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Before the Putra Heights gas inferno, many were unaware of the risks posed by underground gas pipelines, assuming all developments go through strict evaluations to ensure safety. — AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN



# Tariff pause mere brief respite: PM

Malaysia evaluating ripple effects, working with Asean partners to cushion blow, strengthen regional economic resilience and push for fair trade rules.

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# 90-day US tariff pause only offers temporary relief: PM

► Malaysia evaluating ripple effects, working with Asean partners to cushion blow, strengthen regional economic resilience and push for fair trade rules

**PETALING JAYA:** The 90-day pause on tariffs by the United States (US) on 75 countries, including Malaysia, provides only temporary relief, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

"Malaysia is involved, but this is short-term," he said after attending an *Aidilfitri* open house hosted by the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry.

Earlier, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz welcomed the decision to pause tariff hikes on many of US' trading partners, but noted that the move injects fresh uncertainty into Asean economies.

"This shifting landscape will be front and centre at the Asean Economic Ministers' Meeting I'm chairing this morning," he said in a post on social media yesterday.

He added that with US President Donald Trump's tariff policy, "the only certainty is uncertainty".

Yesterday's special meeting was convened to forge a united Asean response to Trump's sweeping reciprocal tariffs.

"Malaysia is actively evaluating the ripple effects and remains firmly committed to working with Asean partners to cushion the blow, strengthen regional economic resilience and push for fair, predictable trade rules."

Tengku Zafrul said Asean unity and deeper regional integration are now more critical than ever.

He said Malaysia remains a reliable and transparent trading partner to all, including China and the US, committed to securing win-win outcomes.

He added that Malaysia is accelerating trade diversification, breaking into new and unfamiliar markets, and fast-tracking economic reforms to sharpen its competitive edge.

"Our priority is to navigate this volatile terrain while securing Malaysia's economic future."

Trump said on Wednesday he had considered a 90-day delay to the planned tariff hikes "over the last few days", and credited the pause to active diplomatic

engagement, reported Anadolu Ajansi.

The announcement coincided with a dramatic 125% tariff on Chinese imports.

Trump said the pause follows appeals from affected nations seeking to "negotiate a solution" to trade disputes spanning tariffs, currency manipulation and non-monetary barriers.

He said these countries had not retaliated "in any way, shape or form against the US".

On Tuesday, Anwar had said Malaysia does not subscribe to megaphone diplomacy in dealing with Washington's tariff whiplash.

He said in line with its policy of quiet engagement, Malaysia would instead

despatch officials to Washington to initiate dialogue.

Anwar acknowledged there may be limited scope to revisit the underlying intent but maintained there is room to adjust how the policy is implemented.

It was reported that Tengku Zafrul would lead Malaysia's delegation to Washington at the end of this month to engage on the reciprocal tariffs, Bernama reported.

He will be joined by Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry Deputy Secretary-General (Trade) Mastura Ahmad Mustafa, senior ministry officials as well the ministry's representatives from the Malaysian Embassy in Washington.

Asean's Indochina bloc bore the brunt of the tariff hike with Cambodia hit with 49%, Laos 48%, Vietnam 46%, and Myanmar 44%.

Thailand was slapped with 36%, Indonesia 32%, Brunei and Malaysia 24% each, the Philippines 17% and Singapore the baseline 10%.



Anwar and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof at the *Aidilfitri* open house in Petaling Jaya yesterday. — **BERNAMAPIC**

## 'Asean steps up efforts to eliminate market distortions'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Asean member states are stepping up efforts to eliminate trade distortions and enhance efficiency, creating more space for negotiations amid mounting concerns over tariff and non-tariff barriers, said Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati.

Welcoming the United States' (US) decision to pause reciprocal tariffs, Sri Mulyani, a seasoned policymaker and economist, said many member states acknowledge there is still room to sharpen their trade and investment policies.

"We hope this 90-day pause presents a valuable opportunity for the US and its partners to build a more positive-sum relationship. As the world's largest economy, the US should view the rest of the world through a lens of mutual gain," she said in an interview on the sidelines of the 12th Asean Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' meeting

here yesterday.

She said the 10-member bloc, both collectively and individually, has strong mechanisms in place to absorb economic shocks, backed by its experience in navigating past crises such as the Asian financial crisis, the global economic downturn and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sri Mulyani emphasised the need for a focused approach to economic fundamentals.

"Macroeconomic policy, which must encompass fiscal, monetary and structural reforms, should be combined for Asean to strengthen its economic foundation."

Media reports suggest that Sri Mulyani would travel to Washington next week with other senior Indonesian economic officials to discuss the country's tariff situation.

On a different note, Sri Mulyani, who led a delegation to the meeting, praised Malaysia's leadership, noting that Asean's theme this year

— focusing on inclusivity and sustainability — is particularly relevant in today's global context.

She commended Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's role in coordinating, communicating and assessing the issue of US tariffs, which has enabled Asean to act as a unified group.

"The Asean chairmanship under Malaysia is crucial in reinforcing this cooperation," she said, particularly as intra-Asean trade accounts for only 22% of total Asean trade.

Sri Mulyani, a former World Bank managing director, stressed that many complementarities between member states still need to be explored so that members view one another as collaborators rather than competitors.

She also highlighted how current US policies could shift trade dynamics, with increased trade diversion from the US, especially towards regions like Europe, India, Australia, New Zealand and other Asean+3 nations. — **Bernama**

## Malaysia, China hold talks on boosting trade cooperation

**BEIJING:** China and Malaysia have held candid talks on boosting economic and trade cooperation as part of Malaysia's tenure as Asean chair.

China's Commerce Minister Wang Wentao and Malaysian Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz had a video meeting yesterday, according to China's Commerce Ministry.

Xinhua reported that both sides discussed strengthening China-Malaysia and China-Asean trade relations and addressing the so-called "reciprocal tariffs" imposed by the US.

Wang condemned the tariffs, arguing that they undermine years of multilateral trade negotiations and ignore the long-standing benefits the US has gained from global trade.

He labelled the US move as blatant unilateral bullying, damaging the legitimate rights of China and Asean members.

Wang warned that this approach also harms US interests, disrupts global economic growth and destabilises industrial and supply chains, posing a serious threat to the multilateral trading system.

He reaffirmed China's firm opposition to such measures and vowed decisive counteractions, adding that China is prepared to stand firm if the US persists in its misguided path.

Wang also expressed China's readiness to strengthen dialogue and coordination with trading partners, including Asean.

Tengku Zafrul said the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry had already issued a statement opposing the US policy, emphasising that it contradicts the principles of free and fair trade as outlined by the World Trade Organisation.

He also affirmed Malaysia's full respect for China's position and its commitment to supporting multilateralism and the advancement of global trade.

