



COLOURFUL WELCOME ... China President Xi Jinping being received by His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at Istana Negara in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — **BERNAMAPIC**

M'sia, China sign 31 MoUs

Agreements in defence, trade and transport inked in addition to mutual visa exemption arrangement.

Report on
page 2

More than RM33 billion housing units nationwide in limbo

Report on
page 3

Supply-demand mismatch results in unsold properties and abandoned projects involving both licensed and unlicensed developers.

Shocking lack of attention over children safety involving vehicles

Report on
page 4

Recent cases resulting in death and injury drive home point that youngsters must be watched at all times.



KUALA LUMPUR: His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim has expressed belief that Malaysia and China will continue to strengthen cooperation, despite various geopolitical gaps around the world.

According to a post on Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar's Facebook page yesterday, His Majesty said Malaysia is focusing on deeper economic integration, strengthening supply chain and industrial collaboration, increasing connectivity and upholding the principles of mutual respect and benefit in engagement with all partners, including China.

"I believe there is great potential for Chinese companies and investors to explore opportunities here as it is in line with the importance of regional connectivity and high-quality development under China's 'Belt and Road' Initiative.

"With strong strategic incentives and a good location, the Forest City Special Financial Hub within the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone has emerged as one of the region's prime investment locations," said Sultan Ibrahim at a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at Istana Negara yesterday.

According to the post, Sultan Ibrahim also agreed to invite the Chinese government to promote language exchanges between the two countries.

His Majesty said the number of student exchanges between the two countries had increased and Malaysia intended to send more students to China to exchange knowledge and culture.

"I believe language is an important

King confident ties will continue to be strengthened



Sultan Ibrahim and Xi during a commemorative souvenir presentation ceremony at Dewan Seri Maharaja, Istana Negara yesterday. —BERNAMA PIC

bridge in strengthening bilateral relations. In this direction, I intend to actively promote the Sultan Ibrahim Malay Studies Chair at Beijing Foreign Studies University," said His Majesty.

Earlier, Xi was accorded a state welcome at Istana Negara in conjunction with a three-day state visit starting yesterday at the invitation of

Sultan Ibrahim. Xi was received by Sultan Ibrahim upon his arrival at 10.30am.

Also present were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, both deputy prime ministers Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof as well as Cabinet ministers.

The ceremony at the Istana Negara Parade Ground began with the playing of the national anthems of both countries by the Royal Malay Regiment Central Band, followed by a 21-gun salute by the 41st Battery of the Royal Artillery Regiment.

The Chinese president then inspected the Main Guard of Honour

involving four officers and 103 personnel of other ranks from the First Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment of Sungai Besi Camp, led by Mejar Mohamad Waqiyudin Abd Rahman.

After the event, Xi was presented with a welcoming dance performance by the National Department of Culture and Arts as a symbolic respect to the Chinese president's presence at Istana Negara.

His Majesty then held a meeting with Xi and the Chinese delegation in addition to witnessing a commemorative souvenir presentation ceremony at Dewan Seri Maharaja.

After the meeting, Sultan Ibrahim hosted a state banquet in honour of Xi and members of his delegation at the main dining hall.

This visit marks Xi's second official visit to Malaysia in 12 years, after the last visit in 2013, which saw the two countries upgrade diplomatic relations to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Xi's visit is part of the Chinese president's first state visit series this year.

Malaysia and China established diplomatic relations on May 31, 1974. The two countries celebrated the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations last year.

For 16 consecutive years since 2009, China has remained Malaysia's largest trading partner.

Total trade between the two countries was worth RM484.12 billion in 2024, representing 16.8% of Malaysia's total global trade (RM2.88 trillion). — Bernama

Malaysia, China seal 31 MoUs in major diplomatic push

➤ Supporting implementation of Global Development Initiative and collaboration in AI sector among objectives of agreements signed

■ BY AZURA ABAS
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia and China have signed 31 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) yesterday, ranging from defence to trade and transport.

The MoUs aim to promote cooperation under the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilisation Initiative, as well as to strengthen development collaboration and support the implementation of the Global Development Initiative.

The two countries also signed a mutual visa exemption agreement for holders of public affairs and ordinary passports.

In the digital sector, two MoUs were signed focusing on collaboration in artificial intelligence and the digital economy.

Malaysia and China also signed an agreement to enhance cooperation in the railway sector as well as agriculture and food security.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and China President Xi Jinping witnessed the exchanging of the MoUs at the nation's

administrative capital in Putrajaya.

Earlier, Anwar said the world might have shifted in many ways, but the friendship between Malaysia and China had remained firm and steadfast – renewed through dialogue and affirmed through action.

"China remains our most significant trading partner, its presence felt in the very arteries of our development – from the flow of goods and ideas to the transformation of our energy, infrastructure and innovation.

"Yet the true strength of this relationship lies beyond trade figures or tourist statistics.

"It rests on a profound understanding – that prosperity, to endure, must be shared and that trust, once cultivated, must be tended with care, patience and commitment," Anwar said in his speech at the state banquet held in conjunction with Xi's visit.

He also said at a time when multilateralism is under tremendous strain, when some nations abandon the principle of shared responsibility and others question long-standing commitments, China's global initiatives offer a new lease on hope.

"They look outward, not inward.

They speak not of rivalry, but of renewal.

"In some quarters, the rules-based order has been turned on its head, dialogue has yielded to demands, tariffs are imposed without restraint, and the language of cooperation is drowned beneath the noise of threats and coercion.

"What we are witnessing today is not an honest reckoning with the imperfections of globalisation, but a retreat into economic tribalism," Anwar said, adding that market access is being weaponised.

"What was once a multilateral covenant for shared growth now buckles under the weight of arbitrary disruption and unilateral whim.

"We call on all parties to pause, reflect and step away from the precipice.

"Trade is not a contest of winners and losers, but a shared endeavour. Its aim is not domination, but the advancement of all.

"When the powerful bend or break the rules, it is not only prosperity that falters. Indeed, the very foundations of global peace can begin to tremble."

Anwar said in these trying times, the world yearned for steadiness,

reliability and purpose.

"We see this in China's conduct. Malaysia acknowledges such steadiness with quiet recognition and is conscious not only of the calm it has brought, but of the hope it may continue to offer."

Anwar also said decades of globalisation had created a web of interdependence – economic, cultural, and human – that could not easily be unravelled.

"The ties that bind us may stretch, but they endure. As President Xi has graciously reminded us – during his previous visit and again in his reflections for this one – in the Malay language, we say: *Air dicincang tidak akan putus*. Or, in another tongue: 'You may cleave the water, yet it remains intact'."

Anwar also pointed out that China is a civilisation whose history stretches back over five millennia – a nation that has withstood the tempests of time and emerged time and again not diminished but reformed, yet refined.

"Her strength lies not only in the scale of her achievements but in her capacity to endure – to weather disruption with poise and to respond to uncertainty with purpose.

"Under your stewardship, Mr President, China continues to embody these virtues – steady and resolute, unyielding even in the face of harsh winds and unreasonable treatment."

College name change to honour Pak Lah

PETALING JAYA: The Kepala Batas Mara Junior Science College (MRSM) may soon undergo a name change following a proposal to rename it MRSM Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in honour of the late former prime minister.

Mara chairman Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki said the management is currently drafting the proposal to rename the school from its current name, MRSM Ulul Albab Kepala Batas, to MRSM Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The proposal will be reviewed by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Rural and Regional Development Minister – the ministry under which Mara operates.

"This is to honour the legacy of the late Pak Lah (Tun Abdullah). I will seek the approval of the deputy prime minister (Ahmad Zahid) to rename MRSM Kepala Batas to MRSM Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi," said Asyraf Wajdi.

MRSM Kepala Batas is located in the constituency that Tun Abdullah represented for seven consecutive terms, from 1978 to 2008.

Asyraf added that the former premier played a significant role in shaping holistic human capital development across various disciplines, including Islamic studies, science, and technology.

— BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE

Supply resumption in Putra Heights expected by July: Petronas Gas Bhd

KUALA LUMPUR: Petronas Gas Bhd (PGB) estimates that gas restoration efforts at Putra Heights in Subang Jaya could begin as early as July 1, pending the outcome of ongoing investigations, regulatory approvals and actual site progress.

In a filing with Bursa Malaysia on Tuesday, PGB said it is working closely with authorities, a gas shipper and gas distributors to resume pipeline services in the affected areas.

"As a result, gas supply capacity from the north to the northern sector, including Bestari Jaya, Meru and Kapar, has increased, supported by additional supply from the Trans Thailand-Malaysia gas pipeline system," the company said.

PGB reiterated its commitment to supporting communities affected by the April 1 gas pipeline disaster in Putra Heights, adding that the safety and wellbeing of residents remain its top priority, along with ensuring continuous gas supply.

The company is fully cooperating with the Department of Occupational Safety and Health, Fire and Rescue Department and police to facilitate investigations and enable necessary rectification and remedial works on the pipeline, reported Bernama.

"The works include sheet piling for soil stabilisation, water movement management and pipeline excavation," it said.

In the meantime, operations at the Serdang City Gate have resumed, resulting in more stable gas supply access across the Klang Valley.

"PGB will continue to engage with regulators and relevant authorities to stabilise gas supply while safely carrying out remedial works and supporting the ongoing investigations," it added.

Following the disaster, gas supply was disrupted in several central zone areas, but electricity supply in Peninsular Malaysia remained stable.

According to the Energy Commission, the incident affected gas supply to four major power stations in the Klang Valley – the Connaught Bridge, Pulau Indah, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz (KEV) and Putrajaya stations.

Among the areas reported to have experienced gas supply disruptions are Shah Alam, Klang, Serdang, Puchong, Batu Tiga and Kapar in the central zone, as well as parts of the northern zone.

The commission said gas supply is currently available on a limited basis, with priority given to critical services such as hospitals, electricity generation and pipeline pressure stabilisation.

Umno adopts 'man-to-man marking' approach for by-election

TAPAH: Umno is on the ground with a 'man-to-man marking' strategy in efforts to win over voters in the Ayer Kuning by-election.

Party secretary-general Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki said the approach is proving to be effective in fostering personal relationships

and building voters' confidence in the Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate.

(Man-to-man marking means assigning campaign workers to small groups of voters, allowing for more meaningful interactions between candidate and voters).

"(For instance), one (machine) takes

care of 10 (voters), because it is more effective. That is why we do not do many mega talks and ceramah," he told reporters when met while campaigning with BN candidate Dr Mohamad Yusri Bakir at Bidor Botanical Park on Tuesday.

He described the BN campaign as "politically mature" which refrains from

launching personal attacks against opponents.

The Ayer Kuning by-election on April 26 will see a three-way fight between Mohamad Yusri, Abd Muhaimin Malek of Perikatan Nasional and Bawani KS of Parti Sosialis Malaysia. – Bernama

RM33 billion housing units stuck in limbo

■ BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE
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PETALING JAYA: Over RM33 billion worth of homes across Malaysia are either stalled in abandoned projects or remain unsold, revealing a mismatch between supply and demand in the country's property market.

Of the staggering figure, 30,371 units stemmed from abandoned projects by licensed developers, while a further 12,378 units were the result of developments by unlicensed companies.

The statistics were revealed in the Abandoned Housing Report published by the Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association Institute (Rehda).

Adding to the concern, some unsold units fall within the

Spate of abandoned projects and thousands of unsold properties nationwide attributed to supply-demand mismatch

affordable housing category – priced at RM300,000 and below – accounting for 15% of all unsold residential units nationwide. It points to a troubling trend – even price-controlled homes are struggling to find buyers.

The report said compounding the issue is the rising cost of construction materials, which has pushed developers to raise prices. Lower mid-range homes, which are typically priced between RM500,000 and RM800,000, have seen hikes of up to 20%, while

homes above RM800,000 have increased by 12%.

Another major concern is the growing number of "sick housing" projects – developments that fail to meet the completion timelines specified in sale and purchase agreements. According to latest data, 440 such projects have been identified, involving 68,325 housing units.

Selangor recorded the highest number of sick projects, with 111 developments involving 22,127 units. This was followed by the

Federal Territory with 19 projects involving 11,102 units and Kelantan with 38 projects and 5,207 units.

The report added that many of the troubled developments fall within the RM200,001 to RM300,000 price range, representing 20% of all 'sick' projects. It warned that new buyers looking for homes priced at RM400,000 and below may find it increasingly difficult to secure timely delivery from developers.

"Based on the housing cost burden approach, homes priced between RM200,000 and RM400,000 are considered affordable for households earning between RM3,000 and RM6,999 per month.

"However, the developments remain vulnerable to project delays or abandonment," the report said, adding that developers face financial feasibility issues for homes priced below RM100,000 targeted for lower-income groups earning below RM2,000. This has compounded the housing supply challenge.

The report also revealed that there are 111,929 abandoned and troubled residential units across 726 development projects in Malaysia.

"Selangor is the most affected state, with 46,097 units spread across 266 projects. It highlights the severity of the issue in the country's most populous and economically active state."

Rehda emphasised that the delay and deterioration of housing projects, even in urban areas, point to significant weaknesses in project management, risk assessment, cash flow and regulatory oversight.

"If not addressed, it will place additional strain on the economy, undermine public confidence in the property market and worsen the nation's housing affordability crisis."



The report also revealed that there are 111,929 abandoned and troubled residential units across 726 development projects in Malaysia.
—AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

Affected residents were free to choose location of relief homes: S'gor govt

SELANGOR: The Selangor government has refuted allegations that it housed residents involved in the gas pipeline fire in isolated or remote locations.

State Housing and Culture Executive Councillor Datuk Borhan Aman Shah dismissed the claims and clarified that the state government had provided temporary rental accommodation based on availability of vacant housing units in Selangor.

He stressed that residents were not forced into any specific location and were given the freedom to select homes that best suited their preferences and needs.

He pointed to the availability of 100 vacant units at Pangsapuri Seri Suria in Kota Warisan, offered under Selangor SMART Sewa scheme, as an example of the state's commitment to ensuring adequate and accessible temporary housing for those affected.

"We're giving them the flexibility to choose the unit they find more comfortable. It's entirely up to them."

"These are not second-hand homes. What we are offering are brand new units, and not houses that have been used or previously occupied," he told reporters after handing over keys to two home

owners yesterday.

Borhan was responding to criticism and rumours that the state government was relocating victims to unfamiliar and remote areas, far from their original homes and communities.

He reiterated that the government's priority was to support residents in their time of need without adding unnecessary hardship.

On Monday, Borhan announced that 100 units at the Sri Suria Apartments were being made available to affected families at a reduced monthly rental of RM850. The

initiative forms part of a wider state-led effort to stabilise and support families who have been displaced by the devastating incident.

"To date, we have received 75 applications for units at Seri Suria. Our team is reviewing them to ensure that only eligible applicants are approved."

"We are focusing on those who genuinely need a home, especially those who don't currently own one. If they meet the criteria, they will be approved directly and won't be required to pay a deposit. This is a special case, and we're handling it with care."

Borhan added that coordination with the district office was necessary to prevent any misuse of the aid being offered.

"We want to prevent anyone slipping through the cracks or taking advantage of the situation. Our aim is to provide real, lasting support without future complications."

The blaze on April 1 caused extensive damage in Putra Heights, destroying 81 homes with structural damage exceeding 40 per cent. An additional 81 houses were partially damaged, while 57 homes were affected but not burnt. – Bernama



Risks to children involving vehicles spark safety calls

► Experts push for stricter enforcement, alert systems and public awareness to prevent tragedies

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
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PETALING JAYA: Safety experts are calling for urgent measures to prevent incidents involving inattention to children in vehicles, as some cases have tragically resulted in injuries and death.

Alliance for a Safe Community chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said the safety of children must be treated as a national priority.

In a recent case on April 8, a three-year-old boy sustained facial injuries after falling out of a car window at Km5 of Jalan Lipis-Merapoh.

The child's father had pulled over to answer a phone call and later drove off, only realising two kilometres after that his son was missing.

On March 30, a one-year-old girl died after she was accidentally run over by her father while he was reversing his car at their home in Taman Desa Harmoni, Johor Bahru.

"These tragedies are preventable. Children should never be left alone in or near vehicles, not even for a moment," said Lee.

He urged parents and caregivers to remain vigilant at all times and proposed stricter regulations to ensure child safety involving vehicles.

Among his recommendations were mandatory vehicle checks for transport service operators, legal consequences for negligence and licensing requirements - including safety training - for school and daycare transport providers.

Lee also called for clear public and institutional guidelines to reinforce safety practices, especially in parking areas.

"These measures would promote accountability and signal how seriously we treat child endangerment," he said.

He also urged automotive manufacturers and authorities to implement child alert systems, technology that detects the presence of a child in a stationary vehicle and alerts the driver or emergency contacts if no action is taken.

"Such systems should become standard in all family and school vehicles, much like seatbelt reminders," said Lee, adding that tax incentives or rebates could encourage families and



Lee stressed the importance of child restraint systems, which could prevent children from falling out of moving vehicles or being thrown out during a collision. - AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN

transport operators to install certified safety systems.

Lee also stressed the importance of child restraint systems (CRS), that could prevent children from falling out of moving vehicles or being thrown out during a collision.

"Carrying children on laps or allowing them to travel unrestrained is dangerous and must stop," he said.

Although the use of CRS has been mandatory under the Road Transport Act (Amendment) 2020 for children under 135cm in height, Lee noted that enforcement remains weak.

"Some families cite high costs, but there are now affordable and certified options," he said, adding that the government provides up to 50% rebates for B40 families purchasing child car seats.

However, he acknowledged the challenge faced by larger families, as most cars cannot accommodate more than two CRS units, potentially leaving some children unprotected.

Meanwhile, road safety and transport advocate Shahrim Tamrin also called for a nationwide digital safety campaign involving the National Population and Family Development Board, car manufacturers and the Communications Ministry.

"We need consistent messaging via social media, radio and television. The Road Safety Unit under the Road Transport Department must be proactive, not just reactive after

tragedies occur," said Shahrim, a former board member of the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research.

He also highlighted the development of MyCinta, a system designed four years ago to detect children left in vehicles using motion and sound sensors.

"The system can alert the driver via phone call or SMS, provide the vehicle location through Google Maps, slightly lower the windows for ventilation and activate hazard lights," he said.

Shahrim urged the government and Transport Ministry to fund and implement such technology, particularly in local car brands such as Proton and Perodua.

He also pointed to simpler tools such as Waze's child reminder feature, which prompts drivers to check the back seat.

He said parents could place essential items such as phones, bags or ID cards next to the child to serve as a visual cue.

"The public also has a role to play. If you see a child alone in a car, especially in private parking areas, immediately inform the police, Fire and Rescue Department or building security. Never ignore it," he stressed.

Shahrim further called for emergency child detection systems to be made mandatory in all new vehicles under the Vehicle Type Approval process, and called for the inclusion of such systems in the safety ratings for all new family vehicles marketed across Southeast Asia.

Perak opposition leader suspended over remarks

IPOH: Gunung Semanggol assemblyman Razman Zakaria has been suspended from attending the Perak State Legislative Assembly sitting for six months, effective yesterday, over racist and seditious remarks made on Dec 2 last year.

The decision was made following Razman's referral to the Assembly Rights and Privileges Committee on Dec 4, 2024.

Razman, who is also the opposition leader, was found to have violated the Standing Orders.

The motion to suspend him was tabled by Ong Boon Piow (PH-Bercham) and seconded by Datuk Shahrul Zaman Yahya (BN-Rungkup) during the assembly sitting.

Speaker Datuk Mohammad Zahir Abdul Khalid approved the motion after it received a majority vote from the House.

Razman's remarks during the assembly sitting were deemed to have contravened Regulation 40 (11)(b) and (c) of the Standing Orders, which concern making offensive and seditious statements that could cause hurt or incite discord. - Bernama

Home Ministry probes daily over incomplete Jalur Gemilang

PETALING JAYA: The Home Ministry has launched an investigation into a controversial illustration of the national flag, the *Jalur Gemilang*, which appeared on the front page of a vernacular daily on Tuesday.

As part of the probe, the ministry has issued a show cause letter to the publication, summoning its representatives to explain the error.

The illustration, which accompanied a report on Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Malaysia, was deemed incomplete for omitting the crescent symbol - an essential element of the national flag that represents Islam as the official religion of the Federation.

The ministry confirmed that the investigation is being carried out under the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act 1963 and the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984.

"The *Jalur Gemilang* is not just a symbol. It is a powerful representation of our sovereignty, unity and national identity. Any negligence in its depiction is unacceptable and may disrupt the peace and stability of our multi-ethnic society," the ministry said in a statement yesterday.

It added that the omission of the crescent symbol constitutes a breach of official specifications and raises serious concerns regarding professionalism and respect for national symbols.

It said such lapses could potentially disrupt harmony within Malaysia's diverse society.

The ministry stressed it would not tolerate actions that threaten public safety or social harmony and warned that firm action would be taken against any party found negligent in publishing content that may jeopardise public order.

CORRECTION: In our article titled "Insurance 'gift' brings joy, relief to religious officials", published on April 14 on page 4, we incorrectly stated Datuk Shahul Hameed Dawood as Berjaya Land Bhd Group CEO. The actual Group CEO for Berjaya Land Bhd is Syed Ali Shahul Hameed. We regret the error and apologise for any confusion caused.

Content creators urged to act responsibly in AI use

■ BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE
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PETALING JAYA: The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has made content creation easier than ever, but it also presents serious ethical challenges, especially when creators act irresponsibly.

As more people seek to generate income through digital platforms, content creators are being reminded to consider the wider impact of their work and to ensure it does not cause harm.

Content regulation advocate Mediha Mahmood said while the use of technology in image manipulation is not new, today's tools make it more accessible and potentially more harmful.

"Creating explicit images of others is not something new. It has existed for ages. Previously, it was simply called Photoshop," she said.

She was commenting on a recent case involving a student from a private secondary school who was found producing sexually explicit images and videos of his schoolmates.

Mediha stressed that while technological advancements have created new economic opportunities, they have also made it easier to misuse digital platforms.

"There are 10-year-old schoolchildren selling Canva posters online, which I think is really smart. But there are also those who accept money to alter images of their schoolmates at someone else's request," she said.

She emphasised the need to instil a sense of responsibility in young content creators.

"They must understand that their artwork should never harm others," she added.

Beyond discouraging the creation of lewd content, Mediha also highlighted the importance

of respecting the 3Rs - race, religion and royalty - especially in a multi-racial and multi-religious country such as Malaysia.

She added that her organisation had recently conducted a workshop with 200 "eduinfluencers" - teachers with a strong online presence who are recognised by the Education Ministry - to familiarise them with a content code.

"We also encourage teachers to develop their own 'online safety syllabi' for students.

"For instance, a history teacher could get students to watch documentaries and then identify any inaccuracies. This helps train them to think critically, especially in an age when misinformation is deliberately created and shared," she said.

Mediha also expressed hope that by equipping teachers with knowledge of the code, they would cultivate digital literacy and responsibility among their students.

Police probe varsity students 'KKK' video

SEPANG: Police have confirmed receiving a report on Tuesday over a widely shared video allegedly involving racial discrimination, featuring Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Dengkil students in Ku Klux Klan (KKK)-like costumes.

Sepang police chief ACP Norhizam Bahaman said the video is believed to be part of a student assignment related to the KKK.

"It includes a re-enactment of past events depicting white men killing Black individuals, the rise of the KKK, and the eventual introduction of anti-discrimination laws," he said.

He added that investigations are ongoing and urged the public not to speculate or spread unverified claims that could cause unrest.

Images of the students in KKK-style robes had earlier circulated on social media.

The KKK is a white supremacist hate group known for its violent, racist history in the United States. Formed in 1865, it opposed the emancipation of Black slaves and promoted white dominance.

UiTM clarified on Tuesday that the students were completing an academic assignment for a Contemporary Global and Legal Issues course.

The university said the presentation aimed to promote critical thinking and awareness of international human rights, and was conducted in a controlled academic setting, avoiding religious, cultural or racial insensitivity. — Bernama

Complications leave stateless children in quandary

► Despite scientific advances in DNA testing, govt maintains legal marriage is paramount, impacting rights of such individuals to citizenship, public education, healthcare and inheritance

KUALA LUMPUR: Mazlan (not his real name) feels a stab in his heart remembering when his eldest daughter received her school's Best Student Award three years ago.

It was his proudest and saddest moment.

"When announcing her name, the 'binti' was followed by 'Abdullah', instead of my name," he said.

"I felt kind of sad."

In Malaysia, Muslim children born out of wedlock are typically given the surname "Abdullah" on official documents. While Mazlan is listed as the father on all four of his children's birth certificates, they still bear the "Abdullah" surname.

The National Registration Department (NRD) told Mazlan, who married in Sabah and now lives in Selangor, that he lacked a valid marriage certificate from the Sabah Islamic Affairs Department. Without it, the marriage is not legally recognised.

Although the couple tried to register their mosque wedding, his

wife was repeatedly turned away due to lack of proper identification documents. She is stateless, having been adopted in Sabah, and that status has passed to their children.

For 15 years, Mazlan and his wife have sought citizenship for their children, with no success. Response from the authorities do not explain what went wrong. Their situation is increasingly urgent – proposed amendments may lower the citizenship application age limit from 21 to 18.

The Federal Constitution outlines citizenship by *jus soli* (right of land), *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) and legitimacy. Yet in practice, legal marriage takes precedence over biological ties.

There are over 300,000 stateless people in Malaysia, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and their numbers continue to grow. Stateless individuals cannot access public education, healthcare, bank services or travel freely.

On Oct 17, 2024, the Dewan Rakyat passed constitutional amendments that both expanded and limited citizenship rights. While they gave equal rights to Malaysian mothers, they also removed automatic citizenship for children of permanent residents and lowered the application age limit.

As of April 10, these amendments have yet to take effect.

Despite scientific advances in DNA testing, the government maintains that legal marriage is paramount.

"Islam is the religion of our federation and we uphold eastern values and our traditions," said Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail.

