



Walking fine line of influencer marketing

Experts stress need to strike balance between product authenticity, transparency and brand relationships.

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Higher EPF dividend expected

Second Finance Minister upbeat based on strong performance in first nine months of last year, with momentum set to continue into fourth quarter.

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The Health Ministry has banned eyeball-like gummy candies, on which a 10-year-old pupil choked to death in Butterworth recently. — MASRY CHE ANI/THESUN

RM200,000 raised at gala dinner for children with cancer

Non-profit charitable organisation needs RM1.8 million to provide medical care for its 14 young patients.

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Paediatricians warn of gummy candies choking hazard

Underdeveloped jaw muscles and smaller airways of young children make it difficult for them to safely chew and swallow such treats.

No preconditions imposed on opposition MPs for allocations, says Anwar

BANGI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said no conditions were ever imposed requiring opposition MPs to support him in order to receive allocations.

"We have never imposed any such condition," he said at a media conference at the Madani Government Retreat 2025.

'Innovative ideas generated at retreat'

KUALA LUMPUR: The two-day Madani Government Retreat acted as a catalyst for Cabinet members to generate innovative ideas that would drive meaningful change for the benefit of the people, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said every view shared at the session was a reflection of the government's concern and commitment to shaping a brighter future.

"Alhamdulillah, the retreat ended last night after a day of in-depth discussions, presentations and evaluation of content for policies. All these are to ensure the well-being and survival of the people," he said in a post on his Facebook page yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also rural and regional development minister, affirmed that the mandate given by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the retreat would be carried out with utmost responsibility.

"Hopefully, the togetherness forged will be a catalyst for a more meaningful life for all Malaysians."

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Zambry Abd Kadir said the retreat marked the beginning of a new year, fostering a strong spirit of unity and togetherness among Cabinet members.

He said the retreat served as a platform to identify what needs to be improved.

He added that Anwar, in his closing speech, emphasised the government's commitment to being open to views and criticism from all parties to improve its service to the people and the country.

"This gives room for every ministry and agency to improve the (weaknesses) in the government and will certainly help the Madani government to function better." – Bernama

Anwar advised opposition MPs to hold discussions with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof on allocations.

He pointed out that such discussions were not unprecedented, recalling his own negotiations with the ninth prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, when Pakatan Harapan was in

the Opposition.

"So, I think this matter should not be sensationalised, as holding discussions is nothing new. Let's discuss it first."

On whether he would meet opposition representatives on the issue, Anwar said it was unnecessary, as Fadillah has been given the

mandate to reach a consensus.

He was commenting on a statement by Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Johari Abdul, who urged the Opposition to negotiate with the federal government for financial allocations for its constituencies since the matter is at the prime minister's discretion. – Bernama

Cabinet to take steps to improve performance: PM

► 'Ministers have taken criticisms, feedback seriously and are implementing necessary measures to address shortcomings'

BANGI: The Cabinet welcomes all feedback and criticism and will take appropriate steps to improve its performance, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the the Madani Government Retreat 2025.

He said ministers received independent reports and assessments of their performance from academics and civil servants.

"We then allowed the ministers to share their views on their commitment and determination to improve performance."

"I am not saying everything is perfect, but the Cabinet's performance has been commendable as its members have taken the criticisms seriously and are implementing the necessary measures for improvement," he told a media conference on Saturday.

He said the retreat also discussed the need for the government to reassess its approach to mitigating the impact of inflation on the public.

Anwar said despite statistics indicating positive performance, the government must still address ongoing issues such as rising

prices of goods.

"Although statistics show that our inflation rate is low, people are still complaining about rising prices, particularly essential goods."

"This is a challenge we are focusing on because we understand that figures on economic growth, increased investment, security and tourism appeal will only hold real value if we can control the rising cost of living that burdens parts of our society."

Meanwhile, in a post on his Facebook page, Anwar reaffirmed that efforts to eradicate hardcore poverty would be intensified and pursued more aggressively nationwide.

He said the government wants to see more people break free from the shackles of poverty and enjoy a better, dignified and prosperous life.

"Poverty is not merely an economic issue but also a matter of dignity and social justice. That is why, from the very beginning, I have emphasised that the Madani government will not stand by idly while the people continue to be burdened by poverty."

"With comprehensive policies and targeted assistance programmes as well as integrated grassroots efforts, the government will continue to ensure that those in genuine need are helped and given opportunities to escape poverty."

Anwar said as part of this effort, his political secretary Datuk Ahmad Farhan Fauzi delivered aid to families in need in three state constituencies under the Permatang Pauh parliamentary constituency, namely Seberang Jaya, Penanti and Permatang Pasir on Friday, Bernama reported.

"Alhamdulillah, 221 families have successfully been lifted out of hardcore poverty. This is not just a number but tangible proof that the Madani government's efforts to assist those in need are bearing fruit."

Anwar added that the initiative was not merely about providing temporary assistance but ensuring that every family has the opportunity to become self-reliant, secure better employment and ultimately improve their standard of living.

He urged all parties, including the private sector, NGOs and concerned individuals, to join hands in this noble endeavour, as a strong spirit of solidarity would enable Malaysia to become a more just and prosperous nation for all.



LEADING THE WAY ... Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof accompanying children with autism who participated in the KL Autism Awareness Fun Run 2025 at Dataran DBKL yesterday. – BERNAMAPIC

Resolving Myanmar crisis Asean priority

REMAU: Malaysia remains steadfast in its commitment to addressing the ongoing crisis in Myanmar, including addressing human trafficking, restoring peace and safeguarding the future of its people, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.

He said the situation in Myanmar was a key topic at last month's Asean Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Langkawi, with discussions focusing on urging all conflicting parties to cease hostilities immediately, Bernama reported.

"While Asean upholds the principle of non-interference, the crisis in Myanmar has transcended borders."

"It has become an international concern involving human trafficking, online scams, cybercrime and drug-related activities, all of which pose significant challenges to neighbouring countries, including Malaysia."

He was speaking after presenting Ramadan contributions to mosques and surau in the Rembau parliamentary constituency yesterday.

EPF dividend expected to be higher than in 2023

PUTRAJAYA: The EPF's encouraging performance for the third quarter of 2024 is expected to yield good returns for contributors, said Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

He said based on the strong performance, EPF contributors can expect better dividend distribution for 2024 as compared with the previous year.

"If we look at its performance up to the third quarter of last year, it is encouraging. By the third

quarter, EPF had already earned RM57.5 billion (investment income), which is better than the previous year.

"This performance will continue into the fourth quarter. The dividend will be encouraging but I cannot comment what it will be. Just wait for it. It will be better."

He was speaking after completing the Larian Asean: Trek Kewangan @MOF event organised by the Finance Ministry yesterday.

EPF declared a higher dividend of 5.5% for

2023 for conventional savings compared with 5.35% in 2022, with a total distribution of RM50.33 billion.

For syariah savings, it was 5.40% compared with 4.75% in 2022, with a total distribution of RM7.48 billion.

EPF is expected to announce the 2024 dividend rate in early March. Several economists and academics had previously predicted EPF's 2024 dividend to exceed 6%.

More than 3,700 Finance Ministry staff and

the public participated in the run held in conjunction with Malaysia's Asean chairmanship 2025.

Amir Hamzah and the ministry's top management members completed the 3km category.

The run was held to expose the ministry's staff and the public to Asean's roles as well as the activities being carried out throughout the year.

"The run also supports healthy living practices, especially among the staff." – Bernama

Govt allocates RM869 million for student food aid

TAIPING: The government has allocated RM869 million for the Supplementary Food Scheme this year to support students from hardcore poor families.

Deputy Education Minister Wong Kah Woh said the allocation represents a 10% increase from RM784 million last year.

"The allocation ensures nutritious and balanced meals for children in need," he said at the 12th Toyo Tyre education financial assistance programme by Toyo Tyre Malaysia Sdn Bhd (TTM) on Saturday.

As one of the ministries receiving the largest annual allocation, the Education Ministry provides 18 types of assistance for primary and secondary school students, including the Early School Assistance, which helps ease financial burdens on parents.

Wong also thanked TTM's leadership for its corporate social responsibility efforts in supporting underprivileged students.

"Toyo Tyre Malaysia is a prime example of how companies can integrate environmental, social and governance principles into their business while having a positive impact on the community by empowering the next generation through education," he said.

He urged more companies to take part in efforts to build a more inclusive and resilient society.

TTM president and managing director Mike Toh said RM186,600 had been allocated for this year's Toyo Tyre education financial assistance programme. — Bernama

EC to be notified of Ayer Kuning seat vacancy

IPOH: The Election Commission (EC) will be notified of the Ayer Kuning seat vacancy as early as tomorrow, said Perak state assembly speaker Datuk Mohammad Zahir Abdul Khalid.

He was met at the residence of Ayer Kuning assemblyman Ihsan Shahrudin, 59, who collapsed and died after a friendly football match at Bandaraya Stadium in Georgetown, Penang, on Saturday.

A by-election must be held within 60 days from the date EC receives the official notice of vacancy.

The last by-election in Perak was for the Slim state seat on Aug 29, 2020.

Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad and several state executive councillors were among those who visited the late assemblyman's family. — Bernama

CCAM fundraiser raises RM200,000, seeks RM1.8m

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: The Children's Cancer Association Malaysia (CCAM) hosted a Gala Night Fundraising Dinner on Saturday at Berjaya Times Square Hotel, in conjunction with International Childhood Cancer Day on Feb 15.

The event raised RM200,000, but CCAM founder Lavaniyah Ganapathy told *theSun* that RM1.8 million is needed to provide medical care for 14 children currently under CCAM support for the next year.

Sponsored by Berjaya Corporation Berhad (BCorp) founder and adviser Tan Sri Vincent Tan, the event gathered 350 guests, including supporters, corporate sponsors and members of the public, to raise funds for Malaysian children battling cancer.

Among those present were 60 childhood cancer survivors and their families, many of whom have received assistance from CCAM.

Lavaniyah, who founded CCAM in 2022, was inspired by her own experience after her daughter Mahiyaa Bala, six, was diagnosed with leukaemia.

"Childhood cancer remains a

➤ Association calls for support to fund medical treatment, financial aid and essential resources for 14 children battling cancer

pressing concern in Malaysia, with about 77 out of every 100,000 children diagnosed. Since its establishment, CCAM has helped 72 children and are supporting 14 others in their fight against cancer.

"In 2023 alone, 220 children lost the battle with cancer. This underscores the urgent need for awareness, early detection and financial support," she said.

She highlighted that the most common types of childhood cancer in Malaysia include leukaemia, brain and nervous system cancers and lymphoma.

While the fundraiser secured RM200,000, CCAM aims to raise RM1.8 million to cover medical care for the children it currently supports.

"To sustain our efforts, we need at least RM5 million annually to fund essential treatments, financial aid and resources for families with children battling

cancer," Lavaniyah said.

The funds will help cover medical expenses, hospital treatments and financial aid for families facing long-term care costs.

Beyond financial aid, CCAM also conducts awareness programmes, provides emotional and psychological support and ensures that no child or family faces cancer alone.

The organisation supports children from newborns to 18 years old, ensuring equal access to medical care.

Despite medical advancements, Malaysia's childhood cancer survival rate remains at 55% to 65%, far below the 95% survival rate in many developed countries.

"This gap is alarming and must be addressed," Lavaniyah said, urging an update to Malaysia's national cancer registry as the latest statistics date back to 2017.

"It is shameful that we are still

relying on outdated data," she added.

Lavaniyah stressed on the importance of early intervention, adding that timely treatment improves survival rates.

"Unfortunately, in some cases, funds were secured too late. By the time treatment began, infections or organ damage had already occurred," she said.

The rising cost of cancer treatment is expected to increase by 12.7% annually, making financial aid crucial to ensure timely access to care.

She urged the public, corporate sponsors and caring individuals to support CCAM's mission so that no child in Malaysia is denied cancer treatment due to financial limitations.

"We need to act quickly to give these children the best chance of survival. I urge all Malaysians to join CCAM in this mission so we can bridge the gap and give them the fighting chance they deserve," she said.

Those interested in supporting CCAM can contact Lavaniyah at info@ccaminternational.com.

Donations can be made to Hong Leong Bank A/C No. 21400086276.



Lavaniyah (fifth from left) standing next to CCAM vice-president Chua Keng Soon, and other officials during the Gala Night Fundraising Dinner to raise awareness and funds for children battling cancer in Malaysia.

— ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

'Urban Renewal Bill will not displace Malays or low-income groups'

PUTRAJAYA: Town and Country Planning (PlanMalaysia) director-general Datuk Dr Alias Rameli has denied claims that the Urban Renewal Bill (URB) will displace Malays and B40 and M40 income groups in urban areas.

He said the government upholds 10 key principles to ensure transparency and safeguard the rights of registered property owners in drafting the bill.

"Among the main principles of the Bill are securing property owners' consent, maintaining original residents,

protecting landowners' interests and ensuring fair maintenance cost adjustments.

"The Bill does not involve amendments to other laws as claimed by the Kota Bharu MP, such as the Federal Constitution, the National Land Code and the Land Acquisition Act 1960," he said in a statement.

Opposition MPs have labelled the Bill a subtle tactic to displace Malays from urban areas by lowering the consent threshold for strata housing redevelopment.

Perikatan Nasional Chief Whip Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan (PN-Kota Bharu) also claimed the bill was being rushed through Parliament.

Addressing these concerns, Alias said the Bill complements existing laws while introducing additional provisions to protect property owners' rights.

He noted that a review of over 17 property development-related acts had been conducted to prevent legal overlaps and conflicts.

Alias also dismissed claims that the Department of Director-General of

Lands and Mines had rejected the Bill.

"In reality, the department, through the Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Ministry, agreed in principle to the Bill's drafting during the Cabinet Meeting on Aug 14, 2024," he said.

He added that urban renewal is crucial to addressing dilapidated and unsafe buildings, aligning with global best practices in urban development.

"Leaving old buildings to deteriorate with inadequate facilities and poor infrastructure is not an option

for effective urban governance.

"Support from various stakeholders is necessary and a 'do-nothing' approach is not an option for the *Madani* government, which prioritises long-term well-being and quality of life," he said.

Alias also criticised 31 Malay-Muslim NGO that recently submitted a memorandum opposing the Bill to PN, saying their actions could hinder a legislative process that benefits urban communities and property owners. — Bernama

'Be transparent to maintain credibility'

➤ Influencers must strike balance between personal voice and being upfront when promoting sponsored content: Academic

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The rapidly evolving landscape of influencer marketing needs to strike a balance between authenticity and brand relationships, said Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Centre for Research in Media and Communication senior lecturer Dr Nurzihan Hassim.

She said the success of influencers comes from positioning their credibility alongside professional relationships with brands.

"They are expected to provide recommendations that benefit and not harm their followers mentally and physically, but how much do that?"

"Transparency is important, especially when

influencers promote products they do not use themselves or favour. They should disclose this fact if they don't like a product, but cultural values such as *jaga hati* (maintaining harmony) make such transparency challenging."

Nurzihan pointed to food reviewer Jason Chen as an example, noting that while his honest opinions have sometimes led to a backlash, they have also prompted certain businesses to improve their offerings based on his constructive criticism.

She said influencers must strike a balance between personal voice and brand messaging with the key being to be upfront about sponsored content while making it feel natural. While adding that inconsistent messaging can damage credibility, she said transparency in sponsored content is not only ethical but legally required.

"The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission has guidelines on advertising disclosure.

"Using hashtags like #ad or #sponsored isn't just good practice, it's a necessary compliance."

Nurzihan warned that Malaysian audiences are highly sceptical and appreciate those who prioritise honesty when promoting content.

While honesty is crucial, influencers must carefully navigate Malaysia's relationship-focused business culture.

"There's a difference between tactful honesty and brutal honesty," she said, adding that instead of saying "I hate this product," an influencer could say "This product might work better for different skin types."

She advised following the 80/20 rule in which sponsored content is kept to about 20% of the total posts, and the rest is organic, genuine lifestyle content.

Universiti Teknologi Mara head of Communication and Knowledge Advancement and Communication and Media Studies Faculty senior lecturer Dr Wan Hartini Wan Zainodin emphasised the power influencers have in shaping their partnerships.

"Current audiences are smart and can sense whether a promotion is genuine or otherwise. So to maintain trust, influencers must engage in open communication with brands about expectations.

"Balanced reviews that highlight strengths and weaknesses can help sustain credibility while preserving relationships."

Wan Hartini added that legally, influencers must be upfront about paid partnerships, and that their followers would appreciate such honesty.

"Misleading content can backfire and risk an influencer's reputation and attract legal consequences. The credibility that's built over

time fosters continued audience engagement and strengthens an influencer's industry standing."

She said while accepting paid promotions offers immediate financial gains, authenticity remains crucial for longevity since it becomes a personal brand, and influencers who share their product experiences foster deeper connections with their followers, which leads to stronger brand collaborations.

"Even though excessive criticism of a product could strain brand relationships, there is a constructive way to provide feedback. Delivering comments in a professional and solution-oriented manner helps brands grow while maintaining influencer credibility."

Wan Hartini said influencers should aim to educate and inform rather than merely criticise. To ensure long-term success, influencers must go beyond profit-driven content creation.

"Just as we want to buy products that offer value for money, so do social media followers. A focus on authenticity and audience trust will ultimately enhance an influencer's reputation and earning potential."

"At the same time, brands that prioritise influencer marketing over product quality risk eventual failure. A great product should speak for itself. Marketing should amplify its strengths, not cover up its flaws."

Nine Sarawak bridges expected to be completed this year

MUKAH: A total of nine more bridge construction projects currently under way in Sarawak are expected to be completed this year.

Sarawak Deputy Premier Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas said out of 16 projects involving a cost of RM5.9 billion, two projects have been successfully completed, namely the Marudi Bridge and Muara Lassa Bridge.

He added that three of them are scheduled to be completed in March, namely the Rajang Bridge, Bintulu-Jepak Bridge (Iconic Cable Bridge) and Lingga River Bridge.

"Other bridges expected to be completed

this year include the Sejingkat Bridge, Batang Lupar 1 Bridge, Saribas 1 Bridge, Kemena-Sebauh Bridge, Limbau River Bridge and Kemena River Bridge in Sebauh, Bintulu," he said at the inauguration ceremony of the Muara Lassa Bridge in Daro.

Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg officiated at the event on Saturday.

Uggah also announced that five more bridges are expected to be completed by 2026, namely the Batang Lupar 2 Bridge, Saribas 2 Bridge, Krian Bridge, Paloh Bridge and Igan Bridge.

"Meanwhile, the construction project of the

Rambungan Bridge in Kuching is expected to be completed in 2027," he said.

Uggah, who is also Sarawak infrastructure and port development minister, also said by 2027, the construction project of the 896km coastal road, costing RM5.42 billion, will also be completed.

"The coastal road connecting Lundu-Sempadi to Miri and passing through the Matu/Daro area has reached an 80% completion stage," he added.

The Second Trunk Road has now reached 30% completion and is scheduled to be fully completed by 2028. — Bernama

State to spend RM6b on rural water supply projects

MUKAH: Sarawak is set to spend approximately RM6 billion by 2030 on rural water supply projects, said Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg.

He said the water supply grid construction project would also include the building of water treatment plants and the replacement of old pipes.

"It has already begun. Under the people's project, it is RM4 billion. This does not yet include the 13th Malaysia Plan, where we will add another RM600 million. To replace the old pipes to prevent them from bursting, we estimate the cost to be RM1.1 billion," he said after launching the Muara Lassa Bridge in Daro on Saturday.

The construction of the 2,430m long bridge spanning Lassa River, which connects Daro to Pulau Buit, began on March 22, 2019, and was completed on Jan 9, 2025.

It is a key component of Sarawak's coastal road project, valued at nearly RM600 million.

The project aims to improve land access for rural residents, particularly for those who previously relied on ferry services to cross the Batang Lassa.

Abang Johari added that infrastructure development requires significant funding.

Earlier, in his speech, he said the completion of the Muara Lassa Bridge would serve as a catalyst for development in Daro.

Moreover, with the upcoming construction of the Batang Paloh Bridge, which will connect Pulau Buit to Serdeng next year, the entire Rajang Valley will have road access, opening up various economic opportunities in the region.

He urged the youth in Daro to seize the opportunity to engage in new economic sectors and adopt digitalisation as a means to support their efforts.

"Don't just rely on the local market. We need to think globally and use the internet to market our economic products abroad. This is how our income will increase," he said. — Bernama

Vet Dept disinfects illegal pig waste site

PORT DICKSON: The Negeri Sembilan Veterinary Services Department conducted a disinfection operation at an illegal pig waste dumping site in Site A, Tanah Merah on Feb 13.

The department said in a statement the action was taken to prevent the spread of animal diseases caused by wild animals digging through waste from the site.

"An inspection conducted by the department at 3pm found several pits used to bury pig waste, with some remains scattered by wild animals."

"We advised the village head to ask the landowner to fill the pits immediately to prevent possible spread of diseases caused by wild animals consuming or dragging the pig waste."

The department said although there are no laws on illegal pig waste disposal, sanitation measures and monitoring pig transport without permits will continue to be enforced. — Bernama



FAN FAVOURITE ... Enthusiasts with 'Pikachu' at the Pokemon Trading Card Game Showdown at Lalaport Bukit Bintang City Centre yesterday. — ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

Over 19,000 heads of household getting RM100 monthly aid

IPOH: A total of 19,012 heads of household have received the Kad Perak Sejahtera assistance so far, which is part of the state's efforts to help the low-income group.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad said the initiative, introduced in 2019, was to ensure that the B40, poor and hardcore poor groups could meet basic food needs.

"This card can be used at 291 registered panel shops and supermarkets, with a total value of RM1,200 per year or RM100 per month for each recipient."

"A total of 1,002 new applications have been received this time and 915 applications have been approved, with the highest number received from Kinta District involving 430

applications," he said after launching the card handover ceremony at Bangunan Perak Darul Ridzuan here on Saturday.

Saarani said Perak is targeting 20,000 recipients under the initiative.

"We are committed to ensuring that the programme continues to benefit those who are truly in need," he added. — Bernama

Hidden dangers of gummy candies for children

➤ Soft, sticky confection can cause airway blockage, prevents oxygen from reaching lungs, brain: Specialist

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Paediatricians have warned that gummy candies can cause choking in young children due to their underdeveloped jaw muscles and smaller airways, which make it difficult for them to safely chew and swallow such treats.

Paediatrician and neonatologist Dr Masri Muhamed said a child's airway makes him more vulnerable to obstruction, and even a small piece of gummy candy can completely block airflow and cause choking.

"Additionally, since children are often active and may eat, talk, laugh or run with the candies in their mouths, it can cause aspiration when the confection accidentally enters the windpipe instead of the food pipe.

"If not treated quickly, it can result in severe airway blockage or aspiration pneumonia (a lung infection caused by inhaled food particles)," he said when commenting on a recent incident in which 10-year-old Mohamad Fahmi Hafiz died after choking on an eyeball-shaped gummy candy during a *Quran* and *Fardhu Ain* class in Butterworth, Penang. The victim was rushed to the intensive care unit of a hospital but fell into a coma and died on Friday. Following his death, the Health Ministry has banned the sale of

gummy candies in stores and online platforms and said it will seize the candy and act against sellers.

Masri said gummy candies can easily cling to the throat due to their soft and sticky texture, making them harder to remove compared with hard candies, which can sometimes be coughed out. He warned that a complete airway blockage prevents oxygen from reaching the lungs and brain, causing brain damage within four minutes if not cleared immediately.

"Prolonged oxygen deprivation can also result in cardiac arrest, further reducing the chances of survival. Even if the child is successfully resuscitated, complications such as aspiration pneumonia, airway injuries or long-term neurological damage can occur.

"This is why immediate action is crucial. Performing the *Heimlich* manoeuvre (a first aid technique in a choking emergency) or in severe cases, cardiopulmonary resuscitation can save a child's life. Parents and caregivers should know basic first aid to respond quickly in emergencies."

Consultant paediatrician and child disability activist Datuk Dr Amar Singh HSS said while young children under five years old are well known to be at risk of choking from food and small objects, such incidents among children of schooling age have been on the rise in recent years.

He said a choking child may become pale or "blue," be unable to speak, cry or cough, become drowsy and look panicked.

"It is hard for parents to control what their children buy outside school, so the community should work with the government to ban dangerous products like gummy candies and jellies in small, mouth-sized cups, which are already banned in some countries."

Amar suggested that teachers use online training guides and resources from local NGOs to learn how to help a choking child, including performing back blows and abdominal thrusts.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia public health medicine specialist Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh said the Guidelines on the Enforcement of the Ban on Food and Beverage Sales Outside School Gates (Second Edition 2021) has been in effect since 2012 and prohibit vendors from selling food and beverages within a 40-metre radius of the school perimeter.

"However, enforcement is almost non-existent, which is why high risk foods like gummy candies and *konjac* jelly continue to be sold near schools.

"These items may cause choking and malnutrition. They are also high in calories, artificial colouring and fruity scents that attract children. School security and staff should help enforce the ban."

Sharifa Ezat said Australia has banned foods linked to choking incidents, adding that Malaysia should follow suit with food labels that display nutritional content and warning of choking hazards for children.

Businessman loses RM4.2m in scam

SEREMBAN: A former businessman lost RM4.2 million after falling victim to a Macau scam syndicate that posed as police officers.

Seremban police chief ACP Mohamad Hatta Che Din said police received a report from the 62-year-old man, who informed them he was duped by the syndicate last Thursday.

He said the man claimed to have received several messages via WhatsApp from an unknown number, introducing himself as "Sergeant Michael" on Dec 21 last year and informing the victim he was involved in a money laundering case.

"The victim made an online transfer to a company account and then deposited two cheques into two different company accounts as instructed by Sergeant Michael.

"He also told the bank to transfer money from his personal account to another account with all transactions claimed to be for investigation purposes," Bernama reported.

Mohamad Hatta said the man only realised he had been deceived after the bank notified him before his bank account was blocked, adding that the case is being investigated under Section 420 of the Penal Code.

He also said from January to December last year, the police opened 105 investigation papers related to phone scams (Macau scam) involving losses of RM1.89 million, compared with 84 investigation papers with losses of RM930,931.18 in 2023.

As a preventive measure, he advised the public to be cautious when receiving calls from individuals claiming to represent any agency and requesting payments for any purpose.

"The public is also advised not to provide details such as account numbers and banking information to others to avoid being manipulated by scammers."

Crash kills driver, injures passenger

KOTA BHARU: A man was killed and a woman was injured after the lorry they were travelling in skidded and plunged into a ravine at KM79 of the Kota Bharu-Gua Musang (Bukit Ah Kim) road in Kuala Krai.

Kuala Krai police chief Supt Mazlan Mamat said the 48-year-old lorry driver died on the spot in the 11.20am incident on Saturday.

The 39-year-old passenger was taken to Sultan Ismail Petra Hospital for treatment.

"Preliminary investigations found that the lorry, which was travelling from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Bharu, is believed to have veered off the road and fallen into the ravine," he said.

Those who have information on the crash can contact Kuala Krai police headquarters traffic division or investigating officer Insp Mohamad Amirul Izham Azian at 09-9666222. – Bernama

Child care centre not authorised to operate

PUTRAJAYA: A kindergarten embroiled in allegations of abuse involving a six-year-old autistic child in Shah Alam was found to be operating without complying with regulations.

In a statement, the Social Welfare Department said checks revealed that the premises was not authorised to operate as a child care centre (taska).

"The department has issued a notice prohibiting the kindergarten from operating due to violations under the Child Care Centre Act. It has also instructed the operator to attend a meeting at the Selangor welfare office. The case has been referred to the district education office."

The notice was issued following an investigation into a complaint by the parents of an autistic child, who alleged that the child had been abused at the premises.

On Friday, Shah Alam district police chief ACP Mohd Iqbal Ibrahim said the report lodged by the victim's mother stated that her husband had found red marks on the child's back and below the right eye. The case is being investigated under Section 31(1)(a) of the Child Act 2001. – Bernama



TACKLE TALK

...The two-day KL Fishing Expo 2025 at Taman Metropolitan in Kepong brought together anglers, industry pros and outdoor enthusiasts to explore the latest fishing techniques and sustainable trends.

—ADIB RAWI
YAHYA/THESUN

'Prioritise safety, protection of children at mosques'

KUALA LUMPUR: The authorities and mosque management must take immediate proactive action to ensure the safety of worshippers, especially children, who often frequent places of worship to seek knowledge and engage in religious practices.

Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement women affairs bureau vice-president Dr Fatin Nur Majdina Nordin said the attempt to molest a young girl at a Batang Kali mosque in Selangor on Friday had tarnished the sanctity of the mosque and posed a threat to the psychological well-being and safety of visitors.

She said such incidents should not occur in

mosques, which are supposed to be places of worship that guarantee peace and safety.

"The movement expresses concern and urges the community to be more attentive to the issue of child protection and safety, particularly with regard to the recent sexual harassment incident involving a young girl at a mosque.

"The incident highlights the importance of monitoring and ensuring safety of both inside and around mosque premises, especially during worship times."

On Friday, a closed-circuit television (CCTV) footage went viral, showing a man wearing a white skull cap sneaking into the women's prayer area and hugging a young girl from behind while

she was in *sujud* (prostration) and then fleeing with the victim.