Tengku Zafrul added the country would consult with other Asean members to collectively address the so-called "reciprocal tariffs" and other measures proposed by the US. — **Bernama-Xinhua**

## S'gor to get feedback from industries

**SUBANG JAYA:** The Selangor state government will conduct a survey this week through Invest Selangor Bhd to gather feedback from industry players on the impact of US tariffs on their businesses.

Selangor Investment, Trade and Mobility Committee chairman Ng Sze Han said the week-long survey aims to assess the effects on industries, particularly property development and manufacturing.

"We need to understand the impact on these sectors and prepare to assist them," he said after the Brazil-Malaysia Bilateral Semiconductor Industry Development Programme yesterday.

The Malaysia Semiconductor Integrated Circuit Design Park, in collaboration with Brazil, ChipInventor and Amazon Web Services, aims to accelerate innovation, strengthen the semiconductor value chain, and nurture world-class talent in chip design and manufacturing.

The park, the first of its kind in Southeast Asia, is designed to drive national growth in semiconductor innovation. It brings together companies, startups, research institutions and talent development programmes under one roof.

Ng said the partnership offers a stable, strategic alternative for companies seeking to mitigate risks and expand in Asia.

"Collaborations with Brazil show that we can rise above trade tensions through cooperation and shared values."

"Brazil's expertise in semiconductor design complements Malaysia's manufacturing ecosystem. Together, we are proving that emerging economies can lead the high-tech industry through shared innovation and mutual trust." — **Bernama**



## Health Ministry refutes fatality claims, lodges police report

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Health Ministry has lodged a police report over several social media comments falsely claiming that there were deaths in the recent gas pipeline fire in Putra Heights, Subang Jaya, Selangor.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry said the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission had also been informed.

However, no report has been received from public or private health facilities regarding any fatalities linked to the incident.

"Irresponsible parties who spread false comments that cause public outrage will be dealt with strictly according to the law," the ministry warned.

The gas pipeline fire, which broke out at 8.10am on April 1, caused flames to rise over 30m high, with temperatures exceeding 1,000°C.

It took almost eight hours to fully extinguish the blaze.

As of 12.30pm on Wednesday, 17 residents were receiving treatment at government hospitals, while 21 others were being treated at private facilities.

One patient remains in the intensive care unit, and is reportedly responding well to treatment.

A total of 150 individuals sought medical attention following the incident.

Of these, 127 suffered direct injuries such as burns and other physical trauma.

Another 18 experienced indirect effects, including anxiety, panic attacks and hypertensive urgency, while the remaining five did not require further treatment.

The ministry confirmed that government healthcare facilities will continue to support all residents affected, especially those with burn injuries, at Kuala Lumpur Hospital and Putrajaya Hospital.

"This also includes mental health services, which are crucial in helping affected individuals and their families return to normal life as soon as possible."

The ministry also said eight of its staff who were involved in the incident will receive full support until they are fit to return to work. — Bernama

# Pipeline blast raises awareness on hidden property risks

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH  
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**PETALING JAYA:** The recent gas pipeline fire incident has rattled many Malaysians, particularly those considering property purchases in the affected or nearby areas.

What was once an overlooked consideration on the property checklist is now gaining serious attention – hidden underground risks such as fuel pipelines.

For many potential buyers, safety concerns have always played a part in the decision-making process, but the recent incident has brought these hidden threats to the forefront.

"Honestly, such pipelines were never a top consideration until this

➤ Safety now a top concern as Malaysians rethink home purchases near utility corridors

recent incident," said Yaswinii Kannan, 28, a business analyst.

Her typical checklist includes evaluating nearby pollution sources, proximity to hazardous industrial premises, electrical hubs and other strong electromagnetic fields.

Other key considerations for Yaswinii include the crime rate in the area, security features such as gated communities and camera surveillance, and traffic risks.

She also looks at the environmental history of the land,

such as whether it was once a mine or a lake.

"It is also important to investigate the land stability and check for pests, termites or other harmful parasites," she added.

For Indira Magesan, 31, a former general practitioner, buying property revolves around three main pillars – location, safety and finance.

She emphasised the importance of being near basic amenities, evaluating future developments for investment potential and

ensuring affordability.

Although checking for industrial activity and construction is part of her process, pipelines had never been a concern.

"To be honest, we just make sure that industrial areas are at least five to 10km away from our community.

"As a layperson, we don't have access to blueprints to check for pipelines underground.

"As for construction sites, as long as safety, noise levels and air quality are maintained, I'm okay because these factors can affect property value in the long term," she said.

Before the fire incident, Indira had been unaware of the risks posed by pipelines.

"We assumed all developments go through strict evaluations to ensure safety," she said.

"But now, we realise freak incidents such as this can happen anywhere to anyone.

"It will definitely influence my decision in the future. Safety is crucial, but peace of mind is even more important."

Reflecting on the explosion, she expressed concern that despite numerous regulations for property construction, such an incident still happened.

"Buyers need to do thorough research on the property and evaluate the developer's portfolio and risk management measures before making a decision.

"I'm not sure if I'd consider buying a house near the site of the incident or in areas known to have gas pipelines, at least not now."

While Indira believes authorities will take steps to improve safety in the area, she pointed out that human nature makes it difficult to let go of past trauma.

She also said full disclosure on such incidents should be mandatory for parties selling property.

"Buyers must be made aware of past accidents, the countermeasures taken, the placement of pipelines and ongoing safety measures.

"It's crucial that they have all the information to make informed decisions, free from the pressure of sales talk or promotions."



The General Operations Force and police personnel monitoring and controlling the entry and exit routes. — ADAM AMIR HAMZAH /THESUN

## 190 homes reoccupied after safety inspections

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A total of 190 homes affected by the gas pipeline fire in Putra Heights have been reoccupied after inspections confirmed it was safe for residents to return to their units.

Selangor police chief Datuk Hussein Omar Khan said as of Wednesday, 487 affected homes had been inspected by 12 technical agencies. These include Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), Air

Selangor, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health, Public Works Department, Subang Jaya City Council and the police.

"Of these, 328 homes were deemed safe for occupancy, and 190 homes have already been reoccupied," he told Bernama when contacted.

Hussein added that TNB had restored electricity supply to

306 homes.

Meanwhile, a Bernama check at the scene found that the area remains under tight security, with access limited to residents and authorised personnel with special passes.

On Tuesday, Hussein also reported that 30% of the ongoing soil stabilisation work had been completed.

## Fire underscores need for comprehensive home insurance

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Homeowners affected by the recent gas pipeline explosion in Putra Heights may still need to continue repaying their housing loans, even if their properties were destroyed, unless they are fully insured, said a property expert.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia property economics and finance associate professor Dr Muhammad Najib Razali explained that borrowers are generally obligated to service their loans regardless of the condition of the property.

