US\$5 billion (RM22 billion) to US\$5.5 billion, compared with analysts' average estimate of US\$5.93 billion, according to data compiled by LSEG.

The company reported a profit of US\$4.55 per share for the fourth quarter ended Oct 27, above Wall Street expectations of US\$3.87, aided by lower production expenses and cost controls.

Net sales from equipment operations fell nearly 33% to US\$9.28 billion, missing analysts' estimate of US\$9.34 billion. – Reuters

Bessent is credible, safe pick for Treasury: Experts

WASHINGTON: Hedge fund manager Scott Bessent (*pic*) is a credible, safe choice for US Treasury secretary - and one that is likely positive for markets - observers said on Saturday following President-elect Donald Trump's highly anticipated nomination.

His selection came after competition for the top economic job spilled into the open last week, with the world's richest man Elon Musk throwing his support instead behind Trump's transition team co-chair Howard Lutnick.

Lutnick has since been named commerce secretary to lead Trump's tariff and trade agenda, and Bessent's nomination days later appears to be uncontroversial for now.

"Scott Bessent is a credible, mainstream pick for Treasury secretary," said Jason Furman, a professor at Harvard University and former top White House economic adviser.

"I could see previous administrations as having chosen him," Furman, a former

chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, told AFP.



But a key difference is that Bessent, 62, has had to adopt and defend views on topics like tariffs, in a way "he never would have in pursuit of the job for a previous Republican administration".

Tariffs are a key part of Trump's economic agenda, with the Republican president-elect vowing sweeping duties on allies and adversaries alike.

In an opinion piece published earlier this month on Fox News, Bessent defended the potential use of tariffs as a means to raise revenue for the government, protect strategic US industries and negotiate with trading partners.

Jens Nordvig, CEO of data and analytics firm Exante Data who has worked with Bessent, drew a contrast between his demeanour and that of other Trump supporters.

While some Trump allies have a tendency

towards "general sweeping statements," Bessent is an "analytical thinker, and he communicates accordingly", Nordvig told AFP.

He counts Bessent among his early clients. "I would expect his messaging to be very focused, to get his key points across, without any unnecessary flamboyance or gusto," Nordvig added of the Wall Street veteran.

Calling Bessent a "safe choice", Brookings senior fellow in economic studies David Wessel told AFP: "He will be an adult in the room for the Trump administration."

Besides Bessent, others seen as top contenders for Treasury chief in recent days included former Federal Reserve governor Kevin Warsh, Apollo Global Management chief executive Marc Rowan, and Tennessee Senator Bill Hagerty.

It remains to be seen if Bessent will be a big influence "moderating some of the Trump administration's more aggressive trade policy" or simply be a spokesman, Wessel said. – AFP

MARKET ROUND-UP: NOVEMBER 22

BURSA MALAYSIA

Trade Statistic

22 Nov 2024

Participation

Retail Net (in RM million): -14.00	19.38%
Institutions Net (in RM million): 53.56	43.07%
Foreign Net (in RM million): -39.56	37.55%

Source: Bursa Malaysia
Preliminary stats (excluding trade amendments). For final data, please refer to www.bursamalaysia.com
Detailed version available at our Facebook Page iPacOnline

iPhone 16 Giveaway! Find out more at our Social Media channels!

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SUNBIZ presents a summary of the day's trading activity on Bursa Malaysia and other markets in an easy to digest format.

Sources: Bursa Malaysia, Bernama, shareinvestor.com and websites

DISCLAIMER: The data and reports are provided as a service to investors. Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

Bursa Indices		
INDEX	CHANGE	
FBMEMAS	12,110.99	+23.38
FBMKLCI	1,589.78	+1.10
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	541.40	-0.33
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	173.28	+1.27
CONSTRUCTION	299.89	+6.83
FINANCIAL SERVICES	19,037.07	+5.94
ENERGY	820.12	-5.98
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	535.69	+0.49
HEALTH CARE	2,136.11	-12.42
TRANSPORTATION	1,053.42	-1.06
PROPERTY	1,073.97	+5.51
PLANTATION	7,538.52	-27.86
FBMSHA	12,125.51	+54.62
FBMACE	5,163.07	-34.87
TECHNOLOGY	59.16	+0.05
TURNOVER: 2.589 bil	VALUE: RM2.284 bil	

FBM KLCI seen trading in tight range of 1,600 to 1,610 points

BURSA Malaysia's benchmark FBM KLCI is anticipated to trade within a tight range of 1,600 to 1,610 points this week, with 1,600 remaining a key psychological and technical threshold, reflecting Malaysia's resilient economic backdrop.

UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan said while the index had briefly fallen below the 1,600 level in recent weeks, consistent efforts to reclaim it reflect cautious optimism among market participants.

"However, momentum remained subdued, with upward movements likely to hinge on external catalysts," he told Bernama.

He said Malaysia's economic fundamentals remain robust, underpinned by steady gross domestic product growth, manageable inflation, low unemployment and resilient trade performance.

"These strengths provide a solid foundation for market stability, but they have yet to translate into significant upward momentum for the domestic equity market. As a result, the FBM KLCI's near-term trajectory continues to be influenced by global factors."

Among the global factors, the uncertainties surrounding President-elect Donald Trump's potential protectionist trade policies and the lingering impact of US-China trade tensions stand out, Mohd Sedek said.

He added that discussions at the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit in Hong Kong suggest a less than 60% probability of extreme tariff measures, which has somewhat alleviated fears. "However, the lack of clear policy direction and incomplete cabinet appointments in the US weigh on investor confidence. Until these issues are resolved, equity markets are likely to remain susceptible to short-term volatility," he said.

Last week, on a Friday-to-Friday basis, the FBM KLCI fell 2.66 points to 1,589.78.

Top 20 Actives				
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('000)
HSI-PWBB	0.100	0.010	11.11	1,555,422
HSI-CWAN	0.155	-0.030	-16.22	871,946
HSI-PWB4	0.180	0.020	12.50	621,232
ZENTECH	0.010	-0.005	-33.33	583,620
HSI-HZX	0.095	0.015	18.75	517,857
YTL	1.770	-0.060	-3.28	453,672
HSI-CWAO	0.110	-0.020	-15.38	401,922
GTRONIC	0.545	0.035	6.86	379,595
HSI-CY8	0.175	-0.055	-23.91	377,986
MYEG	0.910	-	-	374,502
YTL-C98	0.015	-	-	355,695
CEB	0.355	-0.015	-4.05	319,141
YTLPOWER	2.900	-0.080	-2.68	272,430
DNEX	0.360	0.025	7.46	266,033
TANCO	1.610	0.050	3.21	230,741
OVERSEA	0.055	0.005	10.00	225,996
YEWLEE-WA	0.175	0.020	12.90	222,475
PERMAJU	0.045	0.005	12.50	221,634
AIZO	0.135	-0.005	-3.57	201,095
TOPGLOV	1.140	-0.010	-0.87	178,057



Top 20 Gainers (By RM)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('000)
DLADY	31.000	0.980	1,132
HEIM	23.740	0.400	1,076
GAMUDA	9.170	0.300	73,668
QUALITY	1.300	0.300	2,261
F&N	28.400	0.240	1,138
NSOP	4.270	0.240	42
TENAGA	14.000	0.200	108,499
KLUANG	5.820	0.160	12
PIE	5.900	0.150	5,338
HLFG	18.400	0.140	1,088
LPI	13.420	0.140	361
PETDAG	17.720	0.140	2,632
SUNCON	4.560	0.130	56,125
HLIND	13.900	0.120	1,148
PPB	13.620	0.120	6,301
FRONTKN	4.110	0.110	20,066
IJM	3.050	0.110	80,704
HSI-PWBW	0.620	0.095	2,000
HSI-PWBV	0.420	0.090	4
PCHEM	4.920	0.09	135,725

Top 20 Gainers (By %)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('000)
DNEX-C34	0.010	100.00	300
HSI-HWN	0.020	100.00	13,892
HSI-HZM	0.060	100.00	360
JADI-WB	0.010	100.00	48,177
MI-C21	0.010	100.00	1,600
MSM-CZ	0.010	100.00	5,220
OCR-WE	0.010	100.00	34,428
PCHEM-C98	0.010	100.00	2,001
YTL-C93	0.010	100.00	1,502
YTLPOWER-HD	0.120	100.00	69
UWC-C8	0.080	60.00	1,003
IJM-C83	0.055	57.14	43,991
BSLCP	0.030	50.00	110,991
DLADY-CC	0.030	50.00	200
HSI-HZI	0.015	50.00	9,949
IJM-C88	0.015	50.00	10,845
PCHEM-C99	0.015	50.00	35,557
SUNCON-C17	0.090	50.00	16,720
HSI-HWV	0.035	40.00	250
HSI-HZN	0.070	40.00	1,645

World Stocks/Commodities			
INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	44,296.51	+426.16	+0.97
S&P 500 [US]	5,969.34	+20.63	+0.35
NASDAQ [US]	19,003.65	+31.23	+0.16
NYSE [US]	20,123.45	+155.15	+0.78
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	4,789.08	+33.25	+0.70
FTSE 100 [UK]	8,262.08	+112.81	+1.38
DAX [GER]	19,322.59	+176.42	+0.92
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	38,283.85	+257.68	+0.68
TOPIX [JPN]	2,696.53	+13.72	+0.51
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	19,229.97	-371.14	-1.89
CSI 300 [CHN]	3,865.70	-123.60	-3.10
SH SE COM [CHN]	3,267.19	-103.21	-3.06
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	2,501.24	+20.61	+0.83
ASX 200 [AUS]	8,393.85	+70.89	+0.85
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	8,633.06	+66.07	+0.77
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	79,117.11	+1,961.32	+2.54
FBM KLCI			

MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by SunBiz Team

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Ibraco reports 24.9% y-o-y growth in PAT for third quarter

KUCHING: Ibraco Bhd, a property and construction developer in Sarawak, reported a 28.8% increase in revenue to RM 151.78 million in the third quarter ended Sept 30, 2024 (Q3'24) compared to RM117.85 million in the third quarter ended Sept 30, 2023 (Q3'23).

This growth was primarily driven by the group's construction segment, which experienced a significant revenue increase of 145.5% on a y-o-y basis from RM28.95 million in Q3'23 to RM71.07 million in Q3'24 albeit lower revenue contribution from its property segment.

This notable improvement in revenue was attributable to higher revenue recognition from the government construction contracts for the current quarter. Correspondingly, the group's construction segment is now the main contributor attributing 46.8% of the group's revenue followed by property segment at 46.3% for the quarter under review.

Similarly, the group reported profit after tax (PAT) of RM16.03 million in Q3'24, reflecting a 24.9% increase compared to RM12.84 million in Q3'23.

On a q-o-q basis, the group registered a 60.7% increase in its revenue and a 146.3% increase in its PAT compared to its second quarter ended June 30, 2024 (Q2'24).

The management of Ibraco commented: "We are pleased with our performance in Q3 2024 and we expect our construction segment to grow further in line with our current outstanding order book. In addition to our upcoming property development launches for the remainder of the year, we are positively optimistic of the group's prospects."

The group declared an interim dividend of 2.0 sen per share in respect of the financial year ending Dec 31, 2024.

Ringgit expected to trade at RM4.46-4.48 against US dollar

THE ringgit is expected to remain within a tight trading range this week, moving between RM4.46 and RM4.48 against the US dollar, said Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid.

He noted that traders will closely monitor US personal consumption expenditure (PCE) data to be released this week, the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation gauge, for October.

"At the current juncture, markets anticipate the Fed will adopt a cautious monetary easing approach, factoring in possible inflationary policies from US President-elect Donald Trump next year."

Mohd Afzanizam highlighted that the 10-year US Treasury yield has risen from 4.27% during the US presidential election to 4.41%-4.42%, an increase of 14 basis points, reflecting market expectations of a more inflationary environment ahead.

For the week just ended, the ringgit was traded mostly higher against the US dollar despite ongoing concern over geopolitical tensions in Ukraine.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the ringgit appreciated against the US dollar to 4.4660/4720 from 4.4715/4770 a week ago.