"If we abandon the requirement of marriage and rely solely on DNA, the future of our generations will be at risk."

International Islamic University Malaysia estate law expert Dr Wan Noraini Mohd Salim said marriage impacts citizenship, inheritance and property rights.

"The law requires that any marriage must be registered, to safeguard the rights of all the citizens."

But these requirements often trap stateless women in a cycle of exclusion. Muslim children born

less than six months after *nikah* are also considered illegitimate, while non-Muslim children can be legitimised if the parents marry later and the father acknowledges them, Bernama reported.

Lawyer Agalya J. Munusamy, who handles citizenship cases, said Malaysia should follow Indonesia and the Philippines, where children gain citizenship through a parent regardless of marital status.

"You can't deny a human right, which is citizenship, to a child just because their parents are not married," she said.

While courts cannot compel DNA tests in civil cases, Agalya still advises her clients to take them as a precaution. DNA has, in some cases, secured citizenship.

In Islamic inheritance law (*faraid*), illegitimate children cannot inherit from their fathers but may receive gifts during the father's lifetime. Statelessness, however, complicates inheritance claims.

Mazlan's children may inherit his property under Islamic law due to blood ties but registering their names on land titles would be difficult due to their status.

On May 20, 2024, the Taiping High Court ruled that stateless individuals have a right to marry, and that the NRD must register such marriages. The decision is under appeal.

Motorists react to traffic disruptions with wry humour

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
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PETALING JAYA: As Malaysia rolls out the red carpet for Chinese President Xi Jinping on a landmark diplomatic visit, road users across the Klang Valley have been experiencing notable traffic delays due to temporary road closures accommodating the VIP convoy.

Despite the disruption, Malaysians have responded with their trademark humour and resilience, taking to social media to share a blend of witty observations and thoughtful reflections.

Many acknowledged the significance of Xi's visit, highlighting its importance for diplomatic relations.

A widely shared video of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim waiting in the rain to greet the Chinese leader drew widespread praise across social media platforms.

"You can see PMX was truly honoured to welcome the Chinese president," commented @AwatifiWardina.

"Standing respectfully in the rain speaks volumes about the strength of Malaysia-China ties."

Others offered constructive suggestions to ease future disruptions.

"Maybe next time they could consider using helicopters for VIPs – efficient and traffic-free!" proposed @mazzkl.

Offering practical advice, @wanfarlee posted: "From April 15 to 17, avoid Putrajaya if you can. With



Traffic police personnel re-routing traffic at one of the closed sections yesterday.

— ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

road closures for President Xi's visit, it's best to delay walk-in appointments at government offices."

Looking ahead, some users raised points about infrastructure improvements.

"If Putrajaya and the surrounding areas had better rail links, major visits wouldn't cause such congestion," said @RandomHistoryG4.

Meanwhile, others called for real-time navigation support.

"Can you update your map during the blockage?" said @AbaGengGeng, calling for apps to provide more accurate live traffic

updates during such events.

Authorities have confirmed that 17 roads across the Klang Valley will be closed in phases from Tuesday to Thursday.

Each closure would last approximately 30 to 45 minutes to ensure safe passage of the convoy before roads are reopened.

Today, closures are scheduled to begin at 8.50am, impacting several major routes including Jalan P5, Lebuhraya, Persiaran Selatan, the Putrajaya-Dengkil Highway, Lingkaran Putrajaya, the Elite Highway and Lebuhraya KLIA.

Phone scam costs elderly woman over RM750,000

BUKIT MERTAJAM: An elderly woman incurred a loss of RM764,511.17 after falling victim to a phone scam.

Central Seberang Perai police chief ACP Helmi Aris said the 73-year-old local retiree lodged a report on Monday, claiming she had been deceived.

"She received a phone call on Feb 18 from a caller identifying himself as a police officer from Pahang, claiming that she was involved in a money laundering case and several other criminal offences," he said in a statement yesterday.

Helmi added that the suspect threatened to arrest the woman, but also offered to help her "resolve" the matter and erase her supposed criminal record.

He requested the victim's banking information, allegedly for verification purposes related to the money laundering case, which she subsequently provided.

Helmi said the victim received multiple OTP (one time password) messages, likely linked to online fund transfers, which the suspect told her to confirm.

She later found 59 unauthorised transfers to six accounts.

The case is being investigated under Section 420 of the Penal Code for cheating. He urged the public to stay alert against online scams, avoid unsolicited calls and

never share banking details.

He advised the public to remain vigilant against online scams, to be cautious when receiving unsolicited calls or dealing with unknown individuals, and to never disclose banking information to others.

Meanwhile in Terengganu, a senior manager at a private company lost RM64,500 after falling victim to a non-existent tender scam.

Kuala Terengganu police chief ACP Azli Mohd Noor said the 42-year-old woman was contacted on March 17 via WhatsApp by an individual claiming to be an officer from the Federal Territory Education Department, offering a curtain and accessories installation tender at the Besut District Education Office.

"However, the suspect stipulated that the materials must be sourced from a supplier appointed by the department," he said yesterday.

He added that the victim made two transfers totalling RM64,500 into a bank account provided by the suspect, purportedly belonging to the supplier.

"She lodged a police report yesterday after discovering the tender offer did not exist. The case is being investigated under Section 420 of the Penal Code for cheating," he said. — Bernama

BATU GAJAH: Nothing brings greater joy to a father, especially one behind bars, than the chance to embrace his children after a long separation.

Such was the emotional experience of Kamarul (not his real name), who was overwhelmed and in tears as he reunited with his five children after being apart for over a year due to his imprisonment at the Batu Gajah Correctional Centre.

Kamarul was among several prospects selected to meet their families under the centre's Aidilfitri Correctional Outreach programme, held in conjunction with Hari Raya.

Initially unaware that all his children, currently under the care of the Social Welfare Department, would be present, Kamarul rushed forward with visible emotion as his children ran to embrace him.

"The moment was incredibly touching. I was deeply moved by the effort made by the correctional centre in coordinating with the Social Welfare Department to bring my children here. It means the world to me."

Kamarul said he was sad and happy at the same time - sad because he missed the children so much, and happy because for the first time since being admitted to the centre a year and five months ago, he finally got to hug them again.

"I was told they were really excited to come and see me. It warms my heart. I have waited so long for this moment to see and hold my children again. Only God knows how much I have missed them."

Also present was Batu Gajah Correctional Centre director, assistant commissioner S. Tanabal, Bernama reported.

Kamarul, who is serving a three-

Best way to rehabilitation is through the heart

► Correctional centre presses right buttons by arranging surprise visits for family of residents during Aidilfitri

year sentence for child neglect, has three sons and two daughters aged between three and 13.

He was allowed to reunite with his children and share a Hari Raya meal during a special event that lasted over an hour.

He thanked the Social Welfare Department for caring for his children and for making their wish to visit him a reality.

"I admit that living behind bars has had a profound impact on me. When I leave this place, my main priority is to raise my children in the best way I can," he said.

"I'm also truly thankful to the Batu Gajah Correctional Centre for giving me the chance to reunite with my little family. The surprise they prepared touched me deeply and it's something I'll cherish forever."

For Intan (not her real name), 23, who is currently serving a sentence for drug trafficking, the longing for the warmth of Eid celebrations with her family in her village remains deep.

"But I consider myself very fortunate to have been selected for this programme and to be able to meet my family, including my father and mother. It has eased some of the longing in my heart," she said.

Intan pledged to turn over a new leaf after she is released.

"I vow never to repeat the mistakes of my past, and I truly hope my family will accept me again. That's what I want most."

She is among a few prospects who have memorised some chapters (*juzuk*) of the Quran through a rehabilitation programme at the centre. Intan also shared her aspirations to pursue further studies in the automotive field.

In his speech, Tanabal emphasised that former inmates must be welcomed back into society without the burden of negative stigma, which often leads to social exclusion after their release.

"It is crucial that these individuals receive support, especially from their families. Here, we carry out the



Kamarul spending some quality time with his children during the event.

— BERNAMAPIC

rehabilitation process, but real recovery continues with the love and acceptance in their own homes."

He said some former prospects relapse into crime or drug abuse because they are only accepted back by the same social circles that led them astray, while being rejected by their own families.

Tanabal added that the programme made history as it marked the first time the Batu Gajah Correctional Centre successfully arranged a family reunion for Kamarul.

"When we received information about Kamarul's situation, we immediately took the initiative to locate his children, who were under the care of the Social Welfare Department. We then submitted a request to bring them here to visit their father in conjunction with the *Syawal* celebration."

"We firmly believe that with proper communication and the rehabilitation programmes implemented at this centre, inmates, whom we call 'prospects', can truly transform for the better."

theSun

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Coordinated attacks of arson, graffiti at French prisons

► Inscription 'DDPF', standing for 'prisoner rights', found at nearly all sites

PARIS: A wave of coordinated attacks have hit prisons across France, with unknown assailants torching cars outside several jails, leaving mysterious inscriptions and hitting one facility with gunfire.

Justice Minister Gerald Darmanin and Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau have recently vowed to intensify the fight against narcotics and drug-related crime.

Overnight on Sunday, fire was set to a prison warden's car in Seine-et-Marne outside Paris as well as seven vehicles in the car park of a prison staff training centre in Agen in southwest France, a prosecutor's office and police source said.

Overall, 21 vehicles have been graffitied or burnt since Sunday

night, another police source said.

Most of the incidents, including an automatic gunfire attack on a prison near the southern city of Toulon, were recorded overnight on Monday.

The inscription "DDPF", standing for "French prisoners' rights", was found at nearly all sites, except for the prison near Toulon where assailants left the mysterious acronym "DDFM".

The national anti-terrorist prosecutor's office said it is taking charge of the investigation.

Darmanin on Tuesday travelled to the prison near Toulon that was targeted by gunfire.

He said no one has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

France is facing "drug trafficking issues and taking measures that would seriously disrupt criminal networks", he said, promising a "firm" government response.

The former interior minister is presiding over what he calls a "prison revolution" that envisages putting 200 of France's 700 most dangerous drug traffickers in two top-security prisons.

The plan follows the escape from custody last year of suspected drugs baron Mohamed Amra, during which two prison guards were killed.

He was re-arrested in Romania and extradited back to France.

All lines of inquiry are being pursued over this week's attacks but investigators are not ruling out that anarchists could be behind them, one source said.

Darmanin said the methods seemed reminiscent of those used in the drug world.

A source close to the matter told

AFP that it looked like a coordinated attack "clearly linked to the anti-drug gang strategy" pursued by Darmanin.

Retailleau called for a "prompt" reinforcement of "the protection of prison officers and establishments".

On Monday night, several individuals armed with automatic rifles targeted the gate of the prison near Toulon, according to authorities.

The prison gates were peppered with bullet holes and spray-painted with a mysterious inscription reading "DDFM", an AFP journalist reported.

In the southern port city of Marseille, 10 prison vehicles were tagged with the inscription "DDPF", said Bouches-du-Rhône department head Martine Vassal.

Wilfried Fonck, national secretary for the UFAP UNSA Justice union, told AFP the prison system did not have enough staff to secure prison perimeters 24/7. – AFP

PARALLEL GOVT DECLARED IN SUDAN

KHARTOUM: Sudan paramilitary Rapid Support Forces commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo announced on Tuesday the formation of a "parallel government", which he said would "represent a political charter and an historic transitional constitution for a new Sudan", Xinhua reported. The "parallel government" would introduce new currencies and issue national identity documents, Dagalo said, calling on the African Union to recognise the "parallel government". – Bernama-Xinhua

5.6-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS PHILIPPINES

MANILA: A magnitude-5.6 earthquake struck the Philippines yesterday, said the United States Geological Survey (USGS), with no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The quake off the coast of the island of Mindanao had a depth of 30km, the USGS added. Local authorities said early indications were that the quake had caused no significant damage. – AFP

PALM OIL FIRM STAFF HELD IN GRAFT CASE

JAKARTA: The Indonesian Attorney-General's Office said it has arrested an employee of global palm oil company Wilmar Group on graft charges related to corruption in obtaining export permits, a day after the firm denied its staff were being investigated. The office said late on Tuesday that the suspect will be held for 20 days in a Jakarta prison. – Reuters

Police raid office of ex-president

SEOUL: South Korean police yesterday raided the office of former president Yoon Suk Yeol and his security detail as part of a criminal probe into the impeached leader.

Yoon declared martial law in December before reversing course. He was quickly impeached by lawmakers but resisted arrest for weeks in a criminal probe.

He became South Korea's first sitting head of state to be arrested in January. He was later released on procedural grounds.

Police yesterday said they had "initiated a search and seizure at the presidential office and the presidential residence complex".

Police seized encrypted phone servers and raided the office of Yoon's presidential security detail, plus his chief of security's house, in what they said was part of a probe into "alleged obstruction of an arrest warrant execution".

His guards had installed barbed wire and barricades at the residence, forcing hundreds of police officers and investigators to use ladders and scale perimeter walls to reach the main building.

Police also seized CCTV footage from the presidential office as part of a separate probe into former interior minister Lee Sang-min, they said.

Yoon was in court on Monday for the first official day of his criminal trial on insurrection charges.

He has denied committing insurrection. – AFP



ARTISTIC ACTIVISM ... Individuals outside the South Korean embassy in London, Britain on Tuesday displaying large, hand-painted placards depicting Greenpeace International members who have been banned from leaving Korea after taking part in a peaceful protest against plastic pollution on a tanker in November last year. – REUTERSPIC

Peru former leader gets 15 years for corruption

LIMA: A Peruvian court on Tuesday sentenced ex-president Ollanta Humala and his wife to 15 years' prison for graft linked to a globe-spanning corruption scandal involving Brazilian construction group Odebrecht paying bribes to politicians.

The court found the 62-year-old and his wife Nadine Heredia guilty of money laundering for receiving illegal contributions from Odebrecht and the Venezuelan government in two presidential campaigns.

Humala was taken into custody in the courtroom after the verdict was read out and later jailed at a police base.

His lawyers said they would file an appeal against his conviction.

Judge Nayko Coronado also

ordered the arrest of Heredia, who did not attend the sentencing hearing and has sought asylum at the Brazilian embassy in Lima.

Peru's Foreign Ministry said after talks with Brazil, she was granted safe passage to travel there with her son.

Humala, a former army officer who led the country from 2011 to 2016, became the first Peruvian ex-president to stand trial in the Odebrecht corruption scandal in 2022, which has seen three other former presidents implicated.

Two-term leader Alan Garcia committed suicide in 2019 when police came to his house to arrest him while Alejandro Toledo (in power from 2001 to 2006) was sentenced last year to more than 20

years' prison for accepting multimillion-dollar bribes in exchange for government contracts.

Investigations continue into the fourth ex-president implicated, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (in office from 2016 to 2018).

Prosecutors sought a 20-year prison term for Humala and 26 years for Heredia for accepting US\$3 million (RM13 million) in illegal contributions for his 2011 campaign from Odebrecht.

The company is considered responsible for one of the biggest foreign bribery schemes in history.

The pair was charged with illegally diverting about US\$200,000 sent by Venezuela's then-president Hugo Chavez for Humala's failed 2006 campaign. Heredia was also

charged with "concealment of real estate purchases" made with some of the money.

In 2016, Odebrecht agreed to pay US\$3.5 billion in penalties in Brazil, the United States and Switzerland, arising out of payments of more than US\$788 million in bribes to foreign leaders and government officials in order to win infrastructure projects.

The company admitted to having paid at least US\$29 million in bribes to Peruvian officials between 2005 and 2014.

Leftist Humala came to the presidency in 2011 after beating right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori in a runoff election.

Fujimori herself spent 16 months in pre-trial detention in a case linked to Odebrecht. – AFP

W.H.O. MEMBERS FORM PLAN TO ADDRESS FUTURE PANDEMICS

GENEVA: Members of the World Health Organisation (WHO) reached an agreement to prepare the world for future pandemics after more than three years of negotiations, the organisation said yesterday. The legally binding pact is intended to shore up the world's defences against new pathogens after the Covid-19 pandemic. The proposal includes establishing a pathogen access and benefit sharing system, and building geographically diverse research capacities. It also proposes a global supply chain and logistics network while emphasising stronger health system resilience and preparedness. – Reuters

SPACEX LANDINGS SUSPENDED PENDING POST-LAUNCH PROBE

WASHINGTON: The Bahamas government said on Tuesday it was suspending all SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket landings in the country, pending a full post-launch investigation. "No further clearances will be granted until a full environmental assessment is reviewed," said Bahamian Director of Communications Latrae Rahming. SpaceX did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The probe comes after a SpaceX Starship spacecraft exploded in space last month, minutes after lifting off from Texas. – Reuters

Biden slams Trump in first post-presidency speech

WASHINGTON: Joe Biden, in his first major speech since leaving the White House, railed on Tuesday against his successor Donald Trump's government overhaul, claiming that the "hatchet" effort puts American retirement benefits at risk.

"In fewer than 100 days, this administration has done so much damage and so much destruction," he told a conference of disability advocates.

"They have taken a hatchet to the Social Security administration, pushing 7,000 employees out the door," he said, referring to the national agency that pays out retirement and disability benefits.

The 82-year-old Democrat spoke for about half an hour.

His choice of topic, Social Security, aimed to ramp up pressure on Trump over his government overhaul efforts.

He highlighted the staff reductions at the agency that Trump and his billionaire aide Elon Musk have pushed as part of their Department of Government Efficiency, saying the Social Security "website is crashing" and hindering retirees from getting their benefits.

Many Americans "literally count on Social Security to buy food, just to get by" and "for many of these beneficiaries, it is their only income. If it were cut or taken away, it would be devastating for millions of people," said Biden.

He bashed Trump's commerce secretary, former hedge fund manager Howard Lutnick, over a recent remark in which he said "fraudsters" would complain about a missing check but not his mother-in-law.

Biden scoffed at that characterisation, saying "what about the 94-year-old mother living all by herself, who does not have a billionaire in the family?" – AFP

Administration grilled over wrongly deported migrant

GREENBELT: US President Donald Trump's showdown with the judicial system came into the spotlight on Tuesday as a judge grilled his administration over its failure to return a migrant who was wrongly deported to El Salvador.

The Trump administration previously admitted that Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who was living in the eastern state of Maryland and married to a US citizen, was deported to a notorious prison in El Salvador due to an "administrative error".

A judge ordered Trump to "facilitate" his return, an order upheld by the Supreme Court, but his government has yet to request El Salvador return Abrego Garcia.

Trump has alleged that Abrego Garcia is "an MS-13 gang member and foreign terrorist

➤ Judge to set in motion process to discover if officials acted against court orders

from El Salvador" while Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt claimed that he was "engaged in human trafficking".

Abrego Garcia's family has continued to proclaim his innocence and judge Paula Xinis, before whom the Tuesday hearing was held, has said she saw no evidence that Abrego Garcia was a gang member.

During the hearing, Xinis slammed the administration for sharing "nothing" on its plans for Abrego Garcia's return.

She said she would set in motion a process to discover

if officials acted against court orders.

If so, it would mark a tipping point for the Trump administration, which has for months flirted with open defiance of the judiciary following court setbacks to its right-wing agenda.

Dozens of protesters carrying signs reading "Defend democracy" and "Bring Abrego Garcia home" gathered outside the courthouse in Maryland on Tuesday.

They were joined by Abrego Garcia's wife Jennifer Vasquez Sura, who urged Trump

and his ally Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele to "stop playing political games with my husband".

Maryland Senator Chris Van Hollen, who is a Democrat, said he would travel to El Salvador yesterday to check on Abrego Garcia's condition and discuss his return.

"He should not have to spend another second away from his family."

Trump and his administration have repeatedly clashed with the courts since he returned to office in January, criticising rulings that curb the president's policies and power, and attacking the judges who issued them.

"No district court judge, or any judge, can assume the duties of the president of the United States. Only crime and chaos would result," Trump said on Truth Social last month.

Government attorneys last week rejected Xinis's order to provide an update on Abrego Garcia's status by Friday, saying that "foreign affairs cannot operate on judicial timelines".

The Trump administration has since partially complied with the judge's directives, providing a statement from a State Department official saying that Abrego Garcia is "alive and secure" in the Salvadoran prison.

The Homeland Security Department said in a court filing on Tuesday it would take Abrego Garcia into custody and deport him again if he returned to the United States.

Bukele also rejected calls to repatriate Abrego Garcia and said: "I do not have the power to return him to the United States."

The case represents the only time the administration has acknowledged wrongly deporting anyone, although the Justice Department fired the lawyer who made that concession, saying he had failed to vigorously defend the government position. – AFP



Inmates at the Terrorism Confinement Centre in Tecoluca, El Salvador, where Trump has sent deported Venezuelans, including Abrego Garcia. – REUTERS/SPIC

Charges sought against Dominican nightclub owners

SANTO DOMINGO: The family of one of 231 people killed when a Dominican nightclub roof collapsed on concertgoers is seeking manslaughter charges against the establishment's owners, according to a legal filing on Tuesday.

The widow and parents of victim Virgilio Cruz filed a complaint with prosecutors, claiming that the owners of the Jet Set nightclub had been negligent in "safety design" and modifications made to the building.

The family argued that there is "sufficient evidentiary merit to indict" the club owners for involuntary manslaughter, adding that they would pursue a civil liability claim against authorities in

the Dominican Republic.

"This tragedy is not only attributable to the owners and managers of the Jet Set nightclub but also to Dominican state institutions" and the municipality, said the filing.

"They failed to fulfil their legal duties of supervision, inspection and authorisation of operations for establishments open to the public."

The roof of the club came crashing down in the early hours of Tuesday last week on hundreds of people attending a concert by merengue star Rubby Perez, who also died in the Caribbean nation's worst disaster in decades.

As of Monday, authorities put the death toll at 231, with hundreds

more injured.

Jet Set owner Antonio Espaillet told prosecutors on Tuesday that he was at the disposal of authorities and would assist with the probe.

The legal filing listed the following as evidence: the fact that the building, which was 52 years old, had been weakened by age, a recent fire, inadequate repairs and "undue loads" placed on the roof by heavy equipment, such as air conditioners.

"The facts described here testify to a chain of structural negligence and security omissions, attributable not only to the managers (and) shareholders of the nightclub but also to public institutions."

"These institutions, by failing in their duties of inspection,

supervision and control, violated their legal functions and fostered a dangerous environment that culminated in this avoidable tragedy," said the document.

More than 300 rescuers, aided by sniffer dogs, worked tirelessly for days to find survivors, and pulled 189 people alive from the mounds of twisted steel, zinc and brick that remained of the structure.

The Dominican government has announced a commission of national and international experts to investigate the calamity.

A preliminary list of victims included an Italian, two French citizens and, according to the US State Department, several Americans. – AFP

Muslim Brotherhood members held

AMMAN: Jordan has arrested 16 members of the Muslim Brotherhood who were trained and financed in Lebanon, and plotted attacks on targets inside the kingdom, involving rockets and drones, authorities said on Tuesday.

Jordanian authorities said at least one rocket was ready to be launched as part of an operation that had been under surveillance by security forces since 2021.

The Muslim Brotherhood, one of the Arab world's oldest and most influential Islamist movements, denied any links to the alleged plot and said the group has always pursued a peaceful political course, adding that Jordan's branch of the Brotherhood has operated legally for decades.

The movement's political arm in Jordan, the Islamic Action Front, became the largest political grouping in the parliament after last September's parliamentary elections, although most seats are still held by government supporters.

Security forces found a rocket manufacturing facility alongside a drone factory, according to a statement by the General Intelligence Department.

The suspects were referred to the state security court for trial.

Officials said the Muslim Brotherhood could be banned if they are implicated in the case, as set under the Constitution.

"We are talking about new tactics, rockets and drones. This means a complete change in the way the Muslim Brotherhood are dealing with Jordan and targeting its security," said security analyst Amer Al Sabaleh.

Government spokesperson Mohammad al Momani said the government would be airing full confessions from the suspects.

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam told his Jordanian counterpart in a phone call that his country is ready to cooperate with Jordanian authorities, shortly after suspects shown in a video aired by Amman said they had been trained in Lebanon.

A security source said dozens of rockets were found, Reuters reported.

Over the last year, Jordan said it has foiled attempts to smuggle weapons by infiltrators linked to pro-Iranian militias in Syria and Lebanon-based radical Palestinian groups.

Contact lost with captors of Israeli hostage: Hamas

➤ Release of individual reportedly central to latest proposal for ceasefire

GAZA: Hamas on Tuesday said it had "lost contact" with the captors of an Israeli-American hostage in Gaza after an Israeli strike.

The release of this hostage reportedly took centre stage in Israel's latest proposal for a renewed ceasefire.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited northern Gaza on Tuesday, his office announced, as the military kept up the offensive that it resumed on March 18, effectively ending a two-month ceasefire.

Speaking to troops, he said Hamas would continue to "suffer blow after blow".

Hamas military wing Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades spokesman Abu Obeida said: "We have lost contact with the group holding soldier Edan Alexander following a direct strike on their location. We are trying to reach them at this moment."

The military wing later released a video

addressed to the families of the remaining hostages, warning them that their loved ones are likely to return in coffins if Israel keeps up its bombardment of the territory.

It also released a video on Saturday showing Alexander alive, in which he criticised the Israeli government for failing to secure his release.

He appeared to be speaking under duress in the footage, making frequent hand gestures as he criticised Netanyahu's government.

AFP was unable to determine when the video was filmed.

Alexander, 21, was serving in an elite infantry unit on the Gaza border when he was abducted by Palestinian militants during their October 2023 attack.

He was born in Tel Aviv and grew up in the US state of New Jersey, returning to Israel after high school to join the army.

Hamas said on Monday it had received a new truce offer from Israel that foresees the release of 10 living hostages, starting with Alexander, in exchange for a 45-day ceasefire.

A Hamas official said the proposal called for Alexander's release on the first day of the ceasefire as a "gesture of goodwill".

It was delivered to the group's delegation in

Cairo by Egyptian officials over the weekend and a senior Hamas official told AFP that the group would "most likely" respond within 48 hours.