The man was arrested at his residence located approximately one kilometre from the mosque, at 10am the same day.

Selangor Social Welfare Department director Azmir Kassim confirmed that checks revealed the man held a disability card due to learning difficulties.

Fatin Nur Majdina said the issue of disability in the incident must be carefully considered as it is a sensitive matter and requires thorough investigation and assessment. She added that offenders should be appropriately punished and the identity of the child protected. – Bernama

Straw buffalo attraction at carnival

► Exhibits on traditional *padi* farming also featured at Kedah annual event

YAN: Standing amid the crowd, "Awang Kundur," a life-size buffalo sculpture crafted entirely from straw, was the main attraction at the Kedah Straw Carnival 2025 in Kampung Teror, Guar Chempedak near here.

Created by the Pengkalan Kundur B4 Area Farmers Organisation, it was not just a sight to behold but also a tribute to traditional farming, in which buffaloes once played a crucial role in ploughing *padi* fields before modern machinery took over.

"Buffaloes were a farmer's best friend in the past, used to till the fields before tractors and other equipment came into play. Today, you won't find working buffaloes in Kedah anymore, except in demonstrations," said the organisation's manager Amrin Hamdan.

"After brainstorming ideas, we decided to create this exhibit. It took us two weeks to complete, and we didn't stop there. We also built a traditional rice barn and a *padi* threshing area, both of which were essential elements of *padi* farming in the past," he told Bernama.

Made with three massive rolls of straw, each weighing between 250kg and 300kg, the exhibits were brought to life with a budget of less than RM2,000.

Crafting the straw was no small feat, with 20 workers dedicating their time and skills.

"We divided the team into three groups, but creating the buffalo required eight people alone as it had to look as close to the real thing as possible," Amrin said, adding that their efforts paid off as visitors flocked to the carnival, eager to snap photos with "Awang Kundur".

"The response was overwhelming. Beyond just admiring the artwork, people also learnt about the farming methods of the past. It was a great way to reconnect with our agricultural heritage."

Muda Agricultural Development Authority (Mada) chairman Datuk Dr Ismail Salleh said the three-day carnival, that started on Friday, was a much-anticipated annual celebration following the *padi* harvesting season in Mada areas.



The centrepiece exhibit featuring 'Awang Kundur' at the carnival. – BERNAMAPIC

"This year, 12 organisations participated, and those with straw baler machines transformed their harvest waste into stunning sculptures. I was truly impressed by their creativity," he said.

The competition saw the top winner walk away with RM3,000, while the second and third place winners won RM2,000 and RM1,000

respectively. Other participants received consolation prizes.

Ismail said the carnival highlights the potential of straw as an additional source of income for farmers, adding that in the past, farmers would simply burn it.

For visitor Salina Ramli, 48, who attended the carnival with her husband Mazdi Mohd Razali, 48, the

event was a must-see.

"We saw it being promoted on social media and decided to come and check it out. Seeing these straw sculptures up close was simply breathtaking. Kedah is known as the 'Rice Bowl of Malaysia', so events like this are a brilliant way to showcase our culture and attract more tourists to the state," she said.

Mushroom income boon for underprivileged

BUKIT MERTAJAM: An oyster mushroom cultivation project at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) is helping to increase the income of *asnaf mualaf* (underprivileged Muslim converts) and improving their standard of living.

The community project utilises modern farming techniques through the iMistroom 2.0 modular smart mushroom house system.

It was created by UiTM Penang Faculty of Mechanical Engineering senior lecturer Assoc Prof Dr Hamid Yusoff and his team, in collaboration with four other stakeholders.

Hamid said the project, funded by Bank Rakyat with an allocation of RM364,800, started in September last year with 20 *asnaf mualaf* participants selected to cultivate oyster mushrooms at Surau Al-Huda in Taman Markisah, Permatang Tinggi.

"iMistroom operates on the 2T (Leave and Harvest) and 3M (User-friendly, Easy and Modular) concepts. The participants are from B40 and *asnaf* communities, so we support them with a community-friendly technology that is easy to manage."

"This collaboration will continue until the end of this month, but

ongoing support will be provided to help the *asnaf* expand their yield and start cultivating mushrooms at other locations," he told reporters after the launch of the project recently.

The ceremony was officiated by UiTM deputy vice-chancellor (Industry, Community and Alumni Network) Prof Dr Jamalunlaili Abdullah and attended by Malaysian Chinese Muslim Association Penang branch chairman Ben Ooi Chooi Beng.

Hamid said the project is a joint effort between UiTM Penang and UiTM Kedah, with the Penang campus providing technology expertise,

training, guidance and monitoring, while the Faculty of Business at the Kedah campus assists in marketing and product research.

The cultivation is carried out in phases and 20,000 mushroom blocks have been placed in 20 smart mushroom houses. Ten units are located at the *surau* and another 10 are managed by a company in Pokok Sena, Kepala Batas.

He said each block could produce four to five harvesting cycles within three months and the project has generated about RM20,000 in sales. In addition to fresh mushrooms, value-

added products such as fried mushrooms are sold at several locations, Bernama reported.

Ooi said the project has been very beneficial, especially in helping the *asnaf mualaf* to generate income and reduce their reliance on monthly aid.

"In terms of sales and revenue, there is clear growth, with participants earning at least RM200 on top of their existing income."

"We see great potential for the participants to improve their standard of living. In fact, three participants have started their own fried mushroom kiosks."

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Taiwan invasion board game players go nuclear

► Tabletop simulation uses maps based on real-life exercises

TAIPEI: To stop invading forces seizing Taiwan, board gamer Ruth Zhong chooses the nuclear option, dropping an atomic bomb on the capital Taipei to secure the island's freedom and her victory.

The Taiwanese board game 2045 is a zero-sum contest of military strategy and individual self-interest that puts players on the frontlines of a simulated attack.

Their battlefield game tactics will determine the theoretical future of Taiwan, which in the real world faces the threat of invasion.

"The most interesting part of this game is that you have to make

continuous decisions based on the evolving situation, and these choices can alter the entire history of Taiwan in an instant," said Zhong, 36, at Sunny Boardgame store where she played 2045 with friends.

"I saw (the nuclear bomb) as a necessary move to ensure the survival of the entire island."

Launched by Mizo Games last month, 2045 is set in the first 10 days of a theoretical invasion of Taiwan and before help from friendly forces has arrived.

Players represent different characters, including a person who has taken up arms, a collaborator and an arms dealer.

Mizo Games founder Chang Shao-lian said 2045 was different to its previous war games, which required players to cooperate to win.

"We decided to move away from romanticism and create a game rooted in realism," Chang said.

In the game, if (an invader)

captures a critical number of key cities on the island, Taiwan loses.

"Some players assume the game caters only to independence players but in reality, anyone with a strategic vision for the Taiwan Strait conflict can find ways to win," Chang said.

Mizo Games raised more than NT\$4 million (RM539,794) through a crowdfunding site and went to great lengths to ensure 2045 was as close to reality as possible.

The makers consulted experts on military personnel, national security and political analysts, and also created maps based on real-life exercises.

They also studied actual attacks to ensure the "directional logic" of fighter jets attacking Taiwan's tallest building, Taipei 101, which features on the box cover.

"We repeatedly refined details, how much damage should be shown, the intensity of the explosion, the light effects and even

the presence of aircraft in the background," said 2045 visual designer Lai Boyea.

While the 2045 creators hope conflict stays on the game board, Lai said Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 had made the threat of an attack seem more real.

"You imagine, if they were to attack, how would they do it?" Lai said.

"Many of the game's cards depict these possibilities, from amphibious landings on Taiwan's beaches to aerial incursions over central and southern regions."

While 2045 cannot capture the brutality of an actual war, Zhong said it showed the limits of people's willingness to assist others in a crisis.

"Its value lies in showing players that even in a game, or in real life, your allies won't necessarily help you unconditionally," she said.

"Everything ultimately depends on interests." – AFP



Board game enthusiasts play 2045 set against the backdrop of a fictional conflict. – AFP/PIIC

Toddlers killed in old grenade blast

PHNOM PENH: Two Cambodian toddlers died when a rocket-propelled grenade, believed buried since the country's civil war, blew up near their homes.

The explosion happened on Saturday in a remote village in northwestern Siem Reap province that was once a battle site for Cambodian government soldiers and Khmer Rouge fighters in the 1980s and 1990s.

The children who died were cousins – a boy and a girl who were both two years old.

"According to an investigation report, the two toddlers were playing on the ground, digging the soil and

may have hit (the grenade) with an object that caused the explosion," said Heng Ratana, director general of the government's Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

He said one child was killed instantly while another died in hospital.

"There has been peace for more than 25 years, but the blood of Cambodian people continues to flow because of landmines and the remnants of war," Heng Ratana said.

The accident comes after Cambodia was forced to partially suspend demining operations for several weeks when Washington suddenly halted funding following

President Donald Trump's order to freeze foreign aid for 90 days.

But on Friday, Cambodian officials said deminers were to resume clearing unexploded munitions, after the United States granted a waiver to keep funding the work in the country.

The Southeast Asian nation remains littered with discarded ammunition and arms from decades of war starting in the 1960s.

After more than 30 years of civil war ended in 1998, Cambodia was left as one of the most heavily mined countries in the world.

Deaths from mines and unexploded ordnance are still

common, with around 20,000 fatalities since 1979, and twice that number wounded.

Last month, two Cambodian deminers were killed while trying to remove a decades-old anti-tank mine from a rice field and a villager died in a landmine blast on his farm.

More than 1,600sq km of contaminated land still needs to be cleared, which leaves about a million Cambodians affected by war remnants.

Cambodia had aimed to be mine-free by 2025, but the government pushed the deadline back by five years because of funding challenges and new landmine fields. – AFP

BRIEFS

RESCUERS RACE TO FREE EIGHT WORKERS

MUMBAI: Search teams in southern India were working yesterday to rescue eight workers believed to be trapped in an irrigation tunnel that collapsed during construction. The accident occurred on Saturday in the state of Telangana after a sudden inflow of water and soil caused a part of the tunnel to cave in. Workers near a boring machine managed to escape but another eight engineers and labourers near the entrance were believed to be stuck inside. "This is an unfortunate incident, but we are committed to bringing them out safely," State Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy told reporters. – Reuters

TIMOR KEEN TO BUY RUSSIAN MEDICINES

DILI: The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is interested in buying medicines from Russia, President Jose Ramos Horta told RIA Novosti. "We can cooperate in the healthcare sector or in trade, even in small volumes. We would be happy to buy from Russia," he said. According to the president, he is especially interested in buying pharmaceutical products and medical equipment from Russia. "I know about Russian medical technologies. Russian medicine – it is high class to the level of the best hospitals and doctors anywhere in the US and in Europe." – Bernama

Thai, Cambodian police free 215 in scam centre raid

BANGKOK: Thai and Cambodian police raided a building in a border town and freed 215 foreigners, a senior Thai official said yesterday, in an expansion of a regional crackdown against cyber scam centres.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been trafficked by criminal gangs and forced to work in scam centres and illegal online operations across Southeast Asia, according to the United Nations.

A UN report in 2023 estimated that the fast-growing operations generate billions of dollars annually.

The raid yesterday targeted a three-storey building in the Cambodian border town of Poipet in Banteay Meanchey province.

The rescued foreigners included 109 Thais, 50 Pakistanis, 48 Indians, five Taiwanese and three Indonesians, said Thai government spokesman Jirayu Hongsab.

"This is the largest number of Thais freed from a building suspected of cyber fraud for the two countries."

The raid was the result of a joint effort by Thailand and Cambodia to tackle scam centres, he said.

Scam centres have been operating for years. But they now face new scrutiny after the rescue of Chinese actor Wang Xing, who was lured to Thailand with the promise of a job, and then abducted and taken to a scam centre in Myanmar.

Southeast Asian countries have stepped up efforts to tackle scam centres, with recent actions along the Thai-Myanmar border. Earlier this month, Thailand cut power, fuel and internet supply to areas linked to scam centres. – Reuters



'US govt staff must justify work or lose jobs'

► Employees mandated to reveal accomplishments

WASHINGTON: All US federal employees must justify their work or lose their jobs, Elon Musk said on Saturday hours after the president pushed him to be "more aggressive" in slashing government spending.

Musk has led the effort to fire swathes of the government workforce.

"All federal employees will shortly receive an email requesting to understand what they got done last week. Failure to respond will be taken as a resignation," Musk wrote.

According to a copy of the email provided to AFP, federal workers were asked to submit "approx 5 bullets of what you accomplished last week."

The email came from the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM), with the subject line "What did you do last week?" The deadline to reply was 11.59pm Monday, although the message did not say failure to do so would lead to termination.

The OPM did not immediately reply to AFP's request for comment on Saturday evening.

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the largest federal employee union, vowed to challenge any

unlawful terminations in a statement from national president Everett Kelley.

Kelley slammed Musk and the Trump administration, saying the move showed "their utter disdain for federal employees and the critical services they provide to the American people."

"It is cruel and disrespectful to hundreds of thousands of veterans who are wearing their second uniform in the civil service to be forced to justify their job duties to this out-of-touch, privileged, unelected billionaire who has never performed one single hour of honest public service in his life," he said.

Several federal employees told AFP they were advised by their agencies not to respond to the email and wait for further instruction, a recommendation echoed by the National Treasury Employees Union.

"I have so much work to do, I am not going to neglect actual patient care for this drama," said a physician at the Department of Veterans Affairs, who received the email.

Musk later appeared to downplay the requirements of the request, writing on X that the bar is "very low" and saying: "An email with some bullet points that make any sense at all is acceptable!"

Earlier on Saturday, Trump said on his Truth Social platform that Musk was "doing a great job, but I would like to see him get more aggressive."

"Remember, we have a country to save."

Trump has put the tech entrepreneur in charge of the new Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) advisory body, tasking him with slashing public spending and tackling waste and corruption.

In the latest cuts announced on Friday, the US Defence Department is to reduce its civilian workforce by at least 5% starting next week.

Trump's administration has already begun firing many other federal workers who are on probationary status.

DOGE is a free-ranging entity run by Musk, although its cost-cutting spree has been met with pushback and mixed court rulings.

A judge on Thursday denied a union bid to temporarily halt the firing of thousands of people.

Musk said this week he would work with Trump for as long as he "can be helpful," as the pair dismissed concerns over conflicts of interest due to the tycoon's government contracts.

"Elon is doing a great job," Trump told a meeting of conservative activists on Saturday, running through a list of "some of the flagrant scams" that had been uncovered.

"We love Elon, don't we? He's a character. People said: 'What official position does he have?' I said: 'Patriot'."

Musk said DOGE was publicising its actions on its website and the transparency would hold him accountable. - AFP

Australia PM promises healthcare boost

SYDNEY: Prime Minister Anthony Albanese promised yesterday a US\$5.4 billion (RM23.8 billion) boost to the national healthcare system in an overture to voters ahead of elections that must be held by May 17.

Surveys show the cost of living is at the top of voters' minds.

As his three-year term in office nears its end, Albanese has yet to announce the date of elections. But unofficial campaigning is already in full swing.

"Just as every Australian wants the best healthcare for their family, our government wants the best healthcare for every Australian," the prime minister told a rally in the Tasmanian city of Launceston.

Albanese said his centre-left Labor government would invest an extra US\$5.4 billion in Medicare, which has provided universal healthcare since 1984.

It would result in patients not having to pay for 90% of visits to the doctor by 2030, the government said, as well as delivering extra money for training nurses and doctors.

Peter Dutton, leader of the conservative opposition, responded to the latest spending promise by saying his Liberal-National coalition would match the US\$5.4 billion Medicare investment if elected.

Support for the Labor Party is running almost neck-and-neck with the opposition coalition, according to a Newspoll survey. - AFP

BRIEFS

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD MIGRANT GIRL DROWNS OFF PANAMA

PANAMA CITY: A boat carrying 19 South American migrants blocked from entering the United States sank off the coast of Panama as they returned to their home countries, leaving an eight-year-old Venezuelan girl dead. The boat went down on Friday night "due to strong waves caused by bad weather" in Caribbean waters off northeast Panama, the country's Senafront border service said. Aboard were migrants from Venezuela and Colombia, and two crew members. Aside from the girl who died, the others were all rescued, Senafront said. The migrants were returning home to Mexico and Central American countries after giving up on trying to enter the United States. - AFP

TWO KILLED IN PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL SHOOTING

YORK: A man carrying a handgun and zip ties took hostages inside a Pennsylvania hospital on Saturday, fatally shooting a responding police officer and wounding five others before he was killed by police. The gunman, identified as 49-year-old Diogenes Archangel-Ortiz, entered UPMC Memorial hospital in York, Pennsylvania, on Saturday and went directly to the intensive care unit, where he took staff members hostage. A nurse and custodian were both shot and wounded, and a doctor was grazed. The suspect and police exchanged gunfire after he walked into the hallway holding a female staff member at gunpoint with her hands bound. - Reuters



Demonstrators protesting against Musk and electric car maker Tesla on Saturday in Seattle. - AFP/PIIC

Trump to name FBI chief Patel as acting ATF head

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump will name newly confirmed FBI director Kash Patel (pic) as the acting head of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, said a person familiar with the matter.

Patel, a Trump loyalist, will run the FBI, the nation's most prominent law enforcement agency, at a time of growing upheaval while also leading the ATF, which enforces US gun laws.



Democrats and two moderate Republicans had forcefully opposed Patel's nomination, saying his past calls for retribution against Trump's critics made him unfit to lead the FBI, but this was not enough to overcome broad Republican support.

Patel, who has received support from the Gun Owners of America lobby group for championing gun rights, would be expected to lead an overhaul of the

agency, shifting its focus away from regulating firearms.

During his presidential campaign, Trump accused the ATF of being heavy-handed with gun owners and revoking licences on frivolous grounds.

On Thursday, Attorney-General Pam Bondi abruptly fired the ATF's long-time chief counsel, Pamela Hicks, and had security escort her out of the building without an explanation or a warning, according to a source familiar with the matter.

Bondi later said in an interview with Fox News that she fired Hicks because "these people were targeting gun owners".

Bondi had ordered the ATF to shift its focus to helping the Department of Justice target illegal immigration and shift away from its role of regulating arms, tobacco and alcohol.

Patel would be one of several Trump administration officials to take on two roles.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio is also serving as acting administrator of

the United States Agency for International Development, which Trump wants to dissolve and fold under State Department control.

Office of Management and Budget director Russ Vought is also acting head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an agency the administration wants to dissolve.

Interior secretary Doug Burgum and Energy secretary Chris Wright also serve as co-chairs of Trump's new National Energy Dominance Council. - Reuters

Pope Francis in critical condition but alert

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis in critical condition battling double pneumonia, had a "tranquil" night, was alert and had rested after a respiratory crisis and blood transfusions, the Vatican said yesterday.

The pope was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital on Feb 14 after experiencing difficulty breathing for several days and subsequently had pneumonia diagnosed in both lungs.

The Vatican described his condition as critical for the first time on Saturday, reporting that the 88-year-old Francis had needed supplemental oxygen and blood transfusions that day after a "prolonged asthma-like respiratory crisis".

"The night was tranquil, the pope rested," the Vatican said in a one-sentence update yesterday morning without providing further information.

A Vatican official, who did not wish to be named because he was not authorised to speak about the pope's condition, said that Francis was awake and alert yesterday. The pope was receiving oxygen as needed via a small tube under his nose, but was breathing unaided, the official added.

In a written message for his usual Sunday prayer in St Peter's Square, which the pope was unable to give for a second consecutive week, Francis said he was continuing "confidently" with his treatment in hospital. He thanked his doctors and people who have sent him messages of support.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, a senior Vatican official, told participants at a Mass in St Peter's Basilica yesterday they should make their prayers for Francis "stronger and more intense".

Double pneumonia is a serious infection that can inflame and scar both lungs, making it difficult to breathe. – Reuters



Gaza truce gravely endangered, says Hamas

Israel expands West Bank military offensive

TEL AVIV: Hamas yesterday said Israel was gravely endangered a five-week-old Gaza truce by delaying the release of Palestinian prisoners under the deal because of the manner it has freed Israeli hostages.

The first phase of the truce ends early in March and details of a planned subsequent phase have not been agreed.

With tensions again hanging over the deal, which halted more than 15 months of war, Israel yesterday announced an expansion of military operations in the occupied West Bank.

The military said a tank division will be sent in to the West Bank city of Jenin, the first such deployment to the territory in 20 years.

Since the Gaza ceasefire's first phase began on Jan 19, Hamas has released 25 living Israeli hostages in ceremonies before crowds at locations in Gaza.

Armed masked fighters escort the captives onto stages adorned with slogans. The

hostages have spoken and waved in what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called "humiliating ceremonies".

The Red Cross has previously appealed to "all parties" for the swaps to be carried out in a "dignified and private" manner.

In the seventh such transfer, Hamas released six Israeli captives on Saturday but Israel put off the planned release of more than 600 Palestinian prisoners in exchange.

Senior Hamas official Bassem Naim said postponing the release exposes "the entire agreement to grave danger".

Naim said the mediators, "especially the Americans", must pressure Israel's government "to implement the agreement as it is and immediately release our prisoners."

Both sides have accused each other of violations during the ceasefire but it has so far held.

Netanyahu's office said early yesterday that, "In light of Hamas' repeated violations – including the disgraceful ceremonies that dishonour our hostages and the cynical use of hostages for propaganda – it has been decided to delay the release of prisoners."

Israel's military offensive in Gaza has killed more than 48,000, according to figures from both sides.

The war drew in groups around the region, including in Lebanon where Israel in November reached a separate ceasefire with Hezbollah.

Alongside the Gaza war, which displaced almost the entire population of 2.4 million, violence has also soared in the West Bank.

Israel's military said yesterday "a tank division will operate in Jenin" as part of "expanding" operations in the area, where the military began a major raid against gunmen just after the Gaza truce began.

The United Nations has said the military activities have led to "forced displacement" of 40,000 Palestinians from Jenin and other refugee camps.

Defence Minister Israel Katz said he has told troops "to prepare for a prolonged presence in the cleared camps for the coming year and to prevent the return of residents and the resurgence of terrorism."

In the West Bank as well as in Gaza, families of Palestinian prisoners had waited with uncertainty into the night on Saturday, hoping for their release.

In the city of Khan Younis, Umm Diya al-Agha, 80, said she had received word her son was among those scheduled to be freed, after 33 years in prison. – AFP

Tens of thousands mourn slain Hezbollah leader

BEIRUT: Tens of thousands of people gathered on the outskirts of Beirut yesterday to pay their respects to Hezbollah's slain leader Hassan Nasrallah, nearly five months after he was killed in an Israeli airstrike.

The killing of Nasrallah, who led the group through decades of conflict with Israel and oversaw its transformation into a military force with regional sway, was one of the opening salvos in an Israeli escalation that weakened Hezbollah.

Carrying pictures of Nasrallah and Hezbollah flags, supporters gathered early yesterday for a mass funeral for Nasrallah and other slain leaders of the group at a stadium in the Hezbollah-controlled southern suburbs of Beirut.

The 55,000-seat Camille Chamoun Sports

City stadium was nearly full hours before the ceremony was set to start.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, an Iraqi delegation including politicians and militia commanders, and a delegation from Yemen's Houthis were expected to attend.

The mass funeral is aimed at showing strength after Hezbollah emerged battered from last year's war with Israel, which killed most of its leadership and thousands of fighters and wreaked destruction on south Lebanon.

The impact on Hezbollah was compounded by the ousting of its ally Bashar al-Assad in Syria, severing a key supply route.

"We may have lost a great deal as a man, but we have not lost the value of the resistance because the resistance is clinging on," said

Hassan Nasreddine, a Lebanese man headed to the ceremony from the south.

The funeral was also being held for Hashem Safieddine, who led Hezbollah for a week after Nasrallah's death. He was killed in an Israeli strike before he had been publicly announced as Nasrallah's successor.

After his death, Nasrallah was buried temporarily next to his son, Hadi, who died fighting for Hezbollah in 1997. His official funeral was delayed to allow time for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from south Lebanon under the terms of a US-backed ceasefire which ended last year's war.

Though Israel has largely withdrawn from the south, its troops continue to hold five hilltop positions in the area, and Israel carried out airstrikes yesterday. – Reuters

Sudan rebels, allies sign parallel govt charter

NAIROBI: Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and its allies have agreed to set up a parallel government, sources said yesterday, despite warnings such a move could further fragment the war-ravaged country.

"It's done," a source close to the organisers of the signing ceremony in Nairobi told AFP.

The signatories said the charter paves the way for a "government of peace and unity" in rebel-controlled areas of the northeast African country.

The move comes nearly two years into a devastating war with the regular army that has uprooted more than 12 million people and caused what the United Nations calls the world's worst hunger and displacement crises.

The signing, delayed many times, took place behind closed doors in the Kenyan capital.

Among those who agreed to it was a faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu, which controls parts of the southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

Abdel Rahim Daglo, deputy and brother of RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who was notably absent, also signed.

The charter calls for "a secular, democratic, decentralised state based on freedom, equality, and justice, without bias towards any cultural, ethnic, religious, or regional identity".

It also outlines plans for a "new, unified, professional, national army" with a new military doctrine that "reflects the diversity and plurality characterising the Sudanese state".

The proposed government aims to end the war, ensure unhindered humanitarian aid and integrate armed groups into a single force.

The signing follows a rift within Sudan's largest civilian coalition, Taqadam, over the formation of the new government. – AFP



Lebanese marching to the public funeral ceremony for Nasrallah and Safieddine. – REUTERS/IC



COMMENT by Chen Yue Tian and Dr Mohd Istajib Mokhtar

Greening our solar panels

SOLAR photovoltaic (PV) technology is transforming how we harness and utilise energy. It provides clean electricity for homes, businesses and entire communities, reduces carbon emissions and plays a crucial role in combatting climate change.

However, there is a lesser-known side to this green revolution: the environmental challenges posed by PV panels when they reach the end of their life cycle. These challenges encompass technological, environmental, economic and legal aspects.

We must ask ourselves a vital question: How can we ensure that the end of clean energy is as green as its beginning?

When PV panels reach the end of their lifespan, they do not simply vanish. Each panel contains materials such as silicon, aluminium and glass, and sometimes hazardous substances like lead and cadmium.

If old panels are disposed of improperly, these harmful materials can leach into the soil and water, contaminating the environment. This pollution can persist for years, impacting ecosystems and human health.

Europe has taken steps to address this issue, with strict laws requiring PV panel recycling. These laws establish clear responsibilities for manufacturers and provide guidelines for managing old panels.

However, in other major markets like the United States, China and Australia, recycling largely depends on voluntary efforts.

According to Peter Majewski from Future Industries Institute, University of South Australia, Australia, without legal mandates, manufacturers, users and governments often lack clarity about who should take responsibility. This uncertainty prevents the creation of effective recycling systems and limits the potential for economic growth in the recycling industry.

Recycling PV panels entails a significant technical challenge. Research indicates that materials such

as silicon and metals can be extracted and reused but the process is expensive.

High costs discourage companies from investing in recycling technology and establishing facilities.

Furthermore, in many regions, the limited quantity of old panels available for recycling makes it difficult to justify the investment.

According to the *Energy Policy* journal, another issue is the limited market demand for recycled materials, which reduces the financial incentive to recycle. Without proper economic support, the process remains costly with little immediate returns.

According to a research, titled "Recycling of Solar PV Panels: Product Stewardship and Regulatory Approaches", without clear regulatory frameworks, recycling will remain underdeveloped in many areas.

Legal systems complicate matters further. Different countries have varying rules on how to handle old PV panels, making it difficult to manage panels that are traded or moved across borders.

For example, one country may require recycling while another may have no regulations at all. This inconsistency creates gaps in the global effort to handle PV waste responsibly.

At the same time, the lack of clear producer responsibility means manufacturers often have no incentive to design panels that are easier to recycle, leading to missed opportunities for innovation in sustainable design.

To address these challenges, science and law must work hand in hand. Governments can enact laws that hold manufacturers accountable for the full life cycle of their products while encouraging the design of panels that are easier to disassemble and recycle.

They can also offer financial incentives, such as tax breaks, low-interest loans or grants, to drive investment in recycling technology. Supporting pilot projects for recycling facilities can showcase scalable models for broader implementation.

"By integrating rigorous research with clear policies, we can ensure that solar energy remains sustainable from production to disposal. This effort is not only about protecting the planet, it is also about taking responsibility for the legacy we leave behind."



The future of PV technology is about more than generating clean energy. It is an opportunity to demonstrate how science and law can collaborate effectively to solve real-world problems. — **PIC BY NUNO MARQUES/UNSPLASH**

This is a global issue that transcends national boundaries. International cooperation is essential. Countries can create shared standards for recycling and exchange ideas, technology and funding.

For instance, nations with advanced recycling technology can assist those still developing their systems, ensuring that no panels are left to harm the environment.

Every individual has the power to make a difference. When selecting PV systems, consumers can opt for panels designed with sustainability in mind.

They can also ensure their panels are properly recycled at certified facilities at the end of their lifespan. Small actions like these – when multiplied across millions of users worldwide – can have a profound impact.

The future of PV technology is about more than generating clean energy. It is

an opportunity to demonstrate how science and law can collaborate effectively to solve real-world problems.