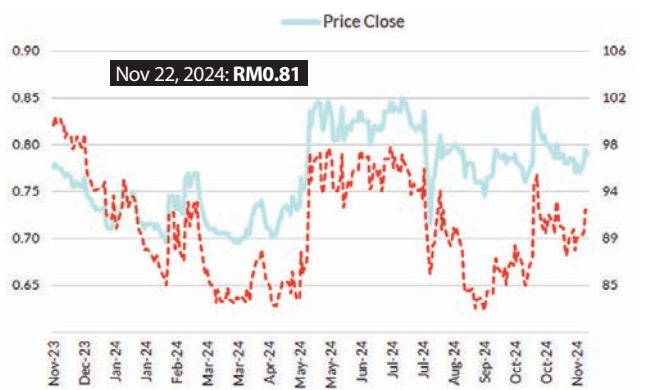
It also gained against most other major currencies. The local note increased versus the euro, closing at 4.6455/6507 against 4.7224/7292 a week earlier and strengthened vis-a-vis the British pound to 5.5870/5932 versus 5.6573/6656, but it fell against the Japanese yen to 2.8906/8942 from 2.8774/8818.

The ringgit gained versus the Philippines' peso to 7.58/7.59 from 7.61/7.63, improved against the Singapore dollar to 3.3101/3141 from 3.3330/3381 on Friday last week, and edged up vis-a-vis the Indonesian rupiah to 281.2/281.7 compared to 281.6/282.2 previously. – Bernama

Exchange Rates			
FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.5460	4.4090	4.3990
1 Australian Dollar	2.9780	2.8560	2.8400
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3750	3.2750	3.2670
1 Canadian Dollar	3.2500	3.1610	3.1490
1 Euro	4.7670	4.6100	4.5900
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.6720	2.5720	2.5560
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3750	3.2750	3.2670
1 Sterling Pound	5.7300	5.5450	5.5250
1 Swiss Franc	5.1630	4.9400	4.9250
100 UAE Dirham	125.2200	118.6800	118.4800
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.8840	3.6140	3.4140
100 Chinese Renminbi	63.2400	60.5300	N/A
100 Danish Krone	65.5100	60.2500	60.0500
100 Hongkong Dollar	59.0400	56.0700	55.8700
100 Indian Rupee	5.4700	5.1300	4.9300
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0295	0.0267	0.0217
100 Japanese Yen	2.9530	2.8570	2.8470
100 New Taiwan Dollar	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	42.1600	38.7300	38.5300
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6600	1.5600	1.3600
100 Philippine Peso	7.8200	7.3700	7.1700
100 Qatar Riyal	126.0100	119.6200	119.4200
100 Saudi Riyal	122.4000	116.1900	115.9900
100 South Africa Rand	26.0300	23.5000	23.3000
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.6000	1.4700	1.2700
100 Swedish Krona	42.3800	38.5700	38.3700
100 Thai Baht	13.6700	12.1100	11.7100

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

Focus Point Bhd Buy. Target price: RM1.20



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

FOCUS Point's 9M24 results met expectations, driven by strong performance in the optical segment and improvements in the F&B wing. We expect the former to continue delivering robust performances despite soft consumer sentiment, supported by effective marketing initiatives. Concurrently, we think the F&B unit's turnaround should sustain, driven by higher orders and potential new business wins.

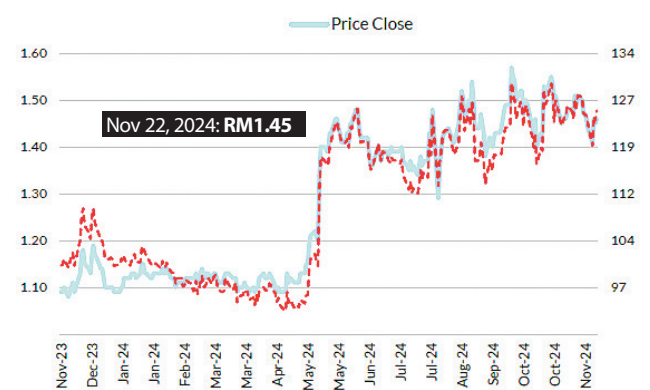
9M24 core earnings of MYR24m (+22.5% YoY) met 65- 66% of our and Street's full-year forecasts. Focus Point's results are in line with expectations, and we expect a seasonally strong 4Q24.

YoY, 9M24 sales rose 11.7% to MYR209.1m – contributed by growth in both the optical (+13.4%) and F&B (+5.4%) segments. The former's performance was fuelled by network expansion – with four new owned stores and two franchised outlets (totalling 198 stores) – alongside >10% SSSG. The F&B segment benefitted from increased corporate customer orders.

4Q24F net profit should pick up, in our view, due to better seasonality from year-end festivities and school holidays. Beyond the immediate term, the optical segment is poised for continued strong topline growth, supported by effective marketing strategies, a growing myopic population, and expanding store network. In the F&B segment, the group has increased stock keeping unit or SKU offerings to Family Mart to 20 items from 13 since June, which we think will help boost central kitchen utilisation – this is given Family Mart's extensive store network. Focus Point is also testing products at one ZUS Coffee outlet, and is awaiting feedback for a potential broader rollout.

Maintain BUY and RM1.20 TP. – RHB Research, Nov 22

AEON Co (M) Bhd Buy. Target price: RM1.75



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

AEON Co's 9M24 results were in line with expectations, with a stronger 4Q24 anticipated. Property management segment (PMS) should continue to be the key growth driver, supported by above-industry rental reversions following mall refurbishments, tenant mix optimisation, and ongoing mall expansions. Current valuation is attractive, with AEON well-positioned to capitalise on positive sector developments and on track to achieve a record year.

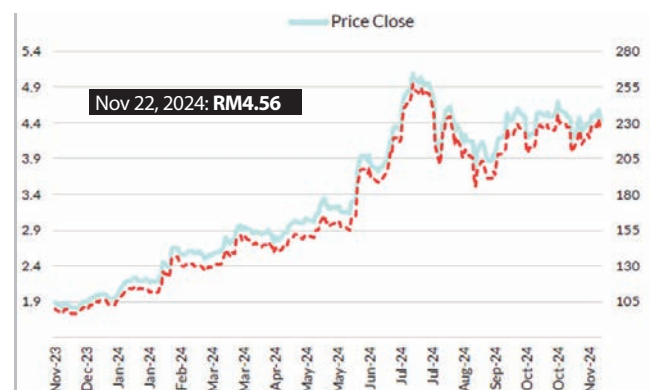
9M24 core profit of MYR104m (+26.5% YoY) came in at 66-69% of ours and Street's full-year estimates. The results are deemed within expectations, as 4Q24F should see seasonally stronger results.

YoY, 9M24 sales rose 3.1% to MYR3.2bn thanks to better results from both the retailing (+4.1% YoY) and property management (+9% YoY) segments. PMS benefitted from an improvement in occupancy rates and effective rental renewals, while the retailing business saw higher spending likely boosted by the restructuring of Employees Provident Fund (EPF) accounts to facilitate flexible withdrawal. 9M24 EBIT margin expanded by 0.4ppts to 7.3%, likely due to higher sales which led to operating leverage. QoQ, 3Q24 revenue fell 1.8% due to unfavourable seasonality with the absence of major festivals and lengthy holidays. 3Q24 EBIT margin shrank 1.7ppts QoQ, dragged by the retailing segment, which incurred an EBIT loss of MYR8.2m. Correspondingly, core profit dipped 32.1% QoQ to MYR18.8m.

Sales are expected to pick up in the seasonally stronger 4Q, driven by the year-end festive season, school holidays, and the earlier Lunar New Year (2024: Feb 10 vs 2025: Jan 29).

Maintain BUY and RM1.75 TP. – RHB Research, Nov 22

Sunway Construction Bhd Buy. Target price: RM5.50



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

SUNWAY Construction's 9M24 core net profit of MYR98.3m (+2.3% YoY) accounts for 61% and 56% of our and Street full-year projections. However, we view results as in line as we envisage a stronger 4Q24, backed by greater progress of its jobs for data centres (DC) and Sunway. While SCGB may record lower earnings in FY24, we believe FY25F will likely be a supercharged year (53% growth) – underpinned by stronger revenue recognition from a mix of DC jobs (c.50% of outstanding orderbook).

The construction arm's PBT surged by 65% YoY in 3Q24, with a stronger margin of 8.2% (3Q23: 7%) amid accelerated progress of ongoing projects (particularly DCs).

Meanwhile, its precast segment recorded a 3Q24 PBT of MYR2m vs MYR6.5m in 3Q23, due to higher contributions from projects nearing completion a year ago.

SCGB's construction orderbook as of end-3Q24 stood at c.MYR7.1bn (end-3Q23: MYR5.8bn), with MYR4bn orders secured (vs our FY24 target of MYR4.5bn). The company has MYR10.6bn worth of active tenders comprising DC, warehousing and semiconductor facilities.

We make no changes to our earnings estimates as we deem results to be in line. This is premised on better progress in 4Q24 for its first package for the JHB1X0 DC job in Johor worth MYR1.7bn.

SCGB's ROE is significantly higher than its peers', and it is set to benefit from catalysts such as securing semiconductor-related jobs (it has yet to clinch any) and infrastructure contract wins, eg the Penang International Airport expansion and Segment 2 of the Penang LRT Mutiara Line.

Maintain BUY and RM5.50 TP. – RHB Research, Nov 22



Curating *art* in cyberspace

Artists using tech to make their mark – P22

WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY
Technology and
social media

TUESDAY
Travel
and leisure

WEDNESDAY
Fashion
and beauty

THURSDAY
Home
and living

FRIDAY
Food
and beverage



—PIC COURTESY OF CHRIS SEBASTIAN

INSIDE

p23 Next-gen audio professionals

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BY JOHN TAN

Artistic visions in cyberspace

Three artists share with *theSun* how social media boosted their careers

SOCIAL media has become an integral part of our society, impacting various aspects of our lives. From the way we express ourselves to how we consume content, social media has developed a profound influence on our lifestyles.

Local artists Chris Sebastian, Rachel Ho and Syahbandi Samat, however, argue its influence goes beyond that. For artists such as them, social media has been instrumental in boosting their creative endeavours by broadcasting their works online.

One foot in

For one, social media has given them a proper introduction to the digital world. Chris, who works as a 3D digital artist, got his start during the pandemic in 2020. After coming across various digital art on social media, he conducted extensive research and followed numerous artists online, eventually creating his first piece of art.

"The process was challenging as I had no formal background in art or design. Instead, I dedicated countless hours to self-learning through YouTube, Google and a lot of trial and error. Once I gained some confidence in my work, I started sharing it on Instagram," said the 29-year-old.

Although it took him a while, he gained traction for his 3D animations, accumulating over 22,600 followers on the platform.

Local visual development artist and illustrator Rachel Ho shares the same sentiment. The Sabah native who pursued art professionally upon graduating, grew a following after posting her drawings on Instagram and Behance.

Ho has over 13,300 followers who



An illustration spawned from Chris's imagination.

— PICS COURTESY OF CHRIS SEBASTIAN



One of Chris's illustrations for Kitbash 3D.

Chris utilises Blender 3D for his illustrations.



appreciate and root for her success as an artist on the social platform.

"I am grateful to have been born in a decade when technology was developing and social media was beginning to emerge. My first few social media platforms were Instagram and Behance. I used the platforms to post my drawings and

portfolio to the public. It helped me reach out to a broader audience," shared Ho.

While technology spurs the careers of rising artists such as Chris and Ho, established artists such as Syahbandi Samat have also benefited from social media exposure. His career may have started after working for the *News Straits Times* in 2010 but his online presence has brought more eyes to his work.

As a traditional artist, Syah utilises social media to showcase his existing works from exhibitions and gallery shows, attracting new enthusiasts who may have missed them.

"Social media is a platform where you can showcase whatever you want without filtering from your gallery. It makes it easier for people to view your work by just sitting on their couch at home," expressed the ballpoint artist.

Bringing in clients

Having a high viewership and social following is one thing. While regular users utilise this metric for ego-boosting, these criteria are necessary ingredients for content creators,

allowing them to monetise their passion.

Upon accumulating a huge following, Chris was able to work with various local and international brands, producing sci-fi and fantasy illustrations for clients such as American company Kitbash 3D. He even got to showcase his illustrations in local art exhibitions and was featured on a podcast by Astro Radio.

"Social media has been instrumental in unlocking countless doors for me as an artist. It has allowed me to share my artworks with a global audience, transforming my creative visions into experiences others can appreciate and engage with."

Things started to turn around for Ho too. She was quickly able to live out her dreams of producing illustrations for animated films. The animation enthusiast, who was inspired by Disney's *Tangled*, got to work



Chris's love for art started during Covid-19 pandemic.

with the company on two projects.