"In the event of property destruction, banks typically expect repayment to continue as agreed,"

he said.

However, in extraordinary cases such as natural disasters or industrial incidents, including the Putra Heights blast, affected borrowers may appeal for financial relief.

"In such cases, borrowers can request a loan moratorium or restructuring, potentially suspending repayments for up to six months to ease financial stress during recovery."

He highlighted the importance of comprehensive insurance coverage to shield homeowners from significant financial loss in unforeseen disasters.

Without adequate coverage, borrowers could be left repaying loans on uninhabitable homes.

Banks may also restructure loans by extending tenures or reducing

monthly payments to support affected borrowers.

According to Muhammad Najib, such flexibility is vital in times of crisis and can help ease the burden on those facing severe financial strain.

Homeowners impacted by the Putra Heights incident could reasonably expect similar support from their banks, but any relief depends on individual bank policies, the extent of the damage, insurance status and the borrower's financial standing.

Responsibility for rebuilding lies with the homeowners, especially in the absence of third-party liability.

However, if a third party such as a utility provider or contractor is found negligent, homeowners may pursue compensation or legal action.

"In the case of Putra Heights, in which the fire may involve a gas pipeline, determining liability is critical," he said.

"Legal and insurance investigations will be necessary to establish if the pipeline operator or another party is responsible for the damage."

Affected homeowners may need to rely on their insurance or government aid for reconstruction.

Muhammad Najib also highlighted the importance of fire insurance, which protects against the financial impact of such events.

"Many Malaysian homeowners only carry basic mortgage-linked insurance, which usually covers just the outstanding loan, not rebuilding costs or personal losses," he added,

adding that this leaves many vulnerable to severe financial strain in the event of a fire.

He said the Putra Heights incident serves as a reminder of the consequences of being underinsured or lacking comprehensive coverage.

"It's crucial for homeowners, especially those near industrial zones or infrastructure, to ensure their insurance policies cover both property rebuilding and contents."

Following the incident, the Association of Banks in Malaysia issued a statement urging affected borrowers to contact their banks promptly.

Borrowers are advised to reach out through official websites or customer service hotlines to explore available support.



# 'Bullying, abuse cases in army will not be condoned'

► No leniency in SOP implementation against military personnel involved in such acts, with stern action pursued: Deputy minister

**KOTA BHARU:** The Defence Ministry has stressed that there will be no leniency in the implementation of SOPs regarding cases of bullying and abuse among military personnel, and that relentless action will be pursued at the ministry level and in accordance with the law.

Defence Deputy Minister Adly Zahari said the ministry will not compromise with any member of the Armed Forces who crosses the line by being involved in bullying.

"Emphasis is given to the SOP in addressing bullying cases. Although these cases may be considered isolated, action will still be taken.

"As stated by the army chief, there have been

some cases reported but we have a clear SOP with two approaches, action at the ministry level and internal measures," he said after attending a Madani Aidilfitri celebration event at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce hall yesterday.

Adly added that the ministry does not condone any form of bullying, although military training is conducted rigorously according to prescribed modules, Bernama reported.

He said the ministry has an internal mechanism, including a special committee, to differentiate between disciplinary training and bullying behaviour.

"We have made several decisions regarding bullying cases and have issued warnings that perpetrators will face legal action," he said.

He also said additional measures have been taken, including increasing the number of wardens at the Royal Military College, keeping junior and senior students separated, and installing closed-circuit cameras at strategic locations.

"We also provide psychological rehabilitation spaces, advisory services and

education to raise awareness among students and families," he said.

On Monday, it was disclosed that 41 army officers and personnel were dismissed from service due to bullying and abuse cases involving lower ranked personnel since 2019.

Army chief Tan Sri Jen Muhammad Hafizuddeain Jantan reportedly stated that the dismissed group comprised 12 officers and 29 other personnel.

In earlier media reports, Muhammad Muqriz, 21, from the 20th Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment at Sri Miri Camp in Sarawak died on March 24 due to blunt force trauma to the chest.

Muhammad Hafizuddeain said the army does not take lightly any form of abuse or bullying in the military and views every lower-ranked personnel as a brother or sister who ought to be protected.

"The army will not remain idle. We often remind our personnel regarding these matters (not to bully or abuse lower-ranked personnel). However, the incident is not a tradition within the army, but there are isolated incidents due to the actions of individuals," he said.

## Sabah records RM6.5 billion total investments

**KOTA KINABALU:** Sabah recorded total investments of RM6.5 billion last year, with 38.7% contributed by the manufacturing sector, said Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Musa Aman.

He said the figures clearly showed that the Sabah government efforts to develop the manufacturing sector were on the right track, and had succeeded in attracting more investors to the state.

Musa added that the manufacturing sector continued to play an important role in stimulating the state economy, including opening up opportunities for technology integration, strengthening infrastructure and creating job opportunities.

"To that end, focus will be given to developing more downstream activities in key industries, including biomass, oil palm, industrial tree plantations and oil and gas.

"By encouraging the expansion of these sectors, Sabah also has the potential to attract more investments, thus stimulating more sustainable economic growth for the state," he said in his state government policy speech in conjunction with the opening ceremony of the Fifth Term of the 16th Sabah State Legislative Assembly yesterday.

Also present were Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor and Sabah State Assembly Speaker Datuk Seri Kadzim M. Yahya.

Musa said Sabah also managed to maintain state revenue collection above the RM6 billion level, at RM6.842 billion last year.

The Sabah government has imposed state sales tax on three new products, namely silica sand, palm oil biomass brought out of Sabah, and gold and silver mined in the state, he added.

It is an effort to diversify revenue sources and reduce state dependence on oil and gas related resources.

Meanwhile, Musa said the Sabah government has drawn up a strategic direction for state development for a five-year period through the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), with a focus on priority areas that are pillars of state development.

"Therefore, I urge all ministries, departments and state agencies to take proactive steps to plan development in line with this set direction to ensure that the real needs of Sabah are given priority," he added.

Musa also said the Sabah government would focus on implementing programmes and projects oriented towards development spending as an effort to ensure the smooth implementation of the state's strategic development direction through 13MP.

The commitment was in line with efforts to improve state financial management and increase development expenditure compared with operating expenditure, he said.

"With this effort, the achievement of state economic development goals will be accelerated.

"I am confident that with full cooperation from all parties, the process of preparing 13MP will be able to run smoothly and orderly by taking into account various perspectives and needs," he said. – Bernama

## Child protection initiatives to continue at 300 schools

**SELANGOR:** The Women, Family and Community Development Ministry, through the Social Welfare Department, will continue its "Kasih Kanak-kanak" child protection advocacy programme at 300 schools and 30 children activity centres nationwide this year.