Another Hamas official said Israel had also demanded that the Palestinian militants disarm to secure an end to the Gaza war but said this crossed a "red line".

In northern Gaza, Netanyahu told troops, "We insist that they release our hostages and we insist on achieving all of our war objectives".

French President Emmanuel Macron told Netanyahu in a telephone call on Tuesday that only a ceasefire in Gaza could free the remaining hostages.

He called for an "opening of all humanitarian aid crossings" into the Palestinian territory.

Israel has cut off all aid to the Gaza Strip since March 2 to pressure Hamas.

Macron angered Israel last week when he suggested that Paris could recognise a Palestinian state during a United Nations conference in New York in June.

Netanyahu's office said he told Macron on Tuesday that the establishment of a Palestinian state would be a "huge reward for terrorism".

— AFP



A woman visiting a memorial displaying flags and photographs of fallen servicemen at Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine. — REUTERS/PIC

BID TO SMUGGLE WEAPONS FROM EGYPT FOILED

JERUSALEM: The Israeli military said it shot down a drone attempting to smuggle weapons from Egyptian territory into Israel on Tuesday. "Security forces located the drone, four weapons and ammunition," the military said. It has previously said it thwarted similar attempts to smuggle weapons using drones. In February, the military shot down a drone crossing from Egypt into Israeli territory. The military has also conducted numerous air strikes in Gaza on people attempting to retrieve drones that crossed into the Palestinian territory.

— AFP

OMAN AND U.S. DISCUSS NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN

MUSCAT: Prime Minister of Oman His Majesty Sultan Haitham Tarik has received a phone call from US President Donald Trump, Oman News Agency reported. Trump expressed appreciation for the bilateral relations between the two countries and for Oman's efforts in the ongoing negotiations between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. They also discussed ways to support these negotiations to achieve the desired outcomes. — Bernama-ONA

Russian drone attack injures three in Ukraine

ODESA: A Russian drone attack on the Black Sea port city of Odesa overnight injured three people, sparked fires and damaged homes and civilian infrastructure, officials of the southern Ukrainian region said yesterday.

"The enemy has again attacked Odesa with a massive drone attack," said Oleh Kiper, governor of the region whose administrative centre is Odesa, on Telegram, although the full scale of the attack is not clear.

Ukraine's air force usually reports details of overnight Russian attacks later in the morning.

Odesa's mayor Hennadiy Trukhanov posted photographs depicting a residential building and other structures that had been nearly destroyed, as well as one in which emergency workers sifted through rubble.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports and there was no immediate comment from Russia.

In a separate development, the Russian Defence Ministry yesterday said its defence units destroyed 26 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Nine drones were destroyed over the

southern Voronezh region, eight over the border Belgorod region, and the rest over the Kursk, Lipetsk and Moscow regions and the Crimean Peninsula, the ministry said on Telegram.

Both sides deny targeting civilians in the war that started more than three years ago.

Late in March, the United States said it has reached separate deals with Ukraine and Russia to pause their attacks over the Black Sea and against each other's energy targets.

Both sides have repeatedly accused each other of breaking the moratoriums. — Reuters



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Tariff war standoff: Who will hold firm?

“THERE are no winners in a trade war, and going against the world will only lead to self-isolation.” – China President Xi Jinping

Until Friday, April 11, the big question for market analysts and media commentators amid the tariff war that US President Donald Trump unleashed on the world was: Who will blink first, Trump or Xi?

This uncertainty stemmed from Trump's call for a 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs affecting over 180 countries, announced on April 2, while notably excluding China from the pause period.

He also escalated the tariff attack by raising the rate on Chinese imported goods to 145% on April 9. In an immediate response, China increased its tariff rate on US imports to 125%.

In the war of words between the two countries, Trump and his officials have repeatedly emphasised that they expect China to follow other countries by bending its knee to the US demands and having to accede to a negotiated tariff deal.

Such a deal would ensure that the US has the upper hand and allow Trump to proclaim victory in correcting the tariff “injustices”, which he claims the US has been a victim of during earlier administrations.

How Trump views his tariff war

In speech after speech, Trump has repeatedly used not very diplomatic but effective line of defence to his American audience to justify his launch of the global tariff war that has upended share and financial markets around the world and spooked ordinary Americans by its inevitable impact on their cost of living and businesses.

“I’m telling you, these countries are calling us up, kissing my ***. They are dying to make a deal.”

Mocking the pleas of foreign leaders, he parodied: “Please, please, sir, make a deal. I’ll do anything.”

On China's response, Trump has also been insistent on his expectations.



ANOTHER TAKE
BY LIM TECK GHEE

“China wants to make a deal. They just don’t know how quite to go about it. They’re proud people.” Trump said during an event at the White House.

Signalling Xi on a deal that would allow the US to claim victory in the tariff war while offering some concessions to China, Trump told reporters in the Oval Office: “Xi is a smart guy and we’ll end up making a very good deal. Xi is a man who knows exactly what has to be done; he loves his country. We will get a phone call at some point and then it’s off to the races.”

China's response to Trump's overtures

Not only has the phone call not come through but Trump's public assertions of admiration for Xi have also failed to have any effect with China making it clear that it is prepared to “fight to the end” in the tariff war.

According to China's Finance Ministry: “The US side's imposition of excessively high tariffs on China seriously violates international economic and trade rules, runs counter to basic economic principles and common sense, and is simply an act of unilateral bullying and coercion.”

For now, China has responded with a combination of opposition, diplomatic efforts and retaliatory measures.

Here is a breakdown of the Chinese retaliation to date:

➔ **Retaliatory tariffs:** Chinese officials have described the US tariff actions as a “numbers game” that has no real economic meaning, and that it is becoming a “joke”.

At the same time, China has retaliated with tariffs especially targeting American rural communities in the midwest and south that are key electoral support groups for Trump and his Republican party.

Significant US sectors also affected by Chinese tariffs include the aeronautical and manufacturing industry and Trump's “drill, baby drill”-favoured oil, gas and coal industries.

The latest China-move to suspend exports of rare earth minerals and magnets crucial for the world's



Trump called for 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs affecting over 180 countries, announced on April 2, while excluding China from the pause period.

– REUTERS/PICT

“Chinese officials have described the US tariff actions as a ‘numbers game’ that has no real economic meaning, and that it is becoming a ‘joke’.”

semiconductor, high tech, aerospace and military industries has the potential to be a game changer in the tariff war.

➔ **Emphasis on multilateralism:** China has emphasised its commitment to open and free markets and multilateralism, and as a defender of the global trading system.

Together with complaints lodged with the World Trade Organisation challenging the legality of the US tariffs, it has worked to build alliances and strengthen trade relationships with other key global trading blocs, including the European Union and Asean.

Xi's trip to Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia can be expected to strengthen Asean's resistance to the US's unilateral bullying and coercion of smaller countries.

➔ **Economic and strategic shift:** Chinese media and officials have emphasised self-reliance, with the government accelerating domestic production and consumption of critical goods, reduced dependency on the American market and diversification to the global south and BRICS countries.

Conclusion

The US can be seen to have blinked first in this war between the two global trading giants. This is because while the US remains a key trading partner for China as a major export destination, China is an even more important trading partner for the US in supplying a wide range of everyday products that provide the average American family with a

comfortable and affordable lifestyle.

The latest development in this battle over tariffs has Trump suspending the tariff imposition on mainly China-imported products covering 20 product categories, including computers, laptops, disc drives and automatic data processing.

It also includes semiconductor devices, equipment, memory chips and flat panel displays. All are everyday products important to American consumers, who lack access to equivalent affordable products from anywhere in the world, including from the US and US businesses – small and large – dependent on their China investments and factories for their profits and bottom line.

The reality which Trump and his team as well as Western economists and mainstream media commentators ignore or prefer not to discuss is that should the tariff war boil down to which country can withstand the pain more, it will be China.

Further delay by the US in arriving at a negotiated settlement with China can only ensure its counter-intuitive impact on American interests by stiffening the resistance of other countries to what is regarded by all US allies as violations of international trade rules and basic economic principles; and the reckless whipping up of global economic turbulence and disorder, in which there can be no winners.

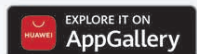
Lim Teck Ghee's Another Take is aimed at demystifying social orthodoxy.
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Tariff whiplash may push Asean away

COMMENT by Dr Tricia Yeoh

THE reciprocal tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump on April 2 – what he referred to as “Liberation Day” – hit Southeast Asian economies particularly hard.

While they and others received a brief respite in the form of a 90-day pause, with a universal lowered reciprocal tariff of 10%, tariffs on goods from China spiked to 145%.

The increasingly inconsistent and erratic policymaking from the Trump administration will ultimately push Southeast Asia away from making deals with the US, an increasingly unreliable trade partner.

Given the questionable economic basis of Trump's original tariff calculations, the relatively high tariffs initially imposed on the region can best be explained through political reasoning.

The tariffs – which ranged from 49% for Cambodia, 48% for Laos, 46% for Vietnam, 44% for Myanmar, 36% for Thailand and 24% for Malaysia and Brunei – were most likely intended to pressure these developing countries to seriously reconsider their close economic ties with China.

However, Trump's punitive tariff strategy may have the opposite effect as Southeast Asia disengages from the US to be pushed into the welcoming arms of China.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's highly publicised visits to Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam will invariably result in high-level bilateral trade and economic commitments that will strengthen these countries' relationships with China.

This “charm offensive” is a strategic move by Xi, given Malaysia's chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) this year, especially with Asean members Cambodia and Vietnam among the hardest-hit countries on Trump's original reciprocal tariffs list.

Before April 2, most Southeast Asian countries were unwilling to take a clear side in the US-China trade war. That said, the State of Southeast Asia 2025 Survey, recently conducted by the ISEAS-Yusuf Ishak Institute, revealed that the US was preferred over China should the region be forced to align with one or the other.

Events of the past weeks, however, may alter this sentiment, particularly since the previous year's survey saw respondents preferring China over the US, indicating Southeast Asian economies will switch allegiances in their best interests.

That the US is willing to force this decoupling is surprising given that it needs Southeast Asian allies in the region, particularly in the context of escalating disputes in the South China Sea, where China lays claim to territorial waters that are also claimed by Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Even the Philippines, the US's longtime ally in the region, was slapped with a 17% tariff.

Semiconductor-exporting countries in Southeast Asia breathed a sigh of relief when they saw that semiconductors were among the exemptions listed by Trump on April 11, with some pullback by the president just days later.

Malaysia accounts for approximately 20% of the US's semiconductor imports, while Vietnam accounts for more than 10% of semiconductor chips imported by the US.

As the White House continues to vacillate on this exemption, ultimately, it may not last. While some goods such as copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors and lumber articles are not subject to the reciprocal tariffs announced on April 2, they may be subject to future tariffs under Section 232 of the 1962 US Trade Act.

These tariffs on semiconductors should not be surprising as this sector represents precisely the type of manufacturing industry Trump envisions reshoring to the US.

Trump had previously shared intentions of placing tariffs as high as 25% on semiconductor imports. However, not all semiconductors are exempt at present – such as graphics processing units and servers for training artificial intelligence models.

If Trump's broader tariffs on Southeast Asia are followed through, the implications will be severe and long-lasting. Asean countries combined accounted for 7.2% of global GDP in 2024 and 8.7% of global GDP growth over the past decade (2014-2024).

If an economic recession were to hit Southeast Asia, those with the lowest GDP per capita, such as Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, would be especially hard hit. Myanmar, which has been embroiled in a civil war since 2021 and was recently hit by a devastating earthquake, will be left in shambles.

There are already anecdotes of Chinese investors based in mainland China and Vietnam looking to diversify their manufacturing bases elsewhere in the region. Malaysia and the

“Even if Southeast Asian countries would prefer a more balanced and diversified trade relationship that still includes the US, the region's short-term strategic adjustments to shift its focus to China may become long-term if current US policies and tariff regimes endure.”

Philippines, which are facing relatively lower tariff rates, may stand to gain but at the expense of their neighbours.

Meanwhile, individual Southeast Asian countries may be increasingly tempted to impose trade barriers on Chinese goods to protect their domestic industries as exports that would otherwise have been destined for the US are redirected to Southeast Asian markets.

This move, however, could be economically self-defeating given the region's tightly interlinked supply chains and shared reliance on Chinese inputs. It would also run counter to the principle of Asean centrality and economic integration.

Ultimately, Southeast Asia may not be able to break ties completely as the American foreign direct investment (FDI) into Asean represented 32.4% of the region's total FDI inflows in 2023. As a result, all Southeast Asian countries have prioritised diplomacy, sent negotiation teams and committed to working closely with Washington.

Malaysia is leading a unified regional response to the tariff announcement. At a special Asean economic ministers' meeting on April 10, Asean articulated a common position to engage in a “frank and constructive dialogue with the US to address trade-related concerns” and not impose any retaliatory measures in response.

This position, however, may just be about safeguarding economic interests and diplomatic relations with the US in the current moment while the bloc simultaneously works out alternative long-term measures.

Those measures may include upgrading the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement, finalising negotiations on the Asean Digital Economy Framework Agreement and, importantly, upgrading the Asean-China Free Trade Agreement and Asean-India Trade in Goods Agreement, as recently suggested by Malaysia's minister of Investment, Trade and Industry.

Moving in on these measures would indicate that Southeast Asia is indeed seeking deeper economic cooperation with China in the immediate future.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the free trade agreement that brings together China and the 10 Asean member states, as well as Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, will also be an increasingly attractive instrument to solidify partnerships within the Asia Pacific region.

Amid this confusion and the flip-flopping of policies from the Oval Office, there is a unique opportunity for Canada to be the reliable and stable trading partner that Southeast Asian

economies seek.

Canada's 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy can be strengthened and updated to reflect current circumstances. A statement issued by the Asean economic ministers on April 10 drew parallels with that strategy and reaffirmed Asean's support for a “predictable, transparent, free, fair, inclusive, sustainable and rules-based multilateral trading system”.

Canada, along with other regional bodies such as the European Union, should now brandish its credentials as a stable and reliable global player that adheres to these rules-based norms, helping to shore up the certainty that Southeast Asia currently needs.

The institutions that the US was once part of creating but is now dismantling should continue to be upheld. While the existing free trade system may have weaknesses, a complete dismantlement of the global order at this speed – predicated on economic protectionism alone – cannot be absorbed by the majority of the world's economies, least of all those in Southeast Asia.

Canada's participation in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which brings together 12 member countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam, also gives it an advantage the US does not have.

Trump's tariff policies are pushing Southeast Asia further away from the US at a time when Washington needs regional allies in economic and security matters.

The long-time lag for reshoring manufacturing to the US will mean that in the near term, America will still require goods that are critical for its supply chains; even cars made in the US will need auto parts from the rest of the world.

Even if Southeast Asian countries would prefer a more balanced and diversified trade relationship that still includes the US, the region's short-term strategic adjustments to shift its focus to China may become a long-term if current US policies and tariff regimes endure.

Will the US recognise that there are severe long-term consequences of its recent actions in time to mend already fractured relations or will it cede economic leadership in the region for good in its own misguided self-interest?

Dr Tricia Yeoh is Assoc Prof of Practice at the University of Nottingham Malaysia's School of Politics and International Relations and senior fellow at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

My jottings on Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi

LETTERS
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ANOTHER death, another glowing obituary. As many pay their last respects to Pak Lah, it is striking to note that those interviewed by the media seem to have only nice things to say.

This reaction is reflective of a common human tendency: we tend to shower praises upon the deceased, often overlooking the complexities of their lives when they can no longer hear or respond.

It raises the question of what happened

during his lifetime.

Pak Lah stepped away from the political arena many years ago and faced significant health challenges. During that time, media interest in him dwindled significantly.

For someone who dedicated so much of his life to the service of the country, it was disheartening to witness this shift.

News about him became increasingly rare, with the only updates emerging from social media posts by his son-in-law, Khairy Jamaluddin. Outside of that, he seemed to fade into the background, receiving little recognition or interest from the public.

This phenomenon prompts reflection on the

nature of our collective memory. It is human nature to glorify the dead when they can no longer advocate for themselves or address the criticisms faced in life.

Pak Lah's contributions and challenges should not merely be footnotes in history but parts of a narrative that deserve attention and reflection while individuals are still living.

In recognising this tendency, we can strive to do better. We should celebrate the achievements of our leaders and public figures while they are alive, acknowledging their struggles and complexities rather than relegating those discussions to the past.

By doing so, we can foster a culture of

appreciation that honours individuals not just in death but throughout their entire journey, ensuring their legacies are enriched by the full spectrum of their experiences.

Ultimately, let us remember that the worth of a person is not solely defined by their final moments or the memories we conjure after they have passed. It is essential to engage with their lives, recognising their contributions and challenges while they are still among us, enriching our understanding of humanity in all its complexities.

Datin Wan Hiyati Ibrahim
Observer
Kuala Lumpur

Berjaya's Azalea draws 3,000 bids for 402 units

BY AIMIE SHAZRIE
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PETALING JAYA: Berjaya Land Bhd's latest affordable housing project Pangsapuri Azalea located in Subang Heights, has been oversubscribed with more than 3,000 applications for just 402 units, highlighting the critical shortage of affordable homes in the Klang Valley.

The freehold development priced at RM250,000 per unit features a dual-key concept that allows for multi-generational living or home-office use. Each 900 sq ft unit comes with five bedrooms and four bathrooms, making it an ideal choice for extended families and first-time homebuyers.

Berjaya Land Bhd group CEO Syed Ali Shahul Hameed said the overwhelming response underscores the urgent demand for affordable housing, particularly in prime urban areas such as Subang Jaya.

"The response has been extraordinary, proving that the need for quality, affordable homes remains a key issue. We are committed to developing more projects that prioritise accessibility and sustainable living," he told SunBiz.

The oversubscription of Pangsapuri Azalea is part of a broader trend, as housing affordability remains a growing concern for Malaysians.

Located strategically in Subang Heights, Syed Ali said Pangsapuri Azalea offers seamless connectivity via major expressways including the Federal Highway, NKVE, Elite, LDP and NPE.

"Additionally, it is just a five-minute drive to the Batu Tiga KTM Komuter station, providing easy access for daily commuters working in Shah Alam, Petaling Jaya and Kuala Lumpur," he said.

He noted that the project is also surrounded by key amenities including shopping malls, healthcare facilities and educational institutions.

"The project is surrounded by shopping malls such as Subang Parade, Empire Shopping Gallery and The 19 USJ City mall,

► Each 900 sq ft apartment offers five bedrooms and four bathrooms, perfect for growing families and first-time buyers



Tan believes homeownership is more than just having a roof over one's head - it's also about building equity and supporting the nation's economic stability.

providing residents with a variety of retail and dining options.

"For healthcare needs, KPJ Selangor Specialist Hospital and Subang Jaya Medical Centre are located nearby, ensuring easy access to quality medical services.

"Families with school-going kids will also benefit from proximity to reputable educational institutions like Sri KDU International School and Sri Kuala Lumpur,

making Azalea an ideal choice for urban living with essential conveniences," Syed Ali explained.

Furthermore, Berjaya Corporation Bhd founder and adviser Tan Sri Vincent Tan, who established Yayasan Rumah Ku (formerly known as Yayasan My First Home) to assist Malaysians with lower household income category in becoming homeowners, has consistently advocated for equitable housing solutions that cater to families' real needs.

He believes homeownership is not just about having a roof over one's head but is indirectly building equity and contributing to the nation's economic stability.

"A home is the most valuable asset a family can have. Owning a home means building equity, securing the future, and ensuring that Malaysians are not left behind. If we help more people in the lower household income to become homeowners, we are strengthening the nation's economy in the long run," he said.

Tan has also been a vocal proponent of larger living spaces in affordable housing projects, emphasising that the standard three-bedroom layout does not meet the needs of many lower household income families who often have more children.

"For many families in the lower household income group, a three-bedroom home is simply not enough. With five bedrooms, at least each child can have their own space to study or, if needed, boys and girls can be segregated for better privacy.

"When children grow up in a conducive environment, they have a better chance of excelling in education, securing good jobs, and ultimately lifting their families to a better future. We must try to understand their difficulties and their daily challenges. We must not give up in wanting to help them, we must try harder," said Tan.

Glomac banks on RM298m projects to keep growth going

PETALING JAYA: Property developer Glomac Bhd strengthened its growth prospects with upcoming residential phases worth RM298 million in GDV across its established townships, leveraging its financial position to drive long-term value.

The property developer plans to roll out new residential projects within Lakeside Residences, Saujana KLIA and Saujana Jaya in Kulai, Johor. The developments are part of Glomac's broader expansion strategy, supported by strong liquidity and a well-positioned landbank.

During the third quarter ended Jan 31 (Q3'25), Glomac continued to record strong demand for its offerings. Its latest commercial launch at Saujana Perdana comprising shop offices with a GDV of RM125 million, achieved nearly 60% sales as of end-January 2025.

"Additionally, the first phase of Serai@SBCR, which introduced double-storey terrace houses in August 2024, saw overwhelming demand with sales nearing full capacity within three months," Glomac said in a statement.

Glomac remains in a strong financial position, with negligible net gearing of 0.03 times and shareholders' equity of RM1.2 billion.

"As of end-January 2025, cash and deposit reserves stood at RM248 million, ensuring ample liquidity to fund ongoing and future projects. The group's net asset value per share was RM1.56, with a price-to-book ratio of approximately 0.23 times," it noted.

In the first nine months of its financial year ending April 30, 2025, Glomac recorded RM163.4 million in revenue. This was mainly supported by steady progress at projects like Saujana Perdana and contributions from its high-rise developments, 121 Residences and Plaza@Kelana Jaya.

The group's profit before tax (PBT) surged 65% to RM21.4 million in 9M'25, compared to RM13 million a year ago.

"This was attributed to a favourable product mix with higher-margin developments, gains from the disposal investment properties and lower finance costs," it said.

In Q3'25 alone, Glomac recorded an unaudited revenue of RM33.7 million and a PBT of RM3.3 million. The group's strong financial position allows it to confidently move forward with its growth plans while staying stable and resilient in a constantly changing and competitive market.

Is Malaysia ready to lead in safer, greener construction practices?

AS CONSTRUCTION rules become more complex, staying compliant is more important than ever. A Jan 20 report by Malaysian Banking Bhd predicts 9.4% growth in the industry. The government supports this with projects like the Penang light rail, flood control efforts, and building more affordable homes and commercial spaces to meet changing population needs. The Malaysian government's push for public-private partnerships and major infrastructure projects shows its aim to boost connectivity and create more jobs.

Malaysia's construction sector spending is projected to hit RM200 billion in 2025, according to the deputy minister of works. This includes RM32 billion in projects planned by government-linked companies and investment firms, with the private sector also expected to contribute RM80 billion to the total spending.

Governments and regulatory bodies across Asean are placing greater emphasis on digital documentation and transparent reporting to ensure that construction projects adhere to safety, environmental, and regulatory standards. From August 2024, a mandate from the National Development Action Council and the

Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia has mandated the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) for all significant construction projects valued at RM10 million and above, signalling a major shift towards digital methodologies in construction. A report by the Asean Smart Cities Network shows that over 30% of construction firms in the region now use digital documentation, highlighting the growing move toward tech-based compliance.

The increasing role of technology in achieving compliance

Technology is at the heart of achieving compliance in the construction sector. Tools like PlanRadar's Siteview, a 360-degree reality capture tool, allow for comprehensive visual documentation, ensuring transparency and ease in verifying compliance during inspections. New advances in combining BIM and digital twin technology allow real-time tracking and control of construction projects. They help spot compliance issues early so problems can be fixed quickly. IoT sensors and AI also help manage data by predicting risks like safety issues or delays, helping companies avoid violations and stay on track.

Smarter, safer sites: Technology as a cornerstone of construction compliance

Safety is a key part of construction, and technology helps make sites safer. Devices like sensors and wearables check workers' health and detect risks as they happen. AI looks at past data to find areas where accidents might occur, so action can be taken early. Virtual and augmented reality also improve safety training by giving workers hands-on, realistic practice, helping them stay alert and follow safety rules better.

Achieving greater sustainability through tech

As sustainability becomes a priority in construction, green technologies are helping firms meet regulatory requirements related to emissions and energy efficiency. Technologies such as 3D printing minimize waste by creating more accurate and sustainable structures, while modular construction techniques promote the use of pre-manufactured components, reducing waste and improving energy efficiency.

Project cost efficiency through proactive compliance

Recent reports and studies have explored the

historical barriers to adopting blockchain technology in sustainable construction projects. With digitisation expected to drive wider adoption across the Asean region, more companies and organisations are likely to embrace the technology.

Besides helping with regulations, technology can also cut costs in construction. It warns firms about risks early, helping them avoid costly problems. Blockchain keeps project data easy to track and allows instant audits, making compliance simpler. Smart contracts can automatically check if rules are being followed at each stage, making everything more clear and responsible.

Securing the future of construction: A call to action for compliance and safety tech adoption

As the construction industry evolves, embracing digital tools is no longer optional; it is essential. Using technologies like IoT, AI, BIM, and blockchain, construction firms can create safer, greener, and more efficient projects. Moving forward, staying compliant means actively using smart tools to boost safety, sustainability, and profits.

This article is contributed by Vitaly Berezka, Regional Spokesperson, Apac, PlanRadar.



Basic insurance plan to address soaring medical costs in the works: LIAM

KUALA LUMPUR: The Life Insurance Association of Malaysia (LIAM) is working with Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), the Ministry of Health and the Malaysian Takaful Association (MTA) to develop a basic insurance plan to ease the burden of rising medical costs, particularly for low-income and vulnerable groups.

LIAM chief executive officer Mark O'Dell said the industry is under immense pressure due to post-pandemic claims surges and persistent medical inflation, which he said could reach up to 30%.

"These estimates are based on two key assumptions – that medical inflation does not ease, and the premium cap remains in place for three years," he said following LIAM and Malaysian Life Reinsurance Group Bhd's (MLRe) Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration yesterday.

The cap, introduced by BNM as an interim measure, limits annual increases in premiums and contributions for medical and health insurance or takaful products to below 10% for at least 80% of policyholders until the end of 2026.