"The highlight of my career so far has been my work with Disney. I was commissioned to illustrate a promotional poster for Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon* and a poster for the live-action movie *The Little Mermaid*."

Online troubles

The perks, however, come with a price. Once an artist starts receiving recognition, they are expected to constantly churn out content. This process, according to Chris, can take a toll on an artist's love for their craft.

"This pressure can make it hard to take breaks or try new ideas without worrying about losing your audience. Ultimately, the need to stay visible can overshadow the joy of creating, making it difficult to maintain a healthy balance between sharing your work and nurturing your creativity."

Ho echoes this concern, noting how difficult it is to keep up with the pressure, especially with social media's algorithm. Ho adds on, citing plagiarism and cyberbullying as the other downsides.

"Plagiarism may come with being too visible. People online may emulate your work and style without your permission. They also may act or comment without thinking about how their words and actions can affect you."

As for Syah, he feels social media takes out the aspect of reality or firsthand experience. Considering the nature of the medium, he said audiences are not able to interact with the art, resulting in artistic injustice or disconnect.

"There is a lack of real life interaction with the audience. You cannot view the work in real life too. The experience of viewing art on screen and in reality are two different experiences, especially for traditional artists."



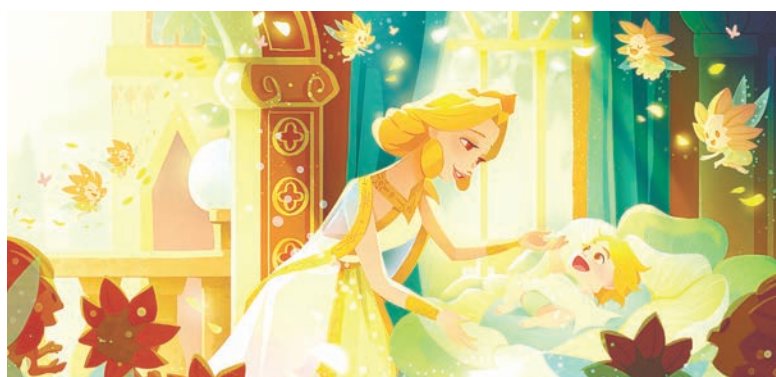
Ho was inspired by Disney's *Tangled*.



Ho's promotional poster for Disney's 2021 *Raya and the Last Dragon*.



Ho uses photoshop and Wacom Cintiq.



Ho's illustration for her moon and sunlight project.

— PICS COURTESY OF RACHEL HO

Turn to page 23

Booming sound education

Local academies shape next-gen audio professionals with relevant training

PROFESSIONAL sound education has become increasingly crucial for aspiring audio professionals in today's evolving audio industry.

Modern training facilities that offer comprehensive programmes, combining state-of-the-art digital and analogue systems, providing hands-on experience with industry-standard equipment and software are often sought after.

From DJ skills to complex audio engineering, students can access specialised courses taught by experienced professionals, covering everything from basic mixing techniques to advanced sound system design and programming.

The following two academies in Petaling Jaya offer educational pathways that not only focus on technical proficiency but also emphasise practical experience,

professional development and industry connectivity, helping graduates establish successful careers in various sectors of the audio industry, from entertainment venues to sophisticated audio installation projects.

SoundKontrols DJ Academy

Established to train and produce professional DJs, SoundKontrols DJ Academy specialises in using digital and analogue systems to train DJs with an emphasis in the studio work. There is also on-the-job training.

All of the academy's students use the Native Instruments Traktor Pro software combined with hardware. They are also trained to use other softwares from Pioneer, Virtual DJ and Serato.

Students are also trained on how to handle the crowd using the microphone. All courses by the



SoundKontrols DJ Academy is founded and led by Dave, also known as DJ MCDave.

academy are taught one-on-one in a studio by certified instructors who are also professional DJs. Courses are tailored according to each student's level of skill or music preference.

As part of the curriculum, students are required to complete a theoretical multiple-choice exam and practical non-stop mix before receiving an achievement certificate. Additionally, the academy will assist graduates with job placements in event agencies or entertainment outlets.

Over the last 15 years, the academy has trained over 300 students from North America, Middle East and Asia Pacific.

For the beginner, intermediate and advance levels, these are the courses that the academy provides:

- ➔ DJ 101 - DJ for Beginners
- ➔ DJ 102 - Advanced Mixing
- ➔ DJ 103 - Live Mixing
- ➔ DJ 104 - Turntablism with Scratching
- ➔ DJ 200 - Live Remix Production

Certified instructors with the academy have a lengthy experience as DJs who have played at some of the biggest events in Malaysia and across the globe. This academy is led by founder Dave Ramana, who also goes by DJ MCDave.

AES Academy

The skills and technical expertise of audio engineers allow them to create carefully crafted soundscapes. Far beyond just creative or media industry applications, audio engineering impacts all of us in fascinating, unknown ways.

Audio engineering is crucial for just about every industry and the most significant challenge in uplifting Malaysia's audio engineers is the lack of formalised education opportunities. Aspiring engineers often struggle to access hands-on experience, advanced studio technology and industry-standard tools.

This is where institutions such as AES Academy come into play as it has

been involved in designing audio systems for stadiums, theatres and sophisticated project installations that involves different engineering disciplines.

For aspiring audio engineers, it is important to be able to build their proficiencies with industry-standard Digital Audio Workstations and learn how to set up, operate and troubleshoot complex audio systems.

There are other supporting skills, such as learning programming languages (Python or C++, gaining knowledge of Max/MSP or Pure Data) or even specialised training in Dolby Atmos, THX or other immersive sound formats that can help audio engineers find their niche.

As such, AES has various courses that accommodate the necessary and supplementary DJ skills, from short courses to part-time and hybrid courses. The academy's courses are designed to equip students with foundational knowledge and practical skills in audio production, system design and engineering.



How a typical sound engineering setup at AES Academy looks like.

Growing possibilities

Despite the hindrance, the significance of social media is not lost on them. They are aware of its growing influence on the industry as a whole. Chris believes social media will shape future trends.

"The ability to share art instantly allows for immediate interaction, helping artists see what resonates with people and adjust their work accordingly."



Syah won 2011's Malaysia Emerging Artist Award.

From page 22

Social media boost for artists

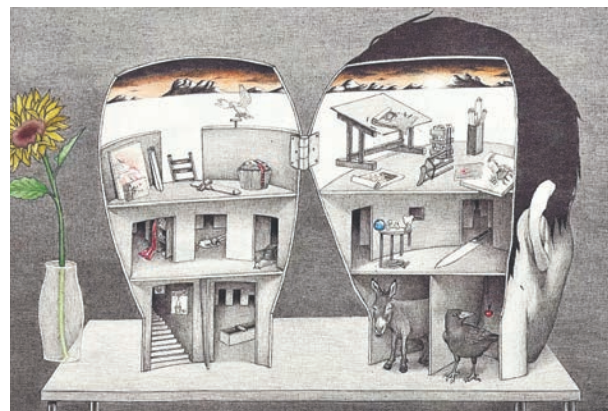
"As technology advances, social media will likely introduce new features that enhance visibility and engagement, showcasing artists' work in new and innovative ways. Overall, its impact will keep growing, affecting everything from art trends to how artists promote themselves."

Judging from its current influence, Ho believes it will be impossible for artists to navigate the industry without social media.

"It is already very impactful. Having an online presence is now essential for every artist. It is how we showcase our work and receive opportunities."

Syah, on the other hand, still believes social media is not a necessity. The 33-year-old said traditional artists who utilise physical galleries and exhibitions can draw in audiences without the help of social media.

"Some artists do not use social media as a platform to showcase their art. Yet, they still manage to gain audiences and interest. In my opinion, it is because not all art deserves to be viewed on screen."



Syah utilises ballpoint for his drawings.

Consistency pays off

When asked for words of wisdom, consistency and persistence emerge as the main takeaway for aspiring artists looking to be more visible online.

"Share your art regularly, even when it feels tough. Do not give up! Persistence is key to building an audience," concluded Chris.

"Keep doing your art and never stop. Build your portfolio and post your work online. Post it even if it is

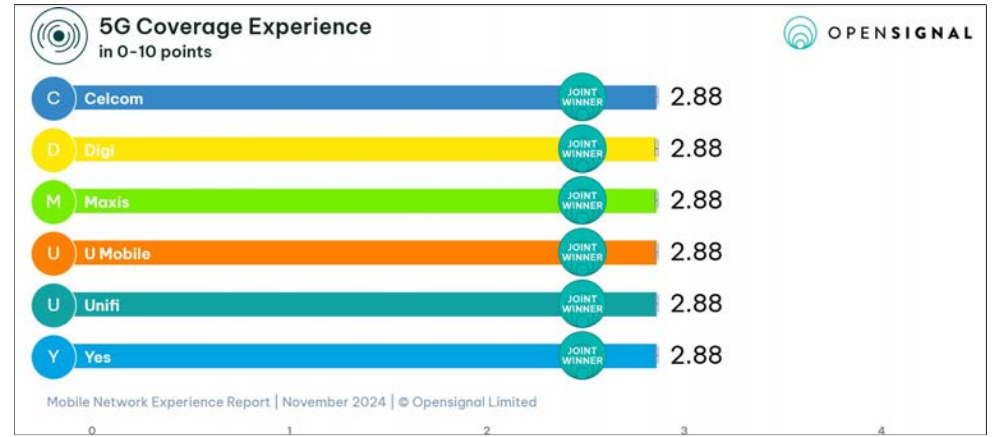
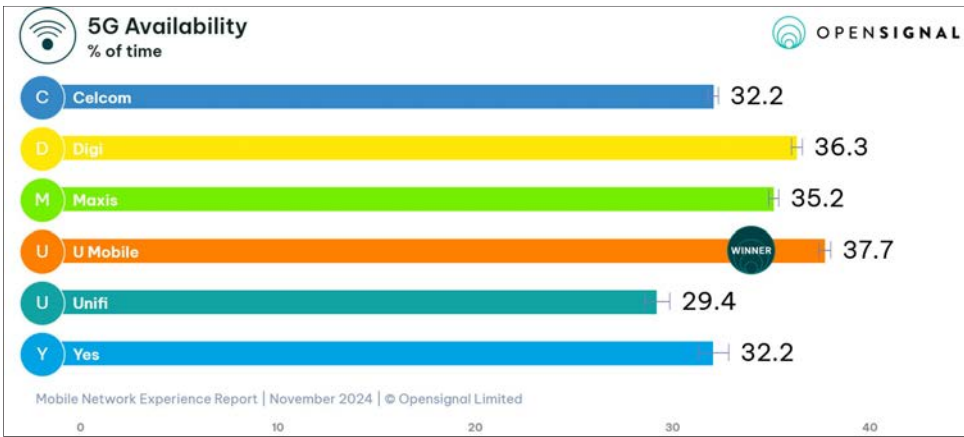
not pretty. Others may find it beautiful when they view it. Art is subjective anyway," Syah expressed.

Ho, however, emphasises consistency with caution. While she preaches for it, she also hopes for artists to be mindful of their postings.

"Share your art regularly at your own pace but do not share everything online, especially (if it is) something you want to be protected. You never know how it will be used against you," Ho cautioned.



Syah's drawings are showcased at physical galleries. - PICS COURTESY OF SYAHBANDI SAMAT



Coverage: 5G Availability.

Coverage: 5G Coverage Experience.

Competition heats up

➤ Telcos in tight race to be top network, U Mobile leads in 5G availability

U Mobile continues to lead in 5G availability and its users have the best experience when playing multiplayer mobile games over 5G connections, revealed a study by independent analytics company Opensignal.

“U Mobile wins the 5G Availability award as our U Mobile 5G users spend 37.7% of the time with an active 5G connection. This is up from U Mobile’s winning score of 31.9% in our last report. Digi comes in second with 36.3% and Maxis in third with a score of 35.2%,” Opensignal said in *Malaysia Mobile Network Experience – November 2024*.

It added that U Mobile also wins the 5G Games Experience award with a score of 88.1 on a 100-point scale. U Mobile’s score has increased by more than three points compared with that seen in the last report. Digi and Unifi share second place with statistically tied scores of 87–87.2 on a 100-point scale. U Mobile was also the 5G Global Winner for 5G Games Experience in the large land mass group in Opensignal’s recent 5G Global Mobile Network Experience Awards.

The government has recently given approval to U Mobile to deploy the country’s second 5G network as national wholesale provider Digital Nasional Bhd now covers more than 80% of the population with 5G.