Minister Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri said the programme, which would begin this month, is part of efforts to address sexual offences involving minors.

She added that the ministry would also promote the Talian Kasih helpline and mobilise the One-Stop Social Support Centre to participating schools throughout the programme.

"They (the children) have school counsellors, but many are reluctant to speak up, possibly due to embarrassment. So, during the advocacy sessions, we use tailored approaches to connect with them.

"For instance, we ask them to draw and explain their artwork. This gives us insights into their inner thoughts and emotions," she said after officiating at the Raikan Kecerian Keluarga event at the KLIA International Airport (KLIA) Terminal 1 yesterday.

Nancy was commenting on recent media reports highlighting a rise in rape and incest cases in Kelantan, with 252 cases recorded last year compared with 206 in 2023.

On the Raikan Kecerian Keluarga initiative by Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB), Nancy said the effort is commendable as it shows the corporate entity is taking family aspects into account in its development plans.

"I believe that public spaces such as airports



Nancy visiting the Orangutan Kids Zone at KLIA Terminal 1 yesterday. – BERNAMAPIC

should be designed with sensitivity to the needs of all groups, especially children, women, the elderly, families and persons with disabilities," she said.

Meanwhile, MAHB managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani said two new features were launched at KLIA Terminal 1 yesterday, namely the new CARE Ambassador uniforms and the Orangutan Kids Zone, to boost user-friendliness at the airport.

"The new uniforms are more than just a design update. They represent our professionalism, friendliness and commitment to excellent service while also offering comfort and easy identification.

"The Orangutan Kids Zone was created to make the airport more family-friendly. It provides a space for children to play while their parents take a short break (before their flights)," he said. – Bernama

## Stay vigilant amid unpredictable weather, public advised

**BAGAN SERAI:** The Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Ministry has advised the public to remain vigilant due to unpredictable weather conditions.

Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad said the country is expected to experience hot and dry weather as the northeast monsoon approaches its final phase, which is projected to end by mid-May.

He said changes in the weather could affect

body temperature regulation and lead to common illnesses such as fever, flu, cough and even hypothermia, especially among children.

"According to records in 2023 and the previous year, the country recorded numerous cases of heat-related illnesses with several fatalities due to heatstroke.

"In fact, we are still witnessing flood incidents caused by the unpredictable weather. While the current hot weather has not yet

reached a critical level, we must always remain cautious," he said after opening Agrobank's first green branch in Bagan Serai yesterday.

Agrobank president and CEO Datuk Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah Raja Hussin was also present.

Meanwhile, Nik Nazmi said the ministry encouraged more financial institutions to adopt green technology to enhance development while minimising environmental degradation.

"The ministry supports green initiatives by Agrobank, such as installing roof structures and using solar energy at its Bagan Serai branch, which help reduce environmental impact and curb pollution.

"We hope that more parties, not just financial institutions, would participate in advancing more sustainable green initiatives, in line with the Malaysia Madani aspiration," he added. – Bernama



## Statements recorded from 7 students over bullying case

**NIBONG TEBAL:** Police have recorded statements from two more Mara Junior Science College students here in relation to a bullying incident, the video of which was widely circulated recently on social media.

South Seberang Perai police deputy chief DSP Mohd Norazmi Abd Ghapar said this brings the total number of students whose statements have been recorded to seven.

"At this point, police believe that seven Form Three students are involved in the incident, including the victim and the person who recorded it.

"Police are completing the investigation paper before submitting it to the deputy public prosecutor's office for further action," he said.

Asked if police would record statements from other parties, Mohd Norazmi said the current focus is on the students suspected to be involved in the incident.

Previously, police detected a video, lasting one minute and 31 seconds, uploaded by Facebook account "Utara Kini", showing a scene believed to be in a hostel room where several individuals appeared to be bullying another person lying on a bed.

The incident occurred at a Mara Junior Science College in South Seberang Perai last year and the case is being investigated under Section 323 of the Penal Code.

On Tuesday, the disciplinary committee of the college recommended that the seven students involved in bullying a fellow student be expelled.

Mara chairman Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki said in a post on his Facebook page that two of the students were found to have been involved in physical bullying.

"No matter whose children they are, whether the children of a Tan Sri, a Datuk or some influential individuals, if they are involved in bullying, firm and stern action will be taken against them. No need to find a way to talk me out of it. My office will never entertain such bullies." – Bernama

# 'RM177m seizure in ex-PM case **largest** in first quarter'

► Amount does not include funds frozen under Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001: MACC

**KOTA KINABALU:** A total of RM177 million in assets, consisting of cash and gold bars, has been seized by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) as part of the probe involving former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

MACC Chief Commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said the amount represents the largest seizure recorded by the commission in the first quarter of this year, out of a total of RM483.38 million in assets seized under the MACC Act 2009.

"This RM177 million refers specifically to seizures. Freezing actions under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001 (Amlatfa) are separate," he clarified at a media conference yesterday.

He was speaking at the launch of Cakna Rasuah, an MACC programme with Sabah media, which was also attended by Sabah Journalists Association president Datuk Muguntan Vanar.

It was also reported that although the

MACC has advocated the use of deferred prosecution agreements, this approach would not apply to the corruption case involving Ismail Sabri.

The approach, which is being applied in other developed countries, defers the prosecution with the condition that there will be a settlement.

"As of now, no," Azam was reported as saying when asked whether deferred prosecution may apply to Ismail Sabri's case when the law comes into force.

He said the MACC has submitted the proposal and is currently awaiting approval from the attorney-general.

The Bera MP is being investigated for alleged corruption and money laundering involving the use of funds for the promotion and publicity of the Keluarga Malaysia programme during his tenure from Aug 2021 to Nov 2022.

The case is being investigated under the MACC Act 2009 and Amlatfa 2001.

Azam said during the same period, asset

freezes under Amlatfa alone amounted to RM548.97 million.

Forfeitures under the MACC Act 2009, Amlatfa 2001 and the Criminal Procedure Code amounted to RM603,363, while compound payments totalled RM412,000.

"During this period, we opened 319 investigation papers, made 401 arrests and charged 146 individuals. We will continue to resolve these cases, focusing not only on securing charges but also on recovering assets."

It was reported that Ismail Sabri is expected to resume providing his statement to the MACC by the end of this month.

This upcoming session will mark the second phase of the investigation, which will focus on the issue of asset declaration, according to his statement.

Azam previously said the first round of questioning, which centred on the discovery of RM170 million in cash and 16kg of gold bars at several "safe houses," had been completed.

Ismail Sabri spent seven days providing a statement to the MACC after being named a suspect in an ongoing investigation involving four of his former senior officers.