O'Dell confirmed that the takaful sector alone is projected to incur potential losses of RM800 million. At the same time, the broader insurance industry could face up to RM4.5 billion in losses due to uncollected contributions under this pricing control.

"In 2023, 25 out of every 100 policyholders were hospitalised, compared to just 10 or 11 per 100 before the pandemic. We saw a spike in hospital admissions post-Covid, which has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. This has driven claims up substantially," he said.

O'Dell said, the proposed basic insurance plan would offer more accessible coverage options for those struggling with premium hikes. "It is really about affordability."

O'Dell said the industry also advocates for structural reform in hospital charges. He said LIAM is proposing a shift towards Diagnosis-Related Group pricing, a fixed-package approach based on diagnosis complexity and co-morbidities.

O'Dell also called for greater price transparency across the healthcare system.

LIAM, its member companies and MLRe hosted a Hari Raya celebration with 120 children, teenagers and caregivers from five charitable homes across the Klang Valley. LIAM and MLRe contributed RM25,000 in daily essentials to the homes. - by **AIMIE SHAZRIE**

Takaful industry paid record RM10.2b in benefits in 2024

■ BY **AIMIE SHAZRIE**
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KUALA LUMPUR: The domestic takaful industry disbursed RM10.2 billion in benefits last year, the highest on record, marking a 16.73% increase from 2023 as it continued to expand its role as a financial safety net for Malaysians.

Malaysian Takaful Association (MTA) interim chairman Wan Saifulrizal Wan Ismail said family takaful accounted for RM7.89 billion, or 77.37% of total benefits paid, while general takaful accounted for RM2.31 billion.

"The industry remained resilient despite population growth, with the takaful penetration rate holding steady at 19.57% in 2024. The number of in-force certificates rose to 6.69 million, following the issuance of 993,393 new certificates.

"Gross contributions for family takaful new business rose 1.48% to RM9.73 billion. Business in-force

➤ Resilient performance with family and general segments posting growth

contributions climbed 7.2% to RM9.62 billion from RM8.97 billion the previous year," he said at MTA's media briefing on 2024 takaful industry performance yesterday.

Wan Saifulrizal noted that over the 2022-2024 period, the industry saw an average annual increase of RM1.54 billion in benefit payouts, nearly 400% more than the RM393.34 million average recorded from 2019 to 2021.

"The growth was also reflected in the expanding agent force, with 92,866 active family takaful agents nationwide and 26,714 new agents added in 2024. Agents' share of new business rose to 25.56%, while bancatakaful remained the largest contributor at 52.05%," he said.

Wan Saifulrizal said the general

takaful segment also grew, with gross written contributions rising 8.46% to RM5.91 billion, supported by strong vehicle sales. "Motor takaful remained the top contributor at 68.77%, with claims totalling RM2.04 billion. Fire takaful rose 7.27% to RM1 billion, while personal accident takaful moderated to RM388 million (6.56%)."

In terms of distribution, agency channels led with a 62.67% share, while internet sales grew to 6.58% from 5.79% in 2023, in line with MTA's digitalisation agenda under its Hijrah27 transformation plan.

Wan Saifulrizal said the industry channelled RM31.19 million in zakat in the first half of 2024, over 60% of the RM50.83 million disbursed in the whole of 2023,

towards social initiatives in line with syariah principles.

Looking ahead, Wan Saifulrizal said the industry is expected to maintain steady growth as it enhances product innovation, digital adoption and outreach programmes to drive participation from underserved segments, particularly in rural and lower-income communities.

"Promoting financial literacy and inclusion through education campaigns, agent training, and value-based intermediation efforts remains our priority, which aligns protection with broader social goals."

Wan Saifulrizal emphasised the importance of protecting residential assets, including homes and their contents, in light of the rising number of fire-related incidents.

"Over the six-month period ending June 30, 2024, the takaful industry channelled RM31.19 million in zakat towards value-based social development initiatives. This represents more than 60% of the total zakat distributed in the entire year of 2023, which stood at RM50.83 million," he noted.

Touching on the industry's response to the Putra Heights fire incident, Wan Saifulrizal said MTA mobilised on-ground assistance on the same day, setting up service booths to assist affected residents.

"Given the area's demographics, many affected individuals are likely takaful participants. Claims are being processed, and the industry is committed to expediting, simplifying claims for those impacted," he said.

On medical inflation, which is expected to rise to 30% this year, Wan Saifulrizal said the industry supports Bank Negara Malaysia's interim measures to cap contribution increases.

Structural healthcare reform is under way with stakeholders focusing on greater price transparency, efficient payment systems, expanding public healthcare access, he added.



Mohd Radzuan (left) and Wan Saifulrizal at the Malaysian Takaful Association's media briefing yesterday.

Sector faces potential RM800m hit with Bank Negara's premium cap

KUALA LUMPUR: The takaful industry is expected to face potential losses of up to RM800 million following Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) interim measures to curb rising medical and health insurance and takaful (MHIT) contributions.

Malaysian Takaful Association (MTA) CEO Mohd Radzuan Mohamed said the three-year pricing cap, which limits annual contribution increases to below 10% for at least 80% of certificate holders, poses a significant challenge to the sector's sustainability.

He said that while the intention is to ease the financial burden on consumers, the rising cost of

medical treatment remains the root issue.

"We understand public concern over rising contributions, but the core problem lies in the escalating cost of healthcare services. Contribution adjustments are necessary to absorb these costs," he said during a media briefing on the takaful industry's 2024 performance yesterday.

Similarly, the Life Insurance Association of Malaysia has warned that the insurance industry could face losses of up to RM4.5 billion due to uncollected premiums under BNM's measures.

Malaysia currently ranks third in Asia for medical inflation, which has

been a key driver behind increased insurance and takaful costs.

Despite the financial pressure, Mohd Radzuan remained optimistic, saying that the central bank's policy could prompt the development of more affordable medical protection solutions.

"We hope to see more initiatives leading to innovative approaches that make medical protection more accessible to all Malaysians."

The interim measures, in effect until the end of 2026, aim to balance consumer affordability with the financial sustainability of insurance and takaful providers.

On the projected medical inflation

rate of up to 30% this year, Mohd Radzuan said the industry supports BNM's move to cap contributions while encouraging takaful operators to offer lower-cost alternatives.

He noted that structural healthcare reform is already under way, involving key stakeholders to address pricing, transparency, and access.

"The medical protection issue in Malaysia is complex and interconnected. BNM has acted decisively by introducing clear guidance for the next three years, allowing consumers to plan and manage their budgets more effectively," Mohd Radzuan said.

He added that the measures

include a temporary freeze on price increases for senior citizens, alongside requirements for operators to provide more affordable plan options.

"As takaful operators, we must find a way to balance rising costs while offering accessible protection. MTA is working closely with stakeholders, including BNM, to map out long-term solutions," Mohd Radzuan said.

Key reform areas identified are encouraging hospitals to publish the actual costs of common procedures and medications, introducing more efficient payment models such as diagnosis-related group systems, and expanding access to affordable medical solutions. - by **AIMIE SHAZRIE**



■ BY AIMIE SHAZRIE
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KUALA LUMPUR: KL Wellness City (KLWC), a three-in-one project comprising medical/healthcare, property and medical tourism, is gearing up to kick-start operations in the fourth quarter of 2026.

The much-awaited project will cement its role as a future-ready health and lifestyle destination with a new phase of development that directly addresses the rising demand for wellness-centric homes and facilities, driven by Malaysia's ageing population, and the importance placed on medical and healthcare services.

As Malaysia steadily approaches ageing nation status by 2030, with more than 15% of the population expected to be aged 60 and above, healthcare developers are rethinking the traditional concept of home.

KLWC director Datuk Seri Dr Vincent Tiew said the company is catering to this evolution with its latest residential offerings set to launch in May, which will feature more liveable, wellness-focused units that cater not just to individuals or nuclear families, but also to families needing and valuing readily available medical and healthcare services next door.

"There is definitely demand for more spacious wellness residences. From our smallest units, like studio apartments, designed to hotel-room standards, we already saw growing interest from buyers seeking more flexibility. Imagining the property investment opportunity arising from this township, a property suite fully furnished priced at merely RM360,000 cannot go wrong for short-term stay investments.

"So we also introduced the option of connecting units, allowing a studio plus studio combination that feels larger and more functional," he told *SunBiz*.

Tiew noted that the demand continues to outpace what traditional residential layouts can offer.

"As a result, the new launch will include units starting at 500 square feet and above, further enabling extended families to live under one roof with a greater degree of privacy and independence.

"In a conventional project, units of 800 to 900 square feet are usually configured as three-bedroom units. But for us, we don't rush to squeeze in bedrooms.

"Our three-bedroom units and can be dual-key format are only introduced from 1,600 square feet onwards, ensuring spacious, liveable homes that reflect a real wellness lifestyle," he added.

These homes are ideal for families with elderly parents or adult children who prefer to live nearby, but not necessarily within the same unit, Tiew said.

"The approach acknowledges modern family dynamics, especially in urban settings, where individual privacy and comfort are equally valued alongside closeness."

Tiew said that at the core of KLWC's vision is its adherence to the principles of Wellness Real Estate (WRE), which include a concept that is fast gaining traction globally, but still in its early stages in Southeast Asia.

"Unlike typical mixed-use developments that evolve over time, KLWC was designed from the ground up with health and well-being in mind.

"WRE is defined by the



KLWC spans more than 26.5 acres, and incorporates essential wellness and healthcare components such as tertiary hospitals, medical suites, specialist clinics, research centres, retirement homes, retail outlets, office spaces and short- and long-term accommodations.

KL Wellness City – rise of a health and lifestyle gem

► Project a long-term response to future medical and living needs of the population not just in Malaysia but across Southeast Asia, says director

Global Wellness Institute in the United States as a township that is carefully and purposefully master planned from day one. It is not an afterthought. It involves everything, from design and planning to ecosystem integration and material selection," he explained.

Tiew said KLWC spans more than 26.5 acres, and incorporates essential wellness and healthcare components such as tertiary hospitals, medical suites, specialist clinics, research centres, retirement homes, retail outlets, office spaces and short- and long-term accommodations.

"We believe we are the only development in Malaysia that is currently implementing WRE in a comprehensive manner. Our project is a long-term response to the future health and living needs of the population – not just in Malaysia, but across Southeast Asia," he added.

Tiew said the project aims to support the region's shift towards ageing populations, particularly in countries such as Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia, where similar demographic patterns are emerging.

KLWC's healthcare vision is further amplified by Malaysia's growing success in medical tourism, Tiew noted.

"Malaysia is still a global leader in attracting overseas healthcare travellers. We outpace other regional players like Thailand and Singapore in volume, and our healthcare services are delivered at significantly lower costs, which are between 30% and 70% cheaper, without compromising on quality," he explained.

KLWC aims to capitalise on this growth through the launch of KL International Tertiary Hospital (KLTH), which is scheduled for completion in late 2026.

Tiew said, "The tertiary facility will offer up to 1,000 beds and is designed specifically with international patients in mind. Our hospital is being built to attract patients from all around the world, particularly from Indonesia, Singapore and China, our low-hanging fruit markets.

"From there, we will continue expanding our outreach to countries like Bangladesh, Cambodia and Brunei, and even to Europe and the Middle East," he remarked.

Beyond cost competitiveness, Tiew said, Malaysia benefits from its multilingual healthcare professionals, internationally accredited hospitals and cultural familiarity with patients from various regions, including those from Muslim-majority countries.

Looking ahead, Tiew noted that KLWC is already preparing for its next phase of growth.

"Over the next 12 months, the team will focus on finalising the structural completion of KLTH and applying for full licensing, with the goal of opening by the fourth quarter of 2026.

"KLWC is also applying to install a rooftop helipad at its upcoming hospital, aiming to support emergency medical evacuations and high-insurance cases from neighbouring countries like Indonesia and Singapore, further strengthening our position in the regional healthcare travel market," he added.

Over the next five years, Tiew said, KLWC plans to expand regionally by replicating its integrated wellness township model in Southeast Asia.

"While one more potential local location is being considered, international markets are the bigger focus. Once KLTH is operational, we intend to explore opportunities to establish similar wellness townships overseas, turning KLWC into a regional brand and hospital group," he added.

Tiew says KL Wellness City is designed from the ground up with health and well-being in mind.

Kenanga IB remains positive on Keyfield

KUALA LUMPUR: Kenanga Investment Bank Bhd (Kenanga IB) expects Keyfield International Bhd's daily charter rate (DCR) in the local offshore support vessel (OSV) market to remain stable or slightly lower year-on-year, supported by tight supply and rising demand despite global macroeconomic challenges.

Nevertheless, the investment bank has maintained a positive view on Keyfield, citing its more competitive fleet based on vessel age and specifications.

"We believe it will be one of the first to capture potential upsides in the OSV market when the global macro environment recovers.

"The group is also targeting its non-oil and gas vessel segment to contribute approximately 20% of total revenue in the medium term, in line with its strategy to reduce reliance on the upstream oil and gas cycle," Kenanga IB said in a research note yesterday.

On Monday, Keyfield acquired a 2023-built cable-laying barge — to be renamed *Keyfield Blessing* — for US\$20.6 million (RM90.8 million) from Taizhou Sanfu Ship Engineering. The acquisition includes a one-year bareboat charter agreement, with an optional one-year extension, valued at US\$9.1 million assuming full-term execution, with Dejing Group.

Kenanga IB also raised its earnings forecasts for Keyfield's financial years 2025 (FY25) and 2026 (FY26) by 5-6%, reflecting accretive income from *Keyfield Blessing*, assuming a DCR of RM56,000 for bareboat charter.

"For charter durations, we assume eight months and 12 months, respectively, for FY25 and FY26," it added.

Keyfield mainly charters its own and third-party vessels, offering offshore accommodation, catering, housekeeping, laundry, and medical support services. — Bernama

Industrial parks to drive SP Setia's future growth

➤ Battersea Power Station projects in London seeing stronger take-up and occupancy

KUALA LUMPUR: Despite external uncertainties, property developer SP Setia Bhd remains confident of meeting its FY25 sales target of RM4.8 billion.

Maybank Investment Bank Bhd (Maybank IB) said SP Setia's industrial parks are expected to drive the next leg of earnings alongside stable township contributions.

Abroad, SP Setia's Battersea Power Station projects in London are also seeing better take-up and occupancy.

Maybank IB noted that SP Setia secured planning approval for the 399-acre Setia Alaman Industrial Park (SAIP), which had a GDV of RM4 billion in Klang in Q4'24, enabling the recognition of RM655 million in land sales from FY25.

To raise the project's profile, SP Setia intends to form a JV with a foreign partner to develop a portion of the land (42 acres), with the deal expected by the second half of 2025.

"We are positive on the

project due to its strategic location in Klang. More importantly, the project — located just a 10-minute drive from the Setia City development — is expected to boost activity in the area, potentially leading to improved margins and higher land value in the future.

"SAIP's proximity to Setia City — with RM5.2 billion in remaining GDV — is expected to spur activity in the area, supporting an integrated ecosystem of industrial operations, residential developments, and lifestyle amenities. These factors should enhance future margins and land value in the vicinity," Maybank IB said in a note.

Moving on, Maybank IB is also positive on the 414 acres

Setia Fontaines Industrial Park (SFIP), which has a GDV of RM3 billion GDV, in Bertam.

With Penang Development Corporation (PDC), the state-owned development arm, as the 50:50 JV partner, Maybank IB expects the approval process to be expedited and should further enhance investor confidence.

To recap, SP Setia signed into a memorandum of collaboration with PDC in March 2025 to jointly develop Setia Fontaines into a green mixed-use and industrial development. SP Setia will hold a 50% stake in the JV.

Phase 1 of the project, which covers about 84 acres, will focus on land sales to lower upfront costs.

"While there are no details on the launch timeline yet, we understand that rezoning approvals for SFIP are likely to be obtained by July 2025," Maybank IB said.

Maybank IB said.

Separately, SP Setia is discussing with two potential JV partners — one

local and one foreign — for its 307-acre Tanjung Kupang Industrial Park (TKIP) in Iskandar Malaysia with a GDV of RM8 billion.

Internationally, SP Setia continues to expand with strong momentum.

In Australia, the company's Atlas Melbourne, which has a GDV of RM2.4 billion, has locked in 50% sales, with 20 units sold monthly.

"While there are no details on the launch timeline for its Carlton project (RM1.8 billion GDV) in Melbourne (across from Melbourne University), we understand that two towers have been earmarked for build-to-sell, while the other tower will be build-to-rent (for student accommodation purposes)," Maybank IB said.

In London, Maybank IB noted that SP Setia does not anticipate significant losses from its 40%-owned Battersea Power Station project.

The development has recorded strong progress, with 99% of its retail space leased, a 71% take-up rate for the KOA apartments (up from 61% in Q3'24), and office occupancy in Phase 3B rising to 46%, compared to just over 20% in Q2'24.

Phase 3C (senior living) is under negotiation with a potential buyer, while discussions for Phase 4, which could be a JV with an international developer, are ongoing.



In addition to Setia Alaman Industrial Park in Klang, the group plans to develop Setia Fontaines in Penang into a green, mixed-use industrial hub. — SP SETIA WEBSITE

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China Q1 economic growth beats expectations

➤ Analysts believe there will be more support measures as Trump's tariffs bite

BEIJING: China's first-quarter economic growth outstripped expectations, underpinned by solid consumption and industrial output, but analysts fear momentum could shift sharply lower as US tariffs pose the biggest risk to the Asian powerhouse in decades.

President Donald Trump has ratcheted up tariffs on Chinese goods to eye-watering levels, prompting Beijing to slap retaliatory duties on US imports that have raised the stakes for the world's two biggest economies and rattled financial markets.

Data published yesterday showed China's gross domestic product (GDP) grew 5.4% in the January-March quarter from a year earlier, unchanged from the fourth quarter, but beat analysts' expectations in a Reuters poll for a rise of 5.1%.

Growth momentum is expected to cool sharply in the next few quarters, however, as Washington's tariff shock hits the crucial export engine, heaping pressure on Chinese leaders to roll out more support measures to keep the world's second-largest economy on an even keel.

Government stimulus boosted consumption

and supported investment, said Xu Tianchen, senior economist at the Economist Intelligence Unit, calling the 5.4% pace "a very good start."

"In each of the past two years China had a high-flying first quarter and an underwhelming second quarter," Xu said, adding that "a forceful and timely policy response" is needed given the additional pressure stemming from US tariffs.

Exports have remained a lone bright spot in China's economy, with a trillion-dollar trade surplus last year helping to underpin growth even as a prolonged property sector slump and sluggish domestic demand continue to undercut a solid recovery.

That complicates the policy challenge for Beijing as Trump's relentless focus on China's vast trade engine chokes off a key growth driver.

China's Premier Li Qiang said this week the country's exporters will have to cope with "profound" external changes, and vowed to support more domestic consumption.

Indeed, quarter-on-quarter momentum highlighted a softer underbelly, with the economy expanding 1.2% in the first quarter, slowing from 1.6% in October-December.

For 2025, the economy is expected to grow at a subdued 4.5% pace year-on-year, the Reuters poll showed, slowing from last year's 5% pace and falling short of the official target of around 5%. Many analysts have sharply slashed their GDP forecasts for this year.

Citing the punitive US duties, ANZ yesterday cut its China 2025 GDP forecast to 4.2% from 4.8% and to 4.3% from 4.5% for 2026.

UBS was even more pessimistic, having this week downgraded its 2025 growth forecast for the Asian giant to 3.4% from 4%, on the assumption that Sino-US tariff hikes will remain in place and that Beijing will roll out additional stimulus.

"We think the tariff shock poses unprecedented challenges to China's exports and will set forth major adjustment in the domestic economy as well," analysts at UBS said in a note.

"Good GDP does not represent the overall economic health of an economy," said Raymond Yeung, chief China economist at ANZ. "Deflation and youth unemployment remain the primary concerns."

Policymakers have repeatedly said the country has ample room and tools to bolster the economy, and analysts expect further support measures in coming months following a blitz of monetary easing steps late last year.

Earlier this month, Fitch downgraded China's sovereign credit rating, citing rapidly rising government debt and risks to public finances, suggesting a tricky balancing act for policymakers seeking to expand consumption to guard against a trade downturn.

"The current situation is similar to the negative shocks China experienced in the past, such as the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 and the global financial crisis in 2008," Yeung said.

"We see limited options for Chinese authorities against the tariff shock except a large fiscal expansion." – Reuters

Thailand to import more American LNG

BANGKOK: Thailand plans to import more liquefied natural gas from the United States over the next five years, Finance Minister Pichai Chunhavan said yesterday, ahead of a planned meeting to discuss tariffs with US officials early next week.

There is already an agreement to import one million tonnes of LNG worth US\$500 million (RM2.2 billion) next year as part of a 15-year plan starting in 2026 totalling 15 million tonnes, he said.

Thailand is planning an additional contract for more than one million tonnes of US LNG worth about US\$600 million over the next five years, Pichai said.

Thailand is an LNG importer and wants to be a distributor in the region and so will have to import more, he added.

The country also plans to import 400,000 tonnes of US ethane worth US\$100 million over the next four years, Pichai said.

His remarks come ahead of talks between Thai and US officials set for next week.

Thailand is among Southeast Asian nations hardest-hit by US President Donald Trump's threatened export levies, with a 36% tariff.

Seeking to negotiate a better deal, the government has said it would increase imports of US goods, such as corn, soybean meal, crude, ethane, LNG, autos and electronics, and aircraft. It would also review rules on imports of US pork and consider importing US beef and offal, as well as liquor.

The government has also said it will promote more Thai investment in the US, and crack down on false claims about the origin of products that use Thailand to ship to America.

When the 36% tariff was announced earlier this month, Pichai had said it could cut growth in Southeast Asia's second-largest economy by one percentage point.

Before the tariff was announced, the government was targeting growth of 3% this year, after 2024's 2.5% expansion. – Reuters



An electronic board showing China's Q1 GDP and previous quarters' economic data in Shanghai yesterday. – REUTERS/SPIC

Indonesia awards five oil and gas blocks

JAKARTA: Indonesia awarded five oil and gas blocks to companies, its Energy Ministry said yesterday, as it attempts to replenish its oil and gas reserves and improve its energy security.

Over the coming years, the government plans to offer nearly 60 oil and gas blocks to try to reverse a decade-long decline in output.

"The government hopes these auction winners will be able to contribute to Indonesia's energy security ahead," Tri Winarno, senior official at the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry, said in an online broadcast on yesterday's awards.

Indonesia awarded both the Gaea and Gaea

II blocks in West Papua to a consortium comprising eight companies, including Enquest Petroleum Production Malaysia Ltd, BP Exploration Indonesia Ltd, CNOOC Southeast Asia Ltd.

Gaea has estimated resources of 9.6 billion barrels of oil or 71.8 trillion cubic feet of gas, while Gaea II has estimated resources of 8.5 billion barrels of oil or 35.1 tcf of gas, Tri said.

The government also awarded the Binaya block in offshore Maluku, which has 6.7 billion barrels of oil and 15 tcf of gas potential, to state explorer PT Pertamina Hulu Energy, and Malaysia's Petronas unit PC North Mandura II Ltd

and Korea's SK Eearthon Co Ltd.

PC North Madura II Ltd and SK Eearthon, together with Japan's INPEX Corporation, were also awarded the Sepang block offshore East Java.

The Kojo block in Makassar Strait was awarded to Armada Etan Ltd.

Once a significant oil producer and a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Indonesia has grown increasingly reliant on imported energy.

It has offered to increase energy imports from the United States as part of negotiations on tariffs. – Reuters

HK postal service to stop shipping US-bound goods

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's postal service said yesterday it will stop shipping goods bound for the United States in response to "bullying" tariff hikes by US President Donald Trump.

Hongkong Post said it will "definitely not collect any ... tariffs on behalf of the US and will suspend the acceptance of postal items containing goods destined to the US".

It added that it will stop accepting surface mail of US-bound items with immediate effect and air mail items starting from April 27.

Trump signed an order this month to scrap a duty-free exemption for small parcels from China, a rule that critics said aided the rise of online retailers Shein and Temu.

The *de minimis* exemption allowed goods valued at US\$800 or under to enter the US without paying duties or certain taxes.

US duties on China are now at an eye-watering 145%, while Beijing has hit back with a 125% toll of its own on US imports.

Hong Kong, a free port with its own trade policies, has not followed China's lead in imposing retaliatory levies.

"The US is unreasonable, bullying and imposing tariffs abusively," the Hongkong Post said in its statement yesterday.

"For sending items to the US, the public in Hong Kong should be prepared to pay exorbitant and unreasonable fees."

For US-bound surface mail parcels that have not yet been shipped, the service will contact the senders to return the items and refund postage starting April 22.

Postal items containing documents only will not be affected, it added. – AFP

ASML CEO sees 'increased macro uncertainty'

THE HAGUE: The head of ASML said yesterday there was "increased macro uncertainty" due to tariffs but the Dutch tech giant kept its sales forecasts for this year unchanged.

ASML's net profits came in at €2.4 billion, (RM12 billion) compared to €1.2 billion in the first quarter of last year, said the firm, which makes cutting-edge machines for the chip sector.

"Our conversations so far with customers support our expectation that 2025 and 2026 will be growth years," said CEO Christophe Fouquet.

"However, the recent tariff announcements

have increased uncertainty in the macro environment and the situation will remain dynamic for a while."

The firm predicted sales for this year at between €30 and €35 billion, unchanged from previous forecasts.

Net bookings, the figure most closely watched in the markets as a predictor of future performance, were €3.9 billion in the first quarter, compared to €7.1 billion in the fourth quarter of last year.

Sales for the first quarter came in at €7.7 billion, in line with the firm's expectations.

Fouquet predicted second-quarter total net sales between €7.2 billion and €7.7 billion.

Longer term, ASML believes the rapidly expanding AI market will push sales up to between €44 and €60 billion by 2030.