Biggest mobile players

Opensignal said as was the case in its last report, no single operator dominates Opensignal’s Mobile Experience Award.

“Once again Digi and Unifi come closest, each winning five awards in total – either outright or jointly. U Mobile wins four. Maxis wins three including Consistent Quality and Reliability Experience. Celcom wins three and Yes wins two.”

With speeds of up to 290.3Mbps, Unifi handily won the 5G Download Speed Award, along with the 5G Video Experience Award with a score of 77.7 on a 100-point scale. This is more than two points higher than the second place finish for Digi.

Maxis also became the first Malaysian operator to win Opensignal’s new Reliability Experience award, along with the Consistent Quality award.

In terms of overall experience,

Digi won the Voice App Experience, Download Speed Experience and Upload Speed Experience awards, beating out Celcom, Unifi and U Mobile from Opensignal’s previous report.

Overall experience

Digi leads the pack by winning three key awards: Voice App Experience, Download Speed Experience and Upload Speed Experience. The operator achieved a 79.9-point score in voice quality, provided the fastest download speeds at 66.6 Mbps and delivered the highest upload speeds at 14.2 Mbps. This represents substantial improvements, particularly in download speeds in which Digi has increased by over 30 Mbps from the previous report.

Unifi has also claimed victory in the Video Experience and Games Experience categories. With a Video Experience score of 67.8 points, Unifi enables users to stream high-quality 720p videos with minimal stalling. In the Games Experience category, Unifi scored 76.6 points, indicating a highly responsive and enjoyable gaming experience with near-immediate action feedback.

Most operators fall within the “Good” or “Acceptable” performance ranges across categories. The report highlights that users can expect satisfactory streaming, gaming and communication experiences. Notable improvements were seen across the board, with operators such as U Mobile showing significant score increases, particularly in the Games Experience category.

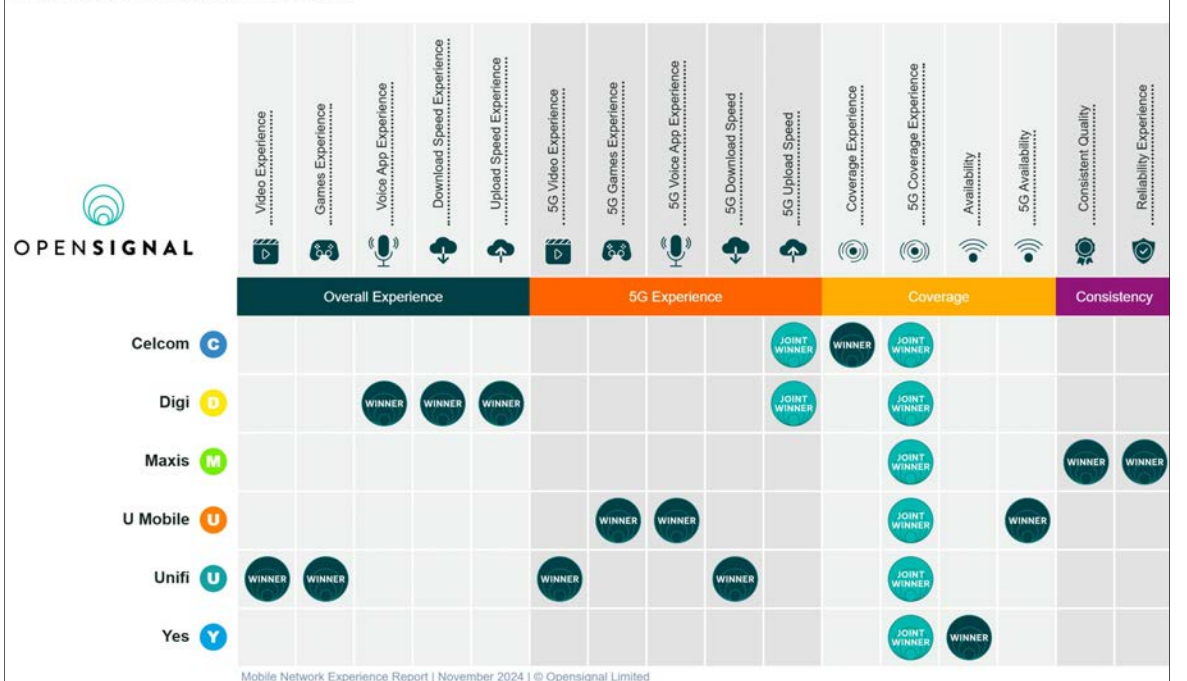
5G experience

Unifi leads the 5G Video Experience with a 77.7-point score, narrowly beating Digi’s 75.5 points. All operators fall within the “Very Good” category, enabling users to stream high-quality 1080p videos with minimal stalling. The report highlights the use of adaptive bitrate streaming technology, which accurately represents real-world video experiences up to 4K quality.

In the 5G Games Experience, U Mobile claims the top spot with an 88.1-point score. Most operators, including Maxis, Celcom, Digi, U Mobile and Unifi, are rated “Excellent”, indicating near-instantaneous game

Mobile Experience Awards

NOVEMBER 2024, MALAYSIA REPORT



Opensignal separated its findings into four groups, which were then broken into a total of 16 award categories. – PICS BY OPENSIGNAL LIMITED



The report examines the mobile network experience of the six main mobile network operators in Malaysia.

– PEXELSPIC

responsiveness and minimal action delays. Meanwhile, Yes falls into the “Good” category.

U Mobile also dominates the 5G Voice App Experience with 83.9

points, replacing Digi from its previous first-place position. All operators are categorised as “Good”, suggesting generally satisfactory call quality with occasional minor impairments.

The 5G Download Speed category sees Unifi triumph with 290.3 Mbps, outpacing Maxis, Digi and U Mobile by 15 Mbps. Yes showed notable improvement, increasing its download speeds by 16 Mbps from the previous report.

In the 5G Upload Speed arena, Digi and Celcom share the top spot with statistically tied scores of 34.1–34.3 Mbps, followed closely by Maxis. Notably, U Mobile experienced a significant 20 Mbps drop in upload speeds.

Coverage and consistency

In terms of coverage, Celcom continues its dominance in the Coverage Experience category, securing the top spot with 8.3 points on a 10-point scale. The operator maintains a lead of two points over Maxis and Digi, which are statistically tied at 6.7–6.8 points. U Mobile, Unifi, and Yes trail behind, with Yes occupying the last spot at 3.6 points.

Interestingly, all operators share an identical 5G Coverage Experience score of 2.88 points, suggesting relatively uniform 5G coverage across

the network providers.

On which operator is the most consistent with its network, Maxis clinched the Consistent Quality award with a razor-thin margin of 67.3%, narrowly edging out Digi at 67.1%. Unifi follows in third place with 64.7% while Celcom, U Mobile and Yes complete the ranking. The most improvement comes from Celcom, which saw an impressive 18 percentage point increase from the previous report.

The Consistent Quality metric is a comprehensive assessment of network performance, evaluating the ability to support mobile application requirements across multiple indicators including download speed, upload speed, latency, jitter, packet loss and time to first byte. Essentially, it measures whether networks can reliably support users’ typical demanding tasks.

Highlighting key achievements by the country’s biggest mobile network players and along with evolving trends, the report showcased how operators are competing and innovating connectivity.

For the methodology, Opensignal examined the mobile network experience of six main mobile operators in Malaysia over a period of 90 days from Aug 10 to Oct 29.

Feliz's Victor is the heart of the show.



Just as terrible as her son, Deirdre's Francis comes with her own set of sympathetic problems.



BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

OVER two years ago, Matt Reeves figuratively flew down from the heavens to save Warner Bros from self-cannibalising its DC Comics properties with *The Batman*. Introducing Robert Pattinson as a different, moodier take on Bruce Wayne and Batman, the film was a success and it paved the way to the upcoming *The Batman - Part II* being greenlit.

Before Pattinson returns in the sequel though, the world of *The Batman* has grown just a little bit bigger with HBO's *The Penguin*, a spinoff focusing on the titular character that was introduced in the 2022 film.

Set not very long after the climactic events of the film, *The Penguin* is an eight-episode television series that chronicles the aftermath of *The Batman*, leading into the next film set to release in 2026.

The assassination of mob boss Carmine Falcone at the hands of The Riddler leaves a power vacuum in the Gotham City crime world, with various gangs seeking to carve more than a slice of the city for themselves.

For aspiring crime boss Oswald "Oz" Cobb (Colin Farrell), or The Penguin, he dreams of nothing more than seizing control and making his mother Francis (Deirdre O'Connell) proud. However, Oz's plans are threatened when Falcone's daughter Sofia (Cristin Milioti) is released from Arkham Asylum.

Crime-fed drama

There is no doubt DC Comics's Gotham City is a festering wound. As such, there are no "good guys" in *The Penguin*. Without mincing words, it is the illegitimate comic book television-movie child of *The Sopranos* and *Breaking Bad*. Like those shows, a big part of this series's charm is its characters who are all alarmingly deplorable in their own ways.

Showrunner and creator Lauren LeFranc understands that Gotham City's criminals are at their best when they embody the duality of their city. This is how she keeps the audience perpetually engaged in a love-hate relationship with *The Penguin*'s characters.

Oz is the best example of how LeFranc does this. Abhorrent in more ways than one, Oz is also shown to have a soft side to him whenever his mother is involved or with his protegee of sorts Victor Aguilar (Rhenzy Feliz).

Even when he repeatedly gets himself into situations with no easy escape and then throws others under the bus to save his own skin, it is hard not to like Oz as Farrell's charisma naturally oozes through the fat suit, makeup and prosthetics.

The same goes with Milioti's Sofia as she flexes her acting in *The Penguin*, bringing the vulnerability of someone wrongfully thrown into an asylum, being broken psychologically and being released to carry out her menacing brand of twisted vengeance.

LeFranc's choice to go bigger with Falcone's "relationship" with women that was briefly seen in *The Batman* by weaving it into the greater tapestry of Gotham City's exploitation of them and the abetment of it by corrupt men also brings a side of storytelling to the city that has not been seen in previous DC Comics films and TV shows.

The Penguin is the right tightrope balance between uniform, stellar writing, directing and

Virtually unrecognisable in the film, Farrell's performance as Oz is equal parts physical and emotional.

— PICS BY WARNER BROS DISCOVERY

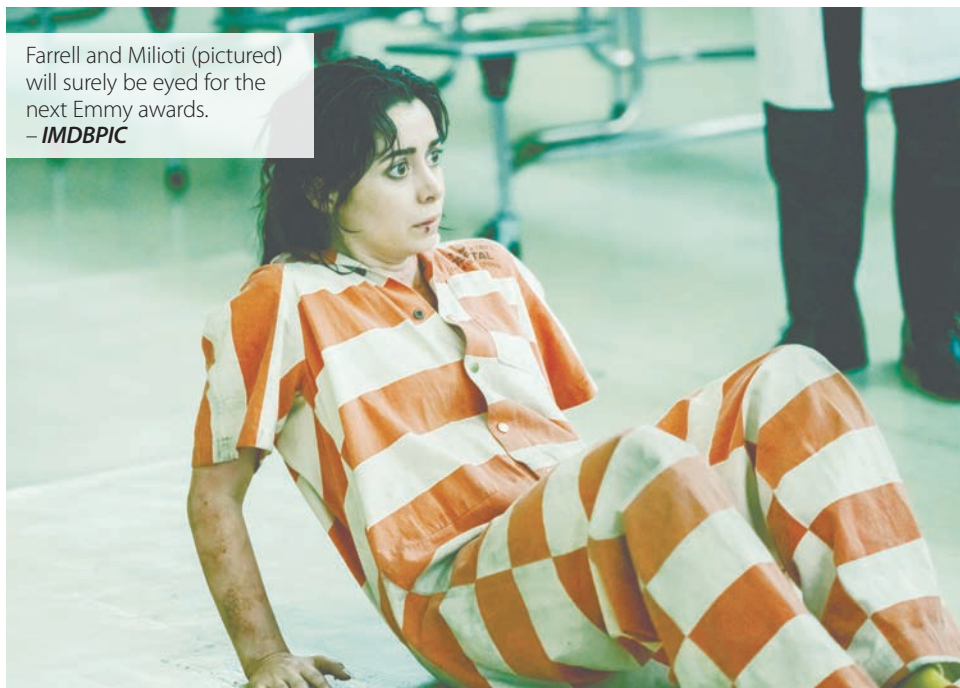


The Penguin rules Gotham

➤ New standard for live-action comic book media

Farrell and Milioti (pictured) will surely be eyed for the next Emmy awards.