The most recent session, held on March 24, lasted five hours, bringing the total time spent on his testimony to over 30 hours.

It was reported that as part of the probe, a money changer was also arrested. – Bernama

## Doctor strikes RM12m jackpot after wedding anniversary dinner

**PENANG:** What began as a simple anniversary celebration turned into a life-changing moment for a 53-year-old general practitioner from Penang, who walked away RM11.77 million richer after winning the Toto 4D Jackpot 1 on March 29, all thanks to a pair of seemingly random digits on a dinner receipt.

The doctor revealed that the winning numbers, 4486 and 5704, came directly from

the receipt at the restaurant where he and his wife had their anniversary dinner.

"These pretty numbers caught my attention after I paid the bill for our candlelight dinner.

"I understand now why the Cantonese say that if you love your wife, you will become rich."

With those numbers in mind, he purchased a System 3 ticket, a decision that earned him RM11,768,682.70, along with a System Play

bonus of RM336.

They collected the prize and expressed heartfelt gratitude, calling it the best anniversary gift they could have ever received. He said he plans to share part of the winnings with his siblings and set aside the rest for his children's future.

The remaining jackpot, worth RM219,975, went to an i-System winner from Sarawak.

## Illegal immigrant fails in bid to dupe enforcement team

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A man's frantic attempt to disguise himself and blend in with media and enforcement officers in a bid to avoid detection was among the dramas during raids conducted by the Malaysian Immigration Department in Chow Kit and Sentul yesterday.

The man was arrested at a hotel in Chow Kit, a location suspected to be a hideout for illegal immigrants. In a state of panic, he kneeled and pleaded for his release, insisting he had valid documents to stay in the country.

A woman also failed to escape from being arrested, as her friend refused to open the hotel room door despite her desperate cries for help from outside.

Both the man and woman were among 32 illegal immigrants detained for not having valid travel documents and overstaying in the country, Bernama reported.

Kuala Lumpur Immigration Director Wan Mohammed Saupee Wan Yusoff said the raids were the culmination of two weeks of intelligence gathering, focusing on several known hotspots across the capital.

"In the first raid conducted at a hotel in Chow Kit, believed to be occupied by illegal immigrants, a total of 22 individuals were arrested. The group included two men and nine Indonesian women, four Pakistani men, five Bangladeshi men and two Thai women.

"In the second raid at four shophouses in Sentul, the authorities nabbed three Indonesian women, three Indian men, two Nepali men, one Myanmar national and one Pakistani."



A total of 32 illegal immigrants were detained during raids in Chow Kit and Sentul yesterday.  
– BERNAMAPIC





SCAN ME



Ghazali said access to libraries is not an issue, as there are 13,000 in the country.  
— AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN

# Plan to **promote** libraries

BY DEEPAKASHMI MANICKAM  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** When thousands of Malaysians lined up outside BookXcess stores for a recent three-day book giveaway, some observers were left stunned.

Others saw it as confirmation of what they have always believed: Malaysians do read, but are books here too expensive and inaccessible?

Librarians Association of Malaysia president Dr Ghazali Mohamed Fadzil said the sight of people queueing from 8am for free books was not surprising. Instead, it underscored an ongoing reality. “Malaysians read, and many read printed books more than digital copies.”

“In rural areas and small towns, it’s also about connectivity.”

“Even when people have smartphones, many are still not comfortable reading digital books.”

He added that while students have increasingly turned to digital formats for academic purposes, the general public continues to gravitate toward physical books for leisure reading.

Ghazali also said the BookXcess giveaway showed that the reading habit is alive in Malaysia, but needs more support and visibility.

## ➤ To boost reading appeal, association advocates inclusion of facilities at housing and mall developments

On public complaints about limited access to libraries, he pointed out that Malaysia has a vast library network.

“There are around 13,000 libraries in the country. I do not think it’s about limited access, but more about reading culture.”

“One of the main roles of libraries is to ensure access to information and learning for all.”

However, he acknowledged that some libraries, especially in smaller towns, may not be easily accessible.

“They are not hidden, just maybe not easy to reach due to distance. One way to mitigate this is to upgrade all libraries,” he said.

He also addressed calls to have libraries in malls and allow them to stay open beyond normal working hours.

“We do have libraries in shopping malls and urban transformation centres in most states, including Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Johor, Sabah and Sarawak.”

“We even have a library inside the Kota Kinabalu International Airport in Sabah and another at a petrol station in Perlis.”

Ghazali said while nighttime libraries may struggle to attract visitors, academic libraries with public access and 24-hour sections could provide a more sustainable model in the future.

In addition to physical expansion, he said librarians are working closely with communities and NGOs to promote reading in more informal ways.

“The association encourages and works with NGOs to organise reading activities such as Read in the Park and Taman Baca Sungai Bunus in Kuala Lumpur with the residents of various communities.”

He also suggested that librarians and libraries be more active on social media platforms, saying: “We could be more active strategically.”

In addition, the association is lobbying for policies to include libraries at all new housing and mall developments, such as People’s Housing Programme areas in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

“The problem with reading and its solution lie within the home,” he said, adding that libraries are community hubs that could help to address social issues.

## Big demand for tiny house experience

**KUALA LUMPUR:** For retiree Mat Zin Ali, 64, nothing brings greater joy than celebrating Hari Raya with his large family of 12.

However, the house he built five years ago that has only four bedrooms and three bathrooms is unable to accommodate everyone comfortably.

To ensure his children, in-laws and grandchildren could gather under one roof, he decided to build two tiny houses next to his main home in 2022.

He said the project was both affordable and practical, with a modern design that maximised space, adding that it cost about RM20,000.

“Which parent wouldn’t be happy to have all the children, in-laws and grandchildren celebrating together? It’s wonderful. But before the upgrade, I felt sad seeing them inconvenienced due to lack of space, sharing bedrooms and bathrooms, and lacking privacy, especially the women.”

Mat Zin, fondly known as Pok Suzin, incorporated traditional Malay village house elements into his two compact units. One is slightly larger, accommodating three to four people while the other is designed for two adults.

“I also took the opportunity to use these tiny houses as a homestay for visitors looking for a unique lodging experience. This not only benefits guests searching for alternative accommodation but also provides me with a source of side income.”

Apart from gaining popularity among those looking for cost-effective housing options or additional space for large family gatherings, the tiny houses have also become a favourite spot for taking OOTD (Outfit of the Day) photos during festive seasons, Bernama reported.

Cottage Homes PD owner Yuslan Ibrahim, 46, said demand for tiny houses usually spikes during festive seasons. His units in Port Dickson, Negri Sembilan have a modern cottage concept, blending English country home aesthetics with minimalism and natural beauty.