"We still see a lot of strength in AI. In fact some of the demand for this year... but also for next year has solidified. So that's very encouraging," said Fouquet.

The financial impact of the tariffs on the firm, Fouquet said, was "something that we don't know how to quantify yet."

"But this is adding definitely uncertainty

on the long term," the chief executive added.

Tariffs aside, the tech giant was already caught in the middle of a US-led effort to curb high-tech exports to China over fears they could be used to bolster the country's military.

Earlier this year, the Dutch government announced it was tightening its export controls on advanced semiconductor production equipment, but said the measures targeted a "very limited" number of goods.

ASML responded at the time that the moves would have "no additional impact" on its business. — AFP

Nvidia chip curbs warning pops stock market calm

➤ Firm faces US\$5.5 billion hit from new restrictions on shipments to China

HONG KONG: Asian stocks swung yesterday after Nvidia's announcement of new US licensing rules on shipments of its new chip to China rattled investor confidence already shot by Donald Trump's sweeping trade war.

After a relatively peaceful couple of days following last week's tariff-fuelled ructions, investors were once again on the defensive as a standoff between the world's top economic superpowers shows no signs of abating.

Chip behemoth Nvidia said on Tuesday that US officials had told the firm it must obtain licences to ship its new H20 semiconductors to China because of concerns they may be used in supercomputers there, adding the rule would last indefinitely.

The move marks the latest salvo in an increasingly nasty row that has seen Washington and Beijing hit each other with eye-watering tariffs, with the technology sector and security at the heart of the issue.

US levies on other trading partners – despite being mostly paused – have sent global markets into a tailspin as governments scramble to cushion themselves from the impact of the measures, with many heading to Washington for talks.

Trump has also kicked off an investigation that could see tariffs imposed on critical minerals such as rare earths that are used in a wide range of products including smartphones, wind turbines and electric vehicle motors.

"Silence is never golden – it's just the calm before the next chaos cycle. And sure enough, the tape just got rattled again," said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management.

"Nvidia dropped the mic, revealing fresh export curbs on AI gear headed to China.

"Then came the other shoe: Trump ordering a new probe into tariffs on critical minerals. Boom



The Nvidia logo is displayed on a building in Taipei, Taiwan. — REUTERS/SPIC

– just like that, we're back in whiplash mode," he said.

"Welcome to the new normal: one step forward, two tariff probes back."

Nvidia said the chip measures would cost it US\$5.5 billion (RM24 billion).

The firm's shares tumbled around 6% in after-market trade, and its Asian suppliers were also hit.

Taiwan titan TSMC shed more than 2%, Japanese firm Advantest was off more than 6% and SK hynix in South Korea lost more than 3%.

And most broader markets retreated across Asia.

Hong Kong led losses, dropping 1.9%, while Tokyo, Sydney, Seoul, Taipei, Manila and Jakarta were also down.

Shanghai, Singapore, Mumbai, Bangkok and Wellington rose.

London fell even as UK inflation slowed more than expected in March, while Paris and

Frankfurt also retreated.

A weak dollar, and an ongoing run into safe havens, saw gold spike to a fresh record high of US\$3,291.81.

As investors look for China and the United States to find some common ground that could ease the tensions, Trump said it was up to Beijing to come to the negotiating table.

"The ball is in China's court. China needs to make a deal with us. We don't have to make a deal with them," said a statement from the president read out by press secretary Karoline Leavitt at a briefing.

"There's no difference between China and any other country except they are much larger," she added.

Trump also accused China of going back on a major deal with American aviation giant Boeing – following a Bloomberg News report that Beijing ordered airlines not to take further deliveries of the company's jets. — AFP

Japan envoy seeks 'win-win' deal with US

TOKYO: Tokyo's envoy for US tariff talks left for Washington yesterday, saying he was confident of a "win-win" outcome while protecting Japanese national interests.

Analysts said the outcome of Ryosei Akazawa's visit could set the template for other countries' negotiations with US President Donald Trump's administration.

"I am confident that we will be able to build a relationship of trust and conduct good negotiations that will lead to a win-win relationship," Akazawa, who is economic revitalisation minister, told reporters.

Despite being the biggest investor into the US, Japan has still been pinched by steep levies imposed by Trump on imports of cars, steel and aluminium.

Trump last week paused his "reciprocal" duty of 24% on Japan, along with differing tariffs on most other nations.

Akazawa will meet Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Trade Representative Jameson Greer later this week.

Purchases of US defence hardware and natural gas from Alaska could be on the table during the negotiations, analysts said.

The minister, who studied at a US university and is close to Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, said he wants to "protect our national interests" in talks with Bessent and Greer, who are "fond of Japan".

The Daiwa Institute of Research warned yesterday that Trump's reciprocal tariffs could cause a decline of 1.8% in Japan's real GDP by 2029.

US officials are also set to hold talks with South Korea and others, but Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management called the discussions with Japan a "canary in the tariff coal mine".

"If Japan secures a deal – even a half-baked one – the template is set. If they walk away empty-handed, brace yourself. Other nations will start pricing in confrontation, not cooperation," he wrote in a newsletter.

And "don't forget the elephant in the vault: Japan's still the biggest holder of US Treasuries. And that, my friend, is a whole lot of leverage," he added.

Top Japanese officials have brushed aside claims that Tokyo may have deliberately created volatility in the US Treasury market to force Trump's pause of reciprocal tariffs, saying that is not what allies would do. — AFP

Canada offers automakers tariff relief as Honda weighs move

OTTAWA: Ottawa on Tuesday offered tariff relief to automakers on condition they maintain production in Canada, as Honda was reportedly considering moving assembly lines from Canada and Mexico to the United States.

Under the plan, companies that continue to manufacture vehicles in Canada would be allowed to import a certain number of cars and trucks made in the United States tariff-free, the government said.

Canada has imposed a 25% tariff on vehicle imports from the United States, in retaliation against President Donald Trump's levies on

autos and parts imported from Canada.

The Canadian tariffs applied to cars and light trucks that are not compliant with an existing North American free trade pact.

Likewise, US auto tariffs provide some reprieve for compliance under the pact.

The tariff relief, Ottawa said in a statement, was contingent "on automakers continuing to produce vehicles in Canada and on completing planned investments".

At an election campaign stop in Quebec province, Prime Minister Mark Carney accused Trump of "attacking our auto industry" and

seeking to "pull apart the most integrated industrial manufacturing sector in the world".

"This is one of the crown jewels of North American manufacturing," he said, vowing to fight for jobs in the sector that is already starting to see layoffs and reduced shifts.

The *Nikkei* newspaper reported earlier that Honda was considering moving some of its car production from Canada and Mexico to the United States to avoid the US tariffs.

About half of the 1.4 million vehicles it sold in the US last year were imported from Canada and Mexico. — AFP

Wine consumption sinks to lowest level since 1961

PARIS: Worldwide consumption of wine fell in 2024 to its lowest level in more than 60 years, the main trade body said on Tuesday, raising concerns about new risks from US tariffs.

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) said that 2024 sales fell 3.3% from the previous year to 214.2 million hectolitres.

The OIV, whose report was based on government figures, said this would be the lowest sales figure since 1961, when sales were 213.6 million hl.

Production is also at its lowest level in more than 60 years, having fallen 4.8% in 2024 to 225.8 million hl.

OIV statistics chief Giorgio Delgrosso said the wine industry had been hit by a perfect storm with health concerns driving down consumption in many countries while economic factors had added to troubles.

"Beyond the short-term economic and geopolitical disruptions," said the IOV's annual report, "it is important to consider the structural, long-term factors also contributing to the observed decline in wine consumption".

The OIV said the consumer is now paying about 30% more for a bottle now than in 2019-2020 and overall consumption has fallen by 12% since then.

The United States, the world's top wine market, saw consumption fall 5.8% to 33.3 million hl.

Delgrosso said that tariffs ordered by US President Donald Trump, even though temporarily suspended, could become "another bomb" for the wine industry.

Sales in China remain below pre-Covid-19 levels, despite a rebound since the pandemic.

Europe, which accounts for nearly half of worldwide sales, saw consumption fall 2.8% last year.

Even in France, one of the key global producers, 3.6% less wine was knocked back last year.

Spain and Portugal were among rare markets where consumption increased.

French retail chain Nicolas say there is a "generational" fall in drinking.

"People do not drink in a festive way anymore and young people consume less than their parents," the company said in a statement. – AFP

PwC exits more than a dozen countries to avoid scandals: FT

LONDON: PwC has shut down operations in more than a dozen countries that are deemed too small, risky or unprofitable, as the Big Four accounting firm aims to prevent repeats of scandals that have affected it, the *Financial Times* reported yesterday.

The decision was taken due to mounting differences with local partners, the newspaper said, citing people familiar with the matter.

Local leaders at the firm said they lost over a third of their business in recent years after pressure from PwC's global executives to drop risky clients, according to the report.

PwC has faced an exodus of clientele and layoffs since last year.

PwC declined to comment on the report to *Financial Times*.

PwC did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment outside business hours.

The accounting giant has cut ties with its Sub-Saharan Francophone Africa firms after a strategic review, the company said last month.

China hit PwC's mainland China unit with a six-month suspension and a US\$62 million (RM273 million) fine for audit failures related to property developer China Evergrande's US\$78 billion fraud.

Last month, Britain's Financial Reporting Council fined PwC £4.5 million (RM26 million) in relation to the audit of Wyelands Bank for its 2019 financial year.

The firm is working with Saudi Arabia and its sovereign wealth fund to mend relations after the kingdom suspended activities between the US\$925 billion fund's holding company and PwC. – Reuters

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SCAN ME

Heineken Q1 sales **exceed** forecasts as tariff risks loom

➤ Brewer maintains annual guidance, analysts welcome strong start

LONDON: Amsterdam-based Heineken reported forecast-beating first quarter sales yesterday and maintained its annual guidance but warned of ongoing volatility caused by uncertainty about the levels and scope of global tariffs.

Shares in the world's second-largest brewer by global volumes rose 2.8% in early trade as investors welcomed another quarter of delivery after Heineken cheered investors with its 2024 performance in February.

Some shareholders have in the past

criticised Heineken for volatility in its results.

But the brewer had already flagged a tougher start to 2025 due to factors, such as a late Easter, and its revenues and volumes both exceeded analysts' forecasts.

"Despite volatile consumer and geopolitical trends, we are performing within the range of expectations," CEO Dolf van den Brink said in a statement.

Heineken said it sold more of its pricier labels, such as namesake brand Heineken, and saw strong growth in key markets like Vietnam, which has dragged on its performance in recent years.

It reported a 2.1% decline in organic beer volumes and a 0.9% increase in organic net revenues, against analyst expectations for a 2.9% and 0.6% decline respectively.

Heineken managed to "squeeze out a beat" in almost every geography despite a

tough environment, said Laurence Whyatt, analyst at Barclays.

"Naysayers will point to tariff risks, but we see a more resilient company than was there last year," he said in a note.

Heineken did warn that uncertainty around tariffs, as well as weak consumer sentiment, inflation and currency changes presented risks ahead.

It still expects between 4% and 8% profit growth in 2025 despite an escalation in global trade tensions sparked by the current US administration.

Since Heineken set its forecast in February, further American tariff announcements, including some targeting beer in cans, have shocked markets, hurting consumer confidence, though a sweeping tariff increases have since been largely paused.

– Reuters



Builders work on a new housing development near Warrington, Britain. – REUTERS/SPIC

UK inflation falls more than expected in March

LONDON: Britain's annual inflation rate fell more than expected in March, official data showed yesterday, handing a boost to the Labour government as US President Donald Trump's tariffs fuels economic uncertainty.

The Consumer Prices Index came in at 2.6% last month, down from 2.8% in February, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement.

Analysts' consensus had been for a drop to 2.7%, while the rate had stood at 3% in January.

"Inflation eased again in March, driven by a variety of factors including falling fuel prices and unchanged food costs compared with the

price rises we saw this time last year," said ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner.

British Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves welcomed the new drop while voicing caution.

"Inflation falling for two months in a row, wages growing faster than prices and positive growth figures are encouraging signs that our plan for change is working, but there is more to be done," Reeves said in a statement.

"I know many families are still struggling with the cost of living and this is an anxious time because of a changing world," she added, nine months after Labour's return to power.

Official data published last Friday showed that Britain's economy grew more than expected in February.

Analysts warn, however, that the 10% levy on Britain's imports to the United States could hamper growth.

The annual inflation rate is expected to reverse direction owing to rises in UK energy and water bills that kicked in this month.

"The dip in CPI inflation ... won't be sustained for long, with inflation set to rise to around 3.5% in the coming months," noted Ruth Gregory, deputy chief UK economist at Capital Economics research group. – AFP

MARKET ROUND-UP: APRIL 16

Bursa Trade Statistic

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

16 April 2025

Participation		Retail (20.74%)		Institution (36.61%)		Foreign (42.65%)	
		Net (in RM mil.)		Net (in RM mil.)		Net (in RM mil.)	
		+33.54		+120.10		-153.64	
		Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)
		358.23	324.68	663.06	542.96	625.70	779.34

Preliminary status (Excluding Trade Amendments) | Final data, refer to Bursa website

Need Some Ideas?
Our Monthly Trader's Talk will be held Every 1st Monday of the Month Live webinar with Q&A

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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

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Bursa Indices

INDEX	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	10,963.70 -75.40
FBMKLCI	1,476.92 -9.51
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	485.21 -3.97
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	143.48 -1.80
CONSTRUCTION	251.40 -2.21
FINANCIAL SERVICES	17,717.60 -109.00
ENERGY	646.75 -8.13
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	473.14 -3.74
HEALTH CARE	1,845.70 -1.22
TRANSPORTATION	964.27 -0.66
PROPERTY	952.44 -6.20
PLANTATION	7,184.49 -21.40
FBMSHA	10,774.90 -78.70
FBMACE	4,515.23 -22.50
TECHNOLOGY	43.87 -0.91

TURNOVER: 2,996 bil **VALUE: RM1.646 bil**

Bursa slips on profit-taking, global trade tariff worries

BURSA Malaysia ended lower yesterday, weighed down by persistent profit-taking amid ongoing concerns over global trade tariffs.

At 5pm, the FBM KLCI slipped 9.51 points, or 0.64%, to 1,476.92 compared to Tuesday's close of 1,486.43.

The benchmark index opened 0.02 of a point higher to 1,486.45 and moved between 1,472.84 and 1,487.50 throughout the day.

In the broader market, decliners outpaced gainers 573 to 320, while 434 counters were unchanged, 1,071 untraded, and nine others suspended.

Turnover slipped to 3 billion units valued at RM1.65 billion from 3.36 billion units valued at RM1.91 billion on Tuesday.

UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors Sdn Bhd head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan said yesterday's consolidation is viewed as a natural response to prevailing uncertainties.

"Market volatility remains elevated due to policy uncertainties, making profit-taking in outperformers a rational and prudent strategy," he told Bernama.

Mohd Sedek said that further intensifying the concerns, US President Donald Trump has urged China to engage in direct negotiations following Beijing's decision to suspend deliveries of Boeing jets to its airlines.

Among the heavyweights, Maybank shed 10 sen to RM9.84, Public Bank eased 1 sen to RM4.30, CIMB Group and IHH Healthcare rose 1 sen to RM6.71 and RM6.82 respectively, while Tenaga Nasional was flat at RM13.44.

Among the actives, Pertama Digital increased 1 sen to 14 sen, Revenue Group and Iskandar Waterfront edged up half-a-sen to 9.5 sen and 38 sen respectively, while Dataprep Holdings and MY E.G. Services declined 2 sen each to 13.5 sen and 90.5 sen respectively.

Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-PWFK	0.175	+0.010	+6.06	2,131,189
HSI-CWC4	0.095	-0.010	-9.52	1,994,823
HSI-PWD2	0.120	+0.010	+9.09	1,912,913
HSI-CWEI	0.150	-0.015	-9.09	1,618,334
HSI-CWEP	0.115	-0.005	-4.17	1,491,280
HSI-PWFO	0.170	+0.015	+9.68	1,118,085
PERTAMA	0.140	+0.010	+7.69	832,406
HSI-CWEL	0.130	-0.035	-21.21	626,090
DATAPRP	0.135	-0.020	-12.90	414,274
XIAOMI-C36	0.090	-0.015	-14.29	406,371
MYEG	0.905	-0.020	-2.16	390,658
REVENUE	0.095	+0.005	+5.56	384,081
HSI-CWEK	0.090	-0.095	-51.35	380,397
HSI-PWD3	0.025	-	-	342,252
IWCITY	0.380	+0.005	+1.33	332,662
TANCO	0.850	+0.015	+1.80	296,796
YEWLEE-WA	0.250	+0.005	+2.04	247,075
SUPERMX	0.835	+0.015	+1.83	244,515
HSI-CWCT	0.075	-0.025	-25.00	225,132
HSI-CWC6	0.210	-0.020	-8.70	220,457



Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	VOLUME ('00)
UTDPLT	22.500	+0.700	8,631
DLADY	27.480	+0.360	12
EUROSP	2.650	+0.300	533
KHIND	2.150	+0.300	3
IDEAL	3.850	+0.250	35
KLK	20.200	+0.200	3,679
BAKAWAN	18.880	+0.180	11
CARLSBG	18.640	+0.160	278
PETDAG	19.060	+0.120	1,430
MCEHLDG	1.500	+0.100	2,658
PPB	11.580	+0.100	4,262
MCEHLDG-WA	0.665	+0.090	605
LBICAP	0.500	+0.085	352
HSI-PWFH	0.510	+0.080	95
HSI-PWFX	1.190	+0.080	10
KKB	1.340	+0.080	200
PETGAS	16.400	+0.080	4,829
BURSA	7.750	+0.070	10,603
MASTER	3.080	+0.070	20
MRDIY-C42	0.180	+0.070	220

Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
ANCOMNY-CS	0.025	+150.00	1,140
VELOCITY-WB	0.045	+125.00	1,000
DGO-C14	0.010	+100.00	2,400
PERMAJU-PA	0.010	+100.00	8,466
SNTORIA	0.010	+100.00	37
YTLPOWER-C82	0.050	+100.00	1,350
FBMKLCI-HA2	0.025	+66.67	7,188
MRDIY-C42	0.180	+63.64	220
99SMART-CT	0.015	+50.00	1
AHB-WC	0.015	+50.00	1,101
ARMADA-C96	0.015	+50.00	600
JADI	0.030	+50.00	41,407
MSM-C1	0.015	+50.00	1,000
OWG-WB	0.015	+50.00	2
RHONEMA-WA	0.045	+50.00	29,852
KPJ-C21	0.095	+35.71	1,000
SINARAN-WB	0.020	+33.33	2,791
SUPERMX-C4Q	0.020	+33.33	20,331
MAHSING-C77	0.045	+28.57	20,000
AMBANK-C52	0.050	+25.00	1,000

World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	40,368.96	-155.83	-0.38
S&P 500 [US]	5,396.63	-9.34	-0.17
NASDAQ [US]	16,823.17	-8.31	-0.05
NYSE [US]	18,430.04	-2.21	-0.01
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	4,927.64	-42.79	-0.86
FTSE 100 [UK]	8,213.40	-35.72	-0.43
DAX [GER]	21,110.14	-143.56	-0.68
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	33,920.40	-347.14	-1.01
TOPIX INDEX [JPN]	2,498.03	-15.32	-0.61
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	21,056.98	-409.29	-1.91
CSI 300 [CHN]	3,772.82	11.59	0.31
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	177.92	2.19	1.25
SHANGHAI SE COM [CHN]	3,276.00	8.34	0.26
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	2,447.43	-29.98	-1.21
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	76,991.00	256.11	0.33
ASX 200 [AUS]	7,758.90	-2.82	-0.04
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	7,961.73	-8.16	-0.1
FBM KLCI	1,476.92	-9.51	-0.64
STRAITS TIMES INDEX [S'PORE]	3,651.31	26.59	0.73
WTI [US\$/BBL.]	61.95	0.62	1.01
BRENT [US\$/BBL.]	65.31	0.64	0.99
GOLD [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	3,325.00	84.6	2.61
SILVER [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	33.38	0.77	2.37
PLATINUM [US\$/T OZ]	964.08	1.73	0.18
COPPER [COMEX] [US CENTS/LB.]	464.4	-3.45	-0.74
COPPER 3MO [LME] [US\$/MT]	9,164.00	-23	-0.25
CORN [US CENTS/BU.]	491	1.5	0.31
WHEAT [US CENTS/BU.]	555.25	-0.75	-0.13
SOYBEAN OIL [CBOT] [US CENTS/LB.]	47.71	-0.13	-0.27
COCOA [ICE] [US\$/MT]	7,889.00	-37	-0.47
RUBBER [S'PORE] [US CENTS/KG]	165.3	-3.4	-2.02

As at 5pm, April 16

Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	VOLUME ('00)
NESTLE	77.040	-2.220	1,947
HSI-PWFF	1.360	-0.690	8
ALLIANZ-PA	17.500	-0.500	7
HLFG	16.620	-0.480	2,196
NIKKEI-HL	1.470	-0.230	50
KLUANG	5.430	-0.200	11
MPI	14.880	-0.200	1,039
PENTA	2.260	-0.190	32,319
F&N	25.800	-0.180	1,243
PARAGON	2.000	-0.180	162
LPI	13.840	-0.160	280
ALLIANZ	17.360	-0.140	546
GC8	3.160	-0.140	7,109
CHINAETF-MYR	4.770	-0.140	31
MBMR	5.370	-0.130	2,701
POMETAL	4.820	-0.130	59,603
SIME	2.060	-0.120	42,460
HSI-CWEA	0.550	-0.110	100
VSTEC	2.690	-0.110	1,591
HSI-PWD8	0.330	-0.105	150

Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
PENTA-C49	0.015	-75.00	5,000
HSI-PWDN	0.030	-70.00	400
HSI-PWD5	0.005	-66.67	500
MEITUAN-C30	0.055	-62.07	500
HSI-CWCS	0.010	-60.00	5
HSI-CWEK	0.090	-51.35	380,397
CIMB-CIS	0.005	-50.00	11,000
CIMB-CIW	0.005	-50.00	26,101
GENM-C3F	0.005	-50.00	2,162
GENTINGC3L	0.005	-50.00	2,821
JADI-WB	0.005	-50.00	9,543
MPSOL-WA	0.015	-50.00	3,000
PETGAS-C5	0.005	-50.00	2
YTLPOWER-C71	0.005	-50.00	6,600
HSI-CWCL	0.025	-44.44	800
MYEG-C7K	0.025	-44.44	900
HSI-PWFF	1.360	-33.66	8
ABMB-C17	0.010	-33.33	3,030
ARTRONIQ-WA	0.010	-33.33	4,000
GREATTEC-C16	0.010	-33.33	5,000

MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by **SunBiz Team**

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February distributive trade sales rise to two-month high of 5.1%

KUALA LUMPUR: The domestic distributive trade sales rose to a two-month high of 5.1% year-on-year in February from 4.6% in January, though monthly sales dipped slightly by 0.4% due to seasonal effects linked to fewer working days.

Kenanga Investment Bank Bhd said sales value eased to RM148.3 billion in February from RM148.9 billion recorded in January, a five-month low but still above the 2024 average of RM147.2 billion.

Growth was supported by wholesale trade and a rebound in motor vehicle sales.

Motor vehicle sales rose 1.5% in February, as vehicle sales increased 0.2% and maintenance and repair jumped 8.2%, contributing 0.1 percentage points to overall growth from -1.5 pts recorded in January.

This was in line with stronger monthly unit sales of 63,900 in February.

Wholesale trade expanded 5.3% in February, led by food, beverages & tobacco (6.3%) and specialised goods (3.7%), raising its growth contribution to 1.2 pts from 0.9 pts posted in January.

Meanwhile, retail trade growth slowed to 5.9% as sales in non-specialised stores (5.9%) and specialised stores (5.5%) moderated, lowering contribution to 1.5 pts from 2.3 pts posted in January this year.

Kenanga said year-to-date distributive trade growth averaged 4.8% in the first two months of 2025, and momentum is expected to continue.

"Rising household income from higher minimum wages, public sector salary hikes, and increased cash transfers support this.

"We maintain our 2025 GDP growth forecast at 4.8% for now, supported by strong domestic demand," Kenanga said.

SP Setia Bhd Buy. Target price: RM1.45



Source: Maybank Investment Bank

DESPITE external uncertainties, SPSB remains confident of meeting its FY25 sales target of RM4.8 billion. Industrial parks are expected to drive the next leg of earnings alongside stable township contributions. BPS projects are seeing better take-up and occupancy.

SPSB secured planning approval for the Setia Alaman Industrial Park (SAIP; RM4 billion GDV, 399 acres) in Klang in Q4'24, enabling recognition of RM655 million in land sales from FY25. We are positive on the project due to its strategic location in Klang. More importantly, the project, which is just a 10-minute drive from the Setia City development, is set to boost activity there, translating into better margins and higher land value in the future.

We are positive on Setia Fontaines Industrial Park (SFIP; RM3 billion GDV, 414 acres) in Bertam. With PDC (the state-owned development arm) as the 50:50 JV partner, we expect the approval process to be expedited and should further enhance investor confidence. Rezoning approvals for SFIP are likely to be obtained by July 2025. Separately, SPSB is in discussions with two potential JV partners for its 307-acre Tanjung Kupang Industrial Park in Iskandar Malaysia (RM8 billion GDV).

Risk factors include: 1) unexpected changes in property sales or a sector downturn; 2) project approval delays; 3) slower construction billings; 4) rising raw material costs; 5) labour shortages affecting construction; 6) higher financing costs from rising interest rates; and 7) unexpected losses from its 40%-owned Battersea Power Station project.

BUY with RM1.45 TP. – **Maybank Investment Bank, April 16**

Ringgit gains as uncertainties weigh on US dollar

THE ringgit ended higher against the US dollar yesterday, supported by a weaker greenback amid uncertainties surrounding the trade war and tariff tensions, said an analyst.