— IMDBPIC



acting across the board. Every piece of this mean machine roars and grinds together in unison to deliver the best television series of the year.

Vengeful future

For a spinoff to *The Batman*, there is almost no allusion the series makes to acknowledge the caped crusader's existence. Sure, the series features one of the antagonists from the film, brings back another in flashbacks, has a fleeting cameo of a certain police figure and *The Penguin* is certainly a continuation of the 2022 film's story but despite the connective tissues, neither Robert Pattinson's Bruce Wayne nor Batman make an appearance.

There are no news reports or fleeting images of newspaper clippings on Batman stopping The Riddler. No passing mentions of the vigilante aiding Gotham City during the floods caused by the former. It was almost as though the crimefighter and his billionaire alter ego suddenly ceased to exist after *The Batman*'s credits finished rolling.

However, by the end of the eighth and final episode, once the full extent of Oz's evil and depravity have been laid bare, turning the viewer's love-hate relationship of the character into one purely fuelled by hate, LeFranc reminds us Batman exists and that he will return to make the Penguin's bum leg the only leg that works.

The Penguin is streaming on HBO Max.



The first season of *Squid Game* propelled Korean drama to new heights. – NETFLIXPIC

Netflix drops trailer for *Squid Game 2*

GET ready to dive back into the twisted world of *Squid Game*. The second season of the hit Netflix series is set to premiere on Dec 26.

The recently released trailer offers a glimpse into the terrifying games that await a new batch of desperate contestants. The protagonist Seong Gi-Hun returns to the deadly arena, this time as a seasoned player determined to expose the sinister forces behind the games.

As the contestants face life-or-death challenges, Seong's mission becomes clear: to survive and dismantle the entire operation.

The trailer teases intense action sequences, shocking twists and a deeper exploration of the game's dark origins.

The first season of *Squid Game* took the world by storm, captivating audiences with its gripping storyline, stunning visuals and unforgettable characters. The show's success has propelled Korean dramas to new heights, solidifying their position in the global entertainment landscape.

Will Seong succeed in his mission? Who will emerge victorious from the deadly games? Only time will tell. – Hallyubeat

Wave to Earth to rock Kuala Lumpur with live gig

➤ South Korean indie band will perform on Jan 19 next year

SOUTH KOREAN indie music sensation Wave to Earth is set to perform in Malaysia on Jan 19 next year as part of its Wave to Earth 0.03 world tour.

The tour will kick off in Kuala Lumpur, followed by Tokyo, Hong Kong, Taipei, Bangkok and Singapore.

The band will immerse fans in an evening of atmospheric indie tunes, heartfelt lyrics and its lush, jazz-infused soundscapes that have garnered a loyal following worldwide.

Wave to Earth is a three-member band consisting of singer-songwriter Daniel Kim, drummer Shin Dong Kyu and bassist John Cha based in Seoul. The name Wave to Earth refers to the band's desire to "become the new wave". The band produces indie pop with a lo-fi aesthetic based on jazz drumming, creating a unique sense of the seasons and a dreamy atmosphere in the music.

Wave to Earth debuted with the single *Wave* in 2019, followed by EPs *Wave 0.01* and *Summer Flows 0.02*. After joining the Wavy Seoul label, the band released its first full-length album in April 2023, titled *0.1 Flaws and All*. The trio embarked on its first world tour *Flaws and All* with shows in US, Europe and Asia.

In September this year, Wave to Earth released its latest album *Play with Earth 0.03*, which garnered widespread acclaim from listeners, debuting at fifth on Spotify's Global Top Debut Album chart. The band embarked on a 0.03 world tour with sold-out shows in North America, Europe, Asia and now, Southeast Asia.

Mastercard cardholders have special access for pre-sale tickets in Malaysia, starting this Wednesday. Live Nation members can secure tickets during the Live Nation pre-sale this Thursday. Tickets to the public will be available this Friday.



Tickets for the gig will go on general sale this Friday.

Star Trek movie, TV show props fetch record RM16m at auction

ENTERTAINMENT auction house Julien's Auctions concluded its ultimate *Star Trek* memorabilia event Bid Long & Prosper early this month, fetching a total of US\$3.6 million (RM16 million) and setting new world records for the highest selling *Star Trek* props sold at an auction.

The holy grail collection of over 200 original props, costumes and memorabilia from the *Star Trek* universe fetched astonishing results led by the captain of the Starship Enterprise himself, Captain James T. Kirk's most iconic items used by actor William Shatner.

Kirk's long-lost phaser from the original *Star Trek* television series was sold for US\$910,000, a new world record for a *Star Trek* prop sold at auction. The second highest selling item was Kirk's communicator, which sold for a record US\$780,000. Both were held by Shatner for the first time since the production of the series in an exclusive video produced by Julien's Auctions that kicked off the opening of Infinity Festival. The original series' Starfleet crew uniforms and guest star costumes designed by Emmy Award-winning designer William

Ware Theiss are some of the biggest pop culture pieces in history and they sold for top prices under the hammer.

Kirk's burnt yellow velour tunic and Starfleet Command Bridge trousers worn in the first season of the television series sold for US\$455,000. Another exciting highlight was a vintage red velour female engineering duty uniform

that sold for US\$114,300.

Other *Star Trek* items included:

➤ Leonard Nimoy "Spock" robe and headband from the film *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* – Sold for US\$45,500

➤ The Captain's USS Enterprise helm and navigation console from the original *Star Trek* series – Commanded a US\$260,000

➤ A remote control device used by Steve Ihnat in the episode *Whom Gods Destroy* – Sold for US\$26,000

➤ An original bridge command chair used by Kate Mulgrew from the television series *Star Trek: Voyager* – Sold for US\$41,275

➤ An original black and white photograph signed by the cast of the original *Star Trek* series – Sold for US\$4,550

➤ A limited-edition poster designed by Ron Lewis, dated 1992, signed by the original series cast – Sold for US\$9,100

The auction was held ahead of the release of *Star Trek: Section 31* starring Tan Sri Michelle Yeoh.



Props used by Shatner as Kirk fetched the biggest haul at the auction.



Kirk's phaser and communicator.



theSun

Classified

MONDAY
NOV 25, 2024

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SPORTS 27

Jaiswal and Kohli slam centuries as Australia stare at defeat

YASHASVI JAISWAL slammed a majestic 161 and Virat Kohli roared back to form with a vintage century yesterday as India zeroed in on victory against Australia in the first Test in Perth.

The visitors declared their second innings on 487-6 in the final session of day three after Kohli rolled back the years to reach 100.

Faced with an ominous 534 to win, Australia needed to survive 30 minutes before stumps.

But they instead imploded with rookie Nathan McSweeney out for a duck to Jasprit Bumrah and nightwatchman Pat Cummins falling for two, edging Mohammed Siraj to Kohli at slip.

The day belonged to Jaiswal, who grew up homeless in Mumbai, hitting 15 fours and three sixes in a mature 297-ball stay.

"For me all my centuries are amazing, but this is special because I really wanted to do it (against Australia)," said Jaiswal.

"I worked so hard in every practice session, I wanted to score runs here in Australia, so I really enjoyed it.

"I was just playing normally, I always trust in me and believe in me."

Kohli was also on fire in a welcome resurgence after a lengthy lean spell that sparked questions about his place in the team.

The 36-year-old rode his luck to bring up a 30th Test ton and his first since July last year to silence the critics.

Along with Jaiswal, Australia removed Devdutt Padikkal (25), Rishabh Pant (1), Dhruv Jurel (1) and Washington Sundar (29), having accounted for KL Rahul (77) before lunch.

Rahul's demise snapped a 201-run opening partnership with Jaiswal, eclipsing the previous best set by Sunil Gavaskar and Kris Srikkanth in Sydney in 1986.

The visitors resumed after seizing control on day two when Australia were dismissed for a woeful 104 in reply to India's 150.

Jaiswal, who began on 90, reached three figures with an extraordinary six off Hazlewood, hitting the boundary marker on the full, triumphantly raising his arms in the air. - AFP

322 Notices

PERISYTHARAN JUALAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-974-09/2024

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 3837/2009 (bertarikh: 12/02/2009) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah Geran 104793, Lot 14534, Mukim Mukim 14, Daerah Daerah Seberang Perai Tengah, Pulau Pinang
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Aturan 83 Kaedah- Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012

ANTARA OCBC BANK (Malaysia) (No. Pendaftaran Perniagaan: 295400-W) ...PLAINTIF

DAN

Tor Kwan Yun (No. Kad Pengenalan: 800725075129)
Loh Khai Thing (No. Kad Pengenalan: 850902075150) ...DEFENDAN

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaya di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 15 Ogos 2024 dan 22 Oktober 2024, adalah dengan ini disyorkan bahawa Timbalan Pendatar/Penolong Kanan Pendatar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM Pada Hari Khamis, 5 Disember 2024, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi, SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua tanggungan, bebanan serta mengenai paksi dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://lelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:
No. Hakmilik : Geran 104793
No. Lot : Lot 14534
Mukim / Daerah / Negeri : Mukim 14 / Daerah Seberang Perai / Pulau Pinang
Pegangan : Hakmilik Kekal
No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan :
Keluasan Tanah : 1302.0000000000 kaki persegi / 121.0000000000 meter persegi
Pemilik Berdaftar : Tor Kwan Yun, Loh Khai Thing
Syarat Nyata : (First Grade)
Sekatan Kepentingan : Tiada
Bebanan / Lain-Lain :
Kawasan Rizab :
Kaveat :

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:
Hartanah tersebut adalah Rumah Teres 2 1/2 tingkat yang beralamat pos di 30, Lorong Perwira Indah 2, Taman Perwira Indah, 14100, Simpang Ampat, Pulau Pinang

HARGA RIZAB:
Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "seperti sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 465,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: EMPAT RATUS ENAM PULUH LIMA RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada OCBC BANK (MALAYSIA) BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman : SEE RAMSUN & TAN
Alamat : 8 TAVOY ROAD, 10050, PG, MY
No. Telefon : 04-2295811
No. Fax : 04-2265988
No. Rujukan : LCS/LTK/78/24

322 Notices

PERISYTHARAN JUALAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1009-09/2024

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 0799SC2020006367 (bertarikh 28/02/2020) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah Geran No. Hakmilik Strata 56701, Lot 544, Mukim 17, Daerah Timor Laut, Pulau Pinang

ANTARA OCBC AL-AMIN BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat : 818444-T) ...PLAINTIF

DAN

LEE KOK WEI (No. Kad Pengenalan : 730915026175)
KOR CHUI SEAN (No. Kad Pengenalan : 760829025392) ...DEFENDAN

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaya di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 6 Oktober 2023 dan 28 Oktober 2024, adalah dengan ini disyorkan bahawa Timbalan Pendatar/Penolong Kanan Pendatar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM Pada Hari Isnin, 9 Disember 2024, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi, SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua tanggungan, bebanan serta mengenai paksi dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://lelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:
No. Hakmilik : Geran No. Hakmilik Strata 56701
No. Lot : Lot 544
Mukim/Daerah/Negeri : 17 / Timor Laut / Pulau Pinang
Pegangan : Hakmilik Kekal
No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan : 138 / 8 / M1B
Keluasan Tanah : 0.0000000000 kaki persegi / 0.0000000000 meter persegi
Pemilik Berdaftar : LEE KOK WEI, KOR CHUI SEAN
Syarat Nyata : Petak ini hendaklah digunakan untuk tujuan pangsupuri sahaja.
Sekatan Kepentingan : Tiada
Bebanan / Lain-Lain :
Kawasan Rizab :
Kaveat :

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:
Hartanah tersebut adalah satu unit kondominium dengan aksesori parcel yang beralamat pos di 7-7-3, Twin Towers, Persiaran Tanjung Bughah, 11200, Tanjung Bughah, Pulau Pinang.

HARGA RIZAB:
Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 585,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: LIMA RATUS LAPAN PULUH LIMA RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama OCBC AL-AMIN BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada OCBC AL-AMIN BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman : GHAZI & LIM
Alamat : 19TH FLOOR, PLAZA MWE NO 8, LEBUH FARQUHAR,
10200, PG, MY
No. Telefon : 04-2633688
No. Fax : 04-2633188/2627433
No. Rujukan : 043/22/JB/LJ/sz

168 Houses for Sale

Rumah Taman Mutuara Indah, Sungai Petani, Kedah

No. B-44, Lorong Mutuara
3/1, Taman Mutuara
Indah, 08000 Sungai
Petani, Kedah, 130 meter
persegi, RM200,000, LOT
UNTUK ORANG MELAYU
SAHAJA.