By integrating rigorous research with clear policies, we can ensure that solar energy remains sustainable from production to disposal. This effort is not only about protecting the planet; it is also about taking responsibility for the legacy we leave behind.

The next time you see a solar panel, remember, its journey does not end when it stops working. The choices we make today will decide whether it remains a benefit or a burden to the environment. Let us keep it green every step of the way.

Chen Yue Tian and Dr Mohd Istajib Mokhtar are from the Department of Science and Technology Studies, Faculty of Science, Universiti Malaya. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com.

EDUCATION

FOCUS 2025

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



Prioritise children's mental health

THE mental health of children is increasingly becoming a critical issue worldwide, and Malaysia is no exception.

A local daily recently highlighted this concern, and the information and discussion presented paints a morbid picture.

This issue is even more alarming considering that physical health concerns often dominate public discourse while the psychological well-being of children remains overlooked.

With growing concerns over depression, anxiety and behavioural disorders among young individuals, the call is loud but the action is rather tepid.

Globally, mental health disorders affect 10 to 20% of children and adolescents, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Yet, many cases go undiagnosed and untreated due to stigma, lack of awareness and insufficient mental health resources.

A study published in the journal *The Lancet* found that nearly half of all mental disorders begin before the age of 14, making early intervention crucial.

Malaysia is facing a similar crisis. The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2019 reported that 424,000 children in the country suffer from mental health problems, accounting for approximately 8.1% of those aged between five and 15. These figures indicate that children's mental health requires urgent attention from parents, educators and policymakers.

Children experiencing mental health problems often face difficulties in academic performance, social interactions and overall development. Depression and anxiety can lead to a lack of motivation, low self-esteem and, in severe cases, suicidal thoughts.

Alarmingly, the NHMS 2019 also revealed that 10% of Malaysian teenagers have considered suicide, and 7.9% have attempted it. This data highlights the devastating consequences of

ignoring mental health concerns in children.

Furthermore, children with untreated mental health disorders are more likely to develop substance abuse problems and engage in self-harming behaviours as they grow older.

According to Unicef (United Nations Children's Fund) Malaysia, bullying and cyberbullying have also contributed significantly to declining mental health among Malaysian children, especially with the rise of social media.

One of the major challenges in addressing children's mental health is the stigma attached to seeking psychological help.

In many cultures, including Malaysia, mental health issues are often dismissed as mere misbehaviour or a phase that children will outgrow. This misconception prevents parents and guardians from seeking professional help for their children.

Additionally, Malaysia faces a shortage of child psychologists and psychiatrists. According to the Malaysian Psychiatric Association, the country has only about 500 registered psychiatrists, far below the WHO's recommendation of one psychiatrist per 10,000 people.

This lack of resources makes it difficult for affected children to receive timely and adequate mental health care.

In this scenario, schools play a crucial role in the early detection of mental health problems in children. Teachers and school counsellors should be equipped with basic training in identifying signs of distress, such as social

withdrawal, sudden academic decline and frequent mood swings.

Implementing mental health awareness programmes within school curricula can help reduce stigma and encourage children to speak up about their struggles.

Family support is equally vital. Parents and caregivers must be more attentive to their children's emotional needs. Open conversations about feelings, stress and anxieties should be normalised at home to create a safe space for children to express themselves without fear of judgement.

Recognising the urgency of the issue, the government has taken steps to improve mental health services. The 12th Malaysia Plan (2021-2025) includes mental health as a priority, aiming to increase mental health literacy and expand access to psychological services in schools and community centres.

Initiatives like *Talian Kasih* 15999, a mental health helpline, provide immediate counselling for children and teenagers in distress.

Non-governmental organisations, such as Befrienders KL and Mental Illness Awareness and Support Association (Miasa), also play a significant role in advocating for mental health awareness and providing support for affected children and their families.

While Malaysia has made progress in acknowledging mental health issues among children, more needs to be done.

Increasing the number of child psychologists, integrating mental health education into school

curricula and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health are essential steps towards ensuring better mental well-being for Malaysian children.

Where do counsellors fit in?

Counsellors play a vital role in addressing children's mental health by providing early intervention, emotional support and essential coping strategies.

As the first line of defence in schools and communities, they can help identify signs of anxiety, depression and behavioural issues, ensuring timely support before these challenges escalate.

They also serve as a bridge between children and specialised mental health professionals, referring severe cases for clinical treatment when necessary.

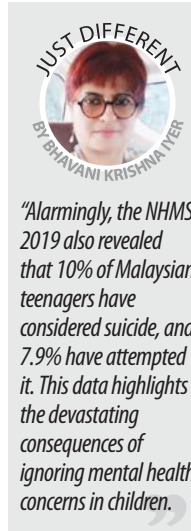
Beyond working with children, counsellors can educate parents and teachers on fostering a supportive environment and reducing stigma, making mental health care more accessible and accepted in society.

Unfortunately, Malaysia has around 11,000 registered counsellors under the Malaysian Board of Counsellors and it is still insufficient to meet the rising demand for mental health services.

The ideal ratio recommended by WHO is one counsellor per 1,000 students in schools, yet Malaysia falls short of this benchmark. Additionally, experts suggest that Malaysia needs at least 20,000 counsellors to effectively address the mental health needs of the population.

Hence, while the race and battle rages on, we as individuals, in our respective roles can take the first step towards becoming better informed.

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



"Alarmingly, the NHMS 2019 also revealed that 10% of Malaysian teenagers have considered suicide, and 7.9% have attempted it. This data highlights the devastating consequences of ignoring mental health concerns in children."

Boosting Malaysia's inbound tourism

COMMENT
By YS Chan

TOURISM is a term that can be vague when used broadly or misapplied to recreational activities that generate no income, such as visiting natural sites like beaches and jungles, or manmade areas with free public access, such as city streets and parks.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation defines tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes.

The above definition is suitable for academics and tourism students, but for the vast majority in the tourism sector, it sounds like jargon and serves little practical purpose in the industry.

It is more meaningful to describe tourism as a massive industry, with the main expenditures being shopping, accommodation, food and beverages, transport, entertainment and attractions.

Taking travel into account, the tourism business can be divided into outbound tours for travelling overseas, inbound tours for incoming tourists and domestic tours for travel within the country.

While outbound tour fares are primarily spent overseas, fees collected for inbound and domestic tour services remain within the country. Additionally, the services for inbound and domestic tours are largely the same, with the main difference being that inbound passengers typically pre-book their services before entering Malaysia.

Many assume that domestic tour packages are only for Malaysians but most are actually sold



The success of a nation can also be determined by its inbound tourism, which not only brings in foreign exchange but also foreign investments. — **BERNAMAPIC**

to foreigners already in the country. These could be visiting tourists who prefer to purchase sightseeing tours upon arrival or foreigners living here, including students, expatriates and their family members.

Few Malaysians travelling within the country purchase domestic tour packages as most have their own vehicles or use public transport. They can also book their flights and accommodations directly, without needing to pay for services provided by travel agencies.

The success of a nation can also be

determined by its inbound tourism, which not only brings in foreign exchange but also foreign investments. There is a strong correlation between inbound tourism and foreign investments, both at the national level and within its various regions or states.

Last year, Malaysia's inbound tourism nearly reached 2019 levels. The four years from 2020 to 2023 are not suitable for comparison as they were heavily impacted by Covid-19. However, 2024 will serve as the new benchmark for comparing performance in the years to come.

In 2024, we received 25,016,968 tourist arrivals, less than the 26,100,784 in 2019. However, the number of excursionist arrivals rocketed to 12,944,787 from 8,944,841 in 2019. Overall, we had 37,961,484 foreign visitors in 2024 compared with 35,045,625 in 2019.

Foreign tourists spent RM102.2 billion, or an average of RM4,086.60 per person while foreign excursionists spent only RM4.5 billion or an average of RM348 per person during their few hours in our country, including the large numbers of cruise ship passengers on shore excursions.

In terms of per capita expenditure, a foreign tourist is 11.7 times more valuable than a foreign excursionist. In other words, one million foreign tourists is equivalent to 11.7 million foreign excursionists. The tourism business is driven by numbers, and receipts are more important than arrivals.

However, the likelihood of their return for future visits is the same. Therefore, we must treat all visitors with the same care and respect, including those staying at hostels and budget hotels, as they could return as successful executives or business people, bringing many family members and friends along with them.

Last year, the top six nationalities that made up the most number of visitors to Malaysia were from Singapore, Indonesia, China, Thailand, Brunei and India. Combined, they totalled 32,092,389, or 84.5% of all foreign arrivals.

Focusing on these six nationalities makes sense for those looking to make a significant impact in Malaysia's inbound tourism.

However, there is also potential for businesses to target niche markets they specialise in. Ultimately, success depends on understanding and acting on the relevant facts and figures.

Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

Tune Protect, Collinson in tie-up to offer lounge access

► Partners unveil pass to ease stress on eligible AirAsia passengers affected by flight delays of two hours or more

PETALING JAYA: Collinson International, a global leader in the provision of airport experiences, loyalty and customer engagement solutions, and owner and operator of SmartDelay, has partnered with Tune Protect Group to facilitate greater convenience and reassurance to air travellers with the introduction of Delay Lounge Pass.

Delay Lounge Pass is offered to travellers who have purchased selected AirAsia travel insurance plans powered by Tune Protect. In the event where flights are delayed by two hours or more, eligible policyholders will be able to gain instant access to Collinson International's network of over 1,600 airport lounges and travel experiences worldwide. Eligible policyholders will automatically be sent a notification of their flight delay and a digital lounge access voucher, through which they can redeem their real-time travel benefit.

Data as of June 2024 sourced from Cirium showed that 33 million travellers across Asia-Pacific were impacted by more than an hour of

flight delays. Additionally, six in 10 travellers surveyed through Collinson International's research revealed that preflight issues can initiate stress and a "Fear of Switching Off" (FOSO) for the rest of their trip.

With travel emerging as one of the highest spend categories for respondents in Malaysia, Thailand and the wider Asia-Pacific region – accounting for almost a third of annual expenditure – brands have the opportunity to build stronger relationships with their customers by offering rewards and benefits designed to reduce travel stress.

"Passenger numbers are expected to reach 5.2 billion in 2025, a 6.7% rise compared to 2024. While great to see, such demand puts pressure on travel infrastructure; often resulting in flight delays. We're pleased that our partnership with Tune Protect will help to alleviate their customers' travel stress in the case of delays by providing multiple options to unwind and relax at airports around the world," said Collinson

International Global chief commercial officer and Asia-Pacific executive chair, Todd Handcock.

He added that they look forward to welcoming eligible Tune Protect policyholders and AirAsia travellers to their expansive network of airport lounges and travel experiences.

Tune Protect Group CEO How Kim Lian said, "This latest initiative underscores Tune Protect's commitment to delivering innovative and customer-centric solutions for travellers. Travel delays are unsolicited and we understand the challenges of navigating them when travelling with a big family or managing a busy schedule."

Tune Protect's Delay Lounge Pass is offered as a bundle with AirAsia Travel Insurance. Available across AirAsia's extensive global network, excluding outbound flights from mainland China, the Delay Lounge Pass is available exclusively to customers purchasing or opting in for either one of the AirAsia Travel Insurance plans. These include the Value Pack, Premium Flex and AirAsia Plus For flights departing from Subang SkyPark Terminal for flights departing from or arriving in Malaysia and Thailand.

The pass is valid for one-time use within 30 days from the issuance date. The Delay Lounge Pass voucher is uniquely assigned to the registered traveller and is non-transferable.

AmBank rolls out AmVault Savings Account/-i to protect customers' financial well-being

PETALING JAYA: AmBank Group has launched AmVault Savings Account/-i which allows customers to deposit their funds conveniently through online transfers.

However, withdrawals would require in-person verification at any AmBank or AmBank Islamic branch.

With a minimum initial deposit of RM20, and no annual fee, customers can apply for the account at any AmBank or AmBank Islamic branch.

AmBank retail banking managing director Cheong Chee Wai said: "The AmVault Account/-i aims to ensure peace of mind as customers can maintain full control over their funds, eliminating worries of lost or stolen cards or even digital threats. It minimises the risk should a scammer gain unauthorised access to the customers' online account, while the funds held in the account will continue to accrue profit for long-term savings."

He added that they are dedicated to safeguarding their customers' financial well-being in the evolving digital landscape where online scams are getting rampant.

AmBank said it remains resolute in supporting Bank Negara Malaysia's efforts to strengthen safeguards against online scams. The bank has implemented robust measures aimed at tightening security and ensuring a safe banking experience.

Beginning January, customers switching to a new device are required to unlink their AmOnline app from their old device before they bind the app to their new device.

Separately, effective Saturday, AmSecure will replace SMS one-time password as the authentication method for AmBank credit cards and AmBank debit cards online transactions.

Other security enhancements include malware scan in customer's device, a designated SMS short code for all customer SMS communications and introducing a strengthened password complexity rule.

MAM Malaysia launches syariah-compliant fund that taps into technology advancements

PETALING JAYA: Maybank Asset Management Sdn Bhd (MAM Malaysia) has introduced the Maybank Global Technology-I Fund, its second in-house global fund and a key addition to its suite of syariah-compliant investment solutions.

Designed for investors seeking long-term capital growth, the new fund aims to offer investors access to high-growth technology companies that are shaping the future of the global economy while adhering to syariah principles.

MAM Malaysia CEO Hisham Hamzah said the launch of the fund comes at a pivotal time as financial markets navigate heightened volatility.

"Following President Donald Trump's return to office, the US has imposed significant tariffs on key trading partners, including Canada, Mexico

and China, introducing renewed uncertainty in the global economy. Amid these challenges, investors seek resilient investment solutions, and the fund is designed to meet this need," he added.

Concurrently, Hisham said, China's technological advancements are reshaping the competitive landscape.

Notably, he added, a Chinese startup has released a low-cost, high-performance artificial intelligence model, R1, which has garnered significant attention and is seen as a major development in the AI industry.

"Keeping up with these rapidly evolving market developments can be complex for investors, requiring the expertise of professional fund managers to identify opportunities and mitigate risks. The fund offers a unique

opportunity to participate in the future of innovation while benefiting from professional investment management, said Hisham.

As an equity fund, the Maybank Global Technology-I Fund invests primarily in a diversified portfolio of syariah-compliant equities and equity-related securities of technology-driven companies worldwide. By maintaining at least 75% of its net asset value in global syariah-compliant technology-related equities, the fund aims to provide investors with meaningful exposure to cutting-edge innovations in AI, cybersecurity, digital payments and cloud computing.

Denominated in ringgit as the base currency, the fund is available in both retail and institutional offerings, with a minimum investment of RM1,000 and RM250,000, respectively.

RHB's #JomBiz empowers more than 700 micro-entrepreneurs

PETALING JAYA: RHB Banking Group celebrated the continued success of its #JomBiz programme, a socio-economic initiative aimed at empowering B40 micro-entrepreneurs.

Since its launch in 2022, the programme has invested over RM1.1 million, benefitting more than 700 micro-entrepreneurs and delivering an impressive 35% average sales growth within just three months.

The 2025 RHB #JomBiz Award Ceremony celebrated the remarkable achievements of selected micro-entrepreneurs, showcasing the programme's critical role in providing funding, capacity building and mentorship to MSMEs from the B40 group and underserved communities.

The ceremony recognised the recipients of business incentive funding from Cohort 5 of the #JomBiz

programme. Participants undergo capacity-building classes on topics such as social media marketing, sustainable business practices, and financial management. Following the sessions, they present their business plans to a panel of judges, with the top 10 proposals receiving initial funding ranging from RM5,000 to RM15,000 to support their business growth.

RHB Banking Group managing director/CEO Datuk Mohd Rashid Mohamad said: "We recognise the immense potential of MSMEs in transforming lives and uplifting communities, but we also acknowledge the challenges they face such as limited access to funding, lack of business knowledge, and the difficulty of building networks within competitive markets. This initiative reflects our unwavering commitment



Seated are Mohd Rashid (fourth from left), group community banking managing director Jeffrey Ng Eow Oo (fourth from right), group chief sustainability and communications officer Norazzah Sulaiman (third from left) together with winners and attendees at the 2025 RHB #JomBiz Award Ceremony.

to driving growth, fostering resilience, and empowering participants to overcome obstacles and thrive in today's dynamic economy."

At the graduation ceremony of Cohort 5 recently, Mohd Rashid shared inspiring success stories from the programme.

RHB aims to expand #JomBiz in 2025 to reach more participants and broaden its impact on Malaysia's micro-entrepreneur community.



International reserves rise to US\$117.7 billion as at Feb 14: BNM

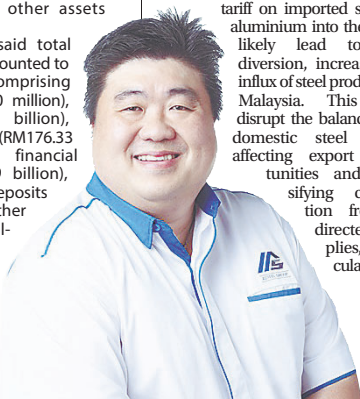
KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's international reserves rose to US\$117.7 billion (RM519.9 billion) as at Feb 14, 2025, from US\$116.4 billion on Jan 31, 2025, according to Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM).

The central bank said the reserves position is sufficient to finance five months of imports of goods and services and is 0.9 times the total short-term external debt.

The main components of the reserves were foreign currency reserves (US\$105.2 billion), International Monetary Fund reserves position (US\$1.2 billion), special drawing rights or SDR (US\$5.7 billion), gold (US\$3.3 billion) and other assets (US\$2.3 billion).

Total assets amounted to RM634.34 billion, comprising gold and foreign exchange and other reserves, including SDR (RM527.02 billion), Malaysian government papers (RM12.95 billion), deposits with financial institutions (RM1.70 billion), loans and advances (RM26.61 billion), land and buildings (RM4.59 billion), and other assets (RM61.45 billion).

The central bank said total capital and liabilities amounted to RM634.34 billion, comprising paid-up capital (RM100 million), reserves (RM196.07 billion), currency in circulation (RM176.33 billion), deposits by financial institutions (RM124.49 billion), federal government deposits (RM15.61 billion), other deposits (RM79.87 billion), Bank Negara papers (RM10.71 billion), allocation of SDR (RM28.18 billion), and other liabilities (RM2.96 billion). — Bernama



■ BY JOHN GILBERT
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Sarawak-based Asteel Group Bhd sees the United States' recent move to increase tariffs on imported steel and aluminium to 25% from 10% as an opportunity to expand regional trade within Asean and explore alternative markets.

Group managing director Datuk Seri Victor Hii Lu Thian (*pic*) said since Asean governments are already implementing measures to manage cheap imports, the company believes Malaysia should adopt similar strategies.

He said Asteel, which has partnered with Tokyo-based Marubeni-Itochu Steel Inc, is positioning itself to enhance regional collaborations and expand market reach beyond traditional partners.

"The imposition of a 25% tariff on imported steel and aluminium into the US will likely lead to trade diversion, increasing the influx of steel products into Malaysia. This could disrupt the balance in the domestic steel market, affecting export opportunities and intensifying competition from re-directed supplies, particularly from China,

➤ Company sees it as an opportunity to step up regional trade within Asean and explore new markets, says managing director

South Korea, Japan, and Vietnam," Hii told *SunBiz*.

He said the global shifts in trade flows due to these tariffs could result in price volatility and supply chain instability.

"Countries previously exporting to the US may seek alternative markets, causing fluctuations in supply and demand. Asteel is closely monitoring these developments to mitigate risks and ensure a stable supply chain for our operations and customers," Hii said.

Reuters recently reported that US President Donald Trump ordered a 25% import tax on all steel and aluminium entering the US, ending previous exemptions for allies including Canada and the European Union and marking a major expansion of trade barriers.

Hii said that to mitigate negative effects and capitalise on opportunities, the government should reinforce anti-dumping legislation, expedite investigations and implement protective measures against unfair trade practices.

"Decisive action is necessary to prevent lasting damage to Malaysia's steel industry, ensuring fair competition and sustainable growth. Asteel urges authorities to step up enforcement against illicit steel imports, as seen in recent seizures by the Customs Department."

Recently, International Trade

and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said Malaysia currently has a moratorium on establishing new steel and aluminium plants and expanding existing facilities due to concerns about potential overcapacity in the country.

He said while recent developments in the US may raise questions, Malaysia is not a significant exporter of steel and aluminium to the US. "Our primary exports to the US are in the electrical and electronics sector, making the impact of any US actions on steel and aluminium exports negligible."

Asteel chief business development and corporate affairs officer Fong Fui Yee said Malaysia's steel demand is expected to remain stable despite global economic uncertainties.

He said the rapid growth of data centres would be driven by key sectors, including infrastructure, construction and manufacturing. "Asteel anticipates continued growth in these areas and is committed to supplying high-quality steel products to support national development initiatives."

Fong noted that Asteel has been involved in significant projects, including the RM61.2 million Elmina Data Centre roof and cladding contract.

"We are continuously exploring new partnerships and projects to solidify our position as a key player in the roofing and walling industry," he said.

Asked to comment on the government's implementation of a two-year moratorium on the expansion and diversification of the steelmaking industry that came into effect on Aug 15, 2023, Fong said while the moratorium may help regulate supply, Asteel believes it is crucial to strike a balance between industry control and business growth.

"We remain focused on optimising operations and increasing efficiency to stay competitive. Industry-wide challenges, including unfair competition, further highlight the need for policies that protect local manufacturers and maintain a resilient market environment," he said.

Fong said Asteel is committed to expanding its footprint in Malaysia.

"Our plans include setting up new branches and roll-forming factories to enhance production capacity and improve service delivery. However, we are also recalibrating our expansion strategies in response to market conditions and the impact of unfair steel imports," he added.

Fong noted that Asteel has previously expanded into international markets, including New Zealand.

"Looking ahead, we are evaluating opportunities in regions such as Kalimantan, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Our global expansion strategy focuses on leveraging regional trade agreements, forming strategic alliances, and ensuring sustainable market penetration."

Sports Toto reports improved revenue and pre-tax profit for Q2'25

PETALING JAYA: Sports Toto Bhd (SPToto) reported revenue of RM1.48 billion for the second quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q2'25), an increase of 8.3% compared to revenue of RM1.37 billion in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

The group's pre-tax profit improved by 71.8% to RM82.64 million in the quarter under review, from RM48.12 million in the corresponding quarter last year.

In the quarter ended Dec 31, 2024, subsidiary STM Lottery Sdn Bhd achieved revenue growth of 6.1% compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year, primarily driven by improvement in average sales per draw and higher accumulated jackpot prizes in Lotto games, despite having only 41 draws in the quarter under review compared to 42 draws in Q2'24.

Pre-tax profit increased by 31.5%,

primarily attributed to a combination of higher sales and lower prize payout in the quarter under review.

Meanwhile, subsidiary HR Owen Plc's revenue increased by 9.4% in Q2'25 compared to the corresponding quarter of last year. Sales growth was primarily driven by positive demand within the used car sector contributed by better sales volume and increased average selling price. The new marque, Lotus, which is now represented by HR Owen, has also generated new sales.

HR Owen reported a reduced pre-tax loss of RM7.8 million compared to a loss of RM15.8 million in the same quarter of last year. The narrower loss reflects revenue growth amid the

challenging economic environment in the United Kingdom.

For the six-month period ended Dec 31, 2024, the group's revenue was lower by 1.3% to RM2.92 billion, mainly attributed to lower sales recorded by STM Lottery and HR Owen. Despite the drop in revenue, the group reported a 9.5% increase in pre-tax profit to RM151 million for Q2'25 from RM137.9 million in Q2'24, mainly driven by improved results from STM Lottery.

For the period under review, STM Lottery reported a slight decline in revenue of 1.9% mainly due to fewer draws conducted (81 draws versus 84 draws in the previous year's

corresponding period). Despite the drop in revenue, pre-tax profit increased by 10.5% mainly attributed to lower prize payout.

HR Owen reported an increase in revenue of 2.4% compared to the previous year's corresponding period, with positive demand within the used car sector alongside a mix of sales volume and increased average selling price. The Lotus brand with its commencement of deliveries during the current reporting period also contributed to the increase in revenue. However, due to unfavourable foreign exchange, it reported a marginal drop in revenue of 0.5% when converted into ringgit, being the reporting currency of the group.

HR Owen reported a higher pre-tax loss of RM19.3 million compared to a pre-tax loss of RM15.5 million in the previous year's corresponding period, attributed to higher operating

expenses incurred associated with the additional new marque, as well as weaker new car sales due to underperformance of certain existing brands represented.

SPToto's board has declared a second interim dividend of 2 sen per share, amounting to about RM26.7 million, for the financial year ending June 30, 2025. The dividend is payable on April 18. The total dividend distribution for the financial period ended Dec 31, 2024 is about RM53.7 million.

Directors of SPToto remain cautiously optimistic that the group's business will remain steadfast.

Despite the prevailing uncertainties and global economy headwinds including trade policies impact, inflationary trends and regional growth disparities, the directors are of the view that the group's business will grow steadily and maintain a positive outlook for the remaining quarters of FY25.



Pay closer attention to compliance

FAILURE to pay attention to proper compliance can be very expensive in the form of additional taxes, penalties and surcharges. And in the event that any failure is prosecuted, the taxpayer or the representatives of the organisation can be imprisoned.

In the case of corporates, the government is a de facto stakeholder who generally collects 24% of profits as taxes. Surprisingly, many owners or boards of companies abdicate their responsibility rather than delegate under supervision to their management to internally prepare tax computations or outsource the work to their tax agents. Many directors may not know the details of the tax computations.

How is tax computed?

There is a general misconception that

taxable profits are derived from accounting profits. The basis of taxation is set out step-by-step in the Income Tax Act, and calculating taxes follow specific rules. However, in practice, the accounting profits are used as a starting point, and adjustments are made to the accounting profits to arrive at the taxable profits which will be different from the accounting profits.

Where is the gap?

Since this is an annual requirement, there is a tendency for tax preparers especially in organisations where there is no change in the business to do a "copy and paste" from the previous year's tax computation, updating the numbers based on the current year financials. The person preparing the tax computation relies on the description in the ledgers or the management accounts, and very

often fails to check the underlying details of the income or expenditure to ensure the accuracy or correctness of the transactions. Without this understanding, the tax computation can go badly wrong because of misapplication of the income tax rules.

The increased volume of tax regulations, tax rules, guidelines, rulings and notices of change of practices circulated by the Inland Revenue Board makes the preparation of tax computations time consuming. Unless close attention is paid to all these changes and the provisions in the Income Tax Act together with the supporting secondary legislation, mistakes can be easily made.

If there is any special expenditure incurred or actions taken by the company, for example, assets held for sale where during that year, you are not entitled to any capital allowances although the assets are still being used by the company. There are many other provisions such as

controlled transfer provisions, definition of received versus receivable, meaning of incurred, transfer pricing, and many more issues which can come up in one year and may not arise in the next year that can "trip up" the tax preparer.

Since most taxpayers do not provide underlying documents to the tax agents, a serious gap will arise between the taxpayer and the tax agent in the tax treatment in the event there is a disconnect between the underlying documents and the ledgers provided to the tax agents.

Tax agents usually handle large volumes of tax returns and time is of essence to them. Unless a tax agent spends time to probe the taxpayer, he may not be able to uncover any mistakes because the taxpayer may have misunderstood or accidentally misrepresented information to the tax agent.

Divergence of accounting and tax principles has widened

The divergence here also requires

much attention because in preparing the tax computation, the accounting treatment of the transaction must be unwound and given the proper tax treatment.

An example is treatment of long-term lease payments, long-term concession transactions, etc. If the preparer does not understand the accounting treatment, it will lead to an incorrect tax treatment.

What should you do?

Boards of directors and senior management should spend time monitoring the output of the tax computation to check at least the reasonableness of the tax positions. It is also extremely important that all tax preparers must keep abreast with the changes in the tax laws.

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

Sin Hock Soon signs MoU for 40 more Scania Super trucks

PETALING JAYA: Sin Hock Soon Group continues to strengthen its position in the logistics industry by signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Scania for an additional 40 units of Scania Super trucks.

The signing ceremony, held at the company's new warehouse in Bukit Kayu Hitam, Kedah, included the official handover of three Scania Super trucks, part of the initial 10-unit purchase.

Sin Hock Soon Group general manager Shawn Yew formally received the keys to the trucks from Scania Southeast Asia solution sales director for trucks, Gary Chin, signifying the continued collaboration between both companies.

"We understand that our customers' businesses depend on an optimal, seamless, and reliable logistics supply chain, and this is exactly what we strive to deliver. With the Scania Super trucks, we can provide exceptional service, as its robust 13-litre engine ensures maximum uptime while delivering an industry-leading 2,300Nm of torque at 900RPM, along with up to 8% fuel savings," said Yew.

The Scania Super sets a new industry benchmark with the highest torque at the lowest revolutions per minute, delivering unmatched performance. Engineered for excellence, it features dual camshafts, optimised injectors, precision turbocharging and a state-of-the-art engine management system.