At 6pm, the local note appreciated to 4.4085/4135 against the US dollar from Tuesday's close of 4.4100/4155.

SPI Asset Management managing partner Stephen Innes said that traders are continuing to bet against the strength of the US dollar, as they remain doubtful about the White House's strategy for handling trade war and tariff uncertainties.

"The trade war's direction is unclear, the policy response feels reactionary, and there is no visible end game. This creates uncertainties around the US assets, and the dollar is bearing the impact," he told Bernama.

Meanwhile, the ringgit was traded lower against major currencies.

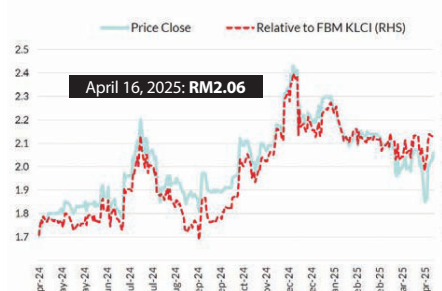
It dropped against the euro to 5.0072/0129 from 4.9996/5.0059 at the close on Tuesday, eased versus the Japanese yen to 3.0861/0898 from 3.0852/0895 on Tuesday and weaker vis-a-vis the British pound to 5.8488/8554 from 5.8366/8439 previously.

At the same time, the local note was traded mixed against Asean currencies.

It rose against the Indonesian rupiah to 261.8/262.2 from 262.0/262.5 at Tuesday's close, while the local note was flat versus the Philippine peso at 7.76/7.78.

However, it depreciated against the Singapore dollar to 3.3537/3578 from 3.3498/3545 on Tuesday and inched down vis-a-vis the Thai baht to 13.2547/2773 from 13.1461/1708 previously.

Kerjaya Prospek Group Bhd Buy. Target price: RM2.67



Source: Bloomberg

KERJAYA Prospek announced its fifth job win for FY25 worth RM98 million, awarded by an indirect subsidiary of Eastern & Oriental for the execution and completion of 50 units of 3-storey terrace houses and 26 units of 3-storey semi-detached houses over two phases in EAST's Andaman Island development in Penang. The contract will commence on April 22 and the works are expected to be completed within 24 months.

We understand that this latest job win relates to Senna and Fera phase 3 and 4, with a GDV of RM250 million, based on our estimates. In terms of profitability, we expect the net margin for this project to be between 9-10%. Excluding the latest job win, there is still RM1.1 billion GDV left to be launched in CY25 to meet EAST's property launch target of RM2 billion for Andaman Island. As such, the potential construction value from these launches could amount to RM440 million (assuming construction costs are 40% of total GDV).

We gather that there are more dredging and reclamation works up for grabs for phase 2B and 2C of Andaman Island, in the excess of RM300 million. Between 2026 and 2030, EAST targets to develop RM3.8 billion worth of GDV of properties, which could lead to construction values of RM1.5 billion. We expect demand for residential properties in Penang to remain resilient, with the National Property Information Centre showing that the overhang in residential projects in Penang has been easing between 2022 and 2024.

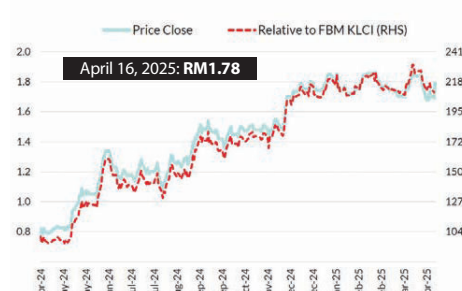
BUY with RM2.67 TP. – **RHB Research, April 16**

Exchange Rates

FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.4810	4.3480	4.3380
1 Australian Dollar	2.8560	2.7410	2.7250
1 Brunei Dollar	3.4030	3.3050	3.2970
1 Canadian Dollar	3.2090	3.1230	3.1110
1 Euro	5.0810	4.9180	4.8980
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.6520	2.5540	2.5380
1 Singapore Dollar	3.4030	3.3050	3.2970
1 Sterling Pound	5.9420	5.7580	5.7380
1 Swiss Franc	5.5130	5.2780	5.2630
100 UAE Dirham	123.4100	117.0600	116.8600
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.7640	3.5060	3.3060
100 Chinese Renminbi	61.5900	59.0100	59.0100
100 Danish Krone	69.7500	64.2100	64.0100
100 Hongkong Dollar	58.3700	55.4800	55.2800
100 Indian Rupee	5.3100	4.9900	4.7900
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0275	0.0249	0.0199
100 Japanese Yen	3.1420	3.0430	3.0330
100 New Taiwan Dollar	14.8000	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	43.2500	39.7900	39.5900
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6200	1.5200	1.3200
100 Philippine Peso	8.0300	7.5700	7.3700
100 Qatar Riyal	124.2900	117.9900	117.7900
100 Saudi Riyal	120.7400	114.6200	114.4200
100 South Africa Rand	24.4000	22.0400	21.8400
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5400	1.4200	1.2200
100 Swedish Krona	46.9100	42.7300	42.5300
100 Thai Baht	14.0200	12.4400	12.0400

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

Binastra Corporation Bhd Buy. Target price: RM2.21



Source: Bloomberg

BINASTRA Corp has secured two awards worth RM458.5 million from EXSIM Kebun Teh (EXSIM) in Johor Bahru (JB). The awards pertain to main building and external works for one block of a 43-storey serviced apartment with 848 units (Plot 1) and one block of a 41-storey serviced apartment with 735 units (Plot 2) at Jalan Kebun Teh. This is BINASTRA's maiden job win in JB, marking another venture outside the Klang Valley after its Sabah foray in CY24.

Plot 1 is for The Asteriaz @ Kebun Teh, which is set to commence works in late April for a targeted completion by Sept 2028. Plot 2 is anticipated to be completed within 48 months from the commencement date, which has yet to be confirmed. Both these land plots are located <5km away from the Bukit Chagar Rapid Transit System (RTS) station. We also understand there are another two plots of land at Jalan Kebun Teh that could be developed by EXSIM in future, subject to market reception to the projects at Plots 1 and 2.

BINASTRA's new job wins for YTD FY26 (Jan) now stands at RM709 million vs our FY26 job replenishment target of RM4 billion. Its outstanding orderbook stands at RM4.2 billion, which provides earnings visibility over the next four years. On top of this latest new job win, EXSIM has more landbank in JB near the New York Hotel and at Jalan Lumba Kuda, which could fetch a cumulative GDV of >RM3 billion or a potential construction value potentially higher than RM1.5 billion. We also note that Maxim Global (MAXIM MK, NR) – another key client of BINASTRA – has acquired a 6.5-acre plot of land at Taman Pelangi for future development.

BUY with RM2.21 TP. – **RHB Research, April 16**



the Sun **LYFE**

THURSDAY | APR 17, 2025

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Nature's call

Marissa Wong's journey of reviewing public toilets in Malaysia - P22

WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY

Technology and social media

TUESDAY

Family and parenting

WEDNESDAY

Fashion and beauty

THURSDAY

Home and living

FRIDAY

Travel and leisure

SATURDAY

Food and beverage

INSIDE

P23

DIY spa for busy people

P24

Ikea's Stockholm collection turns 40

P25

Ne Zha 2 outperforms

P26

Indonesia's horror movie industry



Airing potty concerns

BY JOHN TAN

WHEN we think of influencers, we often associate them with glamour. Many, if not most, influencers build their following by curating content on lifestyle and beauty topics.

Marissa Wong Wern Chin, however, has received the spotlight for talking about toilets in Malaysia, gaining over 127,000 followers on TikTok for her toilet reviews.

Using the slogan "Berak bersama Marissa Wong", the 28-year-old Subang Jaya native's content humorously centres around her experience using public toilets in the Klang Valley.

"It started with food reviews. I was thinking why people like to watch food reviews because they can relate. They eat three times a day. So what is that one thing that is opposite from food review?"

"Then it came to me, I realised the toilet situation in Malaysia is interesting. We do not publicly talk about the toilet situation but we complain a lot. And, not a single person has done toilet reviews properly," Wong told *theSun*.

Lost in algorithms

The absence of toilet reviews prompted the music and arts graduate to take up the challenge. Her reviews initially started out in English but eventually transitioned into Malay due to

► Marissa Wong strives to raise awareness about maintaining cleanliness in public toilets

the algorithms. Instead of reaching Malaysians like she had wanted, Wong noticed her videos were attracting viewers in Western countries such as the US, UK and Australia.

"Due to the cultural differences, they did not understand the references. Hence, I aim to focus on Malaysians, which are my main viewers right now. They can relate and resonate with the content. It is also easier for me to explain the content. A lot of terms that we try to use in English do not apply. It might sound rude if I say it in English but in Malay, it is fine."

Thumbs up for petrol stations

Since making the switch, Wong has reviewed over 300 toilets in the past two years. She observed that Malaysian public toilets lack basic necessities such as proper lighting, water and soap.

"When you go into a toilet, it should be dry and clean. And, there should be light and water. A lot of Malaysian toilets have pipes but sometimes, they have no water. Some places do not even have lights in their toilets."

"Toilets should also have soaps and ventilation as well. Toilets should be well-ventilated and either have a window or fan. These are important criteria."

Other criteria such as the interior design and scent are bonuses, said Wong. Surprisingly, toilets at fancy venues such as cafes, restaurants and shopping malls are lacking when it comes to providing these basic necessities. While they may have aesthetically pleasing exteriors and interiors, their toilets are not well-maintained. Toilets at petrol stations, in comparison, offer better facilities.

"Petrol stations have the best toilets. They have improved a lot compared with 10 years ago. Their toilets are better than shopping malls now, especially the ones in Petron and BHP. They have good lights. Some even have music and fans."



Wong is also a stand-up comedian.

So, petrol station toilets in the city are improving and well maintained."

Feedback welcome

When asked if Wong hears back from any of these businesses, the Chinese-Thai influencer revealed many take well to her suggestions, utilising them for the betterment of their toilets. Staff at one cafe even recognised her and were excited for Wong to see the improvements.

"I mentioned how everything was nice and felt good, except the toilet. I mentioned how the ventilation was bad. After a few months, I returned to eat there and they recognised me. They encouraged me to visit the toilet and to my surprise, they followed all my suggestions. This time around, they added ventilation, perfume, soap and light."

Bad toilet etiquette

That said, businesses are not entirely to blame for dirty public toilets. Users also have contributed to this, Wong has seen the effects of irresponsible toilet etiquette. From unflushed poop to toilet items being stolen, Wong believes heavy punishment should be levied to improve the condition of public toilets throughout the country.

"I suggest the government slap fines on those who are caught misusing public toilets. Additionally, I suggest we make minor (law offenders) clean toilets instead of giving them fines. If you commit minor crimes such as not paying your fines three times in a row, you should be subjected

Marissa Wong's top 10 toilets (in no particular order):

- ➔ Starhill Bukit Bintang
- ➔ Gardens Mall
- ➔ Kopitiam Meng Yang Restaurant Two
- ➔ KK Mart Gotong Raya
- ➔ Shell Pandan Indah
- ➔ Klinik Leo ss14
- ➔ Ikea Damansara
- ➔ BHP R&R Jejantas Sungai Buloh
- ➔ KLPAC
- ➔ Shell TTDI

Reason: Good facilities, consistently maintained and free for public use.

to community service, which is washing the public toilets. This will certainly solve the cleanliness issue."

Pushing for more change

Wong aims to use her platform to further her cause. For one, she hopes to collaborate with private and governmental institutions, aiming to assist with their marketing efforts during their awareness campaigns.

"With topics such as this, if the delivery is done too seriously, the public might be bored and would not engage with it. But if I come into the picture, I can make it more interesting by injecting some fun and humour into it."

Her recent collaboration with the Federal Territories Department is one example. The campaign, titled *Kempen Bersih Setiap Tempat*, saw her advocating for cleanliness in a humorous yet educational manner.

Content-wise, she aims to review over 100 toilets this year, including facilities outside the Klang Valley such as at famous tourist destinations.

"These spots are important because they influence tourists' impressions of Malaysia. If the toilets are dirty, it will give them a bad impression of Malaysia."

"If I can improve the toilets at tourist places, it will give them a better impression when they come over. Other than that, I am looking at reviewing refurbished toilets such as rest and relaxation toilets," she added.



Wong says many establishments have responded positively to her suggestions.

Wong wants the government to fine those misusing public toilets.

Spa on budget

► DIY your way to self-care without leaving home

■ BY VERONICA ELANKOVAN

IN between deadlines and a full-blown meltdown – sometimes, all a corporate baddie needs is a pampering spa day. But, let's be real – between meetings, unread emails and the occasional morning existential crisis, pencilling a time for self-love may seem like trying to rebuild ancient Rome in all of its glory – near impossible.

When you are living life in the fast lane, slowing down starts to feel like an appointment that needs to be scheduled a week in advance, especially if it involves a day at the spa or *onsen*. But here is the truth: It does not take much for self-care. You do not need a reservation, robe with your initials and a RM200 bill.

Yes, you read that right. You can just do it yourself, right at home.

So, here is the only guide you will ever need to make yourself an exclusive home spa.

Set ambience

Bathroom lighting is usually not harsh, so the vibe is already there. Now, set the mood with some aromatherapy.

Light up that pricey three-wick candle you have been saving for a special day because it is today. If you do not have one, a medium-sized diffuser will do just fine. For a total mental



Sometimes all you need to de-stress is a day of self-care. – PEXELSPIC



Scented candles will make your bathroom smell like a luxurious spa.

detox, calming scents such as lavender, eucalyptus, sandalwood or rose will help ground your busy mind and clear out stress energy.

Shower steamers are a good option if you are not into strong scents. Place it close to where you shower and the steamer will slowly dissolve and release a soft scent to calm your mind. If you like musky, earthy scents, incense is your bath partner.

Full-body reset

Now that the tone and mode are set, it is time for a full-body reset. A mental cleanse alone is not enough, the body has to be properly cleaned to feel brand new. Here is your three-step ritual: Prep, exfoliate and moisturise.

➔ Prep

Use a gentle antibacterial, unscented bar soap, lather it onto a Konjac sponge and glide it across your skin gently.

Let the process take about 10 minutes – there is no need to rush. For once, there is no deadline. Focus on the repetitive motion. Let your mind wander. This is the stillness you crave amid the chaos.

➔ Exfoliate

Detoxifying is not just for your insides, it is good for your skin too. Invest in some high-quality bath salts (either a pink Himalayan salt or Epsom salt).

Using the same sponge and scrub in a circular motion. Think about that mildly annoying colleague (you know that one!) and let that passive-aggressive energy fuel your scrub – but gently. You are not trying to peel off an epidermis.

➔ Moisturise

Do not skip this part. After cleansing and exfoliating, your skin is thirsty and in need of hydration. To replenish the skin, gently lather a moisturising body wash that contains shea butter – it is a powerhouse for hydration.

You could use your freshly rinsed sponge to help distribute it evenly across your body. Wash off with warm water and stay under the stream just long enough to unwind, but not too long that you come out looking like a raisin.



A Konjac sponge will scrub away dead skin cells while being gentle.



Shower steamers are for those who prefer a softer, slower release of scents.

Unpack and unwind

After your bath, wrap yourself in a thick, fluffy towel – bonus point if it is made of Turkish or Egyptian cotton. Let it gently hug your skin like the reward you deserve. But you are not done yet. A spa day is simply not complete without skincare.

Play your favourite chill playlist and apply a cooling face mask – cucumber or tea tree oil are good options for moisturising and post-steam relief.

Relax on your lazy chair or bed and let the soft melodies sway you as the mask works its magic. Keep the candles burning. Breathe. Be still. Do not think about tomorrow's deadline or the unanswered emails.

Allow yourself to drift into your happy place and let yourself be carried away by the layered notes as you drift into a good night's sleep.



Pink Himalayan Salt balances the body's pH, improves skin conditions and soothes sore muscles. – PICS FROM PINTEREST



Celebrating Swedish craftsmanship

Return of Ikea Stockholm

BRUNO Mars. *Back to the Future*. What do they all have in common? They turn 40 this year – just like Ikea Stockholm. Because when something is truly great, it does not age. It endures.

This year, Ikea is celebrating 40 years of Stockholm – a collection born from the best of Scandinavian design principles: Simplicity, functionality and beauty. Since its launch in 1985, Stockholm has remained a beloved classic for those who appreciate timeless craftsmanship, exceptional quality and enduring style at an affordable price.

Timeless Scandinavian craftsmanship

The new Stockholm collection stays true to its roots while embracing modern living. With a focus on quality, comfort and tactility, the collection is made to be lived in and loved for generations. While earlier collections focus on matching pieces, Stockholm 2025 embraces bold combinations with a variety of materials and colours.

"It is all about the details, from the design to the material choices. Like with the dining chairs, where we used oak because it ages with grace, leather seating for comfort and a beautifully curved back so guests can linger for hours," emphasised Ikea Stockholm designer Ola Wihlborg.

Comfort meets craft

With over 90 pieces, each item in the collection is designed using natural, long-lasting materials such as solid wood, mouth-blown glass, rattan and pure wool. The result is a sense of warmth and honesty in every item, from statement sofas to elegant tableware.

Whether it is a curved sofa that invites conversation, a rattan cabinet that evokes a sense of calm or a set of tableware that elevates every meal, Stockholm is designed to fit beautifully into your home and budget. The collection aims for elegance without the excess – refined, yet rooted in everyday life.

You can discover for yourself how Stockholm 2025 brings home the soul of Scandinavian living, as the collection is now available at all Ikea stores nationwide.



The Stockholm 2025 collection echoes Sweden's beautiful landscape and design heritage.



The collection embraces bold combinations and striking colours.

Oak wood is used throughout the collection as it ages with grace.



France takes top spot for most expensive locales

WHILE France is famously known as one of the world's top tourist destinations, it is also home to several locales where the ultra-rich who come to settle: Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Paris and Nice. France is home to the most cities and towns on this year's list of most expensive cities in terms of real estate prices.

France is famous for croissants, high-end cuisine, rich and diverse cheese offering, and varied landscapes, which make it a desirable vacation setting for visitors from all over the world. Last year, more than 100 million tourists paid a visit. In terms of visitor numbers, France ranked once again in 2024 as the world's leading tourist destination. But France is also attractive to the ultra-wealthy, as indicated by the numerous ultra-luxurious villas, houses and apartments.

A new report by Henley & Partners, which looks at migration patterns of the ultra-wealthy and assesses the preferences of the world's richest individuals to understand where they settle, reveals the country's considerable appeal among this demographic. While Paris is behind Monaco, New York, Hong Kong and London in terms of most expensive city per square metre, France stands out as the country with the most cities and towns with the highest prices per square metre in the world.

Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, very close to Nice



Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat is home to real estate with the highest price per square metre in France.

– AFPPIC

on the French Riviera, ranks fifth on this list of the most expensive destinations on the planet. The price per square metre is estimated at US\$21,200 (RM93,600). The beautiful Mediterranean city outranks other wealthy celebrity havens such as Palm Beach, Miami Beach and Los Angeles in the US.

According to Henley & Partners, France has the most expensive cities in the world.

There is no shortage of examples: Paris is 6th, Nice 13th, Cannes 15th, Antibes 18th and the small village of Eze 20th. Indeed, this reveals a concentration of wealth on the Cote d'Azur, not far from the Italian border. And unsurprisingly the city that tops the ranking, Monaco, is in this same geographical area. The price per metre outstrips the other destinations at US\$38,800.

Top 20 most expensive cities in the world (based on price per square metre):

- 📍 Monaco
- 📍 New York (USA)
- 📍 Hong Kong
- 📍 London (UK)
- 📍 Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (France)
- 📍 Paris (France)
- 📍 Sydney (Australia)
- 📍 Palm Beach (US)
- 📍 Miami Beach (US)
- 📍 Los Angeles (US)
- 📍 Singapore
- 📍 Geneva (Switzerland)
- 📍 Nice (France)
- 📍 Portofino (Italy)
- 📍 Cannes (France)
- 📍 Tokyo (Japan)
- 📍 Lugano (Switzerland)
- 📍 Antibes (France)
- 📍 Porto Cervo (Italy)
- 📍 Eze (France)

Note that this ranking has been established based on the real estate value of the destinations analysed. When the concentration of the largest fortunes is taken as the metric, the podium becomes quite different, with New York, the Bay Area (which includes San Francisco and Silicon Valley) and Tokyo coming in as top cities for millionaires. – ETX Studio

MOVIE REVIEW

BY VERONICA ELANKOVAN

IN an era of reboots under the banner of “live action”, Yu Yang’s *Ne Zha 2* was validation for cinephiles that good cinema is not on the brink of extinction.

The saga, inspired by a recurring character in Taoist mythology, *Investiture of the Gods* and *Journey to the West*, continues the story of “demon” boy Ne Zha as he learns more about his powers, dynamics of the spirit and demon pearls, and the truth about his destiny in the second instalment.

The first movie follows anti-protagonist Ne Zha, who absorbs the Chaos pearl before being born, in a retribution journey as he tries to gain the love and kindness of Chentang’s villagers.

The movie closes with him and Ao Bing, the dragon prince, learning the truth about their births as they gave up their lives (read: mortal forms) to defeat the heavenly lightning that was meant to end Ne Zha, losing their mortal flesh in the process.

The second movie opens with them trying to recover their physical forms with the help of Taiyi Zhenren and the villagers, using the seven-coloured lotus.

It is learnt from the post-credits of the first movie that Dragon King Ao Guang only knows about his son’s death as told by Chengbao who failed to mention that Ao Bing’s sacrifice was voluntary.

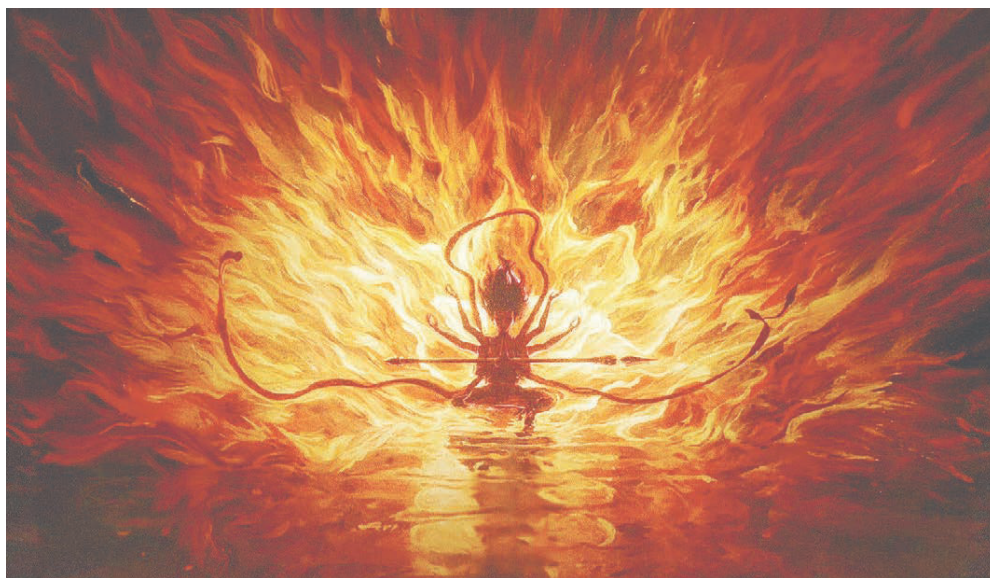
Blinded by heartbreak, Ao Guang launches war against Chentang Pass. This only disrupts his son’s recovery as his invasion leads to the destruction of the



Ne Zha 2 is in cinemas.
— ALL PICS FROM IMDB



The tiff between the dragons and Ne Zha prolongs in the second instalment.



Ne Zha absorbs the demon pearl before he was born.

➔ **Director:**
Yu Yang
➔ **Cast:**
Yanting Lu,
Han Mo,
Joseph

E-VALUE 8
ACTING 6
PLOT 6

Rebirth of Chinese animation

➔ *Ne Zha 2* proves originality is not extinct

incubator lotuses made from fire and water – Ne Zha and Ao Bing core elements, respectively.

The movie then follows the journey of Ne Zha, who goes on a mission to retrieve an elixir from the Heavens to revive their lotuses as he temporarily harbours Ao Bing’s spirit within him. Meanwhile, Ao Guang leaves Chengbao in-charge of holding Chentang Pass hostage until the completion of the mission.

Chinese cinema brilliance

What *Ne Zha 2* does well, apart from its visually stunning animation, is it does not try hard to be different.

While conglomerate Disney seems to be at its wits’ end trying to stay politically correct by rehashing classic characters, *Ne Zha* narrates a straightforward tale of a rebellious deity who made all the wrong moves to make one right choice.

The movie puts the brilliance of Oriental storytelling on blast, showing Chinese filmmakers are not afraid of their roots and are not seeking Hollywood’s validation.

From lengthy fight scenes, snappy dialogues to slapstick comedy that is reminiscent of *Old Master Q* (*Lao Fu Zi*), the movie uses the same formula that Chinese period dramas and cartoons have employed for decades but on a larger scale.

Another charm of *Ne Zha* is that it manages to stay current by referencing the real world such as the screaming beaver meme, facial recognition and touch authentication methods. This may have been an attempt to connect with younger audiences that resonate with meme culture and technology.

Ne Zha 2 does not try to challenge the staid and overdone

formula of the hero battling intense emotions, messing up and ultimately, saving the day. On the contrary, the film embraces it.

By not fussing over complexity, the film stands out by allowing the story to grow organically alongside its characters.

Morally-grey characters

One of the major reasons *Ne Zha* has quickly shaped up to be a formidable contender to the output of giants such as Sony, Pixar and Dreamworks is its strong, layered characters.

The film took existing personalities from Taoist mythology and did not “sanitise” them for the younger audience.

In the first movie, we saw Ne Zha battling his inner demons and overcoming fate by crafting his own destiny. The second instalment delves deeper into Ne Zha’s psyche as a “hero” still figuring out his moral bearings.