“I have two tiny house units, and the idea to build them came from my fascination with small home designs on Pinterest, particularly the Nordic, cottage and cabin styles. I receive many bookings during festive seasons like Aidilfitri,” he said.

Architect Kahar Ambok Lalek, 25, said the tiny house movement began in the early 2000s in the United States as a response to limited land availability, with homes often built on trailer frames. Over time, tiny houses have gained popularity among those seeking a minimalist dream home.

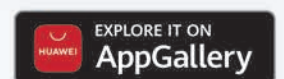
“In Malaysia, demand for tiny houses is mainly concentrated at orchards and farm areas, where they are used as vacation homes or guesthouses. Despite requiring only a small plot of land, these homes can feel surprisingly spacious inside,” he said.

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# Top yakuza gang promises 'no more trouble'

➤ Senior members submit written pledge to police

**TOKYO:** Japan's largest yakuza organised crime body submitted a written pledge to authorities to end its wars with splinter groups, police said yesterday.

The Yamaguchi-gumi has fought bloody wars with other yakuza gangs formed by its former members who broke away in 2015.

Senior members submitted a letter in person to police on Monday vowing to "end all infighting" and "not make any trouble", said a police official.

Authorities have had various yakuza gangs under close surveillance since 2020 over their intensifying violence, which has severely limited their activities, such as their ability to use offices in certain areas.

The Yamaguchi-gumi's pledge, submitted in Hyogo prefecture in western Japan, may be aimed at loosening the restrictions, local media said.

The splinter gangs' plans remain unclear, said the Hyogo police official.

Investigators are monitoring the situation as the Yamaguchi-gumi's pledge might only be a one-sided declaration, he said.

Unlike the Italian mafia or Chinese triads, yakuza have long occupied a grey area in Japanese society.

They are not illegal, and each gang has its own headquarters in full view of police.

The yakuza grew from the chaos of post-war Japan into multi-billion-dollar criminal organisations.

They are involved in a variety of activities, from drugs and prostitution to protection rackets and white-collar crime.

They were long tolerated as a necessary evil for ensuring order on the streets and getting things done quickly – however dubious the means.

In recent decades, stiffer anti-gang regulations, waning social tolerance and a weak economy have resulted in steadily falling membership.

Membership of the nation's yakuza gangs hit a new low of 18,800 last year after years of

decline, falling below the 20,000 mark for the first time, police data showed this month.

Still, they pose a threat to society as they continue to engage in criminal acts while keeping a lower profile, the National Police Agency said in a recent report.

Criminal activities by yakuza and others are becoming more complicated with the emergence of "tokuryu" groups, police said.

Unlike yakuza gangs with organised membership and established hierarchical structures, these are ad hoc gangs of individuals.

Many have no criminal background and are often recruited via social media under the promise of quick money.

These groups are seen working with established yakuza gangs, adding complexity to Japan's crime scenes, according to police.

Tattoos are still often associated with yakuza and other "anti-social" elements, although attitudes are changing.

People with tattoos in Japan are often barred from facilities like swimming pools or "onsen" baths, and tourists with body art can sometimes fall foul of the rule. – AFP

## Thai court grants bail to detained academic

**BANGKOK:** A US academic charged with breaking Thailand's royal defamation laws will appeal against a decision to revoke his visa, his lawyers said yesterday, after he was released on bail of 300,000 baht (RM39,403).

Paul Chambers, who has spent decades in Thailand and is a lecturer in Southeast Asian politics at a provincial university, was arrested on Tuesday after reporting to police to answer a charge of *lese-majesty*.

His case is a rare instance of a foreigner falling foul of strict laws that shield King Maha Vajiralongkorn and his close family from any criticism.

Chambers was granted bail on the criminal case on Wednesday, but was kept in custody until late in the evening while his lawyers negotiated with immigration authorities on his visa status.

"His legal team plan to appeal the visa revocation," said the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights group, representing Chambers, in a post on X yesterday.

The Thai military filed a complaint against Chambers earlier this year over a blurb posted online for a podcast hosted by a think-tank website which focuses on Southeast Asian politics.

Chanatip Tatiyakaroonwong, a researcher at Amnesty International who campaigns for the release of political prisoners, said the visa revocation was meant to "intimidate".

"The visa revocation is meant to send a message to foreign journalists and academics working in Thailand, that speaking about the monarchy could lead to consequences," he said on Wednesday.

International watchdogs have expressed concern over the use of the laws, known as Article 112, against academics, activists and even students.

One man in northern Thailand was jailed for at least 50 years for *lese-majesty* last year, while a woman received 43 years in 2021.

In 2023, a man was jailed for two years for selling satirical calendars featuring rubber ducks that a court said defamed the king. – AFP

## 17 killed in Papua, two held hostage

**JAKARTA:** Rebels in Indonesia's Papua region said yesterday they have killed more than 17 people since the weekend, claiming that they were soldiers disguised as gold miners, and police said the insurgents were holding two hostages.

A low-level but increasingly deadly battle for independence has simmered between security forces and rebels in resource-rich Papua ever since it was controversially brought under Indonesian control in a vote overseen by the United Nations in 1969.

Sebby Sambom, a Papuan rebel spokesperson, said in a statement yesterday the rebels had killed more than 17 people since April 6, including five on Wednesday, and claimed they were soldiers disguised as gold miners.

"If the Indonesian government military wants to chase us, please come to Dekai town, we are in the town," Sebby said, referring to a town in Yahukimo district, where the incident took place.

Faizal Ramadhani, a senior police official who is the chief of the peace task force in Papua, confirmed the rebel attack yesterday. He said police have yet to confirm a death toll as officers are still on the way to the area.

Indonesia's military denied the people killed by rebels were their soldiers, adding it was a hoax, its spokesperson was quoted by state news agency Antara as saying.

Separately, police said in a statement yesterday that 35 people in the area were evacuated to another district, while two residents are allegedly still being held hostage by the rebels. – Reuters

Afghan refugees waiting to leave near the border in Chaman on Wednesday. – AFP/PIC



## Pressure builds on Afghans fearing arrest in Pakistan

**KARACHI:** Convoys of Afghans pressured to leave Pakistan are driving to the border, fearing the "humiliation" of arrest, as the government's crackdown on migrants sees widespread public support.

Islamabad wants to deport 800,000 Afghans after cancelling their residence permits – the second phase of a deportation programme which has already pushed out around 800,000 undocumented Afghans since 2023.

According to the UN refugee agency, more than 24,665 Afghans have left Pakistan since April 1, 10,741 of whom were deported.

"People say the police will come and carry out raids. That is the fear. Everyone is worried about that," said Rahmat Ullah, an Afghan migrant in Karachi.

"For a man with a family, nothing is worse than seeing the police take his women from his home. Can anything be more humiliating than this? It would be better if they just killed us," added Nizam Gull, as he packed his belongings and prepared to return to Afghanistan.