Chin said, "I would like to congratulate Sin Hock Soon Group for being at the forefront of driving the shift towards a sustainable transport system. The Scania Super will continue to enhance profitability and sustainability for their



Yew (second from right) formally receiving the keys to the Scania Super trucks from Chin (second from left), signifying the continued collaboration between both companies. – SCANIA PIC

business and customers. Additionally, safety remains a priority, as the Super now comes standard with side curtain airbags and a steering wheel airbag, alongside safety features like electronic brake system with anti-lock braking system and traction control, to ensure the safety of their drivers and other road users."

With the addition of the Scania Super, Sin Hock Soon Group will gain access to a suite of Scania Digital Services, including a three-year fleet management system control package.

Sin Hock Soon Group began operations in the 1990s with a single truck transporting cargo within Peninsular Malaysia. Over the years, it has grown into the successful conglomerate it is today. With deep expertise in trucking and transport, the company continuously evolves through learning, improvement, and innovation. Its core services include cargo and tanker transport, container haulage, warehousing and distribution, customs brokerage, freight forwarding, engineering, and leasing and support.

JF Technology puts up positive performance in second quarter

PETALING JAYA: JF Technology Bhd, a Main Market-listed innovator and manufacturer of high-performance test contacting solutions for global integrated circuit makers, reported that revenue for its second quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q2'25) rose 5.1% to RM11.5 million from RM10.9 million a year ago.

The improvement was largely driven by higher contribution from Malaysia at RM3.5 million, a jump of 42.6% from RM2.5 million a year ago. At the same time, its joint venture with Shenzhen HFC Co Ltd, HFC Tech Sdn Bhd, kept up the healthy momentum and continued to contribute positively to the group's earnings in Q2'25.

The top-line improvement was reflected at

the bottom line. Profit after tax and non-controlling interest or net profit in Q2'25 increased 5.4% to RM1.34 million compared to RM1.27 million in the prior year.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, the group's revenue rose 15.2% to RM11.5 million in Q2'25 from RM10 million in the preceding three months. The double-digit improvement stemmed from higher sales from Malaysia and China. Revenue from Malaysia jumped 37% to RM3.5 million in the quarter under review from RM2.6 million in Q1'25. Sales from China improved to RM5.6 million in Q2'25, an increase of 33.4% from RM4.2 million in the preceding quarter. In tandem with this, net profit in the

quarter under review jumped to RM1.3 million from RM0.3 million in Q1'25.

Cumulatively, the group reported first-half FY25 revenue of RM21.4 million and net profit of RM1.7 million versus RM21.6 million and RM4.3 million respectively a year ago.

Managing director Datuk Foong Wei Kuong said the group anticipates demand for its products to pick up in tandem with the favourable industry environment. "The group is building on the positive momentum gained in Q2 FY25 and the uptrend in demand from Malaysia and China. Meanwhile, our efforts to strengthen our presence in the US market via our US-based partner have made encouraging progress."

EPMB in joint ventures with Chinese firms to produce key parts for Proton Saga MC3

PETALING JAYA: EP Manufacturing Bhd (EPMB), a Malaysian automotive solutions provider, has entered into two strategic joint ventures with Sanly China and Jujin China to localise the production of key automotive components for the Proton Saga MC3.

EPMB, through subsidiary PEPS-JV (M) Sdn Bhd, formalised a joint venture with Sanly China to localise the manufacturing of front corner modules, subframe modules and rear axle assemblies for the Proton Saga MC3.

The agreement, signed on Feb 18, integrates Sanly China's advanced metalworking technologies with EPMB's existing operations in Batang Kali, Selangor, ensuring a more robust and efficient supply chain.

By leveraging Sanly China's expertise, EPMB aims to deliver competitive pricing models and optimised ex-factory costs, providing original equipment manufacturers with enhanced cost efficiencies and quality assurance.

EPMB executive director Aidan Hamidon said the joint venture represents a strategic leap forward for EPMB as by combining Sanly China's advanced metalworking expertise with their local manufacturing capabilities, they are setting new standards of excellence in automotive component supply.

EPMB has also joined forces with Jujin China to localise production of car seats for Proton. This venture is a result of years of partnership between EPMB and Jujin. Discussions are ongoing to expand the collaboration to other Proton models and potentially Geely vehicles.

"This is not just an expansion of our manufacturing footprint – it is a transformation of our business mindset," said EPMB executive chairman Hamidon Abdullah. "We cannot sustain a model where we produce high-quality products but operate at marginal selling prices. This joint venture ensures we scale production, reduce costs, and drive profitability. We are not just adapting to new norms – we are creating them."

Malakoff turns around with RM268.69m FY24 net profit

► Significant improvement in group's earnings attributable to improved contributions from power plants in Tanjung Bin, Johor

PETALING JAYA: Malakoff Corporation Bhd recorded revenue of RM8.97 billion for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2024 (FY24), a decrease of 1% from the previous financial year's RM9.07 billion following a smaller energy payment contribution from Tanjung Bin Power Sdn Bhd, which is largely due to the lower Applicable Coal Price (ACP) during the year under review.

The group reported profit after tax and minority interests (Patmi) of RM268.69 million for FY24 compared to loss after tax and minority interests (Latmi) of RM837.16 million.

The significant improvement in the group's earnings was attributable to improved contributions from its power plants in Tanjung Bin, Johor. The assets which sit in its subsidiaries Tanjung Bin Power and Tanjung Bin Energy Sdn Bhd, benefitted from the lower ACP pursuant to the stabilisation of global coal prices.

The group said in a statement that it was not impacted by any share of loss or impairment loss from its foreign associates during the year under review, compared to the preceding financial year which saw a substantial share of loss from its 40% foreign associate in Bahrain, Al-Hidd Independent Water and Power Producer.

For the fourth quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q4'24), the group posted revenue of RM2.16 billion, a decrease of 4.4% or RM99.4 million from RM2.26 billion in the quarter ended Dec 31, 2023.

This was primarily due to the lower energy payment recorded from Tanjung Bin Power given the fall in the ACP, although it was partially moderated by higher energy payment contributions from Segari Energy Ventures Sdn Bhd and Prai Power Sdn Bhd (PPSB).

This means Malakoff recorded Patmi of RM26 million in Q4'24, an increase of RM383.1 million or 107.3% from the RM357.1 million Latmi reported in Q4 FY'23. The increase in profit was mainly due to higher contributions from Tanjung Bin Power, the

absence of any share of loss and/or impairment loss of the group's investment in the Middle East and a reduction in the group's financial costs following the repayment of selected borrowings and term loans, which saw the Malakoff's gross and net gearings decline to 1.39 times (Q4'23: 1.59 times) and 1.00 times (Q4'23: 1.04 times), respectively.

Managing director and group CEO Anwar Syahrin Abdul Ajib (*pic*) highlighted Malakoff's continued progress in strengthening its power generation capabilities, expanding its renewable energy (RE) footprint and advancing environmental solutions.

He said the group's strong performance in the financial year under review reflected the success of its strategic initiatives in transitioning towards sustainable development.

"We are actively expanding our RE initiatives to support Malaysia's clean energy transition. As

part of this, we successfully acquired the remaining 51% and 49% equity interests in ZEC Solar Sdn Bhd and TJZ Suria Sdn Bhd from Zelleco Engineering Sdn Bhd on Jan 31, 2025. With ZEC Solar's 29MW large-scale solar (LSS) facility in Kota Tinggi, Johor, we continue to grow our solar portfolio. Additionally, our 84MW small hydropower project in Kelantan is making steady progress, with construction under way along Sungai Galas in the Kuala Krai district.

"As part of our broader RE expansion, we are also developing rooftop solar and building-integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) carport solar projects, including a 203kWp BIPV system at Masjid Saidina Umar Al-Khattab in Kuala Lumpur. These initiatives have increased our total RE capacity to 173MW, strengthening our commitment to sustainable energy development."

Beyond RE, he said, Malakoff is strengthening its footprint in environmental solutions.

Subsidiary Alam Flora Sdn Bhd's total recyclable material collected grew by 11.3%



from the previous corresponding quarter due to higher waste collection and processing volumes, supported by service area expansions, full operational capacity of recovery facilities, and strategic partnerships.

"We are proud to announce that we achieved a recycling rate of 21.1% in 2024, exceeding our target of 15% to 20%, which we aspire to achieve in 2025. On Dec 1, 2024, Alam Flora's subsidiary, Alam Flora Environmental Solutions Sdn Bhd, secured a five-year operation and maintenance (O&M) contract for the Ladang CEP leachate treatment plant in Kota Tinggi, Johor, followed by a three-year O&M contract for the Maokil Landfill in Labis, Johor, on Jan 28, 2025.

"These contracts reinforce our role in waste treatment solutions and our commitment to environmental sustainability," said Anwar Syahrin.

He added that the group remains focused on strengthening the nation's energy security by ensuring reliable and efficient power generation while continuously enhancing their technical capabilities.

"Our subsidiary PPSB has signed a new power purchase agreement with Tenaga Nasional Berhad, extending the operation of our 350MW Prai Power Plant in Penang for another year, with an option for further extension.

"Furthermore, through our wholly owned subsidiary, Malakoff Technical Solutions Sdn Bhd, we have partnered with China Northeast Electric Power Engineering & Services Co Ltd to provide technical manpower for O&M of combined cycle power plants in Bangladesh. This marks our entry into H-class O&M projects, expanding our expertise in advanced power plant technology to meet growing regional demand," Anwar Syahrin said.

In streamlining Malakoff's business operations and freeing up the group's financial and operational resources for other profitable business opportunities, it has decided to realise the value of its investment in Malakoff Utilities Sdn Bhd and sell the business to a third party, he disclosed.

"We expect the sale to complete by the second quarter of this year and plan to use the proceeds for future investments and working capital purposes," he added.

3REN achieves improved results in Q4

PETALING JAYA: 3REN Bhd, an automation solutions and engineering services provider, reported a 12.3% increase in profit before tax (PBT) for the fourth quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q4'24) to RM3.1 million, supported by higher gross margins, compared to the preceding quarter.

This achieved on the back of revenue of RM28.9 million. Profit after tax (PAT) was RM1.9 million. Excluding its listing expenses of RM2.7 million, the normalised PBT and PAT growth, quarter-on-quarter, would have been 107.8% and 112.1% respectively.

For the full financial year, the group achieved revenue of RM103.4 million, representing a 9% increase from RM94.9 million in the previous financial year. The growth was primarily driven by higher sales in product engineering services, engineering support services, and automated equipment solutions. Excluding the one-off listing expenses, normalised PBT stood at RM14.5 million while normalised PAT was RM11.6 million.

The board has proposed a single-tier interim dividend of 0.5 sen per ordinary share for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2024, amounting to about RM3.25 million, which will be payable on March 28.

Executive director/CEO Koh Dim Kuan said 3REN's listing on the ACE Market has been a pivotal milestone, enabling the company to pursue growth opportunities regionally.

"With our first delivery centre now operational and the new Singapore office set to be established by the second quarter of this year, we are confident in our prospects for continued expansion and value creation," he added.

Exsim Hospitality unit bags two contracts worth RM16m in total

PETALING JAYA: Exsim Hospitality Bhd's wholly owned subsidiary, Exsim Concepto Sdn Bhd, has been awarded two contracts worth a combined RM16 million.

Under the first contract valued at RM13 million, which was awarded by Taghill Projects Sdn Bhd, Exsim Concepto will be the subcontractor for interior design works for common areas and unit carpentry works for a 42-storey service apartment development in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur. Contract works will begin immediately with completion expected in early 2026.

The second contract, worth RM3 million, was awarded by Exsim Waterfront Sdn Bhd and is for renovation works for a sales gallery and show units located at MBF Tower, Penang. Works are expected to begin immediately with completion expected by the end of April.

The contracts, which were awarded on Friday, will boost Exsim Hospitality's order book which stood at RM112.08 million as of Dec 31, 2024. They are expected to contribute positively to the company's financial performance throughout their duration.

Managing director Tan Hai Liang said: "Our latest contract signings further build on from our strategy in the short to immediate term which has already begun contributing to our positive financial results in the most recent quarter. The contract works are immediately commencing and this will provide us with additional and immediate revenue stream as we continue to grow our fit-out business."

JAG posts stronger financial performance, thanks to total waste management segment

PETALING JAYA: JAG Bhd announced stronger results for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2024 (FY24), driven by the total waste management (TWM) segment.

For the year, JAG achieved revenue of RM230 million, a 13.3% increase from the RM203 million in FY23. The group's unaudited profit after tax (PAT) stood at RM6.5 million, a significant increase compared with RM1.2 million a year ago. For the fourth quarter of FY24, the group recorded revenue of RM65.9 million compared with RM55.9 million in Q4'23. PAT for the quarter stood at RM151,000, a turnaround from a loss after tax of RM1.3 million recorded in the previous year.



The improved financial performance was driven by the TWM segment, which contributed RM223 million in revenue for the year, with an unaudited PAT of RM15 million. Given this performance, the group will continue to focus on expanding the TWM segment as a key driver of long-term growth.

Executive director Datuk Ng Meow Giak said, "The strength of our TWM segment has been instrumental in our financial results. We are witnessing strong demand, supported by the rising commodity prices of particularly gold, silver, tin and nickel, as well as the continued growth of the semiconductor industry, which is expected to reach US\$1 trillion by 2030. On our

end, we have also experienced a growth trajectory of the segment. Average monthly procurement has increased significantly from around RM10 million in 2022 to RM13 million in 2024, reflecting the segment's resilience and long-term potential."

"Given this landscape, we have been strategically putting into place measures to grow and strengthen our TWM business. The group currently has a robust number of contracts, and in 2024, we focused on enhancing operational efficiencies and optimising downstream processing to strengthen the profitability."

JAG is assessing its non-performing segments for potential divestment to concentrate on core competencies that drive sustainable growth and profitability.



Paramount pre-tax profit rises to RM156.9m in 2024

► Performance supported by RM1 billion in revenue, record property sales of RM1.4 billion

PETALING JAYA: Paramount Corporation Bhd ended FY2024 on a strong note, recording a profit before tax (PBT) of RM156.9 million, a 20% increase from FY2023.

The performance was supported by RM1 billion in revenue, a milestone that Paramount has achieved for the second consecutive year.

Meanwhile, the group's full year profit attributable to ordinary equity holders of the company rose by 24% to RM102.4 million (FY2023: RM82.8 million).

The company declared a single tier third interim dividend of 1.5 sen per share, which will be paid on March 21. Together with the earlier two interim dividends of 3 sen each for FY2024, the total dividend for FY2024 is 7.5 sen (FY2023: 7 sen).

Paramount group CEO Jeffrey Chew (*pic*) said Paramount finished strong for FY2024, with record property sales of RM1.4 billion and unbilled sales of RM1.6 billion.

"These achievements underscore Paramount's understanding of its customers and the evolving market, and in its ability to design and build properties that match their needs," he said.

"Paramount Property has doubled its operations over the last five years, growing its annual property sales of RM770 million in 2020 to the current record-breaking RM1.4 billion of 2024.

"Our RM1 billion sales for the third consecutive year also sets the stage for sustained growth. Sales is converted to revenue when the property is constructed, typically ranging from two to four years. Paramount Property's revenue for FY2024 was RM965.3 million," he said.

"In 2024, we reached a new strategic milestone in expanding our income from outside Malaysia and beyond Asia. In May 2024, we acquired a strategic stake of 21.54% in Eco World International Berhad (EWI), a move that has already contributed positively to the group's FY2024 financial performance, through the dividends. In fact, the acquisition was recognised as the best share placement of 2024, a win for all parties involved."

"The key contributors to our better FY2024 financial results were the improved PBT of our



property segment, as well as the contribution from our investment in EWI, captured in the investment & others segment. Our coworking segment's PBT was lower for FY2024 as FY2023 results included a reversal of impairment loss for the Naza Tower space," he said.

Moving forward, Chew said the group is optimistic about its prospects for 2025 backed by its unbilled sales and a property sales target of RM1.5 billion.

This optimism is supported by Paramount's 2025 pipeline launches of RM1.4 billion GDV across eight projects (including new phases of existing projects) and RM1.8 billion worth of properties that are currently under construction or completed and are for sale.

Chew said Paramount had signed a sales and purchase agreement in December 2024 to buy a piece of 4.5 acres of leasehold land with buildings on it, at the U-Thant area in Kuala Lumpur. The transaction is expected to be completed in the first half of 2025.

"We are hoping to replicate the success of The Ashwood given their proximity," he said.

"On top of that, Co-labs Coworking is looking at opening two new spaces in 2025. As for F&B, we will be launching another restaurant, Bidou, a spin-off from Dewan."

Plytec revenue at all-time high

KUALA LUMPUR: Construction engineering solutions and services as well as trading and distribution of building materials company, Plytec Holding Bhd announced a sterling set of financial results, under a narrative of strong growth and turnaround in earnings at various levels, for the fourth quarter and full year ended Dec 31, 2024 (FYE2024).

For FYE2024, Plytec achieved an all-time high revenue of RM201.1 million, marking a notable 22.0% growth from RM164.8 million in the previous year, driven by commendable growth across all business segments.

Profit before tax (PBT) in turn jumped 99.0% to RM20.1 million. PBT growth would have been even higher if not for the provision of a one-off impairment loss of RM3 million on trade receivables, as opposed to previous year's RM0.6 million.

The group in a statement stressed that the provision is merely a precautionary measure to account for potential credit risks, in line with its prudent accounting management. A significant portion of these receivables are expected to be collected.

Profit after tax and minority interests (Patami) surged by 110.8% to RM13.7 million.

For the fourth quarter (Q4FYE2024), Plytec recorded revenue of RM54.3 million, reflecting a robust 30.2% increase from RM41.7 million in the corresponding quarter of the previous year (Q4FYE2023).

PBT saw a significant turnaround, rising to RM1.9 million, rebounded from a loss before tax of RM2.8 million in Q4FYE2023.

Excluding the above-mentioned impairment, the group would have achieved a PBT of RM4.7 million. Patami was RM1.1 million as opposed to Q4FYE2023's RM3.0 million loss.

"Our record-breaking full-year results reaffirm the effectiveness of our strategic initiatives and growing demand for our innovative construction solutions," group managing director Yang Kian Lock said.

"We are proud to have achieved strong performance across all segments, including the recognition of contributions from our new venture in the sales of plastic materials and panels."

Looking ahead, he said the company aims to strengthen its presence in upstream supply chain while actively seeking new collaboration opportunities to complement its operations and create greater value in the industry.

Steel Hawk reports earnings growth of 75% year-on-year

KUALA LUMPUR: Oil and gas services and equipment provider, Steel Hawk Berhad and its subsidiaries, maintained strong momentum in FY24, with net profit attributable to equity holders (net profit) increasing significantly to RM12.65 million from RM7.22 million in the previous financial year (FY23), reflecting a 75.21% year-on-year (YoY) growth.

This robust performance was driven by an increased revenue of RM78.42 million, compared to RM72.54 million in the previous financial year. The group's overall improved financial performance in FY24 was attributable to increased activity across all business segments.

The group's key revenue contributor, the Engineering, Procurement, Construction, and Commissioning (EPC) division, generated

RM65.49 million in revenue in FY24, representing 83.51% of total revenue, compared to RM64.93 million in FY23 (89.51% of total revenue).

This division's performance was largely supported by a contract with Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd for the engineering, procurement, fabrication, construction, and delivery of 25 chemical injection skids for all Dulang platforms.

The Installation and Maintenance (I&M) segment also registered a notable improvement of 74.05% YoY, generating RM10.06 million in revenue (12.83% of total revenue) during the year under review, up from RM5.78 million in FY23 (7.97% of total revenue).

This rise was supported by new work orders



from Petronas Carigali for the replacement and maintenance of equipment within pipeline inspection systems.

Meanwhile, the Supply of Oilfield Equipment (SOFE) segment posted a strong 56.83% YoY growth, with revenue rising to RM2.87 million in FY24 (3.66% of total revenue), up from RM1.83 million in the prior financial year (2.52% of total revenue).

Deputy chairman and executive director Datuk Sharmar K. Michael (*pic*) said: "Looking ahead, we expect our performance to continue on this positive trajectory. With the recent award of three new contracts and the extension of an existing contract since our listing transfer, we are well-positioned for sustained growth."

Active trading as Hang Seng Index's bullish run continues

WARRANTS WATCH

TRADING over structured warrants were more active last week, with total turnover coming in at RM526.7 million for the week, showing 16.9% increase from the previous week and averaging at RM105.3 million traded per day. This was supported by the 28.5% boost in turnover for warrants over the Malaysia stock after series of earnings reported, alongside 15.7% increase in the turnover for warrants over the Hang Seng Index (HSI).

The Hong Kong market continued its bullish run with HSI Index gained around 3.8% week-on-week (w-o-w) in the previous week. Following a flat start on Monday, the index jumped 1.6% on Tuesday to close shy of 23,000 level, but it then traded lower on Wednesday and Thursday as news on US tariffs drove selloffs in technology

stocks, with shares namely Alibaba and Baidu tumbling (*South China Morning Post*, Feb 20). However, on Friday, the index rebounded as it jumped 900 points (+4.0%), boosted by positive sentiments following Alibaba's earnings which beat market estimates, underpinning a bull run in Chinese tech stocks following DeepSeek's artificial intelligence (AI) breakthrough (*South China Morning Post*, Feb 21). On the back of last week's rally, investors had shifted their focus into the HSI put warrants, namely HSI-PWB9, HSI-PWDV and HSI-PWDK.

Investors who are keen to gain leveraged exposure to the movement of the HSI without leaving Bursa Malaysia may consider structured warrants over this underlying, which currently tracks the February 2025 futures contract.

Due to the warrants' gearing effect, they have moved in larger

Top YTLPOWR warrants by volume traded

Warrant name	Volume (mil)	Issuer	Exercise price (RM)	Expiry date
YTLPOWR-C77	14.5	Kenanga	5.28	24 Nov 2025
YTLPOWR-HG	11.0	Maybank	3.00	31 Jul 2025
YTLPOWR-C72	10.2	Macquarie	3.85	30 Jun 2025
YTLPOWR-C76	9.0	Maybank	3.00	31 Jul 2025
YTLPOWR-HF	5.2	Maybank	4.88	28 Feb 2025

percentages than its underlying. For instance, with the rally, call warrant HSI-CWCF, which tracks the movements in the underlying, saw its bid price surged 22.9% w-o-w, from RM0.175 to RM0.215.

On the other hand, prices of put warrants over the HSI declined, with mostly half of the HSI put warrants which are currently listed on Bursa Malaysia to be priced below RM0.050.

On the local front, warrants over

YTL Power International (YTLPOWR) remain among the most actively traded.

Following their 1.5% rise in share prices in the previous week ended February 14, the shares of YTLPOWR last week had made a 7.7% drop w-o-w to close at RM3.22 last week.

This was after the company reported a 9.2% fall in its net profit to RM767.7 million for its second financial quarter ended Dec 31, 2024,

mainly due to lower contributions from its power generation division (*The Edge*, Feb 20).

For the week, both YTLPOWR call and put warrants were actively traded, namely call warrants YTLPOWR-C77, YTLPOWR-C72 and YTLPOWR-C76, as well as put warrants YTLPOWR-HG and YTLPOWR-HF.

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

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

Asia mulls crypto policy shifts

► Hong Kong and Singapore are front-runners as nations race to cash in on booming sector

SINGAPORE: Hong Kong and Singapore are the front-runners in a push by Asian governments to become cryptocurrency hubs as they look to capitalise on the global resurgence of the sector thanks to the support of US President Donald Trump.

Bitcoin recently hit a record of close to US\$110,000 while others have also rallied on the back of Trump's pro-crypto promises.

With forecasts that they could rise further, governments are keen to get a piece of the action.

Hong Kong regulators said last Wednesday that the city needed to tap "global liquidity" and laid out plans including the possibility of offering riskier crypto products such as derivative trading and margin financing.

"The one word that we need to think about always is liquidity," Eric Yip, an executive director at the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC), said at an industry conference in the financial hub.

"How do you bring liquidity to this market, hence commercial value, hence ecosystem?"

The collapse of exchange FTX in 2022 took along with it around US\$8 billion from customers who used it to buy, sell and store cryptocurrencies.

The funds were later recovered,

but regulators around the world are anxious to avoid a repeat, and the sector has since moved away from its free-wheeling, anti-establishment origins to embrace regulation.

Officials stress the need for investor protection while still hoping their rules will be business-friendly.

"There was a lot more scrutiny two or three years (ago), right after FTX ... (Regulators) want to make sure that they do the proper due diligence," said Hong Fang, president of another exchange, OKX.

Officials in Malaysia and Thailand are mulling crypto-related policy shifts, while Japan, South Korea and Cambodia have made incremental moves, according to Bloomberg News.

But Hong Kong and Singapore, along with Middle East standout Dubai, cemented their front-runner status during a period when US regulators under Joe Biden's administration were sceptical toward crypto.

In an executive order last month, Trump – who has pledged to make the United States the "crypto capital of the planet" – said he will instead provide "regulatory clarity and certainty" to support blockchain and digital asset innovation.

Animoca Brands group president Evan Auyang said the anticipation surrounding a new US playbook is a

game changer and will influence regulators worldwide.

Singapore's Monetary Authority has issued "Major Payment Institution" licences in relation to digital payment tokens to 30 companies, including OKX, which it added last year.

The city-state has had a head start in regulating digital assets, including with efforts such as the 2022 Project Guardian that brought regulators together with major global banks to explore asset tokenisation.

That project showed Singapore "engaged early on central banks, regulatory bodies, international standards setting bodies," Leong Sing Chiong from the Monetary Authority of Singapore said in November.

Hong Kong, which uses a different approach, has granted "Virtual Asset Trading Platform" licences to 10 companies.

The Chinese finance hub is "number two ... behind Singapore" when it comes to crypto regulation, said Animoca's Auyang.

While Hong Kong has fewer exchanges, they saw a spike last year in terms of value received, according to blockchain research platform Chainalysis.

In the first half of 2024, Hong Kong's centralised exchanges collectively received US\$26.6 billion, almost triple the year before and almost double Singapore's US\$13.5 billion.

Hong Kong overhauled its legal framework for crypto exchanges in mid-2023, with the SFC put in charge of vetting and licensing.

China has banned crypto since

2021 and exchanges in the semi-autonomous enclave cannot serve mainland Chinese clients.

But Yat Siu, executive chairman of Animoca Brands, said pro-crypto policies have Beijing's "blessing" and that Hong Kong benefits from being China's financial gateway.

Aside from exchanges, the SFC said last week it will explore a range of regulations, including for custody services, staking and over-the-counter trading.

"Hong Kong isn't sitting back and saying, 'Look at the US, we're just going to sort of kick back,'" Yat Siu said.

"It actually spurs it more into action."

However, regulators have learned that the devil is in the details.

Hong Kong regulatory lawyer Jonathan Crompton said: "Anybody who engages in (exchange licensing) is going to have to commit to a very serious governance regime. It's not for the faint-hearted."

Over the past two years, some companies have reportedly found it challenging to hire specialised compliance personnel. The SFC vetting team, too, is understaffed.

The regulator's website lists eight pending candidates, while 13 have withdrawn their applications.

"The SFC has been stuck between a rock and a hard place," Crompton told AFP.

"People have complained that, on one hand, it's not quick enough to introduce a regulatory regime, and on the other hand, they have not provided enough protection." – AFP

Indonesia seeks to replant 120,000ha of oil palm

JAKARTA: Indonesia has set a target to replant 120,000ha of smallholders' oil palm plantations and up to 10,000ha of smallholders' cocoa plantations this year, the chief executive of the state plantation fund said.

The agency, which collects and manages the palm oil export levy to fund government palm oil programmes including smallholder replanting and biodiesel funding, earlier this year went through a reorganisation process following a decision to include management of cocoa and coconut programmes.

"For cocoa and coconut replanting, regulations are being prepared especially on agriculture minister regulation as the basis of rejuvenation in cocoa and coconut," state plantation fund CEO Eddy Abdurrahman said.

The agriculture ministry estimated that 282,378 hectares, or more than 20% of Indonesia's cocoa plantation, were damaged and pressing output.

This year, the government targets to replant between 5,000ha and 10,000ha of cocoa and coconut plantations each.

Indonesia provides 60 million rupiah (RM16,000) per hectare to replant unproductive oil palm plantation owned by smallholders.

The agency has not shared the amount that will be provided for cocoa replanting.

In 2024, the agency funded oil palm replanting for 38,247ha, below the targeted 70,000ha due to land legality issues and high palm oil prices. – Reuters

XPeng eyes doubling global presence by year's end

SHANGHAI: XPeng, one of China's leading electric vehicle makers, plans to double the number of countries in which the company operates by the end of this year, its CEO said on Saturday.

Founded in 2014, XPeng is one of the Chinese firms in the sector with the strongest international ambitions, focusing in particular on cutting-edge technologies and design.

"We are going to accelerate from the 30 countries and regions where we were present in 2024," XPeng founder and chief executive officer He Xiaopeng told a news conference in the southern Guangzhou city, overseeing a shipment of XPeng cars to Thailand.