As he battles his impulsive nature that is often disastrous, the dynamics of Ne Zha and other characters such as Ao Bing and newly introduced Immortal Wuliang amps up the film’s intricacy as it tackles real-world themes – loss, grief, revenge, familial bonds and good versus evil. These are basic themes that were excellently explored through morally ambiguous characters.

Ne Zha 2 still keeps it lighthearted but peels back layers of its characters to reveal a deeper perspective. Their flawed nature mirrors mankind and humanises them, allowing the audience to empathise through glimpses into their backstories – such as Chengbao, who is initially portrayed as cunning and conniving.

The equivocal characters in *Ne Zha 2* is a microscopic lens into reality and humanity. It reinforces the idea that everyone harbours an ulterior motive – whether good or bad.

While the film adds depth to its existing characters, the newly introduced ones – even with their



The beaver scene is a reference to a popular meme.



Ao Qin is the Dragon King of the South and one of Ao Guang’s brothers.

polarising physical portrayals, such as Wuliang and the Chen clan – remain at core, one-dimensional, which is greedy people in power (the typical embodiment of evil).

Only time will tell if *Ne Zha 3* will humanise these characters or double down on their villainy.

Tradition-inspired art

The Chinese film fraternity has never been behind in CGI-animation. With films such as *Green Snake* and *Jiang Ziya* under its belt, *Ne Zha* is just another proof of the industry’s prowess.

The film’s creator revolutionised animation by blending two unalike disciplines – physics and art –

through the integration of fluid dynamics and particle visual effects to enhance dynamism and realism, as evident in the Dragon Place of Four Seas scene.

Amid the science versus art tug-of-war, *Ne Zha* proves that both can coexist without taking one out.

Breaking its own boundaries and championing traditional Chinese aesthetics, its creator had a new canvas to work on that did not rely on Hollywood’s animation standards.

Using the ink wash rendering technique, the film’s art direction was heavily influenced by the ancient Chinese art philosophy *liu bai*, which means leaving space, further emphasising the film’s Eastern roots.

With ancient *Dunhuang Flying Apsara* murals as inspiration, *Ne Zha* has a dream-like quality that visually represents Chinese mythologies. Whether through its vibrant colour grading or stunning visuals, *Ne Zha 2* is a brilliant product of five years’ labour!

While Western animation studios are busy serving re-heated nachos to fulfil their capitalist agenda, the East is serving up fresh *dim sum* straight off their bamboo steamers.

Ne Zha 2 is not just another animated movie. Instead, it is a cultural mirror that opens a fresh chapter in global animation by reaffirming the power of authentic storytelling.



Indonesia's horror movie industry rises from grave

CRUNCHING popcorn and screaming, Indonesians are flocking to watch homegrown horror films in cinemas that draw on the country's penchant for ghost and monster stories.

The genre now dominates Indonesian theatres after this folklore helped the industry rise from the grave at the start of the century, when almost no horror films were produced locally, compared with scores last year.

"Our parents and grandparents used these stories to scare us. These tales are very close to us," said Ekky Imanjaya, 52, a film studies lecturer at Jakarta's Bina Nusantara University.

According to the Indonesian Film Board, 60% of the 258 productions made domestically last year were horror films. They accounted for 54.6 million tickets sold – or 70% of the total audience.

Moviegoer Elang, a 25-year-old consultant, said while leaving a theatre the genre's success was down to "emphasis on local traditions and monsters" such as *Pocong*, a ghost still wrapped in a burial cloth.

Another movie enthusiast Ajeng Putri, 29, said films that drew inspiration from the country's urban legends were "easier to understand (and) more exciting".

Those include *Tuyul*, a living-dead child, and *Kuntilanak*, a woman unable to give birth while her stillborn baby remains inside her.

Renaissance

Indonesia's film production "declined drastically" in the 1990s due to lack of funding, according to Jakarta-based production company Studio Antelope.

Film archive and data centre Sinematek Indonesia counted just 456 movies made between 1990 and 2000.

"Among them, 37 are horror films," said archive worker Wahyudi, 55.

Yet the country's industry earned the Guinness World Record two years ago for the film industry most focused on horror.

Last year, Indonesia's largest cinema operator XXI recorded five of its top 10 movies as horror films, drawing 27.8 million of ticket sales.

Indonesia's first horror film was made in 1971 under the rule of dictator Suharto, who led the country with an iron fist for almost three decades. It was not until the 2010s "that a new wave began" for the domestic industry, said Ekky.

New directors, the most famous being Joko Anwar, "changed everything by making very good independent horror films of high quality," said Ismail Basbeth, a 39-year-old director from Yogyakarta.

After the Covid-19 pandemic, the industry roared back to life with the 2022 film *KKN di Desa Penari*, which sold 10 million tickets. The film is based on a supposedly true story of students experiencing supernatural events in a rural community service programme.

"It launched a new wave of more realistic films, based on real events," said director Nanang Istiadudi, 53.

Indonesian cinemas generated US\$136 million (RM601 million) in gross revenue in 2022, according to website Film Indonesia.

PwC Indonesia estimated the cinema industry contributed billions to the country's

economy in that year, and said it is expected to grow more than 6% annually until 2027.

The boom also earned the industry a programme at the 2023 Busan International Film Festival, often considered Asia's most important, titled "the renaissance of Indonesian cinema".

Western interest

Alongside urban myths, Indonesian horror films call on religious themes, which dominate society in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation.

In some feature films, passages from the *Quran* are used or the entire plot line can be inspired by Islam. The rise of streaming services has allowed certain movies to reach a wider international audience, said director Ismail Basbeth, who attended Busan in 2023.

Even small production houses such as Jakarta-based Avantgarde Productions are finding success in exporting films to neighbouring countries.

"The latest films have been released in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and we are negotiating with Vietnam," said Marianne Christianti Purnaawan, a 27-year-old producer at the company.

It is the curiosity of Indonesians in horror movies and the appetite of international viewers that leave experts predicting Indonesia's unique export will be far from dead for years to come.

"Indonesian films are successful abroad because they are unique, exotic and unimaginable. The horror film audience seeks the unknown," said Ekky. – AFP



Puteri Khareeza says the recording experience was deeply meaningful.

Lumrah Cinta finally releases

AFTER being "kept away" for nearly seven years, the song *Lumrah Cinta*, co-created by singers Syamel and Aepul Roza, has finally been brought to life by talented singer Puteri Khareeza.

Released under Alternate Records, the pop ballad tells the story of a broken-hearted person still willing to make space for love again.

According to Aepul, with some fresh touches to the lyrics and musical arrangement, *Lumrah Cinta* now presents a more mature and emotional feel that is closer to one's heart, making it a fitting companion for those who have experienced heartbreak.

"The original idea for the song came from Syamel, with the melody first created about seven years ago. Ballads have always been my favourite genre to produce and this collaboration between Syamel and me gives a different feel.

"This year, we were lucky enough to find the right singer for it. We made slight adjustments to the melody and lyrics, and thankfully, the end result is very satisfying," he said in a statement.

Taking only two hours to complete the recording, Puteri Khareeza said the experience was deeply meaningful.

"I was really excited but at the same time nervous because Syamel and Aepul are big names in the industry and artists I truly admire. This song is not easy to sing.

"The biggest challenge was in conveying the emotion in every line of the lyrics, especially since the original demo was recorded by the composer himself, Syamel. Even vocally, it was demanding," she said.

Lumrah Cinta is available on all digital platforms, including Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube Music. – Bernama



Horror film posters on display at the Usmar Ismail Film Centre in Jakarta. – AFPIC



theSun
Malaysian Paper

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322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF DECORWIN FURNISHING SDN. BHD.
Registration No. 201001017445 (901150-W)
(IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, the Final Meeting of the Members of the Company will be held at 13C, Lorong Brunei 2, 55100 Kuala Lumpur on the 19 day of May 2025 at 10.00 a.m. for the purpose of:-

1. To receive the Liquidator's Statement of Final Account showing the manner in which the winding-up has been conducted and the property of the Company disposed of and to hear any explanation that may be given by the Liquidator.
2. To determine the manner in which books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator shall be disposed of.

Dated this: 17 April 2025

Signed by
HUN SIEW TIN
Liquidator

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF BON TON DISCOVERY SDN. BHD.
Registration No. 199901009226 (484126-X)
(In Members' Voluntary Winding-Up)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, the Final Meeting of the contributors of the abovementioned Company will be held at the Liquidators' office at Wisma Goshen, 2nd Floor, 60, 62 & 64 Jalan SS 22/21, Damansara Jaya, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan on Monday, 19th day of May, 2025 at 10.00 a.m. for the following purposes:-

1. To lay before the meeting the Liquidators' statement of account and to give explanations thereof.
2. To decide under Section 518(3) (b) of the Companies Act, 2016, the manner in which the books, accounts and documents of the Company may be destroyed.

Dated this 17th day of April, 2025.

Lam Lee San (f)
Lee Yee Ching (f)
Liquidators

NOTE:
A contributor entitled to attend and vote at the abovementioned meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy who need not be a member of the Company to attend and vote in his stead. The instrument appointing a proxy must be duly deposited at the Liquidators' office, not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF Hektor Simfoni Sdn. Bhd.
201101027925 (956060-A)
(IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to Section 459(2) of the Companies Act, 2016, the Final Meeting of the Members of the Company will be held at 13C, Lorong Brunei 2, 55100 Kuala Lumpur on the 19 day of May 2025 at 10.00 a.m. for the purpose of:-

1. To receive the Liquidator's Statement of Final Account showing the manner in which the winding-up has been conducted and the property of the Company disposed of and to hear any explanation that may be given by the Liquidator.
2. To determine the manner in which books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator shall be disposed of.

Dated this: 17 April 2025

Signed by
HUN SIEW TIN
Liquidator

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF FRIENDS TRADING CO. (M) SDN. BHD.
(198601000054) (149189-X)
(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 Contributors will be held at No. 81 (2nd Floor), Jalan Market, 30000 Ipoh, Perak on Friday, 23 May 2025 at 2.00 p.m. for the following purposes:-

1. To receive and adopt the Final Accounts of the Liquidator showing the manner in which the winding up has been conducted and to receive any explanation thereof.
2. To resolve under Section 518 (3) (b) of the Companies Act 2016 that the books, accounts and documents of the Company and of the Liquidator be destroyed immediately after the dissolution of the Company.
3. To approve and accept the resignation of Liquidator pursuant to Section 513(3) of the Companies Act 2016.

LAM CHUI YOKE
Liquidator

Dated this 17th day of April, 2025

322 Notices

AMBI... PERHATIAN bahawa satu Petisyen Perlesenan bertarikh 22-11-2024, Aduwail oleh Pempetisyen Menyongok Petisyen yang diiktirafkan oleh Chong Kai Qing pada 22-11-2024, Menyatakan Mengenai Perseutujuan bagi Anak-anak bertarikh 22-11-2024, Aduwailnya. Penampakan, Notis Prosiding bertarikh 12-03-2025 dan lain-lain kertas (selapas ini dikenali secara kolektif sebagai "Petisyen Perlesenan tersebut") telah diikhtirafkan terhadap anda sebagai Responden di Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur oleh CHONG KAI QING (NO. KP: 940427-14-6202) dan Mahkamah telah mementeraikan bahawa Petisyen Perlesenan tersebut berserta satu salinan Perintah Penampakan Ganti yang dimeteraikan bertarikh 27-03-2025 ditampakan di Papan Krayan Mahkamah Tinggi Kuala Lumpur dan pada suatu tempat yang mudah dilihat di alamat terakhir kami di No. 674, Kg Chempaka, Sungai Way, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan dan menyebarkan Notis diikhtirafkan dalam akhbar harian "The Sun" untuk sekali dalam Bahasa Malaysia ("Penampakan-Penampakan dan Pengiklanan tersebut") dan Pengiklanan tersebut hendaklah menjadi penyampaian yang sempurna dan cukup dan Kertas Kausa tersebut ke atas kami empat belas (14) hari selepas tarikh akhir Penampakan-Penampakan dan Pengiklanan tersebut dibuat.

Selanjutnya ambil perhatian bahawa Pengusutan kes bagi Petisyen Perlesenan tersebut di Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur adalah pada 15 Mei 2025 jam 9.00 pagi. Petisyen Perlesenan tersebut juga boleh didaftarkan oleh anda atas permohonan di Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur.

Bertarikh pada 15 April 2025

Christopher Yun & Partners
Tetuan Christopher Yun & Partners
Peguacara bagi Pempetisyen

NOTIS IKLAN ini ditakrifkan oleh Tetuan Christopher Yun & Partners, Peguacara bagi pihak Pempetisyen yang mempunyai alamat penampakan di D-3A-8, Plaza Mont Kiara, 2, Jalan Kiara, 50480 Mont Kiara, Kuala Lumpur. (Tel: 03 - 6412 5494) (Fax: 03 - 6412 5495) [Puj No. LIT/240538/AD/CC/CQ]

322 Notices

AMBI... PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ bermeterai bertarikh 12-03-2025 telah dikeluarkan ke atas kamu dalam Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang dengan nama, Sybil No. PA-472NC-206-03/2025 oleh Public Bank Berhad yang mempunyai alamat di No. 407-A & 408-A, Jalan Jelutong, 11600 Jelutong, Pulau Pinang dan peritahan bahawa Writ bermeterai tersebut bersama dengan Penampakan Tuntutan bertarikh 12-03-2025 ditampakan kepada kamu secara penyampaian ganti dengan menampakan kertas-kertas kausa bersama dengan Perintah Penampakan Ganti bermeterai di Papan Notis Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang di Tingkat 6, Bangunan Sri Pinang, Jalan Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah, 10200 Pulau Pinang dan pada satu bahagian yang jelas kelihatan di alamat-alamat terakhir yang diketahui iaitu pada No. 54-2-1, Wisma Sri Mata, Ven Praang Road, 11600 Georgetown, Pulau Pinang dan/atau No. 6C-1-1, Tingkat Thean Teik Satu, Bandar Baru Air Itam, 11500 Ayer Itam, Pulau Pinang dan memasukkan satu iklan dalam suatu surat khabar tempatan Bahasa Inggeris iaitu "The Sun" untuk satu (1) terbitan dan bahawa penampakan dan pengiklanan itu hendaklah ditampakan sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna dan cukup bagi Writ tersebut dalam tempoh masa tujuh (7) hari dari tarikh akhir penampakan dengan kes penyampaian ganti dijadikan kes dalam kausa.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membebel tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu di hadapan Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang pada 20-05-2025 jam pukul 9.00 pagi. Jika kamu ingkar hadir sedemikian, satu penghakiman boleh dibuat terhadap kamu oleh Mahkamah.

Bertarikh 17 April 2025.

----- T.T. -----
Peguacara Plaintiff

302 Jobs

theSun
Malaysian Paper

WE ARE HIRING!

1) EXECUTIVE / SENIOR - HR & Admin
2) ASST MANAGER / MANAGER - HR & Admin

Job Description

- Maintain HR records, including employee files, salaries and benefits information.
- Handle employee attendance records, payroll and claims.
- Handle employee relations and resolve any workplace conflicts or issues.
- Provide HR support and guidance to managers and employees.
- Ensure compliance with all employment laws and regulations.
- Stay updated on changes in work legislation and industry standards.
- Handle employee training and development programmes.
- Manage employee benefits programmes and ensure compliance with regulations.
- Stay updated on current industry trends and best practices in HR management.
- For Senior/Assistant Manager - with supervisor skills.
- Handle staff training and recruitment matters.
- Experience in payroll system would be advantageous.
- Handle General Admin and other HR duties.

Requirements

- Diploma/Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management or related field.
- Executive: 1+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Senior: 3+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Asst Manager: 5+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply for Assistant Executive post.
- Basic HR knowledge and proficiency in Microsoft Office.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

3) EXECUTIVE - Safety & Building Maintenance

Job Description

- Perform routine and preventive maintenance on factory & office building systems, including HVAC, electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems.
- Conduct regular inspections of the factory & office building to identify and address maintenance issues.
- Respond promptly to maintenance requests and ensure timely resolution.
- Maintain accurate records of maintenance activities, including work orders, inspections and repairs.
- Ensure all maintenance activities comply with relevant health, safety and environmental regulations.
- Coordinate with external contractors and vendors for specialised maintenance and repair works.
- Monitor and optimise energy usage to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Assist in preparation and management of maintenance budget.
- Assist in any ad-hoc operations and admin tasks assigned by Management from time to time.

Requirements

- Diploma/Degree in Building or Facilities Management, Safety & Health or related field.
- Additional certificate: Electrical Chargeman, preferably A4 or minimum A1 would be an added advantage.
- Minimum of one year of experience in Building Maintenance or Safety & Health.
- Adequate technical knowledge of building systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing etc).
- Excellent problem-solving and troubleshooting skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Able to work flexi hours.
- Able to handle urgent and last-minute job request.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to: thesun.hr2@gmail.com
(Closing Date: April 30, 2025)

KATONGJU SENDIRIAN BERHAD
198001000201 (S3884-U)
(Members' Voluntary Winding-Up)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given to all the members of KATONGJU SENDIRIAN BERHAD (in Liquidation) that a Final Meeting of the members is to be held at No. 13 Jalan Mutiara Melaka 6, Batu Berendam, 75350 Melaka, on the 26th day of May 2025 at 10.00 a.m. to adopt the following:-

1. The Final Report by the Liquidator on the affairs of the liquidation.
2. The Statement of Receipts and Payments of the liquidation.
3. That the books and records of the company be destroyed after three months of the termination of the liquidation.

Dated this 17th day of April 2025.

CHONG TOONG MING
Liquidator
T. M. CHONG & COMPANY PLT
No. 13-1 Jalan Mutiara Melaka 6
Batu Berendam
75350 Melaka.

LIAN BEE ESTATE SDN. BHD.
201601031471 (1202412-P)
(Members' Voluntary Winding-Up)

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given to all the members of LIAN BEE ESTATES SDN BHD. (in Liquidation) that a Final Meeting of the members is to be held at No. 13 Jalan Mutiara Melaka 6, Batu Berendam, 75350 Melaka, on the 26th day of May 2025 at 11.00 a.m. to adopt the following:-

1. The Final Report by the Liquidator on the affairs of the liquidation.
2. The Statement of Receipts and Payments of the liquidation.
3. That the books and records of the company be destroyed after three months of the termination of the liquidation.

Dated this 17th day of April 2025.

CHONG TOONG MING
Liquidator
CHONG TOONG MING & CO.
(NF: 2591)
No. 13 Jalan Mutiara Melaka 6
Batu Berendam
75350 Melaka.

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA
DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM NEGERI WILAYAH PERSEUTUJUAN (BAHAGIAN KELUARGA)
PETISYEN PERCELAHAN NO. WA-33-954-11/2024

Dalam perkara mengenai perkahwinan di antara CHEN LI SIONG (NO. KP: 871015-29-5395) dan CHONG KAI QING (NO. KP: 940427-14-6202)

Dan

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 53, 54(1)(b), 88, 89, 93 dan 106(1) (jika Membantu Undang-Undang (Perkahwinan dan Perceraian) 1976

CHONG KAI QING (P)
(NO. KP: 940427-14-6202) ...PEMPETISEYEN

DAN

CHEN LI SIONG (L)
(NO. KP: 871015-29-5395) ...RESPONDEN

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada:-
CHEN LI SIONG
(NO. KP: 871015-29-5395)
No. 674, Kg Chempaka, Sungai Way
47301 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan

DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI GEORGETOWN
DALAM NEGERI PULAU PINANG
GUAMAN SYIL NO. PA-472NC-206-03/2025

ANTARA

PUBLIC BANK BERHAD
(NO. SYARIKAT 196501000672 (6463-H)) ... PLAINTIFF

DAN

1. ALVIN LIM TAT KOOI
bernama atas nama dan gaya sebagai "SIGNATURE MANAGEMENT"
(NO. PENDAFTARAN PERMAGAMAAN 201503196342 (PG0371322-D))

2. ALVIN LIM TAT KOOI
(NO. K.P. 830401-07-5461) ...DEFENDAN- DEFENDAN

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada:-
ALVIN LIM TAT KOOI
bernama atas nama dan gaya sebagai "SIGNATURE MANAGEMENT"
(NO. K.P. 830401-07-5461)
11500 Ayer Itam, Pulau Pinang

AMBI... PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ bermeterai bertarikh 12-03-2025 telah dikeluarkan ke atas kamu dalam Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang dengan nama, Sybil No. PA-472NC-206-03/2025 oleh Public Bank Berhad yang mempunyai alamat di No. 407-A & 408-A, Jalan Jelutong, 11600 Jelutong, Pulau Pinang dan peritahan bahawa Writ bermeterai tersebut bersama dengan Penampakan Tuntutan bertarikh 12-03-2025 ditampakan kepada kamu secara penyampaian ganti dengan menampakan kertas-kertas kausa bersama dengan Perintah Penampakan Ganti bermeterai di Papan Notis Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang di Tingkat 6, Bangunan Sri Pinang, Jalan Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah, 10200 Pulau Pinang dan pada satu bahagian yang jelas kelihatan di alamat-alamat terakhir yang diketahui iaitu pada No. 54-2-1, Wisma Sri Mata, Ven Praang Road, 11600 Georgetown, Pulau Pinang dan/atau No. 6C-1-1, Tingkat Thean Teik Satu, Bandar Baru Air Itam, 11500 Ayer Itam, Pulau Pinang dan memasukkan satu iklan dalam suatu surat khabar tempatan Bahasa Inggeris iaitu "The Sun" untuk satu (1) terbitan dan bahawa penampakan dan pengiklanan itu hendaklah ditampakan sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna dan cukup bagi Writ tersebut dalam tempoh masa tujuh (7) hari dari tarikh akhir penampakan dengan kes penyampaian ganti dijadikan kes dalam kausa.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membebel tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguambela kamu di hadapan Mahkamah Majistret di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang pada 20-05-2025 jam pukul 9.00 pagi. Jika kamu ingkar hadir sedemikian, satu penghakiman boleh dibuat terhadap kamu oleh Mahkamah.

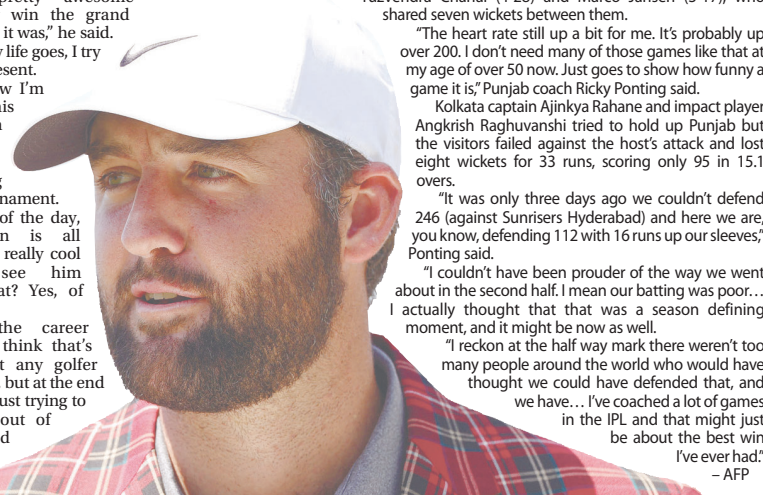
Bertarikh 17 April 2025.

----- T.T. -----
Peguacara Plaintiff

Scheffler remains the No. 1 player in the Official World Golf

"The guy has won FedEx Cup, The Players, all four majors. Maybe the only other thing would be the Olympics is what he would want to win."

"Winning the career grand slam, I think that's something that any golfer would dream of, but at the end of the day, I'm just trying to get the most out of myself." - Field Level Media



"I reckon at the half way mark there weren't too many people around the world who would have thought we could have defended that, and we have... I've coached a lot of games in the IPL and that might just turn out to be about the best win I've ever had."

— AFP

France's Arthur Fils beat Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta 7-6 (8-6), 6-3, while last year's runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas crushed giant American Reilly Opelka 6-2, 6-2. — AFP

[illegible]

SHORTS

Onana unsure about United recall

ANDRE ONANA believes a break from the Manchester United team has done him good but is not sure if he will be recalled to face Lyon tomorrow (3am Malaysian time).

Manager Ruben Amorim left the goalkeeper out of the squad for Sunday's 4-1 defeat to Newcastle to clear his head after he made two mistakes in the first leg of the Europa League quarterfinal against Lyon.

Amorim decided it was best to take Onana out of the firing line after a difficult week on and off the pitch, as thieves had stolen a watch and a handbag from his wife and United had given the family 24-hour protection.

The Cameroonian thinks he has benefited from a weekend off but Amorim is yet to confirm if he will bring him back into the team straight away.

Onana was involved in a war of words with Lyon's Nemanja Matic, who branded him one of the worst goalkeepers in United's history before last week's 2-2 draw at the Groupama Stadium.

And then the £47 million (RM259m) signing was at fault when Thiago Almada put Lyon ahead from a freekick and when Rayan Cherki equalised in the 95th minute.

Bayindir came for his Premier League debut at St James' Park but was to blame when Bruno Guimaraes scored Newcastle's fourth goal after his misplaced pass.

Tindall provides Howe update

NEWCASTLE UNITED assistant coach Jason Tindall maintains Eddie Howe (below) will not be rushed back after being diagnosed with pneumonia and revealed the pair have shared "minimal dialogue".

The Magpies thrashed Manchester United on Sunday to bolster hopes of a top four finish after their famous Carabao Cup triumph.

But after Howe was taken to hospital on Friday after falling ill, Tindall has detailed the "different situation" the squad faces without their manager.

"(Eddie will) make sure that he's fully recovered when he comes back and the sooner he's back, as I said before, you know, the best for everybody," Tindall said.

"But only at a time when he feels he's ready to come back and he's 100% ready to lead the team."

"I am here to step into the shoes. Hopefully the manager will be back as soon as possible."

"He's in the best possible hands and he'll be back as soon as he feels he's ready to come back."

"Your health is the most important thing, that's why it's so important that when he comes back he is able to lead the team as we know he does, which I'm sure he will do."