Telefon
012 4969815
(Rokaili)

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF DOUBLERICH DEVELOPMENT SDN. BHD. (IN LIQUIDATION) (201201006761 (982281-K))

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that the Company has been wound up and Ng Choon Jin was duly appointed as Liquidator of the abovenamed Company pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Malaya at Shah Alam under Companies (Winding-Up) No. BA-28MCC-504-09/2023, on 24th April 2024.

The Creditors of the abovenamed Company, are required on or before 4:00 p.m. of 24th December 2024, to send their names and addresses, and the particulars of their debts or claims, and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the Liquidator at Suite 8-1, 8th Floor, Oval Damansara, No. 688, Jalan Damansara, 50000 Kuala Lumpur and, if so required in writing from the Liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.

Dated this 25th November 2024

NG CHOON JIN
LIQUIDATOR

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF GIG MANAGEMENT SERVICES SDN. BHD. 200201008538 (576201-D) (In Members' Voluntary Winding Up)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 459 of the Companies Act 2016, that a Final Meeting of the Company will be held at SOHO Suites @ KLCC, Block A2, Level 32-3A, No. 20, Jalan Perak, 50450 Kuala Lumpur on 26 December 2024 at 10.00 a.m. for the following purposes:

AGENDA:

- To receive and consider the Liquidator's Statement of Accounts and Report showing how the winding up has been conducted and to receive any explanation thereon.
- To consider, and if thought fit, pass the following resolution as an Ordinary Resolution:- "That the books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator shall be kept by the Liquidator for a period of three (3) months from the date of the Final Meeting and that thereafter such books, accounts and documents may be destroyed by the Liquidator."

Dated this 25 November 2024

Chong Ai Ling
Liquidator

Note:

The Member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting may appoint a proxy (or in the case of a corporation, to appoint a representative) to attend and vote in his place. The Form of Proxy may be obtained from the office of the Liquidator located at SOHO Suites @ KLCC, Block A2, Level 32-3A, No. 20, Jalan Perak, 50450 Kuala Lumpur. The appointment of a proxy must be lodged at the Liquidators' office at least forty eight (48) hours before the meeting.

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF HORMAT MARKETING SDN. BHD. [Company No: 198801004325 (171682-D)] (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, a Final Meeting of the members of the Company will be held at No. 120, Jalan Flora Utama 8, Taman Flora Utama, 83000 Batu Pahat, Johor on Monday, 30 December 2024 at 2.00 p.m. for the following purposes :-

- To receive the Liquidator's account of receipts and payments and statements of distribution among the contributories and to hear any explanations that maybe given by the liquidator;
- To resolve that under Section 518(3)(b) of the Companies Act 2016, the books, accounts and documents of the Company be destroyed after the expiration of three (3) months from the date of the final meeting.

TAN HAWK MENG
Liquidator

Dated: 25 November 2024

A member entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a member of the Company. The instrument appointing a proxy has to be deposited at the office of the Liquidator not less than forty-eight hours before the time for holding the Meeting.

302 Jobs



MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Responsibilities

- Handle both local & outstation Agents and Vendors.
- Handle sales of newspaper-corporate sales e.g.: Hospital, Hotels, etc.

- Actively engage in outbound sales activities to acquire new newspaper subscribers.

Requirements

- Minimum Diploma in Business, Marketing, Communications, or related field.
- SPM level with at least 2 years of experience.
- Proven experience in sales, preferably in the media or publishing industry would be an advantage.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Excellent selling, communication and negotiation skills.

MEDIA SALES REPRESENTATIVE / AGENT (FREELANCE)

Requirements

- Minimum 1 year sales experience in classified ad, newspaper bulk sales or digital advertising.
- Those without sales experience but with media advertising knowledge can apply.
- Attractive commission package and incentive.
- Able to start immediately.
- Central, Northern, Southern, East Coast and Sabah/Sarawak.

Send in your CV
with your photo via email to :
thesun.hr2@gmail.com
or call us at +603 7784 6688

Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd
Lot 6, Level 4, Jalan 51/217, 46050
Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

**CALL TO PLACE
CLASSIFIED ADS**
MS. SHOBA / MS. BALQISH
03 7784 8888
018 261 6626
advertise@thesundaily.com

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF CHINA BRIDGE (MALAYSIA) SDN. BHD. (Registration No. 200901011753(854783-W)) (In Members' Voluntary Liquidation)

At a General Meeting of the abovenamed Company duly convened and held on 18th November 2024, the following resolutions was duly passed:-

"THAT the company will be liquidated by way of members' voluntary winding up."

"THAT Lee Ewe Hock of Wisma Golden Eagle Realty, 11th Floor, South Block, No. 142-A, Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur be appointed as Liquidator to act for the purpose of winding-up the company's affairs and distributing its assets."

"THAT the Liquidator may exercise any powers in accordance with Section 456 and Eleventh Schedule of the Companies Act 2016."

ZHAO HAIQING
Chairman

Dated this 25th day of November, 2024.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF CHINA BRIDGE (MALAYSIA) SDN. BHD. (Registration No. 200901011753(854783-W)) (In Members' Voluntary Liquidation)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of the abovenamed Company, which is being wound up voluntarily, are required on or before 26th December 2024 to send in their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned, the Liquidator of the said Company; and if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are, by their solicitors or personally, to come and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts or claims are proved.

LEE EWEE HOCK
Liquidator

Wisma Golden Eagle Realty
11th Floor, South Block
No 142-A, Jalan Ampang
50450 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: +60 3 2702 5222

Dated this 25th day of November, 2024.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF SOON SENG YAP CONSTRUCTION SDN BHD (199401030182) (315863-A) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

At a General Meeting of the abovenamed Company held on 18th November, 2024 the following resolutions were passed as special resolutions:-

i) That the company will be liquidated by way of members' voluntary winding up.

ii) That Mr. Yapp Hock Hoe of No. 25-4-05, Level 4, Plaza Prima, Batu 4 ½, Jalan Kelang Lama, 58200 Kuala Lumpur be appointed liquidator to act for the purpose of winding-up of the company's affairs and distributing its assets.

iii) That the liquidator be indemnified by the Company against all costs, charges, losses, expenses and liabilities incurred in or sustained by them in the execution and discharge of their duties as liquidators and in relation thereto.

YAPP YIN LEONG
Director

Dated: 25th November 2024

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF SOON SENG YAP CONSTRUCTION SDN BHD (199401030182) (315863-A) (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the abovenamed Company, which is being wound up voluntarily, are required on or before 31 December 2024 to send in their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned liquidator at No. 25-4-05, Level 4, Plaza Prima, Batu 4 ½, Jalan Kelang Lama, 58200 Kuala Lumpur, and, if so required by notice in writing from the said liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally, to come in and prove the said debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof, they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts or claims are proved.

YAPP HOCK HOE
Liquidator

Dated: 25th November 2024

Sinner sends holders Italy into Davis Cup final

DEFENDING champions Italy moved into the Davis Cup final after a 2-0 win over Australia on Saturday as Jannik Sinner defeated Alex de Minaur in straight sets to follow up Matteo Berrettini's victory over Thanasi Kokkinakis.

A repeat of last year's final ended with the same result and with world No. 1 Sinner again seeing off De Minaur, sending Italy into the final.

After an impressive season in which he claimed his first two Grand Slam titles, Sinner is eager to cap the year by leading Italy to their second successive

title in the men's team event.

"It will be tough. It's a final and especially in the Davis Cup anything can happen as we saw this week. We are not surprised, we will do our best and we have to choose wisely who will play tomorrow," Sinner told a press conference.

"This competition is very unpredictable, so we can only be happy to be back in the final... Tomorrow will be an intense day, and we are going to enjoy it."

The ATP Finals champion believes he has improved a lot since last year when he ousted

De Minaur.

"I believe I am a very solid player from the baseline and capable of doing very different things, not just hitting hard. I have achieved many things this year, so I take nothing for granted," he added.

"Winning would be a dream ending to the year for everyone... If we are here, it's because we are a great team, and we have shown that reaching this stage is not just luck. However, if we don't win, it will still be a great achievement to have reached the final." – Reuters

Djokovic hires old rival and fellow 'game-changer' Murray as coach

NOVAK DJOKOVIC announced on Saturday that his retired long-time rival Andy Murray is joining the 24-time Grand Slam-winning player's coaching team, starting at the Australian Open in January.

"I'm thrilled to have one of my biggest rivals on the same side of the net with me, this time as my coach. I look forward to starting the season with Andy and having him by my side in Melbourne, where we've shared many exceptional moments throughout our careers," Djokovic said in a statement.

Murray, a three-time Grand Slam champion who retired from competitive tennis at the Olympics in August, said: "I am very excited about this and look forward to being on the same side of the net for a change.

"I'm also grateful for the opportunity to help him achieve his goals for the upcoming year."

Djokovic posted a video on X of him and Murray during the Scotsman's playing career, jokingly titled: "He never liked retirement anyway."

The 37-year-old Serb has won the Australian Open a record 10 times, defeating Murray in four Melbourne finals.

Djokovic failed to win a Grand Slam in 2024 and has slipped to seventh in the world, although he did land the Olympic singles title in Paris, a victory he described as his "greatest achievement".

Djokovic and Murray faced each other 36 times in their careers with the Serb winning 25 times.

"We played each other since we were boys – 25 years of being rivals, of pushing each other beyond our limits. We had some of the most epic battles in our sport," added Djokovic on Saturday.

"They called us gamechangers, risk takers, history makers. I thought our story may be over. Turns out, it has one final chapter. It's time for one of my toughest opponents to step into my corner."

Djokovic ended his coaching partnership with Goran Ivanisevic in March despite winning 12 Slams together. – AFP

Jeeno equals Yin for lead

... for CME Group Tour Championship lead in Florida

THAILAND'S Jeeno Thitikul fired a nine-under par 63 to capture a share of the lead with American Angel Yin after Saturday's third round of the LPGA's season-ending Tour Championship.

A bogey-free round by the 21-year-old Thai star, closed with an eagle at the par-5 17th and a birdie at 18, left her level with Yin on 15-under 201 after 54 holes at Tiburon Golf Club in Naples, Florida.

"Just trying to make it the lowest score that I can," Jeeno said. "Today it's my caddie's birthday and definitely he's going to say because my birthday you shoot like a really good score."

"Hopefully I can get a big check for him tomorrow."

China's Yin Ruoning was third on 204, three strokes adrift, with England's Charley Hull and South Korean An Narin on 205 and American Lucy Li and Russian Nataliya Guseva on 206.

The top 60 players in the season points chase qualified for the US\$11 million (RM50 million) showdown, which offers a US\$4m (RM18m) top prize.

Jeeno seeks her fourth career LPGA title after the 2022 JTBC Classic, 2022 Northwest Arkansas Championship and this year's Dow Championship pairs event with Yin.

"Whatever is going to happen tomorrow, I take it as

learning experience," Jeeno said. "It's not about life or death. It's just like what we play and then we just trying to improve ourself."

Yin, ranked 34th, won her only LPGA title last year at Shanghai.

"Felt good. The course, I think, is playing pretty tough, so happy with my score," Yin said. "I'm scoring still. Making some mistakes but saving a bunch so a lot of positives."

World No. 7 Jeeno opened with a birdie and added birdies at the par-3 fifth and eighth holes, then began the back nine with three consecutive birdies.

Jeeno grabbed a share of the lead at 14-under with an eagle at the par-5 17th and seized the solo lead with a closing birdie.

"Nothing specific," Jeeno said of her sizzling finish. "We know 17, it's reachable par-5, so I just trying to hit second shot on the green, which is like easy to have like easy birdie. Hit really good, went to the pin, and then not that far for the eagle."