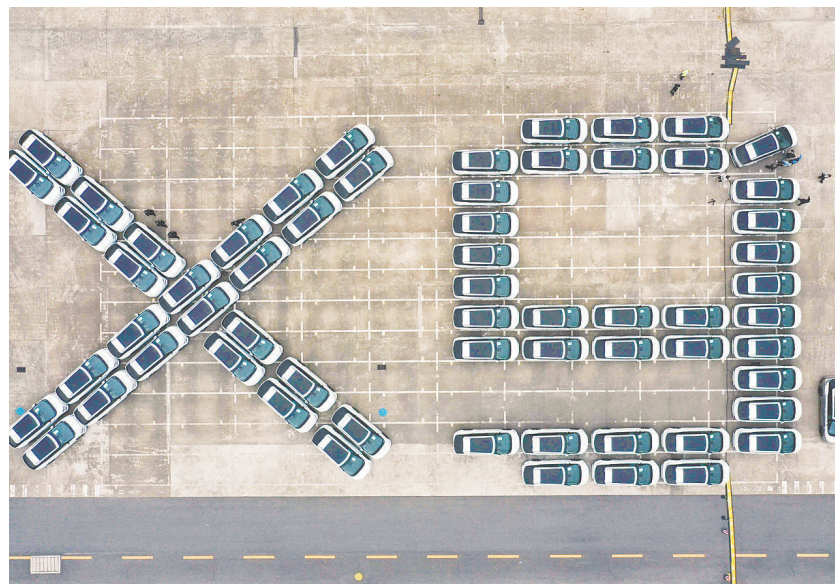
"This year, we will increase to 60 and will have established more than 300 after-sales service points worldwide," he said.

XPeng which designs high-end cars, already has stores in several European countries, including France, Germany, Sweden and Norway.

"Over the 10-year period from 2024 to 2033, we expect half of XPeng's sales to come from outside China," He said.

The ambitious plan comes despite the obstacles posed by the European Union, which has imposed extra import tariffs on China-made electric vehicles of up to 35.3% after concluding Beijing's state support was unfairly undercutting European automakers.

XPeng is banking that its bespoke features – such as driving assistance, rapid recharging and modular interiors – would help it stand out from the crowd in the fiercely



An aerial photo shows X9 electric vehicles by XPeng, waiting to be loaded on a ship for Thailand during a ceremony in the Chinese port of Guangzhou. – AFP/CPIC

competitive Chinese market.

On Saturday, He forecast the possible demise of certain Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers when faced with intense rivalry over price, service and technological advances.

"This year marks the start of the elimination phase in China.

"I think it's going to be extremely

intense in 2025, 2026 and 2027," He said.

A record 10.9 million hybrid and electric vehicles were sold in the country last year, up more than 40% from 2023, according to the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA).

The Chinese electric vehicle market has witnessed explosive

growth in recent years, driven in part by generous subsidies from Beijing.

China's government has supported the development and production of less polluting battery-powered vehicles, a field where Chinese manufacturers such as BYD and XPeng are leading the way. – AFP

Seven & i picks Bain as preferred buyer in asset sale

TOKYO: Japan's Seven & i Holdings, operator of the 7-Eleven convenience store chain, has picked Bain Capital as its preferred buyer for a stake of its non-core assets, local media reported on Saturday.

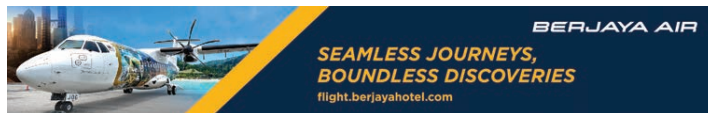
Bain has been competing against rival private equity firm KKR and local buyout firm Japan Industrial Partners in bidding since late last year for a major stake in York Holdings, an entity that the retailer plans to spin off.

Bain is believed to have offered a valuation of more than ¥700 billion (RM20.8 billion) for York Holdings, the *Nikkei* newspaper and *Jiji* news agency reported.

Nikkei cited a person it did not name, while *Jiji* did not specify where it received the information.

The retailer has sought to separate non-core businesses that include its supermarket operations into York Holdings.

The unit will house 31 subsidiaries including the group's superstores business, baby goods store Akachan Honpo and the company that operates Denny's restaurants in Japan. – Reuters



Berkshire Hathaway reports **record** profit, cash

➤ Buffett urges govt to spend money wisely and take care of less fortunate

NEW YORK: Berkshire Hathaway on Saturday reported record annual profits and boosting its cash stake to US\$334.2 billion (RM1.5 trillion), as Warren Buffett used his annual shareholder letter to caution Washington to spend money wisely and take care of those who get the "short straws in life".

Buffett's admonition came as many investors worry US lawmakers won't rein in soaring fiscal deficits, and could make them worse by extending tax cuts backed by President Donald Trump.

The 94-year-old, the world's sixth-richest person and arguably its most famous investor, also acknowledged his advanced age, telling shareholders he uses a cane and will spend less time fielding their questions at Berkshire's annual meeting on May 3.

He nonetheless assured shareholders they would be in good hands after he turns over the conglomerate's reins to vice-chairman Greg Abel, saying the 62-year-old Abel has "vividly shown his ability" to deploy capital.

"It won't be long" before Abel takes over, Buffett said.

Buffett's letter was accompanied by Berkshire's annual report, where it reported a third straight record annual operating profit, rising 27% to US\$47.44 billion.

Quarterly operating profit rose 71% to US\$14.53 billion, also a record, and which analysts viewed as solid.

Net income for the full year totaled US\$89 billion, including gains from Berkshire's common stock investments such as Apple and American Express.

Berkshire's cash stake reflected high business valuations and nine straight quarters of selling more stocks than it bought. The selling included Apple, which remained its largest stock investment.

"Often, nothing looks compelling; very infrequently we find ourselves knee-deep in opportunities," Buffett wrote.

This year is Buffett's 60th at the helm of Berkshire, which he transformed from a failing textile firm into a US\$1.03 trillion conglomerate with dozens of businesses in insurance, railroad, energy, industrial, retail and other sectors.

"Berkshire's activities now impact all corners of our country. And we are not finished," Buffett said.

Buffett said Berkshire will continue preferring equities, primarily US stocks, over

cash, even as it resists paying a dividend to shareholders, which it has not done since 1967.

He said reinvesting in Berkshire is one reason the Omaha-based firm paid US\$26.8 billion of federal taxes last year, 5% of all payments by corporate America.

Buffett himself is worth US\$149.5 billion, *Forbes* magazine said.

But he also sent a cautionary message to Washington, lamenting how capitalism "has its faults and abuses - in certain respects more egregious now than ever", with malfeasance by "scoundrels and promoters" in full force.

He urged lawmakers to help preserve a stable US dollar, saying "fiscal folly" can destroy the value of paper money and the country has at times "come close to the edge".

Buffett said long-term success of Berkshire and the American economy, which he called the "American miracle," has depended on people's ability to participate.

That, he said, is something Uncle Sam can encourage, or take away.

"Take care of the many who, for no fault of their own, get the short straws in life. They deserve better," Buffett wrote, addressing the government.

"And never forget that we need you to maintain a stable currency and that result requires both wisdom and vigilance on your part," he added. - Reuters

Trump orders tighter curbs on China investments

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has signed a memo calling for curbs on Chinese investments in strategic sectors such as technology and critical infrastructure, a move Beijing slammed on Saturday as "discriminatory".

The move, including an expanded role for a foreign investment review panel, comes at a time of growing trade tensions and strategic competition between the world's two biggest economies.

It is aimed at promoting foreign investment in the United States, while protecting US national security interests "particularly from threats posed by foreign adversaries" like China, the White House said.

The memo signed on Friday singles out China for "increasingly exploiting United States capital to develop and modernise its military, intelligence, and other security apparatuses".

China's Commerce Ministry spokesperson on Saturday said the "US approach unduly broadens the concept of national security, and is discriminatory".

It will "seriously hurt the confidence of Chinese enterprises willing to invest in the United States", the spokesperson said in a statement.

"China will closely follow the moves of the US and take necessary measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests," the spokesperson added.

The memo called for the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to be used to restrict Chinese investments in key US sectors such as technology, critical infrastructure, health care and energy.

CFIUS is a panel that weighs the national security implications of foreign investments in the United States.

"President Trump is keeping his promise to prevent foreign adversaries from taking advantage of the United States," the White House said. - AFP

BMW to review timing of electric Mini production in UK

LONDON: BMW said on Saturday it is rethinking its timetable for manufacturing all-electric Mini cars in Britain, citing uncertainties facing the industry.

Mini announced in 2023 that it would invest £600 million (RM3.3 billion) in the UK to make its Mini brand all-electric by 2030 with production due to start in Oxford in 2026.

But BMW Group said on Saturday it was now rethinking that plan.

"Given the multiple uncertainties facing the automotive industry, the BMW Group is currently reviewing the timing for reintroducing battery-electric Mini production in Oxford," it said in a statement.

Sales of electric vehicles have struggled to grow as much as expected.

The industry is also contending with US President Donald Trump's threat to impose a 25% tariff on all US auto imports.

Volkswagen's Audi has said it plans to expand its output in North America and Mercedes will also boost its US production.

In its statement, Mini said construction in Oxford was well underway "to make the plant future-ready" but it had told Britain's government of its decision to review the timeline.

"As part of this discussion, we agreed not to take the previously announced grant, but we remain in close dialogue about our future plans," the statement said. - Reuters



Musk displaying a chainsaw given to him by Milei during the Conservative Political Action Conference. - REUTERS/SPIC

Argentina's Milei praises American plan for reciprocal tariffs

WASHINGTON: Argentine President Javier Milei met with Donald Trump on the sidelines of a gathering of US conservatives on Saturday, where he praised his American counterpart's reciprocal tariffs plans that have shocked trading partners.

Addressing the yearly Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) near Washington, the ultra-libertarian president often echoed Trump's positions as he attacked what he called "a political class with a God complex".

Trump, whom Milei sees as an ideological ally, has vowed to impose reciprocal tariffs beginning April 2 - applying the same fee levels to imports

that other countries place on US products.

Milei said he wanted to make Argentina "the first country in the world to join this reciprocity agreement that the Trump administration is asking for in trade matters".

Trump has also threatened to impose 25% tariffs on steel and aluminum imports.

Argentina is one of the Latin American countries that would be most affected.

Milei doubled down on a series of Trump positions, approving the dismantling of aid agency USAID and - in words echoing a speech by Vice-President JD Vance - castigating European countries which he said had arrested people "for

expressing themselves on social networks".

Milei also defended his "dear friend" Elon Musk, the billionaire businessman tasked by Trump with engineering stark budget cuts.

It was Milei who last Thursday presented Musk with a chainsaw, which the Tesla and SpaceX boss proudly flaunted on the CPAC stage.

Milei said his own government would "use a chainsaw" to hack through state programmes deemed "superfluous, redundant, unnecessary or directly harmful".

Under Milei, Argentine inflation has fallen but the poverty rate last year surpassed 50%, according to official data. - AFP

MARKET ROUND-UP: FEBRUARY 21

Bursa Trade Statistic

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

21 Feb 2025

Retail (19.45%)		Institution (38.48%)		Foreign (42.07%)	
Net (in RM mil.)		Net (in RM mil.)		Net (in RM mil.)	
-11.40		+93.12		-81.72	
Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)	Bought (in RM mil.)	Sold (in RM mil.)
506.34	517.74	1059.59	966.47	1066.81	1148.53

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	11,991.60 +77.68
FBMKLCI	1,591.03 +13.36
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	520.02 +4.95
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	165.05 +3.85
CONSTRUCTION	287.88 +8.71
FINANCIAL SERVICES	19,318.00 +47.23
ENERGY	785.76 +5.81
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	501.46 +0.66
HEALTH CARE	2,037.90 +10.77
TRANSPORTATION	1,038.60 -1.82
PROPERTY	1,066.26 +7.44
PLANTATION	7,458.32 +86.02
FBMSHA	11,716.90 +125.70
FBMACE	4,920.98 +0.45
TECHNOLOGY	56.18 -0.88

TURNOVER: 2.995 bil **VALUE: RM2.632 bil**

Cautious trading expected on lack of fresh catalysts

BURSA Malaysia's main index is expected to trade within a range of 1,570-1,600 points this week due to a lack of fresh catalysts, an analyst said.

Rakuten Trade Sdn Bhd vice-president of equity research Thong Pak Leng said the online broker expects the market to maintain a cautious stance as funds continue to flow from emerging markets into Hong Kong and mainland China markets.

"That said, we believe foreign funds will return to the region in the near future, supported by stronger economic growth compared to the western bloc," he told Bernama.

Thong recommends that investors focus on large-cap sectors such as banks, plantations, and telecommunications, while also considering domestic plays like construction and retail real estate investment trusts for a defensive investment strategy.

"Should the benchmark index reclaim and maintain a position above 1,590 for an extended period with strong volume, a move toward the next resistance level at 1,620 is likely," he added.

Meanwhile, Hong Leong Investment Bank (HLIB) said the FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) is likely to remain in consolidation phase as long as it continues to close below the key 1,590 level.

It noted that investors will assess market developments, including local corporate earnings announcements this week, global trade and geopolitical tensions, the US Federal Reserve's policy outlook, and potential stimulus policies from China.

For the trading week just ended, the FBM KLCI mostly declined, weighed by concerns over the US tariff policy set to take effect on April 2, raising fears about its impact on the global economy, inflation, supply chains, and investment plans.

On a Friday-to-Friday basis, the key index inched down 0.57 of a point to 1,591.03 compared with 1,591.60 a week earlier.

Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-PWB9	0.025	-0.025	-50.00	1,625,750
INGENIEU	0.050	-0.005	-9.09	1,187,054
HSI-CWCD	0.200	+0.070	+53.85	966,616
HSI-CWCA	0.265	+0.100	+60.61	778,122
HSI-PWDW	0.105	-0.055	-34.38	770,680
HSI-PWDN	0.105	-0.030	-22.22	545,374
MYEG	1.040	+0.020	+1.96	518,985
TWL	0.025	+0.005	+25.00	508,950
DSOINIC-WB	0.120	-	-	415,384
INARI	2.350	-0.300	-11.32	391,165
VELESTO	0.185	+0.005	+2.78	334,582
UEMS	0.965	+0.080	+9.04	323,753
TOPGLOV	0.960	+0.005	+0.52	320,616
PCHEM	4.140	+0.440	+11.89	289,300
AIZO	0.080	-0.015	-15.79	283,988
GENTINGC3H	0.015	-	-	282,294
HARTA	2.480	-0.010	-0.40	279,378
TECHSTORE	0.190	-0.010	-5.00	277,360
TAWIN	0.025	+0.005	+25.00	263,351
YTL	1.960	-0.070	-3.45	254,684



Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	VOLUME ('00)
PETDAG	20.500	+1.240	5,068
NESTLE	90.500	+0.760	643
UTDPLT	31.840	+0.600	8,749
FBN	26.450	+0.460	545
SUNNY-C5	0.725	+0.455	2
PCHEM	4.140	+0.440	289,300
PPB	10.900	+0.400	9,682
KLK	21.000	+0.360	5,633
HSI-CWAR	0.920	+0.355	9,315
SAM	3.910	+0.340	15,832
SUNCON	4.450	+0.330	119,396
HSI-CWCH	1.080	+0.320	360
HSI-CWCJ	1.670	+0.320	459
HSI-CWA7	1.270	+0.300	768
ALIBABA-C36	0.785	+0.275	240
HSI-CWCV	1.200	+0.250	500
MCCEMENT	4.900	+0.250	24,287
HSI-CWCI	0.890	+0.245	27,745
HSI-CWAD	0.735	+0.230	100
HSTECH-C18	0.560	+0.225	10,483

Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
PETDAG-C11	0.030	+500.00	1,031
UEMS-C11	0.025	+400.00	15,493
IJM-C92	0.020	+300.00	1
TRIVE-WD	0.015	+200.00	1,113
SUNNY-C5	0.725	+168.52	2
PCHEM-C10	0.035	+133.33	96,852
HSI-CWAY	0.170	+126.67	22,170
DIALOG-CIT	0.010	+100.00	16,342
FBMKLCI-CQT	0.020	+100.00	9,500
HONGSENG	0.010	+100.00	8,700
HSTECH-C16	0.110	+100.00	1,047
KANGER-WB	0.010	+100.00	802
NATGATE-CA	0.010	+100.00	7,565
OCR-WE	0.010	+100.00	11,040
PCHEM-C1E	0.040	+100.00	94,573
SCBUILD	0.010	+100.00	1,047
SUNCON-C26	0.040	+100.00	41,116
UEMS-C1L	0.020	+100.00	30,397
YTLPOWER-C66	0.010	+100.00	171
ALIBABA-C39	0.225	+95.65	2,655

World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	43,428.02	-748.63	-1.69
S&P 500 [US]	6,013.13	-104.39	-1.71
NASDAQ [US]	19,524.01	-438.35	-2.20
NYSE [US]	19,881.54	-268.31	-1.33
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	5,474.85	+13.82	+0.25
FTSE 100 [UK]	8,659.37	-3.60	-0.04
DAX [GER]	22,287.56	-27.09	-0.12
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	38,776.94	+98.90	+0.26
TOPIX [JPN]	2,736.53	+1.93	+0.07
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	23,477.92	+900.94	+3.99
CSI 300 [CHN]	3,978.44	+49.54	+1.26
SH SE COM [CHN]	3,379.11	+28.33	+0.85
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	2,654.58	+0.52	+0.02
ASX 200 [AUS]	8,296.21	-26.61	-0.32
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	8,570.93	-30.82	-0.36
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	75,311.06	-424.90	-0.56
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	190.60	+1.82	+0.96
FBM KLCI	1,591.03	+13.36	+0.85
STRAITS TIMES INDEX (S'PORE)	3,929.94	+2.43	+0.06
WTI [US\$/BBL]	70.40	-2.08	-2.87
BRENT [US\$/BBL]	74.43	-2.05	-2.68
GOLD [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	2,953.20	-2.90	-0.10
SILVER [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	33.34	-0.47	-1.39
PLATINUM [US\$/T OZ]	973.00	-7.95	-0.81
COPPER [COMEX] [US CENTS/LB.]	461.55	-5.05	-1.08
COPPER 3MO [LME] [US\$/MT]	9,559.00	-4.50	-0.05
CORN [US CENTS/BU.]	505.00	-7.75	-1.51
WHEAT [US CENTS/BU.]	604.00	+3.75	+0.62
SOYBEAN OIL [CBOT] [US CENTS/LB.]	47.34	-0.45	-0.94
COCOA [ICE] [US\$/MT]	9,140.00	-1,127.00	-10.98
RUBBER [S'PORE] [US CENTS/KG]	205.00	-0.50	-0.24

Closing, Feb 21

Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [RM]	VOLUME ('00)
MPI	20.400	-1.000	2,541
INARI	2.350	-0.300	391,165
HSI-PWD5	0.215	-0.295	1,458
MISC	7.150	-0.170	80,552
MANULFE	2.380	-0.140	2,723
REDTONE-CD	0.020	-0.130	500
UNISEM	2.400	-0.130	11,052
LPI	13.940	-0.120	793
PCHEM-C1G	0.035	-0.115	6,914
BAT	6.940	-0.110	4,187
YTLPOWER	3.220	-0.110	126,400
CHINAETF-USD	1.215	-0.105	1
CARLSBG	19.180	-0.100	1,507
HLFG	18.200	-0.100	514
MBMR	5.550	-0.100	2,243
GENTING	3.710	-0.090	81,778
RVIEW	2.810	-0.090	176
HSI-PWBY	0.030	-0.085	41,891
NIKKEI-CL	0.565	-0.085	800
SNS-CE	0.065	-0.085	22

Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING [RM]	+/- [%]	VOLUME ('00)
REDTONE-CD	0.020	-86.67	500
PCHEM-C1G	0.035	-78.67	6,914
HSI-PWBS	0.010	-75.00	335
HSI-PWBX	0.005	-75.00	13,255
HSI-PWBV	0.030	-73.91	41,891
HSI-PWD5	0.215	-57.84	1,458
INARI-C3A	0.015	-57.14	48,216
SNS-CE	0.065	-56.67	22
TOPGLOV-C4Y	0.065	-56.67	20,092
HSTECH-H13	0.025	-54.55	7,014
ARMADA-C94	0.045	-52.63	1,000
BCMALL	0.005	-50.00	1,472
BPPLAS-WA	0.040	-50.00	82
HENGYUAN59	0.010	-50.00	1,158
HSI-PWB9	0.025	-50.00	1,625,750
HSI-PWDC	0.015	-50.00	13,337
KGROUP	0.005	-50.00	48,209
MYEG-C7H	0.005	-50.00	17,406
TOPGLOV-C4P	0.005	-50.00	2,797
TWL-WE	0.005	-50.00	54,870

MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by SunBiz Team

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Ibraco soars with 148% y-o-y profit growth in Q4'24

KUCHING: Ibraco Bhd, a property and construction developer in Sarawak, closed the financial year on a high note with a revenue of RM236.50 million for the fourth quarter ended Dec 31, 2024 (Q4'24), marking a significant 124% increase compared to RM105.42 million in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

The impressive revenue growth was primarily fuelled by the continued momentum in the group's construction segment, which contributed RM130.33 million, or approximately 55% of total revenue in Q4'24.

The segment's strong performance was largely driven by progressive revenue recognition from government construction contracts. Meanwhile, the Property segment also delivered solid contributions, reporting revenue of RM91.49 million in Q4'24, compared to RM69.68 million in the corresponding quarter last year, further supporting the group's overall financial performance.

Profit after tax for Q4'24 stood at RM22 million, reflecting a 148% increase compared to RM8.86 million in Q4'23.

In addition to its strong financial results, the group is progressing well with two major projects in Sarawak – The NorthBank and Arden City.

"We are proud to deliver another solid quarter, demonstrating the resilience of our business strategy and the strong execution by our team," group managing director Datuk Chew Chiau Han said.

"Our construction segment continues to be a key growth driver, supported by a healthy order book. Looking ahead, we are optimistic about our prospects with upcoming property launches that are strategically planned to capture market demand."

The group declared an interim dividend of 2.0 sen per share for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2024.

Ringgit set to reach RM4.36 to dollar on trade deal optimism

THE ringgit is expected to move towards its immediate support level of RM4.36 against the US dollar this week, driven by optimism surrounding a less aggressive tariff trade approach by Donald Trump's administration.

This follows the United States president's comments about a potential new US-China trade deal, with markets anticipating a more targeted and gradual approach to high import tariffs. Trump also reportedly said that he expects Chinese President Xi Jinping to visit the US, although he did not provide a timeline for the trip. Russia and the United States on Tuesday agreed to start working toward a peace deal, with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio saying the two sides agreed broadly to create a high-level team to support the Ukraine peace talks.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid views the move positively.

"If this positive momentum continues, the ringgit is expected to move higher. However, several Federal Reserve (Fed) officials are scheduled to speak at public forums, and their views on interest rate direction and US monetary policy could influence financial markets, including foreign exchange markets."

The ringgit strengthened by 0.4% against the US dollar since last Friday, despite expectations that the Fed will keep interest rates steady in the near term. The ringgit appreciated to end the week at 4.4165/4200 from 4.4310/4385 the previous week.

The local currency weakened against the British pound to 5.5851/5895 from 5.5769/5863 and slipped versus the Japanese yen to 2.9346/9371 from 2.9048/9099 last week.

However, it strengthened against vis-a-vis the euro to 4.6236/6273 from 4.6437/6515 previously. – Bernama

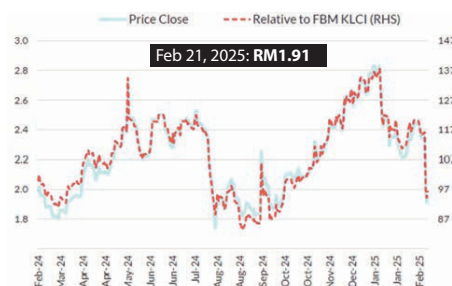
Exchange Rates

FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.4835	4.3485	4.3385
1 Australian Dollar	2.8860	2.7690	2.7530
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3590	3.2600	3.2520
1 Canadian Dollar	3.1580	3.0730	3.0610
1 Euro	4.7110	4.5580	4.5380
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.5940	2.4980	2.4820
1 Papua N Guinea Kina	N/A	N/A	N/A
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3590	3.2600	3.2520
1 Sterling Pound	5.6850	5.5030	5.4830
1 Swiss Franc	5.0240	4.8090	4.7940
100 UAE Dirham	123.4900	117.0600	116.8600
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.7660	3.5070	3.3070
100 Chinese Renminbi	62.2000	59.5600	N/A
100 Danish Krone	64.7500	59.5800	59.3800
100 Hongkong Dollar	58.2700	55.3600	55.1600
100 Indian Rupee	5.2600	4.9400	4.7400
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0284	0.0257	0.0207
100 Japanese Yen	2.9960	2.8990	2.8890
100 New Taiwan Dollar	14.7000	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	41.4600	38.1300	37.9300
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6300	1.5300	1.3300
100 Philippine Peso	7.8500	7.4000	7.2000
100 Qatar Riyal	124.3400	118.0400	117.8400
100 Saudi Riyal	120.8600	114.7300	114.5300
100 South Africa Rand	25.3600	22.8900	22.6900
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5500	1.4300	1.2300
100 Swedish Krona	43.5000	39.6000	39.4000

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

Kossan Rubber Bhd

Buy. Target price: RM2.36



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

KOSSAN Rubber reported 4Q24 core net profit of RM23.6m, bringing its 2024 numbers to RM97.2m – accounting for 89% and 79% of our and consensus' estimates. Its share price corrected 22% since our sector downgrade in January. Following the recent share price correction, we view its valuation as undemanding, trading at 0.45D above mean. We believe Kossan deserves at least +1SD valuation given its relatively better margin profile and sizable exposure in the US, which should benefit from trade diversion opportunity.

Kossan's 2024 full-year results were below expectations, primarily due to unfavourable FX, offset by improved operating efficiencies. Revenue surged 2% QoQ to RM517.9m as its gloves and cleanroom division saw 7% and 8% growths, against a 33% QoQ decline from the technical rubber division. Assuming a blended ASP of US\$22/1000 pieces, we estimate a sales volume growth of 2% QoQ – implying plant utilisation rate of 80%.

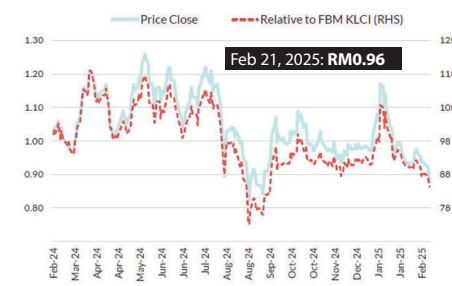
PBT margin from the technical rubber division improved 6ppt QoQ to 14.7%, mainly due to higher unrealised FX losses recognised in 3Q24. Its glove division saw PBT margin contracting 1.5ppt QoQ to 5.8%, as MYR strengthened against the USD.

Our sector downgrade at the start of 2025 had largely played out. Kossan is currently trading at 1.3x P/B, which is 0.45D above its 2-year historical mean of 1.2x. However, we expect the 1Q25 results to likely be weaker QoQ on the back of a potential slowing down in sales volume due to the frontloading effect by US customers. We advise investors to look beyond the April/May period when the US channel inventory depletes, which should start to drive volume growth.

Upgrade to BUY with RM2.36 TP. – RHB Research, Feb 21

UEM Sunrise Bhd

Buy. Target price: RM1.60



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

UEM Sunrise's 4Q24 earnings beat estimates. Net profit surged, driven mainly by higher property sales and billings, and land disposals. Full-year sales of MYR1.418bn also surpassed management's RM1bn target. We believe the successful past launches and upcoming launches in Iskandar Malaysia will continue to drive earnings. Apart from being the best proxy for the multi-year growth story in Iskandar Malaysia, UEMS could be the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore high speed rail play if the Government reinstates the project.

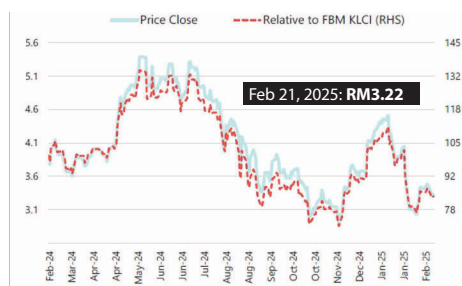
The revenue and earnings growth was primarily driven by higher billings and property sales, as well as land disposals at both group and JV levels. In view of the better results, a 1.24 sen DPS was declared (FY23: 0.75 sen), representing a dividend payout ratio of 60% (vs 50% last year). Net gearing fell slightly to 0.40x, from 0.43x in the previous quarter.

4Q24 property sales totalled RM489.1m, compared with RM426m in 3Q24. UEMS' full-year property sales of RM1.418bn (FY23: RM2.138bn) significantly exceeded management's original target, largely attributed to the successful launches that mainly took place in Sep-Oct 2024. A total of RM904m worth of projects were launched in 2H24 alone (vs its initial plan of only RM800m for the year), and the projects in Iskandar Malaysia saw encouraging take-up. These include Aspira Hills and DiReka Square that were fully booked and are now in the midst of converting into contractual sales. Sales of its Klang Valley projects also improved. The Minh, The Connaught One and Residensi ZIG are now 76%, 52% and 37% sold, from 68%, 50%, and 33% in the previous quarter.