I have best squad in the world: Enrique

PARIS ST GERMAIN coach Luis Enrique hailed his squad as the best in the world yesterday after they reached the Champions League semifinals with a 5-4 aggregate win over Aston Villa.

The French side, who have never won Europe's elite club competition, will face either Arsenal or Real Madrid in their second semifinal in two years.

Yesterday, they lost 3-2 to Aston Villa in the second leg and the English side would have drawn level 5-5 or even won it over the two matches had goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma not pulled off a remarkable series of second-half saves.

"I think I have the best squad in the world, not only the goalkeeper. When you are in a club like

PSG, you have a lot of quality players," Enrique told *Amazon Prime TV*.

"I think in the whole two matches, we deserved to win... I am very happy because I can offer our supporters another qualification to the semifinal."

"I didn't think we'd be knocked out at any moment because Villa never managed to equalise the tie but for 10 minutes we really suffered," he admitted.

"I don't think this team has been so dominated by another team in that way."

"But the opponent has to take risks so they attacked with a lot of intensity, in front of a great crowd – but moments like this make our team better and we'll improve with the experience."

The PSG boss praised Villa's quality and intensity, which saw them come back on yesterday from 2-0 down – putting them 5-1 behind on aggregate – to score three times.

"We started the game in a great way, scoring two amazing goals, trying to take advantage of the spaces," he said.

"We cannot forget, this is the Champions League and you have to accept that the opposite team has a lot of quality. Aston Villa played with a lot of intensity in the second half."

"They didn't have anything to lose because they lost the first match and were losing at halftime in the first half (of the second leg)." – Reuters

'We thought it was over'

Dembele admits PSG switched off during 2nd leg defeat

PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN'S Ousmane Dembele said his side needed to learn not to switch off in big games after almost collapsing against Aston Villa in their Champions League quarterfinal yesterday, and called on his teammates to avoid making the same mistake in the last four.

"You have to be demanding especially in matches like these. We made the task difficult for ourselves, even if Aston Villa put us under a lot of pressure," Dembele told French broadcaster *Canal Plus* after PSG lost 3-2 on the night in the second leg, but squeezed through to the semifinals 5-4 on aggregate.

"They have good players too but I think we made life really difficult for ourselves, especially in the second half where we completely went off the boil."

"We thought we were better than we are," admitted Dembele. "At 2-1 we thought we were already qualified, that the tie was over. But this is what the Champions League is like."

"You can come up against teams, especially when they are at home with a heated crowd like that, who can turn games around. So we need to be more demanding of ourselves in the semifinals."

Through to their second consecutive semifinal in the

competition, PSG will face the winner of the last-eight tie between Arsenal and Real Madrid.

"This will help us enormously, especially as it should teach us to not stop playing, to keep playing both games right to the end," insisted France star Dembele.

"We are happy to be through but now we need to get back down to work because to win this trophy you

need to be really, really demanding."

He nevertheless admitted that there was "lots of joy in the dressing room" at the end of the game, as PSG remain on course to win the Champions League for the first time in their history.

"For Paris Saint-Germain to be in the semifinals is good for the club and for the whole (French) league, and we will try to do our best to get

to the final," added the 27-year-old.

PSG have now lost five matches out of 14 in the Champions League this season, including three out of six against Premier League opposition, but midfielder Vitinha insisted that being through to the next round was the main thing.

"We knew that qualifying was the most important thing, even if we always want to win," the Portuguese international told *Canal Plus*.

"We know it is not easy, playing against a good team in an incredible atmosphere. We started the match well, but then we created problems for ourselves, conceding goals the way we did."

"We were also up against a team who had nothing to lose and who kept pushing, and we switched off a bit, and when you do that in the Champions League you pay for it."

"But we managed to get through, to hold on until the end, so we are pleased. It is not easy to get to the semifinals." – AFP

PSG's Achraf Hakimi (centre)

celebrates scoring the opening goal during the Champions League quarterfinal 2nd leg match against Aston Villa. – **AFPPIX**



Sturridge hails Rashford's resurgence at Aston Villa

DANIEL STURRIDGE says Marcus Rashford has "proven everyone wrong" after a standout performance against Paris Saint-Germain exemplified his remarkable career resurgence since joining Aston Villa on loan.

Rashford was a constant threat for the Villains as they came from two goals down to beat PSG 3-2 in their Champions League quarterfinal second leg.

The Manchester United loanee, who signed for Unai Emery's side temporarily in January, was at the heart of Villa's third, dancing into the box before putting it on a plate for Ezri Konsa to tuck home.

Though the result wasn't enough to progress to the last four, being edged out 5-4 on

aggregate by the French giants, Villa could only leave the pitch with their head held high, having given Luis Enrique's side a mighty scare in a riotous second-half display.

And while focus has been on the heart and desire of the entire Villa team, Sturridge was keen to sign Rashford's praises after proving that he is still very much able to do damage against Europe's biggest hitters – just months after being written off by many.

"The narrative before he came here was that he's not the same player any more," Sturridge told *Amazon Prime*. "That was the narrative. He's proven everyone wrong."

"We have to give him credit. There was a big narrative out there that Marcus Rashford is not the

same player, and Ruben Amorim was correct about everything."

"But Rashford has come here and shown everybody this is who I am, and this is how I play. This is what I can bring to the table."

"As a football player, sometimes when a manager doesn't fancy you, it's up to you to show them: 'I am good enough. This is what I can do.' Sometimes you are not going to get the love from the manager, and you have to go on loan or fight for my spot."

"(Marcus) has chosen to come here and it has worked out for him. Sometimes you make these decisions and it goes the other way."

"I'm really proud of him that he's come here and shown everybody what it is all about." – The Independent

BORUSSIA DORTMUND striker Serhou Guirassy said his side had sealed their fate with a poor first leg performance in Barcelona last week, despite a much improved display in a 3-1 home win yesterday.

Trailing 4-0 from the first leg, Guirassy gave Dortmund a glimmer of hope with an early penalty and then a second goal just after halftime.

But an own goal effectively killed off the tie in Barcelona's favour despite Guirassy completing his hatrick with 14 minutes left.

"They're a great team, we're also a great team, we showed that today. It's a shame the gap was too big in the first leg," Guirassy told *Amazon Prime*.

Guirassy moved up to 13 goals in the

Gap too big, says Dortmund striker

Champions League this season, more than any other player in the competition and a club record.

"It's great to be the top scorer in the Champions League; there are some great players. Being first also means that I'm a great scorer, but without the team, I can't do it alone."

Dortmund defender Niklas Sule, who won the Champions League with Bayern Munich in 2020, agreed "that we messed it

up in the first leg... the performance was too bad in Barcelona."

The German side looked to have made it 4-1 on the night through Julian Brandt with 11 minutes remaining, but the goal was disallowed for offside and Barcelona progressed 5-3 on aggregate.

"I think it would've been an exciting last 10 minutes," said Dortmund midfielder Pascal Gross.

"Until the last minute we

played to show we believed so the stadium would believe in it.

"We're out because of the bitter game in Barcelona, but you can see we are good enough to go toe-to-toe with them."

Despite the exit from the Champions League, Dortmund head coach Niko Kovac expressed great pride in his players' performance at Signal Iduna Park.

"We all watched a wonderful match tonight, especially from my team, the game was filled with excitement and a lot of attacking pressure."

"I feel a great disappointment for our exit from the tournament, but today we handed Barcelona their first defeat in 2025, and that is something to be proud of."

"We were completely different from the first leg, we played with more courage, and there was greater decisiveness and focus in our performance." – AFP/Agencies



Guirassy hatrick in vain

Borussia Dortmund's Serhou Guirassy (left) looks dejected after the match against Barcelona. – REUTERS/PIC

... as Barca go through to Champions League semifinal despite defeat

BARCELONA are through to the Champions League semifinals with a 5-3 aggregate win, despite losing 3-1 at Borussia Dortmund yesterday with Serhou Guirassy hitting a hatrick.

Holding a 4-0 lead after a dominant performance in Catalonia, the visitors were made to sweat as Dortmund and Guirassy nearly pulled off a stunning turnaround.

Guirassy put Dortmund in front with a Panenka from the spot with 11 minutes gone and headed them two goals clear early in the second half.

Dortmund sensed a sensation but Barcelona hit back, Fermin Lopez forcing Rami Bensebaini into an own goal with just over half an hour remaining.

Guirassy reignited Dortmund's belief with a third on the 76th-minute mark and the final stages may have been different had Julian Brandt not been offside before scoring with 11 minutes remaining.

Barcelona are through to the semis, keeping their dream of a remarkable treble alive, 10 years after last completing the feat by winning the Champions League in Berlin.

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick praised Dortmund's performance and said his side "need to focus on the positive, not the negatives."

"What the team has shown in the past few weeks is incredible. We've got a lot ahead of us this season. We're a step further but we're not even close to the end," added the German.

"We played two games and it's justified that we're through. I don't want to talk too much about my team, because it wouldn't be fair to Dortmund," said Flick.

"They made our lives very hard but what was important is we made it to the semifinals."

Through to the *Copa del Rey* final and four points ahead in La Liga, Barcelona remain on track for a treble.

Barcelona midfielder Lopez, whose pass led to the Bensebaini own goal, said the experience would make the Catalans stronger.

"Dortmund have a really good team, you saw that today. Last week we made them suffer at our place. Today we suffered here, but in the end we were able to limit the damage," said the 21-year-old.

"We're now in the semifinals and can draw a lot of strength from this game today because it was a big task."

The defeat was Barcelona's first in any competition in 2025 and Flick said he had "full trust that we'll get back on track."

"Now's the time to celebrate what we've done, getting to the semifinals, then we can get back to analysing what's ahead of us," added the German.

Clearly outclassed in the first leg, Dortmund will take inspiration from yesterday's performance, not least the goalscoring form of Guirassy.

The 29-year-old Guinean, who has spent most of his career bouncing between the first and second divisions in Germany and France, now has 13 Champions League goals this season – more than any other player.

"I'm proud of what we were able to do. Barcelona are a strong team but we fought until the death. We showed what we can do," Guirassy said to *Amazon Prime*. – AFP



SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5953/2025 DATE: 16/04/2025 (WED)
STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.
19690100090 (8428-D)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	9491
2nd Prize	1829
3rd Prize	0369

Special	Consolation
5320 4492	0237 0254
6241 4508	9432 2247
2328 2202	1768 6275
0035 4182	6037 7548
9761 1547	7054 7643

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 **RM 8,757,792.55**

9491 1829	1829 9491
9491 0369	0369 9491
1829 0369	0369 1829

Jackpot 2 **RM 160,362.62**

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize	9491	+	
2nd Prize	1829	+	
3rd Prize	0369	+	GOAT
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D	1ST	7 8 0 3 1
2ND	2 8 0 7 5	4TH 8 0 3 1
3RD	3 1 2 6 9	5TH 0 3 1
		6TH 3 1

6D	1ST	5 6 0 0 5 6
2ND	5 6 0 0 5	or 6 0 0 5 6
3RD	5 6 0 0	or 0 0 5 6
4TH	5 6 0	or 0 5 6
5TH	5 6	or 5 6

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SUPREME 7	(2) (7) (11) (33) (34) (54)
Jackpot	RM 33,324,925.82

POWER 6	(20) (22) (24) (27) (37) (54)
Jackpot	RM 11,579,037.70

STAR 6	(1) (6) (24) (25) (33) (50) + (2)
Jackpot 1	RM 4,996,530.30
Jackpot 2	RM 100,000.00

Toto 4D Jackpot 2 (i-System)

RM 160,730

won on 13/04/2025!

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WINNING NUMBERS damacai

Draw Date: 16/04/25 (Wed) Draw No: 5900/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER 1+3D	
1st Prize	3357
2nd Prize	3576
3rd Prize	5102
Starters	Consolation
9064 0487	1834 7398
9111 4962	3893 6720
5451 8759	8834 5071
8067 3624	5468 6485
0484 0890	5426 4624

1+3D Jackpot	
Jackpot 1	RM17,690,156.70
3357 + 3576	3576 + 3357
3357 + 5102	5102 + 3357
3576 + 5102	5102 + 3576

Jackpot 2	RM192,951.50
-----------	--------------

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus	
1st Prize	Bonus
413 357 + ROOSTER	1st Prize Bonus
	RM80,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus
993 576 + DOG	2nd Prize Bonus
	RM922,611.00
3rd Prize	Bonus
675 102 + TIGER	3rd Prize Bonus
	RM1,991,506.00

Starters	Consolation
109 064 630 487	031 834 497 398
049 111 254 962	483 893 046 720
085 451 948 759	898 834 035 071
498 067 473 624	225 468 366 485
300 484 640 890	555 426 264 624

3D	
1st Prize	357
2nd Prize	576
3rd Prize	102

3D Jackpot	
Jackpot	RM1,072,089.90
357 + 576 + 102	576 + 102 + 357
357 + 102 + 576	102 + 357 + 576
576 + 357 + 102	102 + 576 + 357

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

1+3D Jackpot 2 RM495,378.80 won on 13/4/25!

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RESULTS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE (Quarterfinals, 2nd leg): **Borussia Dortmund 3** (Guirassy 11-pen, 49, 76) **Barcelona 1** (Bensebaini 54-og) – Barcelona win 5-3 on agg, **Aston Villa 3** (Tielemans 34, McGinn 55, Konsa 57) **Paris Saint-Germain 2** (Hakimi 11, Mendes 27) – PSG win 5-4 on agg.

Rapid rise of Pickleball sparks tension

ONCE a niche American pastime, pickleball is rapidly gaining traction in Malaysia. However, not everyone is thrilled.

A fast-paced hybrid of tennis, badminton and table tennis, the sport has exploded in popularity nationwide, attracting players of all ages with its accessible rules and dynamic gameplay.

Played with paddles on a court measuring 6.1m wide and 13.4m long, pickleball is being embraced both for recreational fun and competitive play.

Nevertheless, as more pickleball courts are introduced, often replacing or modifying existing tennis and badminton facilities, the sport is drawing criticism from purists of these traditional racquet games.

Complaints have emerged regarding changes to shared courts, with some players voicing concerns over the visual disruption and the potential wear-and-tear to the courts caused by the sport's rapid growth.

Despite the backlash, pickleball's momentum shows no signs of slowing.

"We encountered resistance early on, with some operators rejecting our requests to use their courts due to fears the ball would damage the surface," said Malaysian Pickleball Association (MPA) president Farrel Choo Kah Thiam, who introduced the sport to Miri, Sarawak.

"But we were fortunate that others allowed us to play and we've always ensured to remove the tape markings after each session," he added.

A further sticking point has been the high cost of renting courts for pickleball, with some venues charging up to RM70 an hour, although Choo explains that prices are determined by market forces and are largely outside the control of the MPA.

"When we started in Miri, court rentals were as low as RM27 to RM30 per hour," he said.

"But as demand increases, prices rise, and the operators are responsible for setting these rates.

"But I believe that as more dedicated pickleball facilities are built, the cost will eventually decrease," he added.

While some remain sceptical about pickleball's long-term appeal, Choo remains confident that the sport is not just a passing fad.

He points to the sport's local growth, from 2,000 active players in March last year to over 10,000 by November, as evidence of its growing popularity and potential staying power.

Looking ahead, the MPA are exploring new avenues for expansion, including lobbying for pickleball's inclusion in future editions of the Malaysia Games (Sukma).

The association are also preparing to host the inaugural Malaysia Open in Sarawak in July, which is expected to attract local and international players. – Bernama

Bigger prize money incentive for shuttlers

MONEY MATTERS, indeed. With the Malaysia Masters 2025 next month offering increased total prize money – from US\$420,000 (RM1.85m) to US\$475,500 (RM2.1m) – expect newly-crowned Badminton Asia Championships 2025 men's doubles champions Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik to play with an extra spring in their steps.

It has also spurred them to try and reach the final of the Malaysia Masters for the first time.

"We are excited to compete on home soil and see many familiar faces again. We hope to reach the final and ultimately, grab the winner's purse," he said at the Malaysia Masters 2025 press

conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The best they have done at the Malaysia Masters was to reach the semifinals in the 2019 and 2022 editions.

Meanwhile, rising national mixed doubles pair Hoo Pang Ron-Cheng Su Yin also hope to produce good results at the Super 500 tournament at the Axiata Arena on May 20-25.

Pang Ron said that, more importantly, they need to keep their cool if they are to do better after what has been an underwhelming start to their 2025 season.

The world No. 14 pair have only managed to

reach the quarterfinals twice out of the eight tournaments they've competed in this year.

Meanwhile, the Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) have extended their gratitude to Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd (Perodua) for being the title sponsor of the tournament for the seventh edition.

BAM acting president Datuk V. Subramaniam said that Perodua's continued support has been instrumental in the tournament's elevation to Super 500 status.

Perodua president and chief executive officer Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Ahmad said they were honoured to be part of the tournament, which has become a key fixture in Malaysia's badminton calendar.

Tickets for the Malaysia Masters 2025 can be purchased from Friday at www.ticket2u.com.my. – Bernama



National women's doubles pair Pearly Tan (right) and Thinaah Muralitharan share a light moment.
– BERNAMAPIC

'Take your time'

THE Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM) will give top national women's doubles pair Pearly Tan-M. Thinaah time to consider their future carefully with the governing body.

As contract renewal talks between both parties are ongoing, BAM acting president Datuk V. Subramaniam said they are in no rush and respect the pair's need to weigh their options.

"I won't set an exact timeframe (deadline for Pearly-Thinaah to sign the contract renewal) because we also give some leeway for the players to think carefully.

"Sometimes, players, you know, maybe they have some advice. So let them think, no harm but they are still with us, no issue on that," he told reporters after the Malaysia Masters 2025 press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Subramaniam added that BAM had always taken great care of the current world No. 5 pair through the investments they have made over the years.

He said their investment is far from modest as it represents a substantial sum aimed at supporting the players.

"Our expectation is that they will continue to stay on, play, train hard, work hard and win medals for the country," he said.

Speculation has been rife that Pearly and Thinaah, whose contracts with BAM ended last December, plan to leave the national governing body.

Meanwhile, Subramaniam said it's up to Chen Tang Jie-Toh Ee Wei, the mixed doubles pair whether or not to accept the offer of being included in the Road To Gold (RTG) programme.

Yesterday, Tang Jie and Ee Wei were among 16 athletes roped in under the RTG Programme in preparation for the Los Angeles 2028 (LA2028) Olympic Games.

Last month, BAM confirmed that the Tang Jie-Ee Wei partnership would be split for upcoming tournaments based on the

BAM give Pearly-Thinaah space as Tang Jie-Ee Wei reunite

recommendation of the coaching panel, including doubles coaching director Rexy Mainaky and mixed doubles head coach Nova Widianto.

The time-out for Tang Jie-Ee Wei is due to tensions between them and to give them space to resolve whatever issues that have cropped up between them.

But in a surprise move yesterday, BAM confirmed that the duo will resume their partnership in the mixed doubles event.

In a Facebook update, BAM said that the decision was made following a request from both players and after extensive discussions between them and the coaching team.

"The duo, who previously achieved a career-high world ranking of No. 3, will now refocus their efforts on the international stage, beginning with the Singapore Open (May 27 – June 1), as they look to reclaim their top form," BAM said.

On Tuesday night, badminton legend Datuk Lee Chong Wei suggested that athletes listed in the RTG Programme in preparation for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games (LA 28) to accept the offer.

Chong Wei, who is a member of the RTG committee, said the offer given should not be rejected as it would greatly benefit the athletes involved, especially those who play professionally.

"For me as an ex-athlete, of course I am happy if I get this opportunity from the National Sports Council and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS). Because it does not only help financially but also provides support services.

"So I hope that this time all athletes will sign for the RTG because previously there was one athlete who did not sign to enter the RTG programme," he said. – Bernama

Winning Results

Full payment guaranteed



Draw No: 190/25 Date: 16/04/2025

4D Classic

1st Prize **8508**

2nd Prize **0113**

3rd Prize **4273**

SPECIAL	CONSOLATION
7468 1581	7997 4220
6367 9908	5978 4759
0829 2234	1070 4595
6097 1809	2567 2282
6357 7025	9964 0652

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM5,397,252.48**

8508 + 0113	8508 + 4273
0113 + 8508	0113 + 4273
4273 + 8508	4273 + 0113

Jackpot 2 **RM128,360.27**

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2 5 7 9 19 29 30 36

13 14

Grand Prize

RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 20 years

2nd Prize

RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 100 days

Jackpot Gold

Jackpot 1 **RM12,196,785.81**

Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM100,000.00**

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	0 8 1 3 7 3
GROUP 2	08137 OR 81373
GROUP 3	0813 OR 1373
GROUP 4	081 OR 373
GROUP 5	08 OR 73
	OR 13
GOLDEN NUMBER	15

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to www.magnum4d.my for more info. THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY



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SCAN ME

BY RICHARD JOLLY

AU REVOIR, Aston Villa. But if there was a way to exit the Champions League, this was it.

An epic, extraordinary effort was in vain and yet valiant and magnificent. They will not join the class of 1982 in tasting European glory, but there was a doomed glory to this.

They beat the side Unai Emery declared the favourites to win the Champions League on the night.

They threatened a comeback to rival the *remontada* Luis Enrique's Barcelona produced to beat Emery's Paris Saint-Germain in 2017.

Two goals behind on the evening, trailing 5-1 on aggregate, Villa scored three times in response.

They took on PSG's running machines and rattled them with their relentlessness. A team with 17 wins in their previous 18 games ended up buffeted, relieved there were only three minutes of injury time.

For Villa, a first European Cup run in 42 years ended too soon. They departed rueing the injury-time goal Nuno Mendes

Proud Villans

Aston Villa's Champions League dream dies as riotous comeback falls just short

scored in Paris and the reflexes of the outstanding Gianluigi Donnarumma showed at Villa Park but cherishing memories of a special night.

Emery challenged his side to return to the Champions League next season after their dream ended.

"I am so, so confident to get our objective, working hard," Emery said.

"We are finishing in the quarterfinal and hopefully we can come back quick to play in the Champions League.

"This is the next objective for us. The most important competition is the Champions League. The challenge we have for the last six matches is to try and get Europe and the Champions League.

"Getting to this level is the next step forward, I want to try to win with Aston Villa. We can feel happy and proud and comfortable with the work we did but if we want to achieve the next level.

"I am going to be demanding of myself and the players as to how we can get better.

"Our squad showed it can respond at this

level. We competed. They deserve to be here. We are ambitious. It is a big challenge and we want the club to push for this level."

The French champions were cruising towards the last four when fullbacks Achraf Hakimi and Nuno Mendes struck in the first 27 minutes to add to their 3-1 first leg lead.

Youri Tielemans pulled a goal back for the English side before halftime and two goals in two minutes from John McGinn and Ezri Konsa transformed the tie early in the second period.

Marco Asensio, playing against his parent club, then missed a golden chance to send the game to extra-time when he was denied by Donnarumma.

Konsa scored the goal to get Villa in the lead on the night after good work from Marcus Rashford and could have levelled it on

after missing a header.

The England international shared his manager's pride, though his disappointment at not getting over the line was palpable during a post-match interview with Amazon Prime.

"Very proud of the boys and what we did tonight. The two goals at the start killed us but we showed great belief and character to get back into it. We won the second leg but it wasn't enough," he said.

"At half-time we felt we had nothing to lose. We wanted to go out there and prove a point. We had

chances, I think I scored the hardest one. I don't think we could have done any more. I missed the ball (for a header), it happens.

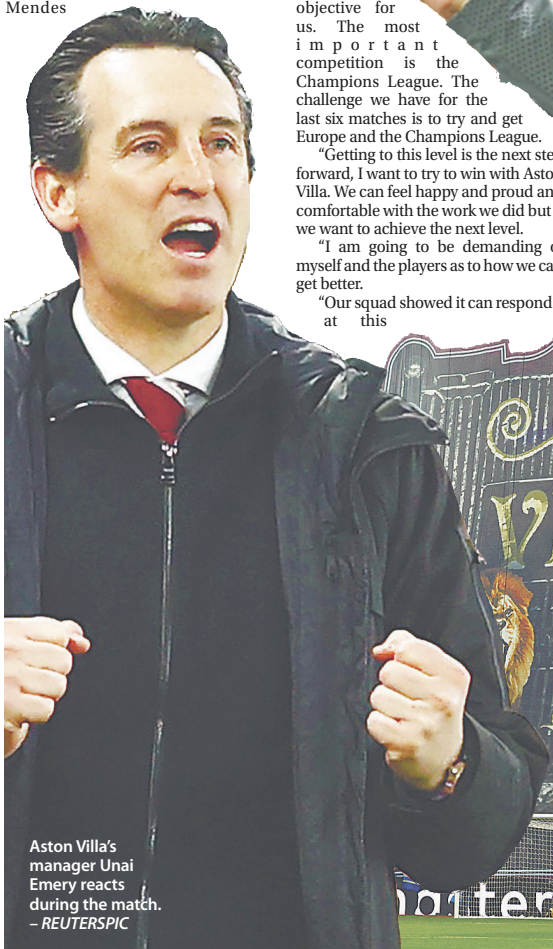
"He (Donnarumma) made some excellent saves. We showed tonight we can compete at the highest level and we want to do it again next season."

Similarly, Aston Villa captain John McGinn was open about his disappointment but concurred with Konsa and Emery about how well they had done in the tie.

"Obvious disappointment but I am proud of my teammates, proud of the club," he told TNT Sports.

"We have come a long way. We were so, so close tonight. We just fell a little bit short." - The Independent/AFP/Agencies

An Aston Villa fan celebrates their third goal scored by Aston Villa's Ezri Konsa (not pictured). - REUTERS/SPIC



Aston Villa's manager Unai Emery reacts during the match. - REUTERS/SPIC

aggregate late



Aston Villa fans display a giant banner in the stands before the match against PSG. - REUTERS/SPIC

● **Scottie gracious in defeat** ➡ **p28** ● **'We thought it was over'** ➡ **p29** ● **Guirassy hattrick in vain** ➡ **p30**