Abdul Shah Bukhari, a community leader in one of the largest informal Afghan settlements

in the coastal city, has watched buses leave daily for the Afghan border, about 700km away.

The maze of makeshift homes has flown over decades with the arrival of families fleeing successive wars in Afghanistan. But now, he said "people are leaving voluntarily".

"What is the need to cause distress or harassment?" said Bukhari.

Ghulam Hazrat, a truck driver, said he reached the Chaman border crossing with Afghanistan after days of police harassment in Karachi.

"We had to leave behind our home. We were being harassed every day."

In Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on the Afghan border, police climb mosque minarets to order Afghans to leave: "The stay of Afghan nationals in Pakistan has expired. They are requested to return to Afghanistan voluntarily."

Police warnings are not only aimed at Afghans, but also at Pakistani landlords.

"Two police officers came to my house on Sunday and told me that if there are any Afghan nationals they should be evicted," said Farhan Ahmad.

Human Rights Watch has slammed "abusive tactics" used to pressure Afghans to return to their country, where they risk persecution.

In September 2023, hundreds of thousands of undocumented Afghans poured across the border into Afghanistan in the days leading up to a deadline to leave, after weeks of police raids and the demolition of homes.

After decades of hosting millions of Afghan refugees, there is widespread support among the Pakistani public for the deportations.

"They eat here, live here, but are against us. Terrorism is coming from there (Afghanistan), and they should leave, that is their country. We did a lot for them," said university lecturer Pervaiz Akhtar in Islamabad.

"Come with a valid visa, and then come and do business with us," said Muhammad Shafiq, a 55-year-old businessman.

His views echo the Pakistani government, which for months has blamed rising violence in the border regions on "Afghan-backed perpetrators" and argued that the country can no longer support such a large migrant population. – AFP



## South Korean opposition leader enters presidential race

**SEOUL:** South Korean opposition leader Lee Jae-myung, who is the front-runner in opinion polls to be the country's next leader, declared his bid for the presidency yesterday, promising to fix inequality and spur economic growth.

The presidential election will be held on June 3, after the impeachment of former president Yoon Suk Yeol for his December martial law declaration was upheld on April 4.

In a video released yesterday, Lee pledged to fix economic polarisation that he said was a key source of social conflict, highlighting how he felt this had exacerbated the recent political turmoil in the wake of Yoon's martial law order.

He vowed to drive large-scale investments at the government level in technology and talent development to resuscitate economic growth.

Lee, who has sought to brand himself as a pragmatist, said it did not matter who launched a policy but what was important was whether the policy was useful.

Conservative critics have warned that the opposition could undermine the alliance with the United States and threaten improved ties with Japan, but Lee proposed a pragmatic approach to diplomacy.

"Realistically speaking, the South Korea-US alliance is important, and South Korea, US, Japan cooperation is important. Within that, the consistent principle is the national interest of the Republic of Korea is the top priority," Lee said.

A new South Korean leader will likely face the daunting task of negotiating with the US, the country's leading security ally, over tariffs that have cast a cloud over the export-reliant economy.

Lee, 61, lost by the slimmest margin in the country's history when he ran against Yoon in the 2022 presidential election.

But last year, he led his liberal Democratic Party to a landslide victory in a parliamentary election. – Reuters

## New Zealand parliament rejects Treaty Principles Bill

**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand's parliament yesterday comprehensively rejected a Bill aimed at reinterpreting the principles of the country's founding agreement following months of protest and debate over the place of Maori in the Pacific nation.

The Treaty of Waitangi, first signed in 1840 between the British Crown and more than 500 Maori chiefs, lays down how the two parties agreed to govern.

The interpretation of clauses in the document guide legislation and

policy today.

The failed Bill was a policy of David Seymour's ACT New Zealand party, which garnered 8.6% of the party vote at the 2023 election.

Seymour had said the purpose of the Treaty Principles Bill was for parliament to define the principles of the treaty, provide certainty and clarity, and promote debates on its place in constitutional arrangements.

In coalition negotiations, ACT's governing coalition partners National and New Zealand First had

committed to support the Bill through the first of three readings but had said they would not support it into law.

The law, needing a simple majority to pass its second reading, failed with 112 votes against it and just 11 votes for it.

"The Treaty Principles Bill is dead. Our movement for *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (Treaty of Waitangi) justice lives on," said Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson, whose party did not support the Bill.

"Instead of dividing and

conquering, this Bill has backfired and united communities across the *motu* (country) in solidarity for our founding agreement and what it represents."

The Bill has garnered significant attention. In November, tens of thousands of people marched on New Zealand's parliament as a show of opposition to the Bill, in what was one of the largest protests ever in New Zealand.

A deluge of submissions to the committee considering the Bill followed. – Reuters

# Meta memoir author stars at US Senate hearing

➤ Ex-staff claims company collaborated with Chinese govt

**SAN FRANCISCO:** The former Facebook employee behind a scathing book about parent company Meta on Wednesday alleged that the social networking giant collaborated with the Chinese government on artificial intelligence, censorship and more, then lied to Congress about what it was doing.

Former global policy director Sarah Wynn-Williams (*pic*), who worked at the company from 2011 to 2017, told members of a Senate committee that top Facebook executives met routinely with Chinese officials, schooling them on technology to compete with US companies and even building products to appease Beijing's government censors.

"The greatest trick (Meta founder and CEO) Mark Zuckerberg ever pulled was wrapping the American flag around

himself and calling himself a patriot and saying he didn't offer services in China while he spent the last decade building an US\$18 billion (RM81 billion) business there," Wynn-Williams said of the Meta co-founder and chief executive.

Wynn-Williams said she saw Meta work "hand in glove" with the Chinese Communist Party to build censorship tools tested on users in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

"When Beijing demanded that Facebook delete the account of a prominent Chinese dissident living on American soil, they did it and then lied to Congress when asked about the incident in a Senate hearing," Wynn-Williams said.

Meta communications director Andy Stone said Wynn-Williams'

testimony was "divorced from reality and riddled with false claims".

"While Mark Zuckerberg himself was public about our interest in offering our services in China and details were widely reported beginning over a decade ago, the fact is this, we do not operate our services in China today," he said.

The company's family of apps is blocked in China.

Meta's open-source artificial intelligence platform Llama can be used there, as can its Oculus virtual reality gear, hearing testimony indicated.

Republican Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri, who initiated the hearing, cited documents and testimony provided by Wynn-Williams to accuse Zuckerberg of lying during past congressional hearings.

"The truth is, Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg have lied to the

American people repeatedly," Hawley said.