Maintain BUY and RM1.60 TP. – RHB Research, Feb 21

YTL Power Bhd

Buy. Target price: RM4.53



Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research

YTL Power's 1HFY25 results came within expectations as we believe the moderation in its net profit will still be largely anchored by its UK subsidiary Wessex Water's earnings recovery and narrowed losses in the telecommunications arm. Management guided that the first 20MW artificial intelligence data centre (AI-DC) project is on track to be commercialised by July 2025 but the timeline of the remaining 80MW offtake remains unclear.

1HFY25 core profit of MYR1.4bn (-18% YoY) was within expectations, at 52% and 48% of our and Street's full-year estimates. No dividend was declared as expected.

2QFY25 core profit declined 16% QoQ to MYR655m, no thanks to a slightly weaker PowerSeraya contribution, while YTLP's telecommunications arm was dragged by lower project billings. 1HFY25 core earnings also weakened 18% YoY on the back of the lower PowerSeraya contribution (-28% YoY, on lower pool and retail prices). This was partially cushioned by narrower losses from the telco division and improvement in Wessex Water's performance following a price revision, as well as earnings from Ranhill Utilities.

We believe PowerSeraya's earnings normalisation will happen gradually, as more gas feedstock supply contracts are subjected to renewals over time till 2028.

Management guided that the first 20MW AI-DC is ready to be commercialised by July this year on a four-year offtake agreement. Management is rather confident that the chip supply will be ready in the near term. However, the commercialisation of the remaining 80MW AI-DC remains uncertain for now. We reckon that it is crucial for the firm to attain national validated end-user status to receive large allocations to ensure sustainable AI-DC developments.

Keep BUY, new RM4.53 TP. – RHB Research, Feb 21



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Editorial
T: 03-7784 6688
F: 03-7785 2625
E: lifestyle@thesundaily.com

Advertising
T: 03-7784 8888
E: advertise@thesundaily.com

Yoga apps

Find your chakra in cyberspace - P22

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LANGKAWI RESORT
MALAYSIA



Regular yoga practice improves muscle flexibility. – ALL PICS FROM PEXELS

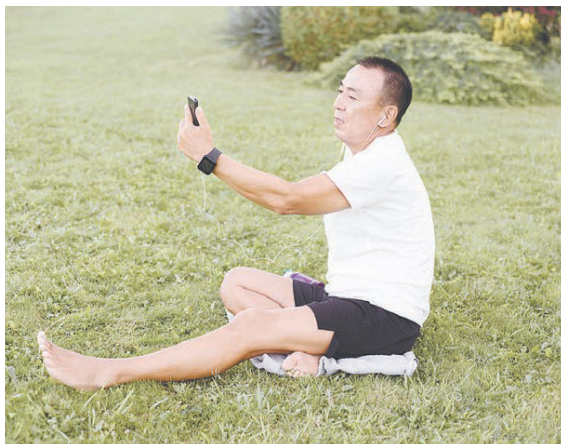
BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

A few years ago, if you wanted to practice yoga, you had to find a studio, sign up for a class and squeeze it into your busy schedule. Now, all you need is a yoga mat, some space and your smartphone. With yoga apps offering guided sessions anytime, anywhere, there has never been a better time to start your journey.

But with so many apps out there, which one should you choose? If you are a beginner looking for a simple, accessible way to get started, here are seven apps that are available on Android and iPhone that can help you ease into the world of yoga at your own pace.

Yoga for Beginners

Imagine rolling out your mat for the first time, not knowing the difference between a downward dog and a child's pose. Yoga for Beginners is designed precisely for this moment. The app offers slow, simple and guided workouts that walk you through the basics step by step. It eliminates the intimidation factor of a studio class and lets you build confidence in your own space. The app is free with in-app purchases for premium features.



Yoga helps with a healthier mind-body connection.

Locate your inner chakra

Seven yoga apps to kickstart your practice

Down Dog

One of the biggest challenges of yoga is finding a class that suits your pace and style. Down Dog solves this by letting you customise everything such as session length, difficulty level, voice guidance and even music. The app generates a new sequence every time, so you never get bored with repetitive routines. Whether you have five minutes or an hour, Down Dog ensures you always have a fresh experience. Free trial is available, but requires a subscription for full access.

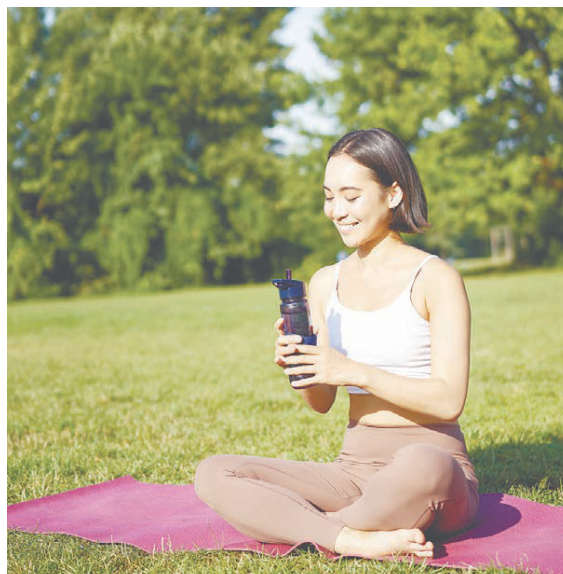
Glo

If you prefer structured learning from top yoga instructors, Glo is a good

option. With classes ranging from beginner to advanced, you can progress at your own pace while exploring different styles such as *Hatha*, *Vinyasa* and *Yin Yoga*. The app also offers guided meditation sessions, making it ideal if you want to combine yoga with mindfulness. The app is subscription-based with a free trial.

Daily Yoga

Starting a new practice can be



Yoga helps correct posture and enhances balance.

overwhelming, but Daily Yoga makes it easier with short and effective sessions. This app is ideal for beginners who want to develop consistency without committing to long workouts. With beginner-friendly programmes and easy-to-follow video demonstrations, it helps you develop flexibility and balance, one session at a time. The app is free with in-app purchases for premium content.

Yoga Workouts

If your goal is to blend yoga with fitness, Yoga Workouts is a solid pick. It includes traditional yoga flows but at the same time, it also incorporates movements that improve core strength and flexibility. The app is great for those who want the benefits of yoga but with a slight workout-style approach. It is free with optional in-app purchases.

Yoga Studio

Yoga Studio is as close as you can get to a real-life yoga class without leaving home. With high-definition

video classes, detailed pose instructions and the option to download sessions for offline practice, it is a go-to app for those who prefer a polished, guided experience. The beginner courses are structured to teach fundamental postures, making it a good starting point for newcomers. The app requires a paid subscription after a free trial.

Simply Yoga

For those who do not need all the bells and whistles, Simply Yoga offers a minimalist approach. The app provides straightforward, voice-guided sessions without distractions, making it ideal for anyone who just wants to roll out a mat and start practising. It is a fantastic choice if you appreciate simplicity and easy-to-follow routines. Free with in-app purchases.

Starting yoga as a beginner can be intimidating, but with the right app, it becomes an enjoyable and rewarding experience.



Deep breathing techniques in yoga promote relaxation and mental clarity.

WITH families increasingly turning to digital platforms for education and entertainment, online safety has never been more top-of-mind for parents. According to Google Trends, search interest in “screen time” reached an all-time high in Malaysia in December 2024, as more parents looked for ways to manage their children’s online habits.

To help families navigate the digital world with confidence, there are tools, resources and parental controls available across the Google platforms.

Putting parents in control

According to the APAC Kids and Families Online Safety Survey, three in four Malaysian children are spending an average of one to six hours daily on digital platforms.

The top three types of inappropriate content reported by parents were misinformation (56.4%), deceptive ads and spam (52.3%), as well as violent content (45.9%).

In response to more children going online, Google’s search data in the past 12 months also reflects parents’ interest in online safety solutions that help manage digital risks for their children. “Screen time for kids” was a top 10 related search term among Malaysians, while the search term “recommended screen time by age” saw a 50% rise in interest.

For example, to make online searches safer and prevent accidental exposure to inappropriate content, SafeSearch on Google is automatically enabled for all signed-in users under 18 years old, and blurs explicit imagery such as pornographic images, videos and websites across all searches.

In addition, Google has also developed parental controls that empower parents to secure and manage their children’s online

Tools to keep families safe online

➤ Google tools, resources, parental controls available to manage device usage, creating safer online experience for children

experience – while helping them build healthy digital habits. These protections are an important way of creating an environment where children can learn and explore safely. Some of the most impactful features that are helping parents across Malaysia include:

Parental controls for a safe experience

Family Link is an app created to help parents set up a supervised account for their child. With the app, parents are able to understand how their child is spending time on their device, find the screen time that works best, stay connected on the go, as well as manage and secure their children’s accounts.

New tools such as the ability to set Downtime and School time to help reduce distractions, parent-managed contacts, and an improved interface were also added to help foster healthy digital habits.

Manage children’s access to websites in Chrome browser

Enable parents to manage their child’s access to specific websites when they are using the Chrome browser on their Android or Chrome OS device. Parents may choose to limit access only to websites that they are comfortable with, or block specific sites that they do not want

their child to visit. This can be done through the Family Link app by tapping on Manage Settings > Google Chrome and choosing the setting that is right for the family.

Additionally, YouTube is more than just entertainment for Malaysian youth – it is a place for them to learn new skills, dive deep into their passions, express their unique selves and discover creators. To make it a safe and positive experience, YouTube has a range of features and policies to protect younger users:

YouTube Kids

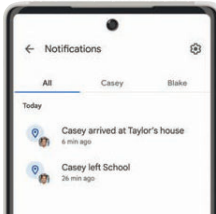
A separate app that offers a more contained and curated environment for children. Parental controls on YouTube Kids allows families to limit screen time, only show videos approved by the parent or select suitable content based on the age of the child.

Supervised experiences for pre-teens and teens on YouTube

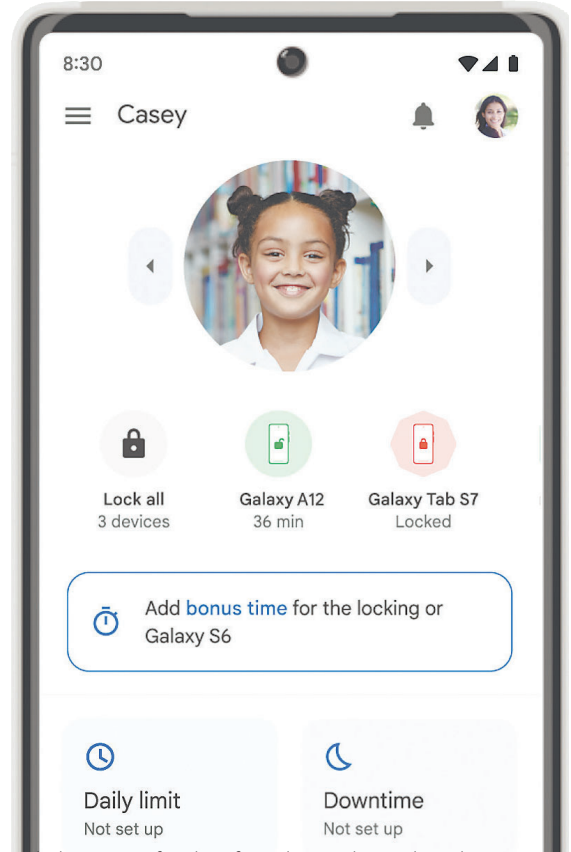
On the main YouTube app, parents can set up a supervised experience on YouTube to manage the content that their children view – such as live streams, live chats, comments and the types of videos they can watch. The Family Centre hub also allows parents and teens the option to link their accounts and get shared insights and notifications

Empowering teens to manage their screen time

Features like Bedtime reminders and Take a Break notifications that encourage healthy digital habits are shown by default for viewers



Family Link is an app created to help parents set up a supervised account for their child.



Help keep your family safer online with Family Link.

under 18 years old, across short and long-form videos, with a default setting for Take a Break reminders every 60 minutes. Autoplay is also disabled for teenagers to give them more control over their viewing experience.

More at Google Safety Centre
There are easy-to-use tools that help families manage screen time, filter content and protect their children online. Parents can explore these features and safety guides at the Google Safety Centre.

Apple unveils budget iPhone 16e

BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

APPLE has announced the iPhone 16e, a new addition to the iPhone 16 lineup that offers powerful capabilities at a more affordable price. The model will deliver fast, smooth performance and breakthrough battery life, thanks to the industry-leading efficiency of the A18 chip and the new Apple C1, the first cellular modem designed by Apple.

iPhone 16e is also built for Apple Intelligence, the intuitive personal intelligence system that delivers helpful and relevant intelligence while taking an extraordinary step forward for privacy in artificial intelligence (AI).

Along with the



When outside of cellular and Wi-Fi coverage, Apple’s satellite features help iPhone 16e users stay connected.

software, the smartphone comes packed with the latest in photo software with a 48MP Fusion camera that takes quality photos and videos and with an integrated 2x Telephoto, it is like having two cameras in one, so users can zoom in with optical quality.

iPhone 16e is built to last, featuring splash, water and dust resistance with a rating of IP68, the Ceramic Shield front cover being an advanced formulation that is tougher and the toughest back glass in a smartphone.

The 6.1-inch Super Retina XDR display with OLED technology has an edge-to-edge design that is perfect for watching HDR videos, playing games and reading crisp text.

Additionally, the iPhone 16e has the best battery life ever on a 6.1-inch iPhone, lasting up to six hours longer than iPhone 11 and up to 12 hours longer than all generations of iPhone SE.

The powerful 2-in-1 camera system on iPhone 16e is perfect for capturing everyday moments and important memories, including in Night mode and Portrait mode. Using computational photography, the 48MP Fusion camera takes super-high-resolution photos, so users can capture gorgeous images that balance light and detail.

With an integrated 2x Telephoto, users have the equivalent of two cameras in one and can zoom in with optical quality to get closer to the subject and easily frame their shot. Meanwhile, the front-facing TrueDepth camera with autofocus enables sharper beautiful group selfies.

The latest generation of HDR captures subjects and the background with true-to-life renderings of skin tones, while ensuring photos have bright highlights, rich mid-tones, and deep shadows.

iPhone 16e takes stunning videos with the ability to record in 4K with Dolby Vision up to 60fps and users can stop and restart a recording for more flexibility when capturing the moment. iPhone 16e also records video in Spatial Audio for immersive listening with AirPods, Apple Vision Pro, or a surround sound system, and enables more ways to edit video sound with Audio Mix.

Users can adjust their sound after capture to focus on the voice of the person on camera, make it sound like the video was recorded inside a professional studio, or position vocal tracks in the front and environmental noises in surround sound.

With wind noise reduction, powerful ML algorithms automatically reduce unwanted noise for better audio quality.

iPhone 16e will be available in two elegant matte finishes — black and white — with colourful cases available to accessorise. Pre-orders begin Feb 21, with availability beginning a week later, on Feb 28.

Pricing and availability

iPhone 16e will be available in white and black in 128GB, 256GB and 512GB storage capacities, starting at RM2,999 or RM1,249.96 per month for 24 months.

Apple offers great ways to save and upgrade to the latest iPhone. With Apple Trade In, customers can get up to RM900 in credit when they trade in an iPhone 11, or up to RM1,000 in credit when they trade in an iPhone 12.

The iPhone 16E has a stronger battery than the previous iPhone SE generation.





AMAZON MGM Studios will take creative control of the *James Bond* franchise in a landmark joint venture agreement with longtime producers Michael Wilson and Barbara Broccoli.

It marks a major shift in the governance of one of cinema's most valuable properties.

So, here are five things to know about the man with a licence to kill.

Born on paper

James Bond started life on the page, his name taken from the cover of a Jamaican bird-watching book because author Ian Fleming wanted something as mundane as possible.

Fleming was able to draw from some rich real-life experiences, having served as a commander in the naval intelligence during World War II.

One of his key missions was Operation Goldeneye, aimed at sabotaging ties between Spain and Germany, which later gave him the name for his Jamaican home and inspired the 1995 movie.

His first novel *Casino Royale* was released in 1953 and was a huge hit. The escapades of a larger-than-life secret agent gave the British public a brief escape from the grim reality of post-war rations and hardship.

He went on to write 13 more *Bond* novels and penned the children's story *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* for his son, which also came to the screen as a hit musical.

Fleming died in 1964 at the age of 56, just two years after the first *Bond* film appeared.

Big money

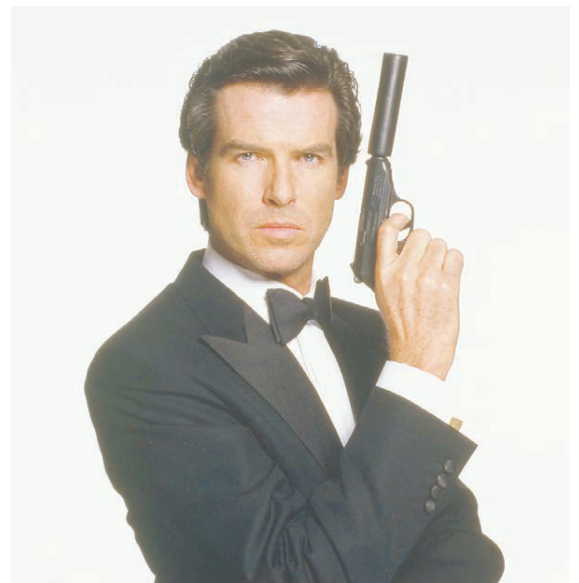
The figures vary, but Bond is clearly one of the most successful film franchises of all time, having spawned 25 official films and enough product placements to make a glossy magazine editor blush.

Industry data site The Numbers places *Bond* in third place for worldwide box office takings, behind only the *Marvel Cinematic Universe* and *Star Wars*.

While franchises such as *King Kong* and *Godzilla* have been around longer, *Bond* is more



Connery is often named as fans' favourite Bond. – PIC FROM FACEBOOK @JAMESBOND007



Actors to play the spy with a license to kill included Brosnan.

Five things to know about James Bond

➤ Amazon MGM Studio will take control of popular film franchise

regular, rarely going more than two or three years between instalments.

The longest gap was between Timothy Dalton's last 1989 outing *Licence to Kill* and Pierce Brosnan's *Goldeneye* in 1995.

Underlining the immense value of the franchise, Amazon bought the *Bond* rights from MGM for US\$8.45 billion (RM37.3 billion)

in 2021.

International agent

The various Bonds of the past 60 years have included Englishmen Daniel Craig and Roger Moore, Scotsman Sean Connery, Australian George Lazenby, Welsh Timothy Dalton and Irishman Pierce Brosnan.

In the novels, Bond is the son of a Scottish father and Swiss mother, both of whom die in a climbing accident when he is a boy.

Codenames

The codename "007" has a specific meaning.

The "00" designation signifies the agent's licence to kill, while the

"7" is his identification within the elite unit of MI6, Britain's external intelligence service.

The M designating Bond's boss comes from the "Missions Department".

Q, who furnishes Bond with all his nifty gadgets, gets his moniker from "quartermaster" — a military term referring to the person in charge of supplies.

The bad guys also have their own codenames.

"Spectre", the organisation that causes Bond so much trouble, is short for Special Executive for Counter-intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion.

Famous fan

One big name who gave *Bond* an early boost was President John F Kennedy, who cited *Russia With Love* in his top 10 books.

Reportedly, it was also the last film he ever watched before leaving for Dallas in November 1963. – AFP

Online shopping giants bet on smart systems to curb clothes returns

FROM sizing advice via selfies to robot stock-takers, online shopping behemoths have increasingly turned to artificial intelligence (AI) in a bid to stem the flow of bad-for-business clothes returns.

Up to 30% of fashion items bought on the internet are sent back, according to a late 2024 study by consulting firm McKinsey and the Business of Fashion website — not least because "clients are buying several sizes or styles and returning most of them".

That practice drags down profit margins. Each returned package costs between US\$21 (RM93) and US\$46 on average given the costs of transport, treatment and making the item fit for selling again, according to a separate McKinsey study.

"70% of returns are linked to a sizing issue," said Zoe Tournant, whose company Fringuant markets an AI-driven algorithm to fix that, charging clients between 5,000 (RM23,105) to 100,000 euros a year.



Besides sizing, e-commerce firms are also counting on AI to help avoid returns caused by shipping errors and automate their stock counts. – PEXELSPIC

Armed with the customer's height, weight and a quick selfie taken on the phone, the French-based startup promises shoppers a better idea of

what size would fit them best.

"With the selfie we detect their age, gender", to help "refine" the image of the customer's body fed into

its AI model, trained for a year on thousands of photos, Tournant explained.

Within seconds that model is then matched up with the garment's dimensions provided by the brand to tell shoppers whether a jumper "falls perfectly on the shoulder" or if there are "doubts at the level of the hips" for a pair of trousers.

Tournant said her firm has some 20 clients, including upmarket womenswear label Maje, which she claimed has seen a dramatic drop in returns.

Similarly tempted by AI's promise, Zalando acquired Swiss start-up Fision in 2020, one of a raft of companies working in the size-prediction niche.

Since July 2023 the German heavyweight retailer has adopted its own AI-driven sizing tool where customers help avoid returns "by taking two photos of themselves with their phone while wearing tight-fitting clothes", said Zalando.

Besides sizing, e-commerce firms are also counting on AI to help avoid returns caused by shipping errors and automate their stock counts.

At ID Logistics, which operates in 18 countries, the order pickers' trolleys are equipped with a smart camera to check that the colour or size of the product retrieved from the shelves matches the order.

The device immediately alerts the worker if they have picked up the wrong item.

In less than two years, this camera has "reduced by 90%" the number of incorrect parcels, explains Ludovic Lamaud, ID Logistics Director of Development and Innovation.

Elsewhere in the warehouse, an independent robot "rammed with AI" likewise maps the premises to "update the stock according to what it sees", processing "6,000 to 30,000 pallets a night".

"The right stock prevents preparation errors and therefore returns," said Lamaud. – AFP

All about DeepSeek

» Breaking down key concerns about latest AI chatbot

DEEPSEEK has quickly become one of the most talked-about artificial intelligence (AI) models, with its latest releases, positioned as open-source rivals to OpenAI's frontier models. As excitement builds, so do concerns over security, privacy and regulatory scrutiny.

DeepSeek
DeepSeek refers to the large language model (LLM) produced by a Chinese company named DeepSeek, founded in 2023 by Liang Wenfeng. LLM is a machine-learning model that has been pre-trained on a large corpus of data, which enables it to respond to user inputs using natural, human-like responses.

Interest in DeepSeek LLM
In January 2025, DeepSeek published two new LLMs: DeepSeek V3 and DeepSeek R1. The interest surrounding these models is two-fold. First, they are open-source — meaning anyone can download and run these LLMs on their local machines. Second, they were reportedly trained using less-powerful hardware, which was believed to be a breakthrough in this space as it revealed such models could be developed at a lower cost.

Differences between DeepSeek V3 and DeepSeek R1
DeepSeek V3 is an LLM that employs a technique called mixture-of-experts (MoE) that requires less compute power because it only loads the required "experts" to respond to a prompt. It also implements a new technique called multi-head latent attention (MLA), which significantly reduces the memory usage and performance during training and inference (the process of generating a response from user input).

In addition to MoE and MLA, DeepSeek R1 implements a multitoken prediction architecture first introduced by Meta. Instead of just predicting the next word each time the model is executed, DeepSeek R1 predicts the next two tokens in parallel.

DeepSeek R1 is an advanced LLM that utilises reasoning, which includes chain-of-thought (CoT), revealing to the end user how it responds to each prompt. According to DeepSeek, performance of its R1 model rivals OpenAI's o1 model.

Minimum requirements to run DeepSeek model locally

DeepSeek R1 has 671 billion parameters and requires multiple expensive high-end GPUs to run.

There are distilled versions of the model starting at 1.5 billion parameters, going all the way up to 70 billion parameters. These distilled models are able to run on consumer-grade hardware. Here is the size on disk for each model:

DeepSeek R1 models	Size on disk
1.5b	1.1GB
7b	4.4GB
8b	4.9GB
14b	9.0GB
32b	22GB
70b	43GB
671b	404GB

Therefore, the lower the parameters, the less resources are required and the higher the parameters, the more resources are required.

The number of parameters also influences how the model will respond to prompts by the user. Most modern computers, including laptops that have 8GB to 16GB of RAM, are capable of running distilled LLMs with seven billion or eight billion parameters.

DeepSeek vs other LLMs

Benchmark testing conducted by DeepSeek showed its DeepSeek R1 model is on par with many of the existing models from OpenAI, Claude and Meta at the time of its release. Additionally, many of the companies in this space have not open-sourced their frontier LLMs, which gives DeepSeek a unique advantage.

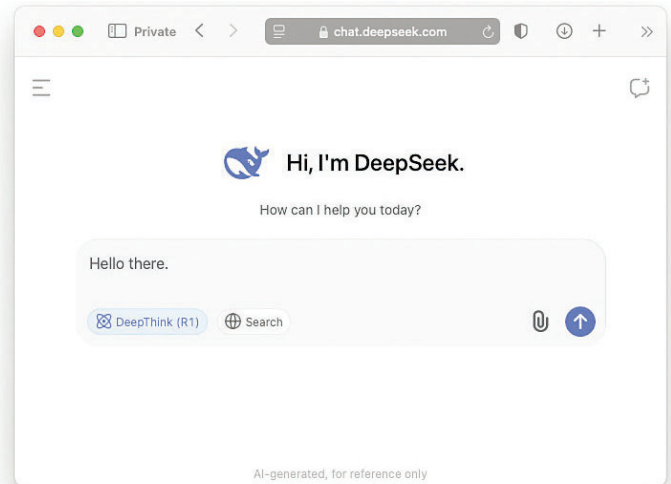
Finally, its CoT approach is verbose, revealing more of the nuances involved in how LLMs respond to prompts compared with other reasoning models. The latest models from OpenAI (o3) and Google (Gemini 2.0 Flash Thinking) reveal additional reasoning to the end user, though in a less verbose fashion.

Frontier model

A frontier model refers to the most advanced LLMs available that include complex reasoning and problem-solving capabilities. Currently, OpenAI's o1 and o3 models along



DeepSeek was founded in 2023 by Liang Wenfeng.



List of countries banning DeepSeek is expected to grow longer in the coming months.

with DeepSeek R1 are the only frontier models available.

Open source vs website

Deploying the open-source version of DeepSeek on a system is likely safer to use versus DeepSeek's website or mobile applications, since it does not require a connection to the internet to function.

However, there are genuine privacy and security concerns about using DeepSeek, specifically through its website and mobile applications available on iOS and Android.

Concerns surrounding using DeepSeek's website and mobile applications

DeepSeek's data collection disclosure is outlined in its privacy policy, which specifies the types of data collected when using its website or mobile applications. It is important to note that data is stored on secure servers, although the retention terms are unclear. Since DeepSeek operates in China, its terms of

service are subjected to Chinese law, meaning consumer privacy protections, such as the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation and similar global regulations, do not apply. If you choose to download DeepSeek models and run them locally, you face a lower risk regarding data privacy.

DeepSeek's ban

As of Feb 13, several countries have banned or are investigating DeepSeek for a potential ban, including Italy, Taiwan, South Korea and Australia, as well as several states in the US have banned DeepSeek from government devices including Texas, New York, Virginia along with several entities of the US federal government, including the US Department of Defense, US Navy and the US Congress. This list is likely to continue to grow in the coming weeks and months.

This article is contributed by the Tenable Security Response Team.

Research claims remote working causes 'Zoom fatigue'

SINCE the widespread adoption of remote working, online meetings have become part of the daily routine for many employees. While this practice facilitates remote collaboration, it also generates a growing feeling of fatigue, often referred to as "Zoom fatigue". A study published in the scientific journal *Plos One* highlighted a little-explored factor in this phenomenon: dissatisfaction with your appearance onscreen.

Researchers at Michigan State University surveyed 2,448 American workers from a variety of professional sectors (technical, scientific and administrative), who often take part in virtual meetings in a professional context. They found people who are more dissatisfied with their physical appearance experience increased fatigue during online meetings.

This discomfort leads them to make more frequent use of image management tools, such as filters, avatars or video editing options. However, these tricks do not just improve their appearance onscreen. They also alter their perception of the effectiveness of videoconferencing, and reduce their willingness to use it on a long-term basis.

This study raised important questions about ergonomics and employee well-being in the digital environment. It revealed digital fatigue is not a matter of cognitive fatigue, but can be fuelled by psychological factors linked to self-image. Unlike

face-to-face encounters, online meetings give you a constant eye on your own reflection, which accentuates aesthetic concerns and amplifies mental fatigue. The authors of the study recommended new approaches to improve the experience of remote meetings.

"Our study highlights dissatisfaction with facial appearance contributes to Zoom fatigue, leading to reduced adoption of virtual meeting technologies," the researchers explained in a statement.

Therefore, they suggested rethinking the functionalities of video conferencing platforms to better meet the socio-psychological needs of professionals. They also encouraged companies to consider the impact of these technologies on their employees' well-being, and to promote a more measured use of online meetings in their work organisation.