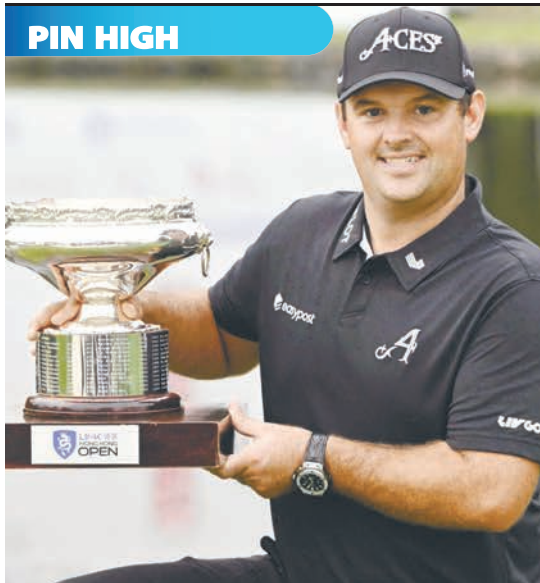
"On 18 nothing, just trying to make par. I have no idea how I can hole that putt in as well."

Top-ranked Nelly Korda, who has already clinched the LPGA Player of the Year award, closed with birdies at 17 and 18 to fire a 69. – AFP

Jeeno Thitikul. – AFP/IC



PIN HIGH



Former Masters champion Reed wins Hong Kong Open

FORMER Masters champion Patrick Reed (*pic*) triumphed on the Asian Tour for the first time with a dominant three-stroke victory at the Hong Kong Open yesterday.

The American, who fired a dazzling 11-under-par 59 on Saturday to grab the outright lead, finished 22 under for victory in Asia's oldest professional golf tournament.

The 34-year-old Reed, who is among a number of big-name players to have jumped over to Saudi-backed LIV Golf, carded six birdies against two bogeys for a final-round 66 at Fanling.

Reed, the champion at Augusta in 2018 and a nine-time winner on the US PGA Tour, sealed victory ahead of defending champion Ben Campbell of New Zealand in outright second.

Reed shot a rare 59 in the third round but

preferred lies were played so the feat does not stand officially.

"Nothing like coming to a place that I know pretty well and love the golf course," said the 34-year-old Texan.

"I love how it makes me think about golf shots and you have to be creative around this place. So, to be able to come out and play the way like I did on the weekend. I mean, it always helps shooting 59 yesterday, but the biggest thing, the hardest part, was today," he added.

England's Justin Rose, the Olympic gold medallist in 2016 and a former major champion, finished tied 18th at 13 under.

Smylie claims Australian PGA title

LOCAL professional Elvis Smylie held off former British Open champion Cameron Smith down the back nine to win the Australian PGA Championship at Royal Queensland Golf Club in Brisbane yesterday.

The 22-year-old Queensland carded a four-under-par 67 to finish on 14-under for the tournament, which was reduced to 54 holes after heavy rain washed out play on Friday.

Australian Smith posted a final round of 69 to finish two shots back on 12-under, with compatriots Marc Leishman (69) and Anthony Quayle (63) a shot further back.

"It's a dream come true," said Smylie after his first win on the DP World Tour. "I won't forget this day playing with Cam and (Marc Leishman)."

"They're guys I've looked up to since I was a kid and to be in their presence and to have the chance to compete against them for a title, I've learned so much. I'm so grateful and so honoured right now."

"My short game was great, I definitely saved myself in that department," said Smylie. "I was pretty average off the tee but golf is a game of imperfection and today was a sign of that."



RB LEIPZIG lost more ground on Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich with a 4-3 defeat at lowly Hoffenheim on Saturday and were overtaken into second by Eintracht Frankfurt.

Equal on points with Bayern just three matchdays ago, Leipzig have since lost two and drawn one to sit eight points behind the league leaders.

Hoffenheim came from a goal down to equalise three times and took the lead with four minutes remaining in a wild debut for new manager Christian Ilzer.

Hoffenheim's Adam Hlozek collected a brace while Tom Bischof scored a clever freekick and Jacob Bruun Larsen was responsible for the winner in the 86th minute.

Leipzig's efforts came through Willi Orban, Antonio Nusa and an own goal from Hoffenheim's Stanley N'Soki.

The team from eastern Germany had only conceded five goals in the league season before Saturday's defeat.

"We're incredibly disappointed. We went ahead three times and lost in the end, that really hurts," Leipzig's Christoph Baumgartner told *Sky*.

Mario Gotze, the hero of Germany's 2014 World Cup win, scored in his 100th Frankfurt

Leipzig lose ground on Bayern

Bundesliga leaders defeated at lowly Hoffenheim, Frankfurt takes second spot

game as his side beat Werder Bremen 1-0 to continue their impressive league form and move two points ahead of Leipzig in second.

Gotze's 45th-minute goal, blasted in from near the penalty spot, was set up by a delicate pass from French striker Hugo Ekitike, his sixth assist of the league campaign.

A "happy and proud" Frankfurt captain Kevin Trapp said "Leipzig's loss gave us some good momentum".

As chants of "German champions, it can only be Frankfurt" rung out, Trapp tried to downplay expectations.

"First spot is far away but we'll take the euphoria and self-confidence with us - it can only do us good."

Borussia Dortmund beat Freiburg 4-0 at home thanks to goals from Maximilian Beier, Felix Nmecha, Julian Brandt and Jamie Gittens, while the visitors finished with nine men.

"It's a special place here, with the fans behind you," Brandt told *Sky*, with an eye on next week's home clash with Bayern.

"That'll be a sensational game."

Dortmund have now won their past six against Freiburg, scoring 24 and conceding five.

Defending champions Bayer

Leverkusen came from two goals down to win 5-2 at home against Heidenheim thanks to a hat-trick from Patrik Schick.

Heidenheim were two goals up within 21 minutes. Argentine World Cup winner Exequiel Palacios pulled one back on the half hour mark before Schick scored three unanswered goals to wrestle back control of the match, before Granit Xhaka added a fifth.

Xhaka told *Sky*: "Patrik is a striker who has needed to be patient, but when you need him, he's there. He doesn't need that many chances."

Last season's runners-up Stuttgart scored two second half goals to win 2-0 at home over bottom club Bochum.

Elsewhere, Ridle Baku scored the only goal as Wolfsburg defeated Union Berlin 1-0 at home. - AFP

Marseille stay in touch with Ligue 1 leaders

MARSEILLE beat Lens 3-1 yesterday to stay within touching distance of Ligue 1 table-toppers Paris Saint-Germain, while Lyon and Reims played out a 1-1 stalemate.

Second half strikes from Valentin Rongier, Luis Henrique and Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg ensured Marseille remain third, nine points behind PSG and three off Monaco in second spot.

After the top two both won on Friday, Marseille needed to get back to winning ways with their trip to Lens following their slump in form before the international break and anything other than a win would have meant they trailed PSG by at least 11 points.

Following a flying start to life under new coach Roberto De Zerbi, Marseille have been hit-and-miss in recent weeks, losing two of their last five in the league.

These came in the form of a chastening 3-0 loss at home to arch-rivals PSG in October and then in the last matchday before the break, a surprise 3-1 home defeat to mid-table Auxerre.

De Zerbi dubbed Saturday's win "a significant response in terms of (his side's) character".

"We managed to shake off that defeat to Auxerre, which really hurt us," he added.

The Italian will be hoping his side further prove him right next week when they welcome second-placed Monaco to the Velodrome.

Elsewhere, Lyon and Reims passed up the opportunity to go fourth with a 1-1 draw in the Champagne region.

"For us I think it's two points dropped," Lyon captain Alexandre Lacazette told *DAZN*.

"Our problem this season has been starting slowly in the second half and we paid for it again here," the ex-Arsenal striker added.

The result leaves Lyon provisionally level on 19 points with fourth-placed Lille, with Reims one point back in sixth.

Saint Etienne ground out a 1-0 win at home to Montpellier in an encounter that could very well already have implications on the relegation battle come the end of the season. - AFP



Atalanta's Ederson (centre) celebrates scoring their second goal with Mateo Retegui (left) and Mario Pasalic. - REUTERS/PIC

Retegui fires Atalanta to top of Serie A

SERIE A'S leading scorer Mateo Retegui netted as Atalanta beat Parma 3-1 yesterday to go top of Serie A on goal difference, overtaking Inter Milan despite the reigning champions' rout of Verona.

Retegui claimed his 12th league goal of the campaign after just four minutes for the visitors before Ederson and Ademola Lookman scored to send Atalanta above Inter, who hammered Verona 5-0 earlier.

Juventus meanwhile failed to impress in a goalless stalemate with AC Milan and are sixth, one place above their opponents.

Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini said his team were developing a winning mentality.

"We have to focus on winning every game we can and the rest is not really in our minds," he told *Sky Sport Italia*.

"That was the case in the Europa League too, we didn't start out thinking we'd win it, but as time wore on and we found ourselves in that position, we weren't going to hold back either."

Earlier, Marcus Thuram scored twice in Inter's easy win over Verona.

Carrick hails hat-trick hero Latte Lath

MIDDLESBROUGH manager Michael Carrick said Emmanuel Latte Lath had "found his stride" after the Ivory Coast forward scored a hat-trick in just 12 minutes during a 6-2 win at Oxford on Saturday.

Victory, which left Boro fifth in the second-tier Championship and just four points off the automatic promotion places, meant the northeast side had scored four or more goals for the third game in a row - something they last achieved back in 1947.

"It's just really enjoyable watching them perform at the moment, seeing them express themselves and getting their rewards for it," said Carrick.

"Emmanuel has found his stride - he's showing that extra bit of sharpness, that zip that he's showing us he's got."

Millwall manager Neil Harris, meanwhile, praised medical staff for the way they responded to two emergencies during a 1-1 draw with Championship

leaders Sunderland.

Both incidents took place towards the end of the first half, with play halted for 25 minutes before the game resumed.

"I want to praise not just my medical team, that I thought were immense in their reaction, but also Sunderland's club doctor as well who went into the top tier of the home end to support one of our fans," Harris said.

Elsewhere 10-man Sheffield United were left second on goal difference following a 2-2 draw at Coventry.

Burnley closed on the top two thanks to a 1-0 win at Bristol City secured by a goal from Jaidon Anthony.

Norwich are without a win in seven after they drew 2-2 at West Brom, while a Ben Gibson own-goal allowed basement club QPR to escape with a 1-1 draw at Stoke. - AFP

Atletico comeback to beat Alaves as Simeone hits milestone

ATLETICO coach Diego Simeone was able to celebrate his 700th match in charge of the club with a 2-1 La Liga comeback win over Alaves on Saturday.

Antoine Griezmann and Alexander Sorloth's goals helped Atletico come from behind to triumph after Jon Guridi sent Alaves ahead with an early penalty.

The win took Atletico provisionally second, two points ahead of champions Real Madrid and four behind leaders Barcelona.

Atletico's Argentine coach Simeone appointed in December 2011, reached a milestone 700th game across all competitions in charge of the club which he has led to La Liga titles in 2014 and 2021.

"Number 700 is a huge number, congratulations to him, the win is for him, the team, all the fans," said Giuliano Simeone, his son, who helped Atletico step up a gear in the second half.

Earlier Valencia scored an entertaining 4-2 La Liga win over Real Betis in their first match after devastating floods hit the region.

The win took the east-coast club provisionally 18th after their previous two games had been postponed following the disaster at the end of October which killed 227 people.

Los Che coach Ruben Baraja said he hoped to turn the emotional nature of the match into positive energy for the team to try to bring the fans joy.

Emotions ran high before the game as a minute of silence was held as players stood before a huge Valencia region flag and tribute banner in the stands.

Defender Cesar Tarrega, who was in tears ahead of the match during the memorial to the flood victims, sent the hosts ahead after a scramble in the box following a short corner routine.

Hugo Duro's own goal soon pulled Betis level but the forward made amends in the second half with two fine finishes to put Valencia two goals ahead.

Diego Lopez smashed in a superb fourth for Los Che and although Chimy Avila pulled one back for the visitors, Valencia were able to hold on to a morale-boosting victory.

"The emotions, the atmosphere, the respect the Mestalla showed, it gave you goosebumps seeing how we paid homage to the victims," said Valencia coach Baraja.

"The victory is dedicated to all of the victims and all of those affected. We are with them." - AFP

PEP GUARDIOLA conceded Manchester City are in uncharted territory after a 4-0 thrashing by Tottenham inflicted a fifth consecutive defeat on the English champions and ended a 52-game unbeaten home run.

James Maddison struck twice in seven first half minutes before Pedro Porro rubbed salt in the wounds of his former club and Brennan Johnson completed the rout.

City's first defeat on home soil from open play since the eve of the 2022 World Cup leaves them still five points adrift of Premier League leaders Liverpool, who play their game in hand at bottom-of-the-table Southampton on Sunday.