While the study has certain limitations — notably a panel made up solely of American workers and the impossibility of establishing a direct causal link — it paved the way for further research into the psychological challenges of online work. Companies, for their part, would be well advised not to underestimate this fatigue and to think about alternatives to make virtual meetings more comfortable and less draining. — ETX Studio



The study recommends new approaches to improve the experience of remote meetings. — PEXELSPIC



Modern love

► Romance with heart, humour

BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

DIRECTOR Kiruthiga Udhayanidhi returns with *Kadhalikka Neramillai*, a contemporary romantic dramedy that explores love, personal choices and fate in a refreshingly modern way.

With a solid cast led by Nithya Menen, Ravi Mohan, Vinay Rai And Yogi Babu, the film manages to be a

breezy watch, blending humour and emotions effectively. It presents an engaging narrative that feels relevant to today's generation.

Shriya (Nithya Menen), an independent architect in Chennai, decides to become a mother through in vitro fertilisation after a heartbreak. Unbeknownst to her, the sperm donor is Siddharth (Ravi Mohan), a Bengaluru-based structural engineer. Fate brings them together in unexpected ways, leading to comedic and heartfelt moments. As their paths collide, the story explores whether love and connection can be built under such unusual circumstances.



Nithya (left) delivers a stunning performance, while Ravi's comedic timing adds to the lightheartedness of the movie.

Performances

Nithya Menen once again proves why she is one of the most effortless actors in the industry. She brings a natural charm to Shriya, making her a relatable and endearing character. Whether it is delivering witty one-liners or portraying moments of deep vulnerability, Nithya shines in every scene. Her chemistry with Ravi is warm and believable, building up the film's romantic moments.

Ravi Mohan, after a streak of underwhelming films, finally finds his footing in *Kadhalikka Neramillai*. He is definitely not the scene-stealer in the film, but he delivers a grounded performance that suits his role well. His comedic timing, especially in the initial interactions with Nithya's character, adds to the film's lighthearted tone. However, in some emotional sequences, his performance feels a little restrained, making certain key moments less impactful than they could have been.

Vinay Rai is a refreshing presence in the film. His role as a positive, mature character adds depth to the narrative. Vinay's role is written with dignity and warmth, making him a standout as a good friend and boyfriend.

Yogi Babu, as always, delivers on the comic front. His impeccable timing and natural delivery ensure that the humour never feels forced. His interactions with both the leads add lightheartedness to the story, making the film more entertaining.

Strengths and weaknesses

The film starts off on a strong note, establishing its characters and premise in a fun, engaging manner. The first half is filled with witty dialogues, organic humour and fun storytelling, keeping the audience entertained. The modern approach to relationships and parenthood is refreshing, making the film relatable to the younger generation.

However, the second half struggles to maintain the same momentum. While the emotional depth increases, some of the conflicts feel rushed. Certain moments that could have been explored with more nuance get resolved too quickly, making the climax slightly



Kadhalikka Neramillai is a Tamil romance-comedy film. —IMDBPIC

predictable. A more balanced screenplay in the latter half would have elevated the overall impact of the film.

Music and technical aspects

A.R. Rahman delivers a beautiful soundtrack, which is expected from a film under his composition. The songs are well-placed into the narrative, adding an emotional touch to important moments. The background score is equally effective, enhancing the lighthearted and dramatic scenes. Visually, the film is

vibrant, with well-framed shots capturing the essence of Chennai and Bengaluru. The cinematography complements the story's tone, making it a pleasant watch.

Despite its minor flaws, *Kadhalikka Neramillai* is a feel-good romantic drama that suits the tastes of today's audience. The modern take on relationships makes it a worthwhile watch. A decent and enjoyable watch for those who love lighthearted romance. *Kadhalikka Neramillai* is streaming on Netflix.

BY MARK MATHEN VICTOR

IF there is one thing A.R.G.U.S. director Amanda Waller (Viola Davis) is truly good at, which is flagrantly finding ways to exploit human rights in the name of protecting America. In Warner Bros Animation and DC Studios's latest *Creature Commandos* series, Waller finds a way to create a new black ops unit



Thanks to Circe, fans are given a teaser to Gunn's version of the Justice League.

Monsters join DC's military

without upsetting the US Congress, by having monsters in the unit instead. Following the attack on the fictional country of Pokolistan by the Amazonian sorceress Circe (Anya Chalotra), Waller puts a team together to protect the princess, consisting of the Bride of Frankenstein (Indira Varma), Doctor Phosphorus (Alan Tudyk), Nina Mazursky (Zoe Chao), G.I. Robot and Weasel (both voiced by Sean Gunn). Led by Rick Flag Sr. (Frank Grillo), "Task Force M" begrudgingly sets on their mission rife with problems, particularly when Eric Frankenstein (David Harbour) shows up to "save" his Bride.

Bloody good precedent

A spiritual sequel to 2021's *The Suicide Squad*, *Creature Commandos* is the first official entry in the new DC Universe (DCU) created by James Gunn and Peter Safran, with the second entry being the new Superman later this year. The series is pretty much what anyone familiar with Gunn's films would expect, as *Creature Commandos* follows the template of "rag-tag group

of criminals or heroes forced to work together despite their differences" that Gunn established with *Guardians of the Galaxy* over 10 years ago and re-established with *The Suicide Squad*.

However, the core difference here is the medium. *Creature Commandos* is delivered in. Being an animated series, Gunn and showrunner Dean Lorey get a lot of room in pushing their content to the extreme, particularly the violence. This brings up a question on how the subsequent DCU titles will handle graphic violence or sexual themes. Will David Corenswet's Superman accidentally punch a hole through someone, with their chest exploding, sending bone shrapnel, innards and blood spraying out, like what happens repeatedly in *Creature Commandos*, in a cinema filled with children brought by their parents?

Balancing light and dark

The series serving as a foundation to the DCU aside, *Creature Commandos* is still entertaining. Bearing a visual and comedic resemblance to the popular,



Grillo will reprise his role as Flag (centre) in the upcoming *Superman* film.

— PICS COURTESY OF MAX

but niche animated series *Archer*, the show fires on all cylinders at all times, whether its time for jokes, moments of seriousness or a combination of both.

Unlike his films, Gunn has more room to expand on the characters he has. Waller is roped into Task Force M, with most of the episodes focusing on flashbacks on each individual member of the team. G.I. Robot, an android created to kill Nazis during World War II, receives a sombre series of flashbacks, while characters such as the anthropomorphic, unintelligible

Weasel — who was brought back from the 2021 film — and the Bride have dark backstories, particularly the latter with Gunn's not-so-subtle condemnation of "Incel behaviour".

Overall, it is a tightrope display of balancing between the edginess of Zack Snyder's previous DC Cinematic Extended Universe and what made those early Marvel films fun. If Gunn keeps it up with the next DCU projects, maybe Warner Bros will finally find success in its DC Comics properties.



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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL
EGSAM
GUAMAN NO:
BF-AZ2NCVC-292-12/2024

MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU
SELANGOR (MPHS) ... PLAINTIFF

DAN

GOR HOON LIAN
(NO K/P: 540417-01-5049) ... DEFENDAN

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada:

GOR HOON LIAN
No.18, Lorong SJ 10/4,
43300 Seri Kembangan,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

GOR HOON LIAN
No.20, Jalan Kemboja 3,
Sek. 8BA, Bandar Bukit Beruntung,
48200 Rawang,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

AMBIK PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu dalam Mahkamah ini oleh **MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU SELANGOR (MPHS)** yang berlatamat di Jalan Bukit Kerjayan, 40000 Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor Darul Ehsan dan Mahkamah telah memintakan supaya Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut disampaikan kepada kamu dengan memampatkan salinan-salinannya beserta satu salinan yang diimteri bagi Perintah untuk penyempitan ganti pada Papan Notis Mahkamah Majlisret di Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor, memamp satu salinan Writ Saman bersama dengan Perintah tersebut ke alamat terakir Defendan yang diketahui dan pengiklanan Perintah tersebut dalam satu keluaran akhbar tempatan The Sun selama satu hari dan bahawa penampakan, pengprosan dan pengiklanan sedemikian dianggap sebagai penyempitan yang wajar dan mencukupi akan Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci ini keatas kamu atau penampatan EMPAT BELAS (14) hari selepas tarikh terakir penyempitan dan pengiklanan tersebut. **DAN SELANJUTNYA AMBIL NOTIS** bahawa tarikh pengurusan ke Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut telah ditetapkan di hadapan Majlisret **28.02.2025** pada **9.00 pagi** di dalam **Pengurusan Kes secara e-review (dalam talian)**.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk menentang dan/atau membatalkan diri, kamu mestilah dalam masa empat belas (14) hari dari tarikh penampakan dan pengiklanan tersebut menjadi sempurna, memohon kepada Mahkamah untuk memampatkan kehadiran di Mahkamah ini. Jika tidak, suatu Pengiklanan boleh dikeluarkan terhadap kamu.

Writ Saman Terperinci dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci ini boleh diperiksa oleh kamu dengan melalui permohonan kepada Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh 14 Februari 2025

Pendafat Mahkamah Majlisret
Kuala Kubu Bharu

NOTIS IKLAN ini difailkan oleh **TETUAN IBRAHIM & FUADAH**, Peguambela & Peguambela bagi Plaintiff yang berlatamat di No.12F, Jalan Bidara 8, SU Mail, Saiguna Utama 3, 47000, Sungai Buloh, Selangor, No. tel: 03- 6038 8164 (0301 emel: info@ibrahimfuadah.my)

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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL
EGSAM
GUAMAN NO:
BF-AZ2NCVC-271-11/2024

MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU
SELANGOR (MPHS) ... PLAINTIFF

DAN

CHEN WAI CHONG
(NO K/P: 63125-08-5679) ... DEFENDAN

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada:

CHEN WAI CHONG
No.22, Jalan TP1
Taman Tun Perak,
40000 Rawang,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

CHEN WAI CHONG
No.18, Lorong SJ 18A,
Taman Selangor Jaya,
68100 Klang,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

AMBIK PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu dalam Mahkamah ini oleh **MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU SELANGOR (MPHS)** yang berlatamat di Jalan Bukit Kerjayan, 40000 Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor Darul Ehsan dan Mahkamah telah memintakan supaya Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut disampaikan kepada kamu dengan memampatkan salinan-salinannya beserta satu salinan yang diimteri bagi Perintah untuk penyempitan ganti pada Papan Notis Mahkamah Majlisret di Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor, memamp satu salinan Writ Saman bersama dengan Perintah tersebut ke alamat terakir Defendan yang diketahui dan pengiklanan Perintah tersebut dalam satu keluaran akhbar tempatan The Sun selama satu hari dan bahawa penampakan, pengprosan dan pengiklanan sedemikian dianggap sebagai penyempitan yang wajar dan mencukupi akan Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci ini keatas kamu atau penampatan EMPAT BELAS (14) hari selepas tarikh terakir penyempitan dan pengiklanan tersebut. **DAN SELANJUTNYA AMBIL NOTIS** bahawa tarikh pengurusan ke Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut telah ditetapkan di hadapan Majlisret **28.02.2025** pada **9.00 pagi** di dalam **Pengurusan Kes secara e-review (dalam talian)**.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk menentang dan/atau membatalkan diri, kamu mestilah dalam masa empat belas (14) hari dari tarikh penampakan dan pengiklanan tersebut menjadi sempurna, memohon kepada Mahkamah untuk memampatkan kehadiran di Mahkamah ini. Jika tidak, suatu Pengiklanan boleh dikeluarkan terhadap kamu.

Writ Saman Terperinci dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci ini boleh diperiksa oleh kamu dengan melalui permohonan kepada Mahkamah ini.

Bertarikh 14 Februari 2025

Pendong Pendafat Mahkamah Majlisret
Kuala Kubu Bharu

NOTIS IKLAN ini difailkan oleh **TETUAN IBRAHIM & FUADAH**, Peguambela & Peguambela bagi Plaintiff yang berlatamat di No.12F, Jalan Bidara 8, SU Mail, Saiguna Utama 3, 47000, Sungai Buloh, Selangor, No. tel: 03- 6038 8164 (0301 emel: info@ibrahimfuadah.my)

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DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJLISRET DI KUALA KUBU BHARU
DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL
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GUAMAN NO:
BF-AZ2NCVC-307-12/2024

MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU
SELANGOR (MPHS) ... PLAINTIFF

DAN

HEW CHEE KONG
(NO K/P: 740914-10-5495) ... DEFENDAN

NOTIS IKLAN

Kepada:

HEW CHEE KONG
No.6, Jalan SS 22/13,
Damansara Utama,
47400 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

AMBIK PERHATIAN bahawa satu Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan telah dikeluarkan terhadap kamu dalam Mahkamah ini oleh **MAJLIS PERBANDARAN HULU SELANGOR (MPHS)** yang berlatamat di Jalan Bukit Kerjayan, 40000 Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor Darul Ehsan dan Mahkamah telah memintakan supaya Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut disampaikan kepada kamu dengan memampatkan salinan-salinannya beserta satu salinan yang diimteri bagi Perintah untuk penyempitan ganti pada Papan Notis Mahkamah Majlisret di Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor, memamp satu salinan Writ Saman bersama dengan Perintah tersebut ke alamat terakir Defendan yang diketahui dan pengiklanan Perintah tersebut dalam satu keluaran akhbar tempatan "The Sun" selama satu hari dan bahawa penampakan, pengprosan dan pengiklanan sedemikian dianggap sebagai penyempitan yang wajar dan mencukupi akan Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan Terperinci ini keatas kamu atau penampatan EMPAT BELAS (14) hari selepas tarikh terakir penyempitan dan pengiklanan tersebut. **DAN SELANJUTNYA AMBIL NOTIS** bahawa tarikh pengurusan ke Writ Saman dan Peringatan Tututan tersebut telah ditetapkan di hadapan Majlisret **28.02.2025** pada **9.00 pagi** di dalam **Pengurusan Kes secara e-review (dalam talian)**.

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Bertarikh 19 Februari 2025

Pendafat Mahkamah Majlisret
Kuala Kubu Bharu

NOTIS IKLAN ini difailkan oleh **TETUAN IBRAHIM & FUADAH**, Peguambela & Peguambela bagi Plaintiff yang berlatamat di No.12F, Jalan Bidara 8, SU Mail, Saiguna Utama 3, 47000, Sungai Buloh, Selangor, No. tel: 03- 6038 8164 (0301 emel: info@ibrahimfuadah.my)



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322 Notices

IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT JOHOR BAHRU, JOHOR COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) NO. JH-280C-21-02/2023

In the Matter of Section 465(1)(g) read with Section 466 (1)(a) of the Companies Act, 2016

And
In the Matter of HADHARI RESOURCES SDN BHD [Company No. 200301015223(617643-H)]

Between
SOUTHERN PREMIX SDN BHD (Company No. 588886-H) ...Petitioner

And
HADHARI RESOURCES SDN BHD [Company No. 200301015223 (617643-H)] ...Respondent

ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION

NOTICE is hereby given that a petition for the winding-up of the above-named company by the High court was on 07.02.2025 presented by the said company and that the said petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at **Johor Bahru, Johor** at 9.00 o'clock in the morning, on the 03.04.2025, and any creditor or contributor of the said company desiring to support or oppose the making of an order on the said petition may appear at the time of hearing by himself or his counsel for that purpose, and a copy of the petition will be furnished to any creditor or contributor of the said company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's address is at B-05 & B-06, Plaza Kelana Jaya, Jalan SS7/13B, Kelana Jaya, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

The Petitioner's solicitor is Messrs Chor Pee Anwarul & Company, Advocates & Solicitors at Bangunan Rasheed-Chor Pee, No. 64 (First & Second Floor), Susur 1, Jalan Tun Abdul Razak, 80888 Ibrahim International Business District, Johor.

Sgd
Solicitors for the Petitioners
Messrs Chor Pee Anwarul & Company

NOTE:- Any person who intends to appear on the hearing of the said petition must serve on or send by post to the above-named Messrs Chor Pee Anwarul & Company, notice in writing of his intention to do so. This notice must state the name and address of the person, or, if a firm, or his or their solicitor (if any) and must be served, or, if posted, must be sent by post in sufficient time to reach the above-named not later than 9.00 o'clock afternoon of the 02.04.2025.

This Advertisement of Petition is prepared by Messrs Chor Pee Anwarul & Company, Advocates & Solicitors at Bangunan Rasheed-Chor Pee, No. 64 (First & Second Floor), Susur 1, Jalan Tun Abdul Razak, 80888 Ibrahim International Business District, Johor, solicitors for the Petitioner.

322 Notices

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY WINDING UP OF LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP

(Section 50(4)(a) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012)

Notice is hereby given that FIRST MEET PLT (LLP No. 202104001821 (LLP0028452-LGN)) will be making an application to the Registrar of Limited Liability Partnerships for a declaration of dissolution pursuant to Section 50(2) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012 within seven (7) days after the publication of this notice. Any partner or creditor of the LLP desiring to object to the application may do so in writing to the Companies Commission of Malaysia within thirty (30) days from the date of this notice.

322 Notices

FOCAL PARK SDN BHD (356898-H)

NOTES LELANG AJARAN KENDARAAN DI BILIK LELANG SPORTEL SEDIA AKAH
TARIKH MELAKSI: SERED HADA MAR LELANG (Pukul 9.00pagi) - 4.00pagi
POTESTAMEN (Pukul 04.00pagi) - 04.56.00pagi, Ajar Sedat 04-782 7892, Ipoh 05-2509371

PPAC - (PELAKSI BERKESAH) di MC Chow Road Kk, 31, MC-Stevens Lim Peng Seng 017305, 43 Petaling Jaya 47000 (03) 782 7892, Ipoh 05-2509371

Alamat : 352, Perumahan Tugu, Jalan Makmur 5, 50100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Lot 138 A, Bata 5, Jalan Lenggong 05040 Ajar Sedat
PUL 01683, Jalan Selangor, Kiri Perumahan Tugu, 30020 Ipoh

SILA LAYARI LAMAN WEB KAMI : <http://www.focallpark.com>

Slm	Reg No	Model	Tahun
AM1	GTM1380	CHEVROLET CAPTIVA (A) 2.0	2010
AM2	AK2374	HYUNDAI SONATA 2.0	2013
AM3	WVS668B	BMW CEMATO (A) 1.6	2015
AM4	AKG2124	PROTON EXORA 1.6	2016
AM5	PMU626	PROTON BEZ 1.3	2016
AM6	AKX598	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2016
AM7	AKT1993	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2017
AM8	AKU2076	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2017
AM9	PPY1795	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2018
AM10	WMN8922	TOYOTA COROLLA (A) 1.6	2019
AM11	PKL1925	PERODUA VIVA	2011
AM12	ABN6465	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2010
AM13	QK20255	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2012
AM14	AKU2079	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2017
AM15	QK30770	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2014
AM16	VLH8107	PROTON SAGA 1.3 (A)	2023
AM17	ALJ5557	TOYOTA CAMRY 2.5	2012
AM18	CRB2035	PROTON PREVE 1.6	2012
AM19	PRY1140	PROTON SAGA 1.3	2016
AM20	SM57819	VOLKSWAGEN JETTA 1.4	2014

(Pihak-pihak Kenderaan-kenderaan diatas yang tidak diatas peritangan akan diilang semula pada 03-04-2025)

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF ALFA ASAS SON BHD
Company No. 200601007323 (77072-P)
(IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)

The following Special Resolution was duly passed by the members of ALFA ASAS SON BHD on the 24th February 2025 in accordance with Section 439 of the Companies Act, 2016.

*That the Company be wound up voluntarily pursuant to Section 439 of the Companies Act, 2016 and that Mr. Hor Yuen Fong of 53300 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan be and is hereby appointed Liquidator for the purpose of such winding-up.

Dated this: 24th February 2025

Signed
(Tan Lay Beng)
DIRECTOR

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF ALFA ASAS SON BHD
Company No. 200601007323 (77072-P)
(IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the above named Company, which is being voluntarily wound up, are required on or before 28th March 2025 (30 days from advertised date) to send in their names and addresses with particulars of their debts and claims and of any security held by them, and the names, addresses of their solicitors (if any) in the undersigned Liquidator at No. 2-29, PV 128, Jalan Genting Kelang, 53300 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan and if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are by their Solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts and claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they shall be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts or claims are proved.

Dated this: 24th February 2025

Signed
Hor Yuen Fong
Liquidator

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY WINDING UP OF LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP

(Section 50(4)(a) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012)

Notice is hereby given that IN SHIELD MEDIC MASK PTL (Registration No.: 202104000220 (LLP0026836-LGN) will be making an application to the Registrar of Limited Liability Partnerships for a declaration of dissolution pursuant to section 50(2) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2012 within seven (7) days after the publication of this notice. Any partner or creditor of the LLP desiring to object to the application may do so in writing to the Companies Commission of Malaysia within thirty (30) days from the date of this notice.

CALL TO PLACE CLASSIFIED ADS

KLANG VALLEY
PENANG | KEDAH
PERAK | PERLIS
PAHANG |
KELANTAN
TERENGGANU

MS. Shoba /
MS. Balqish
TEL: 03-7784 8888
WHATSAPP:
018 261 6626

MALACCA |
SEREMBAN
MR. Rajah
TEL: 012-628 2844
FAX: 06-764 2051

JOHOR BAHRU
MS. Anne Lim
TEL: 013-770 6699
FAX: 07-355 5549

JOSH INGLIS hit a maiden century to help Australia chase down the highest target in Champions Trophy history in a five-wicket win over old rivals England in Lahore yesterday.

The 29-year-old Inglis, who was born in England, smashed an unbeaten 86-ball 120 as Australia chased down 351-8 in 47.3 overs to open their Group B account at Gaddafi Stadium.

The blistering performance from Inglis not only trumped England opener Ben Duckett's 143-ball 165 – the highest individual score in event history – but enthralled a near-capacity 31,000 weekend crowd.

Inglis carted six sixes and eight boundaries, including the winning maximum off express fast bowler Mark Wood.

Australia were struggling at 27-2 with Travis Head (six) and skipper Steve Smith (five) falling to Jofra Archer and Wood respectively.

Matthew Short, who hit a 66-ball 63 with nine boundaries and a six, added 95 for the third wicket with Marnus Labuschagne (47 off 45 balls with five fours) but spinners Liam Livingstone and Adil Rashid dismissed both.

With Australia still needing an imposing 215 in 27.4 overs, Alex Carey and Inglis brought the chase back on track by adding an invaluable

Inglis stars in record chase

Aussies chase down highest target in Champions Trophy history against England

146 for the fifth wicket. "We thought 350 was chaseable," said Smith. "The two keepers (Inglis and Carey) have been batting beautifully. Josh played shots all round the ground."

Smith joked: "I don't know if Josh still has an English passport, but he's not going anywhere."

England skipper Jos

Buttler blamed the dew for his team's struggles with the ball.

"A fantastic game, both sides played well, credit to Australia," said Buttler.

"It was a fantastic innings from Inglis... 350 is a pretty good score, but it was wet and the dew was a worry."

Earlier, Duckett smashed his highest ODI score, and third century, as England built a commanding total after being sent in to bat on a flat pitch.

Duckett hit 17 fours and three sixes to better the previous best individual score of 145 in the Champions Trophy. New Zealand's Nathan Asle (2004) and Zimbabwean Andy Flower (2002) had shared the record.

England also surpassed the previous highest innings tally in tournament history of 347-4 by New Zealand against the USA at The Oval in 2004. – AFP



Australia's Josh Inglis (right) and Glenn Maxwell celebrate after winning the ICC Champions Trophy ODI cricket match against England. – AFP/IC

PA-38-1432-12/2024 PERSTITIMARAN JUALAN
DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYSIA DI PULAU PINANG
PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-1432-12/2024

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965

Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Galian Penerahan No: 0799SC2022039150 bertarikh 05/10/2022 ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipanggil di bawah **Pajakan Negeri 2376/MA/5/294, Lot 3185, Mukim Bandar Tanjung Tokong, Seksyen 1, Daerah Timur Laut, Pulau Pinang**

Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Atrian 83 Kandah, Daerah Mukahmah, 2012

ADANDA
PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 197301001433) ... PLAINTIF

DAN
MAHADI BIN SHAARI (No. Kad Pengalangan: 7712110253511) ... DEFENDAN

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah, Atrian dan Perintah bertarikh 24 Oktober 2024 dan 4 Februari 2025, adalah dengan ini disyorkan bahawa Timbalan Pendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e- Lelong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM
Pada Hari Khamis, 13 Mac 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,
SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG,
KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAHMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan Galian, semua lampiran, bebenan serta mengenai aset, dengan tepat dan teliti sebelum membuat keputusan untuk membeli.

Sila layari <https://lelong.hakmilik.gov.my/bidderweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:
No. Hakmilik :
No. Lot :
Mukim/Daerah/Negeri :
Pegangan :
No. Petak/No. Tingkat/ No. Bangunan :
Keluasan Tanah :
Pemilik Berdaftar :
Syarat Myta :
Sektan Kepentingan :
Bebanan / Lain-Lain :
Kawasan Rizab :
Kawast :

: Pajakan Negeri 2376/MA/5/294
: Lot 3185
: Bandar Tanjung Tokong, Seksyen 1 / Timur Laut / Pulau Pinang
: Hakmilik Pajakan
: 294 / 5 / MA
: 646.0000000000 kaki persegi
: 60.0000000000 meter persegi
: MAHADI BIN SHAARI
: Petak ini hendaklah digunakan untuk tujuan rumah pangsa sahaja
: The land hereby alienated shall not be transferred, charged, leased, sub-leased or otherwise in any manner dealt with or disposed of without the written sanction of the State Authority
: Digalakan kepada Public Islamic Bank Berhad melalui Galian Penerahan No. 0799SC2022039150 yang ditawarkan pada 05-10-2022
: Kawast Persendirian atas Petak oleh Public Islamic Bank Berhad melalui Nombor Pera 0799SC2022007282 yang ditawarkan pada 18-07-2022

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAK
Hartanah tersebut adalah Three-bedroom flat yang berlandas pos di P-4-8, Jalan Tanjung Tokong, Pangsupuri Uda 10470, Pulau Pinang.

HARGA RIZAB:
Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sempitmana sedia ada" terutamanya kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 250,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: DUA RATUS LIMA PULUH RIBU SARILAH) dan kepada syarikat-syarikat jualan yang dilantikkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mengemukakan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama **PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD / HARI BEKERJA** sebelum tarikh telang awam. Baki harga baki hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang terpilih kepada **PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD** dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (20) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman : WONG & LOH
Alamat : NO. 44, CANTONMENT ROAD, 10350, PG, MY
No. Telefon : 04-2280899
No. Fax : 04-2287989
No. Rujukan : 01/LYK/PH/VN/PIBB/L/2024/042

In the matter of the Companies Act, 2016 And in the matter of **KIM SEAN CAPITAL SDN. BHD. (COMPANY NO. 200601000180 (719927-M))** (In Members' Voluntary Liquidation)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE FINAL GENERAL MEETING of the Company will be held at 347-V.Tingkat Pemancar, 11700 Gelagor, Pulau Pinang 24 March 2025 at 10:00 a.m. for the following purposes:-

i) To lay before the Meeting the final accounts of the Company showing how the winding up has been conducted and to receive any explanation thereof.

ii) 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.

iii) To discharge the Liquidator.

Tan Chu Haw
Khaw Mei Ching
Liquidators

24 February 2025
Pulau Pinang

Di dalam perkara Akta Syarikat, 2016 dan di dalam perkara **KIM SEAN CAPITAL SDN. BHD. (NOMBOR SYARIKAT: 200601000180 (719927-M))** (Dalam Pengguguran Sukarela oleh Pemegang Saham)

Notis adalah diberikan bahawa Mesyuarat Akhir Syarikat di atas akan diadakan di 347-V.Tingkat Pemancar, 11700 Gelagor, Pulau Pinang pada 24 Mac 2025 pada jam 10.00pagi untuk tujuan berikut:

i) Untuk membentangkan Akaun Terakhir Pelikudasi yang menunjukkan bagaimana proses pengguguran telah dijalankan dan memberi penjelasan.

ii) Untuk menyelesaikan di bawah Seksyen 518(3)(b) Akta Syarikat 2016, bahawa buku-buku, akaun dan dokumen Syarikat dan Pelikudasi dimusnahkan selepas pembubarannya Syarikat.

iii) Untuk melepaskan Pelikudasi.

Tan Chu Haw
Khaw Mei Ching
Pelikudasi

24 Februari 2025
Pulau Pinang

Andreeva youngest WTA champ

INSPIRED by LeBron James and Roger Federer, Russian 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva wrapped up a fairytale week in Dubai by becoming the youngest ever WTA 1000 champion with victory over Clara Tauson yesterday.

After ousting three Grand Slam winners, including second-seeded Iga Swiatek, en route to the final, Andreeva ended Tauson's own dream run at the tournament with a 7-6 (7-1), 6-1 victory against the Dane.

It was a performance that didn't just earn Andreeva a maiden WTA 1000 trophy, but also secured her top-10 debut with the Russian expected to rise to No. 9 when the new rankings are released today.

Andreeva admitted she did not feel her best on court during the final, but drew inspiration from interviews she watched of NBA legend James talking about how champions can find

ways to win even without their A-game.

"I just told myself, 'You can either let that negativity come into your head and kill you, or you can choose to be 100% mentally and fight for every point and if something doesn't go your way, well okay fine, you forget about it and you play one point at a time,' said Andreeva.