Guardiola has committed himself to turning around the poorest run of his managerial career

Spurs thrash City

after extending his contract until 2027 this week.

But hopes his new deal could revitalise a City side, that have won an unprecedented four consecutive Premier League titles, proved short-lived.

"In eight years we have never lived this kind of situation," said Guardiola, who joined the club in 2016.

"Now we have to live it and break it winning the next games, especially the next one. Now we see things in one way, maybe in a few weeks we see it differently."

Rodri paraded his *Ballon d'Or* trophy to the home fans before kickoff as his name was lit up across the Etihad pitch by firelight in an ostentatious show of support for the Spanish midfielder.

The 28-year-old is not expected to play again this season after suffering knee ligament damage in September and his absence has been at the heart of City's demise.

Guardiola's men did start strongly as Guglielmo Vicario denied Erling Haaland and the

Norwegian had another shot deflected wide.

But the momentum of the match completely swung on Tottenham's first serious attack after 13 minutes.

Dejan Kulusevski's teasing cross picked out Maddison who applied a cool first-time finish.

"In this moment we are fragile defensively," added Guardiola.

"We started really well as normal but we could not score and then after that we conceded. After that we conceded some more which is difficult for our emotions right now."

Maddison had been frozen out of Postecoglou's starting line-up in recent weeks and was keen to prove a point to his manager.

Son Heung-min's inventive pass freed the England international inside the box and he dinked



Tottenham Hotspur's Brennan Johnson (bottom) celebrates scoring their fourth goal with Lucas Bergvall. - REUTERS/PIC

Cityzens end 52-match unbeaten home run, Postecoglou calls for consistency

the ball over the advancing Ederson to double Spurs' lead.

Inconsistency has been the scourge of Tottenham's season so far.

"It is significant because obviously they've got an unbelievable record here at home," said Postecoglou.

"We've reached these standards before. It's about now not dropping as we have in certain games."

Guardiola has to find solutions fast if his side's title defence is to be maintained into the new year.

A daunting trip to face Liverpool at Anfield is next up in the Premier League, where City have not won in front of a crowd since 2003. - AFP

WINNING NUMBERS
PAYMENT GUARANTEED IN FULL

dama cai

Draw Date: 24/11/24 (Sun) Draw No: 5835/24 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER 1+3D

1st Prize	6778
2nd Prize	3768
3rd Prize	4571

Starters	Consolation
0424 5253	5923 7962
7490 8473	8312 4240
0830 2571	6597 7151
7777 3130	7214 7335
1131 3098	6033 3340

1-3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 RM11,861,672.80

6778 + 3768	3768 + 6778
6778 + 4571	4571 + 6778
3768 + 4571	4571 + 3768

Jackpot 2 RM129,608.40

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
666 778 +	OX	RM1,010,342.00
2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
593 768 +	SNAKE	RM985,532.30
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
974 571 +	RAT	RM1,526,188.40

Starters	Consolation
400 424 475 253	315 923 267 962
747 490 098 473	018 312 494 240
310 830 832 571	056 597 507 151
247 777 793 130	617 214 557 335
781 131 173 098	726 033 253 340

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
778	768	571

3D Jackpot

Jackpot RM714,250.90

778 + 768 + 571	768 + 571 + 778
778 + 571 + 768	571 + 778 + 768
768 + 778 + 571	571 + 768 + 778

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

1+3D J2 RM328K & 3+3D 1st Prize Bonus RM196K won on 23/11/24

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Arsenal cruise, Chelsea win

ARSENAL got their challenge back on track. The Gunners crushed Nottingham Forest 3-0 to pull level on 22 points with third-placed Chelsea, who saw off Leicester in the early kickoff.

Mikel Arteta's Gunners were expected to be contenders for City's crown after finishing second in each of the past two seasons.

But they had failed to win in their previous four league games.

Martin Odegaard's return from a long injury lay-off is a major boost for Arsenal and he teed up Bukayo Saka to blast home the opener on 15 minutes.

Saka turned provider for another special strike, this time by Thomas Partey early in the second period.

Teenager Ethan Nwaneri then came off the bench to score his first Premier League goal.

Speaking about Odegaard, who returned to action at Inter Milan earlier

this month, Arteta said: "It's not a coincidence. The team flows in a different way when he is playing."

Chelsea remain ahead of Arsenal on goals scored after a 2-1 win on manager Enzo Maresca's return to Leicester.

Nicolas Jackson scored the opener but Chelsea struggled to make their dominance count until Enzo Fernandez headed home, before a late consolation goal from the penalty spot for Jordan Ayew.

Brighton's incredible start under 31-year-old boss Fabian Hurler continued with a 2-1 win at Bournemouth to climb to fifth.

Wolves are out of the bottom three thanks to a stunning 4-1 win at Fulham, with Matheus Cunha scoring twice.

Everton failed to take advantage of an early red card for Brentford's Christian Norgaard in a 0-0 draw at Goodison Park. - AFP

Villa's winless run continues

BY SUNNY BADWAL

ASTON VILLA boss Unai Emery admits his side are "making mistakes" following the 2-2 draw with Crystal Palace at Villa Park.

The result left Villa without a win from their last six matches in all competitions as they head into another tough Champions League fixture against Juventus in midweek.

Villa stopped the rot of four straight defeats in all competitions with a draw but it has been over a month since they last tasted victory.

Emery said: "We were thinking how strong we were when we were winning 15 matches in a row. And how we can again recover this confidence, this energy, this capacity to be here."

"We dominated the match. We conceded a few chances for the opponents

and they are scoring goals, we are making mistakes and they are scoring and we are not getting the points we deserve but still work to do.

"We played here at home this year in the Premier League not getting three points but we deserved them in each match to win."

"Today we drew but played well. But we are making mistakes and getting punished a lot and this is work to do. We are more or less being demanding to try and keep going with the same consistency we had last year."

Emery admits his side worked on that in training but still fell victim to conceding a goal in that fashion (counter-attack).

He added: "We were deeply analysing the transition against Liverpool, today was different but even like that they did it." - The Independent

SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5888/2024 DATE: 24/11/2024 (SUN)
STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.
196901000090 (8420-D)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	9666
2nd Prize	1018
3rd Prize	0433

Special	Consolation
8574 5207	1798 7517
6156 4606	2671 7078
5896 6589	9040 4933
5821 4358	5393 4734
7628 2787	7786 0232

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 20,131,986.55**

9666 1018	1018 9666
9666 0433	0433 9666
1018 0433	0433 1018

Jackpot 2 **RM 242,605.11**

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize	9666	+	GOAT
2nd Prize	1018	+	
3rd Prize	0433	+	
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1ST **3 4 9 4 8**

4TH	4 9 4 8
2ND	3 9 8 5 3
3RD	4 8 2 9 6
5TH	9 4 8
6TH	4 8

1ST **1 2 8 4 7 7**

2ND	1 2 8 4 7	or	2 8 4 7 7
3RD	1 2 8 4	or	8 4 7 7
4TH	1 2 8	or	4 7 7
5TH	1 2	or	7 7

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SUPREME 6/58

4 12 13 36 50 57

Jackpot **RM 49,066,527.88**

POWER 6/55

17 18 21 42 43 45

Jackpot **RM 4,288,641.31**

STAR 7/60

8 22 30 34 41 45 + 23

Jackpot 1 **RM 1,565,305.36**

Jackpot 2 **RM 100,000.00**

Toto 4D Jackpot 1 (i-System)
RM 4 2 2 , 4 1 9

Toto 4D Jackpot 2
RM 3 8 1 , 8 1 8

Toto 4D Jackpot 2 (i-System)
RM 6 9 , 7 1 2 won on 23/11/2024!

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Max wins fourth F1 title, can Verstappen now make it five in a row?

MAX VERSTAPPEN joined a select group of Formula One greats with his fourth title in Las Vegas yesterday but stretching the run to five in a row next year could be an even bigger, and more thrilling, battle.

Just six drivers have won four championships and only Michael Schumacher managed five in succession with Ferrari from 2000 to 2004.

Only two of them - Verstappen and Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel from 2010-2013 - have won their first four consecutively.

Verstappen has led the standings since May 2022, this month smashing Schumacher's record of 896 days on top, and the Red Bull driver will stay there until at least March 16 when the 2025 season starts in Australia.

That campaign will be eagerly awaited with former champions McLaren, Ferrari and Mercedes already scrapping for wins on a regular basis and seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton soon to switch from Mercedes to Ferrari.

Formula One chief executive Stefano Domenicali congratulated Verstappen as fireworks exploded over the Vegas Strip.

"He is a true great of this sport and has so much more to look forward to in his impressive career," he said.

"This season has been thrilling and 2025 looks set to be even closer."

Verstappen started 2024 with pole

position in the first seven races, winning seven of the opening 10, but then went 10 races without a win as Red Bull's dominance disappeared.

"If we win the title again this year, it will be mainly down to Max," Red Bull's motorsport consultant Helmut Marko said after Verstappen ended the drought by sweeping from 17th to first in a rainswept and chaotic Brazilian race this month.

"With his exceptional driving skills, he covered up the phases in which the car really wasn't good."

The 27-year-old has 62 wins, still far behind Hamilton's 105, but the 2024 points gap - 63 after Vegas - reflected consistency more than any speed advantage.

Seven different drivers have each won more than once this season but Verstappen banked the points early and then defended his lead.

Ultimately, numbers and statistics are not what drives him and how much longer he stays is an open question, but Verstappen has a contract to the end of 2028.

"Now that I've won championships and races, for me, my goals are completed in Formula One," he told Reuters in a recent interview.

"I don't care about winning eight titles or beating the win record. I know that I can do that but you need in a way luck as well, for a long time that you are at the

right team.

"Yes, I can continue until I'm 40-years-old, but I don't want to.

"When I'm 80-years-old I want to look back and say, 'Yes, I had a good time in racing, I did everything I needed to do, and I loved my life and I lived my life.' That's what I want to do."

In 2021, Verstappen and Hamilton went down to the wire in Abu Dhabi, the Dutch driver coming out on top after then-race director Michael Masi controversially changed the usual safety car procedure.

The following year saw Red Bull take both titles, with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc unable to sustain a challenge that started strongly.

"I think the most special will always be 2023," said Verstappen, who won 19 of 22 races in that record season.

Verstappen produced plenty of debate about his driving style this year but Red Bull's Christian Horner has denied and dismissed allegations amid all the team turmoil, Verstappen showed his resilience.

"He's been in a class of his own this year. He's been absolutely outstanding," said Horner as he donned a sweatshirt with the A in Max replaced by a 4.

"He kept overdelivering, kept getting the results and performances. He deserves this fourth world championship. It puts him among the elite of the sport." - Reuters

F1 roll of honour

2024: Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull)

2023: Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull)

2022: Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull)

2021: Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull)

2020: Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes)

2019: Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes)

2018: Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes)

2017: Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes)

2016: Nico Rosberg (GER/Mercedes)

2015: Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes)

Drivers with most world titles:

7: Lewis Hamilton (GBR);

2008 (McLaren-Mercedes),

2014, 2015, 2017, 2018,

2019 and 2020 (Mercedes)

7: Michael Schumacher (GER);

1994 (Benetton-Ford),

1995 (Benetton-Renault),

2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

and 2004 (Ferrari)

5: Juan Manuel Fangio

(ARG): **1951** (Alfa Romeo),

1954 (Maserati/Mercedes-

Benz), **1955** (Mercedes-Benz),

1956 (Ferrari) and **1957**

(Maserati)

4: Max Verstappen (NED):

2021, 2022, 2023, 2024

(Red Bull-Honda)

4: Sebastian Vettel (GER):

2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013

(Red Bull-Renault)

4: Alain Prost (FRA): **1985,**

1986 (McLaren-Tag Porsche),

1989 (McLaren-Honda) and

1993 (Williams-Renault)

3: Ayrton Senna (BRA):

1988, 1990 and 1991

(McLaren-Honda)

3: Nelson Piquet (BRA):

1981 (Brabham-Ford), **1983**

(Brabham-BMW) and **1987**

(Williams-Honda)

3: Niki Lauda (AUT): **1975,**

1977 (Ferrari) and **1984**

(McLaren-Tag Porsche)

3: Jackie Stewart (GBR):

1969 (Matra-Ford), **1971 and**

1973 (Tyrrell-Ford)

3: Jack Brabham (AUS):

1959, 1960 (Cooper-Climax)

and **1966** (Brabham-Repco)