"I've been listening to a lot of LeBron James interviews, and he said that, 'It's easy to be confident and to play good when everything goes your way, but what makes you a champion is when you're giving your best when you don't feel great.' So that's what I tried to do today."

Andreeva also revealed she has been watching highlights from Roger Federer's 2017 Australian Open final victory over Rafael Nadal before her matches this week, taking cues from the Swiss great. – AFP

Rublev downs Draper to win Qatar Open

RUSSIAN Andrey Rublev was given a tough test early on, but finished in style to beat Britain's eight seed Jack Draper 7-5, 5-7, 6-1 and win the Qatar Open yesterday.

Fifth seed Rublev, who also won the title in 2020, claimed his first tournament win since his triumph at the Madrid Open last April, but was made to battle in the opening two sets.

"It feels amazing. It's the first time I've won the same title twice," a delighted Rublev said. "I'm really happy. I don't know what else to say."

The opener went with serve for the first 11 games, with Rublev serving to love on four occasions and Draper twice doing likewise, before the Russian finally broke the Briton to take the first set.

The second set appeared to heading towards a tiebreak when Draper managed to break for a 6-5 lead and served out to level the match.

Draper had never beaten Rublev in their three previous meetings, and went into the deciding set with the wind in his sails, but Rublev showed no mercy.

Rublev broke twice early on to storm into a 5-0 lead and while Draper managed to avoid a bagel, the Russian fired down two aces to wrap up the win.

"I really like Jack as a person and I really like his game. He has a really, really great career and future ahead. He will win many great things," Rublev said.

Draper failed in his bid to win his third ATP title after winning in Stuttgart and Vienna last year, but the 23-year-old's run to the final will lift him to a career-high 12th in the rankings.

"I want to congratulate Andrey. He was too good today. Outlasted me," Draper said.

"We played some really tough matches this week. In the third set he was a bit too strong for me." – Reuters

Rashford, Asensio making right impression on Emery

BY JONATHAN VEAL

ASTON VILLA boss Unai Emery is pleased with the impact of January signings Marcus Rashford and Marco Asensio after they earned a vital 2-1 win over Chelsea.

Rashford arrived on loan from Manchester United and Asensio came from Paris St Germain and the pair combined twice to inspire a comeback behind Premier League win at Villa Park.

After falling behind to Enzo Fernandez's early opener, Rashford was thrown on at half-time and quickly set up Asensio's equaliser.

Rashford was again the creator in the 89th minute as his cross was turned in by Asensio,

whose saveable shot was inexplicably let in by Chelsea goalkeeper Filip Jorgensen.

"The idea when we signed these players was to help us, to improve us, to show their capacity and skills, the commitment to show their work here we need," Emery said.

"We have to set them with a task but then they have to play with their skills. I think today was very good how we saw in the second half, the performance of Marcus (Rashford) and Marco.

"Marco is a very good player, playing as a No. 10. He can play in both positions but he can play trying to get assists and scoring goals. It was fantastic how he played.

"I think the most important thing is how they

are taking responsibility in the commitment we need. Today they did fantastic (sic).

"I think today and in the last matches as well, they are getting to the level we want. They have the experiences at the highest level."

Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca says he will not lose faith in Jorgensen, despite his costly howler.

"The keeper position is the delicate one, the striker can miss a goal but it doesn't look so important, but then a keeper makes a mistake it is always clear, everyone can see that," Maresca said.

"In this moment, it is not a mistake I am going to change my idea about Filip." – The Independent

Postecoglou happy with 're-energised' Tottenham

BY GEORGE SESSIONS

ANGE POSTECOGLOU believes Tottenham are back in a good space after they made it three Premier League wins in a row with a 4-1 victory at Ipswich.

Brennan Johnson's first-half brace set Spurs on course for another three points, with the Wales international able to score twice at a ground where his father David Johnson had been prolific across a four-year spell.

Omari Hutchinson pulled one back before halftime and while the relegation-threatened hosts did create other chances, Tottenham made the points safe with late strikes by Djed Spence and Dejan Kulusevski.

An injury crisis across the winter months coupled with a run of six defeats from seven League fixtures sparked some discussion around whether Spurs could become embroiled in a survival battle, but this result moved them 16 points clear of 18th-placed Ipswich and only six off the top half.

"I thought we did the hard things really well," said Postecoglou. "A couple of times in the first half we lost a bit of concentration in terms of the second ball and duels, disappointing goal we conceded, but aside from that I thought we handled that side of the game really well.

"I always felt we were a threat when we had the ball. Sonny (Son Heung-min) was unplayable in the first half and so good to get Brennan back in those areas where he's always a threat.

"All four of our goals were quality goals. We had to do the hard things, but the fruits of that labour was that our front third play was super exciting and clinical.

"We're certainly in a good space of using these two weeks as well as we could to re-energise the team and I think it has.

"We've still got some significant players out. We've got (Dominic) Solanke, Richarlison, (Cristian) Romero, (Micky) Van de Ven, Ben Davies, he's out today. They're all still to come back.

"I just feel like we've got a really good opportunity in these next 10 days to be well equipped for what's ahead.

"What's ahead is obviously Europe but also an opportunity to address our league position, which is obviously not good enough." – The Independent

Amorim scorches 'soft' Devils

United manager offers brutal reality check despite comeback draw against Everton

RUBEN AMORIM quickly brought his Manchester United players back down to earth after their second-half comeback against Everton by blasting multiple aspects of Saturday's 2-2 draw.

United were abysmal for the first 70 minutes of the Premier League clash before Bruno Fernandes' freekick and Manuel Ugarte's late strike rescued a point.

Amorim's side were staring at a ninth League defeat in 13 games after Beto and Abdoulaye Doucoure punished an unacceptable first half performance.

But the Red Devils ended their final trip to Goodison Park with a flourish to rescue a draw and move 13 points above the relegation zone.

After fulltime, Amorim didn't hold back with his assessment of the visitors' display, claiming they "didn't exist" before springing to life late on.

"If you start the game without the first half and without losing 2-0, it's a good point. But we need to win three points, and we need to play all the game," Amorim told *TNT Sports*.

"The worst part is that we have the free (Everton) men, we are losing the ball without any pressure, we are not doing what we are supposed to do, and then it's really hard.

"And then we suffered two goals from second balls, and it was clear that they would create their chances from second balls. We were soft."

When asked how he would fix United's continued problems under his watch, Amorim insisted only persistence would draw improvement.

"(We will work on it) in training and continue to do the same. That's why, in the second half, we didn't change anything.

"We have to do the same thing but in a good way," the Portuguese tactician added.

United's prospects for the final 12 matches of the Premier League season look bleak. A first-ever bottom-half finish appears inevitable.

Yet, the Old Trafford giants are still in the hunt for silverware.

They will face Fulham in the FA Cup fourth round and have a Europa League last-16 clash against Real Sociedad to look forward to.

Explaining how United can enjoy a positive end to the campaign,

Amorim said: "It is more in this moment. We need to focus on things day by day.

"We need to survive this season, that is clear, and then to think ahead. But we have so, so many problems, and then when you go to the game and we let time pass, it's really hard.

"Of course, I don't want to focus only on the negative part. The second half was so much better, and I believe, in the end, I think we were near to winning this game."

United have the opportunity to return to winning ways when they host Ipswich Town on Thursday (3.30am Malaysian time) before Fulham's visit to M16 on Monday (12.30am). – Express Newspapers



Everton's Beto scores the opening goal during the English Premier League match against Manchester United at Goodison Park on Saturday. – AFP/IC

SHORTS

Hull dent Sunderland's promotion bid

SUNDERLAND goalkeeper Anthony Patterson made a costly error as the Championship promotion chasers crashed to a surprise 1-0 defeat against struggling Hull yesterday.

Patterson flapped Joe Gelhardt's corner into his own net in the 18th minute at the Stadium of Light.

That was enough to condemn fourth-placed Sunderland to consecutive league defeats for the first time this season.

The Black Cats are eight points adrift of second-placed Sheffield United, who face leaders Leeds today.

West Bromwich Albion climbed back into the playoff places with a 2-0 win over Oxford at the Hawthorns.

Alex Mowatt's 11th-minute goal and John Swift's strike deep into second half stoppage time moved Tony Mowbray's side up to fifth.

Josh Coburn tapped in Millwall's stoppage-time winner after missing a penalty just minutes earlier in a dramatic 1-0 victory at second-bottom Derby.

Jack Rudoni and Bobby Thomas scored in the first half for Coventry as Frank Lampard's side stepped up their playoff bid with a 2-1 win over Preston.

Will Keane halved the deficit, but the hosts ended their 17-year wait for a league victory over Preston.

Norwich also improved their playoff prospects by beating Stoke 4-2 at Carrow Road for a first win in four matches.

'Tough to play against' Palace

OLIVER GLASNER praised Crystal Palace for being "tough to play against" after they recorded a 2-0 Premier League victory away to Fulham.

The Eagles made it four wins in six and were helped by former player Joachim Andersen, who scored an own goal in the 37th-minute for their opener.

The south Londoners, who were denied another goal when Jean-Philippe Mateta's effort was ruled out for offside, doubled their lead when Daniel Munoz rounded off a lethal

counter attack.

"All credit goes to the players. They were solid in discipline and defending and they did a great job," Glasner said.

"We waited for the situations and we scored the goal from a set-play, we had a goal disallowed, we were patient and we had an amazing goal from Munoz.

"We know that when everyone is investing so much that it's tough to play against us because we don't give you space and we need to stay disciplined.

"Everyone has to be focused. It's easy talking before but you need to sprint again and again.

"I liked in the first half how comfortable we were in possession. Being patient was one of the topics after the Everton defeat."

SHORTS

Martinez fires Inter top

LAUTARO MARTINEZ shot Inter Milan top of Serie A with the decisive goal in yesterday's 1-0 win over Genoa which piled pressure on title rivals Napoli ahead of this weekend's showdown in Naples.

Argentina striker Martinez's deflected header from a corner in the 78th minute was enough for champions Inter to get past revitalised Genoa and move a point above Napoli, who have a game in hand.

"It wasn't a high-quality performance but we put our heart and soul into it and the important

thing was that we got the three points," said Martinez to DAZN.

"That was important after the defeat last week which hurt us, but we're still in it, we're still on our feet and focussed on winning every game."

AC Milan's troubles continued with a 2-1 defeat at Torino in which the seven-time European champions conceded a bizarre own goal and had a penalty saved.

Sergio Conceicao's Milan sit seventh, six points from Lazio and the Champions League positions after Gvidas Gineitis hit them with a sucker punch with 14 minutes remaining.

Milan thought they had set up a grandstand finish just two minutes before when Tijjani Reijnders classily struck his 12th goal of the

season in all competitions and cancelled out the unfortunate Malick Thiaw's early own goal.

Thiaw was left dumbfounded in the fifth minute when his goalkeeper Mike Maignan came charging out to clear the ball only to thump it against the Germany defender's back, from where it ricocheted into his own net.

Leverkusen trim Bayern's lead

BAYER LEVERKUSEN tightened their grip on second place in the Bundesliga as they cruised to a 2-0 victory at struggling Holstein Kiel yesterday while Serhou Guirassy hit four goals as "euphoric" Borussia Dortmund routed Union Berlin 6-0.

The victory allowed German champions

Leverkusen to cut Bayern Munich's advantage to five points before the leaders host third-place Frankfurt overnight.

Leverkusen have now gone 28 away games without defeat, a record for the club however, it was a statistic which did not excite coach Xavi Alonso.

"It's not the most important thing and we don't get a medal for it," said Alonso.

"But it means that we are very stable and that we have a top mentality."

"We don't want to stop now, we want to keep going."

Dortmund trounced Union Berlin 6-0 with four goals from Serhou Guirassy which took his season tally in the Bundesliga to 13.

Dortmund, who are still involved in the Champions League and face Lille in the last 16 next month, are 10th in the table with 32 points.

"Everyone is relieved, we haven't seen the spectators so euphoric in a long time," Dortmund sporting director Sebastian Kehl told Sky. "Serhou put on a huge show."



Barcelona's Raphinha (right) in action with Las Palmas' Dario Essugo. - REUTERS/PIC

Barca keep La Liga lead

BARCELONA were below par but earned a 2-0 win at Las Palmas yesterday to move back top of La Liga.

After Atletico Madrid beat Valencia 3-0 to temporarily take pole position, the Catalans replaced them with a narrow victory on the road and sit one point ahead of the *Rojiblancos*.

Substitute Dani Olmo produced a fine finish before Ferran Torres drilled home to settle the game and earn Barca revenge for a shock home defeat by Las Palmas earlier in the season.

"We scored two goals, we took three points and the three-and-a-half hour flight back is much better with these three points," Barca coach Flick told reporters.

"(Olmo) scored the first goal and this goal was very important for us."

"In the first half we missed 5-10 percent, maybe more (from our best level)... the players are also not happy with the performance but they are happy with the three points."

Barca were inaccurate in attack in a tight first half, unable to find the quality they needed to unpick the hosts' defence.

Flick took action at the break and brought on playmaker Olmo in place of the quiet Fermin Lopez.

The Spain international's first contribution was a sloppy pass that flew out of play but he quickly found his focus.

Lamine Yamal skipped forward and slipped the ball to Olmo, who showed good footwork to find space in the box and finish.

Olmo has not featured a great deal since the club's financial problems forced him to be unregistered at the start of the year, until Spain's national sports council granted a temporary measure which

... as Atletico apply pressure with win over Valencia

allowed him to play again.

The former RB Leipzig star missed some games with a calf strain in January.

"We don't feel pressure, we want to be at the top, we know (winning the league) is up to us," Olmo told *Movistar*.

"Today we took three important points, so we're going home happy."

Eight minutes of stoppage time were added on which gave Las Palmas heart but instead it was Barcelona who struck.

A loose pass at the back was picked up by Raphinha, who fed Torres to rifle past Jasper Cillessen and seal Barcelona's win.

Defeat leaves Las Palmas 17th, level on points with Valencia, 18th, in the relegation zone.

Julian Alvarez bagged a brace as Atletico were able to climb to the top of the pile for a couple of hours.

The Argentina international reached nine league goals for the season with his first half double before Angel Correa steered home the third late on.

"I'm very happy, it was important to win here to stay in the title fight," Alvarez told *Movistar*.

"It wasn't an easy game, we knew it, they'd been doing well at home, so we had to go for it and getting three points is very good."

"We're still in the fight... there are still a lot of games to go and we have to go slowly, with humility and hard work like always." - AFP

WINNING NUMBERS da ma cai

Draw Date: 23/02/25 (Sun) Draw No: 5878/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER1+3D

1st Prize	3161
2nd Prize	5312
3rd Prize	4509

Starters	Consolation
4853 9150	7940 3062
5565 6728	7001 5527
6052 0358	0679 4814
0058 5060	5697 0994
9671 4624	0749 3510

1+3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 RM4,738,461.60

3161 + 5312	5312 + 3161
3161 + 4509	4509 + 3161
5312 + 4509	4509 + 5312

Jackpot 2 RM201,392.60

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
133 161	GOAT	RM290,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
765 312	DOG	RM1,285,904.60
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
294 509	MONKEY	RM1,781,506.00

Starters	Consolation
084 853 579 150	857 940 533 062
055 565 066 728	807 001 085 527
346 052 680 358	200 679 374 814
220 058 225 060	675 697 470 994
259 671 124 624	400 749 083 510

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
161	312	509

3D Jackpot

Jackpot RM811,260.50

161 + 312 + 509	312 + 509 + 161
161 + 509 + 312	509 + 161 + 312
312 + 161 + 509	509 + 312 + 161

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

HSSB 1+3D Jackpot 1 RM230,511.00 won on 22/2/25!



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TOTO SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 5931/2025 DATE: 23/02/2025 (SUN)
STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.
196901000099 (8420D)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	6669
2nd Prize	9494
3rd Prize	4328

Special	Consolation
9565 4628	0315 3661
4757 2411	4768 1211
2329 2843	8261 6841
9258 2324	7968 0981
3294 7133	3109 5580

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 RM8,118,974.26

6669 9494	9494 6669
6669 4328	4328 6669
9494 4328	4328 9494

Jackpot 2 RM170,555.44

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize	6669	+	
2nd Prize	9494	+	
3rd Prize	4328	+	RABBIT
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D	1ST
	1 5 5 1 3
2ND	4TH
6 3 5 2 9	5 5 1 3
3RD	5TH
7 0 5 8 8	5 1 3
	6TH
	1 3

6D	1ST
	4 9 3 7 7 3
2ND	3RD
4 9 3 7 7	9 3 7 7 3
4 9 3 7	3 7 7 3
4TH	5TH
4 9 3	7 7 3
4 9	7 3

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Jackpot	RM21,876,975.67					

POWER	15	25	27	37	48	53
Jackpot	RM9,093,916.47					

STAR	3	21	27	31	35	37	+	14
Jackpot 1	RM3,864,335.06							

Jackpot 2	RM475,086.42							
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Toto 4D Jackpot 2
RM137,641

Toto 4D Jackpot 2 (i-System)
RM29,691

won on 22/02/2025!

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RESULTS & STANDINGS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE: Arsenal 0 West Ham 1 (Bowen 44), Aston Villa 2 (Asensio 57, 89) Chelsea 1 (Fernandez 9), Bournemouth 0 Wolves 1 (Cunha 36), Everton 2 (Beto 19, Doucoure 33) Manchester United 2 (Fernandes 72, Ugarte 80), Fulham 0 Crystal Palace 2 (Andersen 37-og, Munoz 66), Ipswich 1 (Hutchinson 36) Tottenham 4 (Johnson 18, 26, Spence 77, Kulusevski 84), Southampton 0 Brighton 4 (Pedro 23, Rutter 56, Mitoma 71, Hinshelwood 82).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	26	18	7	1	62	26	61
Arsenal	26	15	8	3	51	23	53
Nottm Forest	25	14	5	6	41	29	47
Man City	25	13	5	7	52	35	44
Bournemouth	26	12	7	7	44	30	43
Chelsea	26	12	7	7	48	36	43
Aston Villa	27	11	9	7	39	41	42
Newcastle	25	12	5	8	42	33	41
Brighton	26	10	10	6	42	38	40
Fulham	26	10	9	7	38	35	39
Brentford	26	11	4	11	47	42	37
Tottenham	26	10	3	13	53	38	33
Crystal Palace	26	8	9	9	31	32	33
Everton	26	7	10	9	29	33	31
Man Utd	26	8	6	12	30	37	30
West Ham	26	8	6	12	30	47	30
Wolves	26	6	4	16	36	54	22
Ipswich	26	3	8	15	24	54	17
Leicester	26	4	5	17	25	59	17
Southampton	26	2	3	21	19	61	9

CHAMPIONSHIP: Coventry 2 Preston 1, Derby 0 Millwall 1, Norwich 4 Stoke 2, Plymouth 1 Cardiff 1, Portsmouth 2 QPR 1, Sunderland 0 Hull 1, Swansea 3 Blackburn 0, West Brom 2 Oxford 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	33	21	9	3	68	20	72
Sheff Utd	33	22	6	5	47	23	70
Burnley	34	18	14	2	43	9	68
Sunderland	34	17	11	6	50	31	62
West Brom	34	12	15	7	44	31	51
Blackburn	34	15	6	13	39	51	51

LA LIGA: Alaves 0 Espanyol 1 (Calero 86), Rayo Vallecano 0 Villarreal 1 (Perez 66), Valencia 0 Atletico Madrid 3 (Alvarez 12, 30, Correa 86), Las Palmas 0 Barcelona 2 (Olmo 62, Torres 90+5).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	25	17	3	5	67	25	54
A. Madrid	25	15	8	2	42	16	53
Real Madrid	24	15	6	3	52	23	51
A. Bilbao	24	12	9	3	37	21	45
Villarreal	25	12	8	5	48	35	44
R. Vallecano	25	9	8	8	27	26	35

SERIE A: Inter Milan 1 (Martinez 78) Genoa 0, Parma 2 (Bonny 37-pen, Sohmi 79) Bologna 0, Torino 2 (Thiaw 5-og, Gineitis 76) AC Milan 1 (Reijnders 74), Venezia 0 Lazio 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter Milan	26	17	6	3	59	24	57
Napoli	25	17	5	3	41	19	56
Atalanta	25	15	6	4	54	26	51
Lazio	26	14	5	7	47	34	47
Juventus	25	11	13	1	42	21	46
Fiorentina	25	12	6	7	41	27	42

BUNDESLIGA: B. Moenchengladbach 0 Augsburg 3, Wolfsburg 1 Bochum 1, Mainz 2 St Pauli 0, Holstein Kiel 0 Bayer Leverkusen 2, Borussia Dortmund 6 Union Berlin 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B. Munich	22	17	4	1	65	19	55
B. Leverkusen	23	14	8	1	51	27	50
E. Frankfurt	22	12	6	4	49	29	42
Freiburg	23	12	3	8	34	36	39
Mainz	23	11	5	7	37	24	38
RB Leipzig	22	10	7	5	36	29	37

FRENCH LIGUE 1: Lille 2 Monaco 1, Saint-Etienne 3 Angers 3, Auxerre 3 Marseille 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	22	17	5	0	59	20	56
Marseille	23	14	4	5	50	29	46
Lille	23	11	8	4	38	23	41
Nice	22	11	7	4	44	27	40
Monaco	23	12	4	7	45	31	40
Lyon	22	10	6	6	40	27	36

SENSATIONAL national striker Faizal Saari announced his retirement from international hockey after helping the Terengganu Hockey Team (THT) win the 2025 Malaysia Hockey League (LHM) treble on Saturday night.

The 34-year-old said it was time for him to hang up his hockey stick after racking up 302 caps in 15 years representing the country since he was first called up to the Speedy Tigers squad when he was 18 years old.

However, he said he would continue to play for Terengganu in the LHM competition and the Tun Abdul Razak Cup.

"I can officially announce that I am quitting international hockey today to give young players a chance.

"Fans won't see my involvement in international tournaments... I have been with the national team for a long time.



SELANGOR ended their decade-long title drought in emphatic fashion on Saturday night, thrashing PDRM FC to lift the Challenge Cup.

At the MBPJ Stadium in Kelana Jaya, Selangor dismantled defending champions PDRM 4-0 in the second leg of the final, sealing a 7-0 aggregate victory.

Head coach Kinoshi Katsuhito hailed the triumph as a significant milestone but stressed that it was only the beginning of a larger journey for the club.

"I'm very satisfied with the players' work. Not only the players but also the staff, who have worked hard to maintain our condition, pitch, nutrition, and overall organisation.

"These efforts make history, and we have learned a lot from this championship," he said at the post-match press conference.

The victory holds special meaning for the Red Giants whose last domestic trophy came in the 2015 Malaysia Cup.

Saturday's win not only ends their title drought but also reinforces their ambition to reclaim their place at the top of Malaysian football.

Despite the achievement, Katsuhito acknowledged that not all Selangor supporters shared the same excitement, hence, urged fans to stand by the team and recognise the sacrifices made by the players.

"This is their choice, so I cannot say anything about it. But becoming a champion is never

Melaka FC clinch semi-pro league title

MELAKA FC's consistent performance throughout this season's A1 Semi-Pro League campaign has been the key factor in their triumphant championship victory, according to head coach K. Devan.

He said that despite being a newly formed team, the squad managed to maintain top-level performances from the beginning of the season to the final.

"After forming a new squad this season, we gradually built momentum with victories that boosted the players' confidence, ensuring Melaka FC's path to the title.

"We also recorded the highest number of goals scored, the fewest goals conceded, and secured the title with three matches to spare," he told reporters after their match in Melaka on Saturday night.

Faizal Saari hangs up hockey stick

"I am very proud of this treble achievement, this is a very glorious year for me and THT, we won all 12 matches for this treble," he said after helping THT emerge as 2025 TNB Cup champions at the National Hockey Stadium 2 in Bukit Jalil.

Faizal, one of the country's best strikers, said he plans to open a hockey academy in Pandamaran, Klang after Hari Raya Aidilfitri because he loves to teach children.

Faizal completed his second successful treble with THT after 2023 by defeating 2024 treble champions, Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) 3-0 through a penalty shootout after the two teams were tied 1-1 in the final.

Faizal, his brother Fitri, and Syarman Mat Tee

managed to find the target to help THT emerge as champions.

THT previously won the Piala Sumbangsih (Charity Shield) title and maintained their unbeaten record in all nine matches to win the league.

THT head coach, Mohd Hafzi Baharom gave full credit to the players for the success of the treble and victory in the final.

"We didn't expect to win the treble by maintaining an unbeaten record in all 12 matches.

"The players played hard today, especially in denying TNB's dangerous attacks which increased a lot since losing 2-1 to us in the Sumbangsih Cup during the day," he said.

TNB team manager Nor Saiful Zaini Nasiruddin said the defeat was caused by the bluntness of the attacking line that failed to finish off chances, as well as several young players who have not reached their best level to play under high pressure. — Bernama

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Draw No: 168/25 Date: 23/02/2025

4D Classic

1st Prize **1783**

2nd Prize **0308**

3rd Prize **8797**

SPECIAL	CONSOlation
0866 0413	1502 1237
5926 8309	7460 3812
6588 3834	9835 3134
4559 2301	6556 2714
0439 7207	6728 2055

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM14,255,458.71**

PARTIALLY WON

1783 + 0308	1783 + 8797
0308 + 1783	0308 + 8797
8797 + 1783	8797 + 0308

Jackpot 2 **RM729,428.58**

PARTIALLY WON

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Jackpot 1 **RM11,692,570.21**

Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM100,000.00**

WON

Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	8 3 0 8 9 7	
GROUP 2	8 3 0 8 9	OR 3 0 8 9 7
GROUP 3	8 3 0 8	OR 0 8 9 7
GROUP 4	8 3 0	OR 8 9 7
GROUP 5	8 3	OR 9 7
	OR 0 8	
GOLDEN NUMBER	0 7	

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SCAN ME



Arsenal's Leandro Trossard (left) in action with West Ham's Aaron Wan-Bissaka during their English Premier League match at the Emirates Stadium yesterday.
— REUTERS/SPIC

Limp Gunners

Furious Arteta accuses Arsenal of dropping standards in West Ham defeat

A FURIOUS Mikel Arteta said Arsenal's bid to win the Premier League title is now out of their hands after accusing his players of failing to hit the levels required in their crushing 1-0 defeat against West Ham at the Emirates.

Jarrod Bowen scored the only goal of the game before Myles Lewis-Skelly was sent off with 18 minutes remaining to leave the Gunners eight points behind Liverpool with 12 matches remaining.

And speaking about Arsenal's bid to end their 21-year wait for the title, Arteta conceded: "It's not in our hands."

"I am really, really annoyed with the things that are in our hands - which is the performance and the result - and we didn't do that as well as we possibly could."

"I am very disappointed, and obviously very angry as well. Even though we had 20 shots, I never felt that we were at the standard and the level that we needed."

"We have to be (angry), and I hope we are because we didn't hit the levels today, and I am

very much responsible of that so I am very, very angry."

Arsenal hit the target just twice as their failure to sign a striker during last month's transfer window was brutally exposed.

Gabriel Jesus and Kai Havertz are both out for the season, while the club's first-choice wingers Bukayo Saka and Gabriel Martinelli are also currently sidelined with hamstring injuries. Makeshift forward Mikel Merino, who usually operates in midfield, led the line.

However, Arteta dismissed the notion that the club's lack of a recognised striker was the chief reason behind their defeat to the Hammers.

He continued: "I refuse that completely because I am talking about the standards of the players and the team that we played today, me included. And that was nowhere near the levels that we have to hit to have the opportunity to win a Premier League."

"We have to look in the mirror of ourselves of what we can do better, and the will, the desire, the way we run and the way we want it,

zero question about that."

"But at that level that is not enough. You have to deliver and it has to be with quality to break down a really good team, and put in the actions that can allow threatening moments to win games, and today we didn't do that."

"It's my responsibility. The team can play much better than we did today, and we have to play much better, and with much more quality."

Arsenal will be back in action on Wednesday (Thurs, 3.30am Malaysian time) with a daunting trip to third-placed Nottingham Forest and Arteta added: "We will suffer and feel the pain and then make sure that we come back on Monday with that bite and that anger still in the stomach for Wednesday's game."

Arteta also said he understood the frustrations of the Arsenal fans who booed at the fulltime whistle, insisting it was up to him and the players to make them happy again.

"I think that's human," said the Spaniard. "You asked me many times what is the ideal

and what the team needs and how we overcome certain deficiencies that we have in the squad."

"It's them being in every single ball, that's my dream, but I'm not here to demand that to the crowd."

Asked for his thoughts on the decision to give Lewis-Skelly his marching orders, Arteta replied: "I haven't seen it back but honestly, I will focus on what we have to do. I don't know if the decision was right or wrong."

For Graham Potter and West Ham their win at the Emirates was only the club's second of the year so far. And Potter hopes the statement triumph will kick-start his reign after taking charge last month.

"The best way to build confidence and belief is to win football matches," said Potter.

"Results help, otherwise the noise comes in from outside and it becomes more difficult to convince people."

"So for the players, the supporters and everyone involved at the club, this is a really big win." - The Independent/Express Newspapers



Inglis stars in record chase

Story on page 28



Amorim scorching 'soft' Devils

Story on page 29



Barce keep La Liga lead

Story on page 30