Wynn-Williams's book, *Careless People: A Cautionary Tale of Power, Greed and Lost Idealism*, was released on March 11 and became a bestseller despite Meta winning an arbitration court order barring the author from promoting the work or making derogatory statements about the company.

Her book recounts working at the tech titan and includes claims of sexual harassment by longtime company executive Joel Kaplan, a prominent Republican and ally of President Donald Trump who took over as head of Meta's global affairs team this year.

Meta took the matter to arbitration, contending the book violates a non-disparagement contract signed by Wynn-Williams when she worked with the company's global affairs team.

"The measure of how important these truths are is directly proportional to the ferocity of Meta's efforts to censor and intimidate me," Wynn-Williams told Senators. – AFP



## Dominican Republic ends search for nightclub collapse survivors

**SANTO DOMINGO:** Rescue workers here on Wednesday ended the search for survivors of a nightclub roof collapse as the death toll neared 150 in the Caribbean nation's worst disaster in decades.

Emergency personnel said they had found 20 more bodies on Wednesday afternoon, a figure yet to be added to the official toll of 124.

An official statement said on Wednesday that "all reasonable possibilities of finding more survivors" had been exhausted, and the focus will turn to recovering bodies.

"Today we will complete the rescue effort," said Jose Luis Frometa Herasme, head of the fire service in the Dominican capital Santo Domingo, where the tragedy occurred at the Jet Set nightclub on Tuesday.

Relatives of missing people were still waiting desperately for news on Wednesday of their loved ones

outside the ruined club, at hospitals and at the local morgue.

Over 300 rescue workers, aided by sniffer dogs, had spent two days combing through mounds of fallen bricks, steel bars and tin sheets, supported by firefighters from Puerto Rico and Israel.

Aerial images of the site showed a scene resembling the aftermath of an earthquake, with a gaping hole where the roof of the club, a fixture of Santo Domingo's nightlife for half a century, had been.

Over 500 people were also injured when the roof caved in while renowned merengue singer Rubby Perez was performing for a crowd of hundreds.

Perez and two former Major League Baseball players were among the dead.

Antonio Hernandez, whose son worked at the Jet Set nightclub, said



his hopes of finding his son alive had begun fading as he watched more and more bodies, but no survivors, being retrieved.

The remains in one body bag resembled his son's height and build,

said Hernandez, but he did not investigate.

"I don't have the stomach to find out the worst yet."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio sent condolences on Wednesday and

said at least one US citizen was among the victims.

"Our hearts go out to the families and loved ones affected by this devastating event," he wrote on X. – AFP

Mourners gather for a mass at St Elizabeth's church in Washington Heights, New York, for victims of the roof collapse in Santo Domingo.  
– AFP/IC



## Three killed in US strikes on Yemen

**SANAA:** Houthi rebels said yesterday the United States killed three people in the rebel-held capital Sanaa.

Rebel-held areas of Yemen have seen near-daily strikes since Washington on March 15 intensified an air campaign against the Houthis to force them to stop threatening vessels.

“Three citizens were killed in the American aggression on the Sabeen neighbourhood of the capital,” Saba news agency said.

Houthi media also reported strikes on Yemen’s Kamaran island in the Hodeida area, after the rebels earlier said a US air strike on Hodeida on Tuesday night killed 13 people, including women and children.

Since March 15, the Houthis have also resumed attacks targeting US military ships and Israel, saying they are acting in solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The rebels began targeting ships transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, as well as Israeli territory, after the Gaza war began in October 2023, later pausing their attacks during a January ceasefire.

The new US campaign followed Houthi threats to resume attacks on vessels over Israel’s Gaza blockade.

The Pentagon inspector general’s office, a watchdog, said it would investigate Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth and other personnel after a leak of details about the March 15 US strikes.

The *Atlantic Magazine* published the transcript of messages accidentally shared with its editor in a chat group of senior US officials on Signal, a messaging app.

After the White House insisted no classified details were involved, the magazine then also published details of the attack plans which it initially withheld. – AFP

## Bombers moved closer to Iran

**PANAMA CITY:** US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said it was up to Iran to decide whether the movement of B-2 bombers was a message to Tehran, as he voiced hope that negotiations over Tehran’s nuclear programme could be resolved peacefully.

As many as six B-2 bombers relocated in March to a US-British military base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia, US officials have told Reuters, amid a bombing campaign in Yemen and mounting tensions with Iran.

There are only 20 B-2 bombers in the Air Force’s inventory so they are usually used sparingly.

Experts say that puts the B-2s, which are equipped to carry the heaviest US bombs and nuclear weapons, in an ideal position to operate in the Middle East.

Asked if the B-2s were meant to send a message to Iran, Hegseth said: “We’ll let them decide.”

“It’s a great asset. Trump’s been clear ... Iran should not have a nuclear bomb. We very much hope – the president is focused on doing that peacefully,” he said.

Trump on Monday made a surprise announcement that the United States and Iran were poised to begin direct talks on Tehran’s nuclear programme, warning that Iran would be in “great danger” if the talks were unsuccessful. – Reuters

# Israel seizing ‘large areas’ of Gaza

### ➤ ‘Security zone being expanded’

**GAZA CITY:** Israel said its troops were seizing “large areas” in Gaza and making the Palestinian territory “smaller and more isolated”, as an air strike on a residential block killed at least 23 people on Wednesday.

Defence Minister Israel Katz’s comments come weeks into a renewed offensive by the military on the war-battered territory,

which has displaced hundreds of thousands, while an aid blockade has revived the spectre of famine for its 2.4 million people.

Katz said that “large areas are being seized and added to Israel’s security zones, leaving Gaza smaller and more isolated”, during a visit to the newly announced Morag Corridor between the southern cities of Rafah and Khan Younis.

Katz emphasised that Israel would keep increasing pressure on Gaza “until the hostages are freed and Hamas is defeated”.

Katz also

said that Israel was encouraging plans for “voluntary emigration ... in accordance with the vision of the US president, which we are working to implement”.

US President Donald Trump had earlier this year proposed a plan to develop Gaza into a “Riviera of the Middle East” while displacing its population.

Gaza’s civil defence agency said an Israeli airstrike on a residential building in Gaza City killed at least 23 people, most of them children or women, while the military said it targeted a “senior Hamas” official.

The strike took



Rescuers checking a bombed-out site in Shujaiyya, Gaza City, on Wednesday. – AFP/PIIC

## France could recognise Palestinian state in June

**ISTANBUL:** France could recognise the State of Palestine “in June” during an international conference co-chaired with Saudi Arabia, French President Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday.

“We must move towards recognition, and we will do so in the coming months,” Macron said in an interview broadcast on France 5.

He said the conference, expected to take place in New York, aims to advance the implementation of the

two-state solution and could mark a turning point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“Our goal is to chair this conference (on Palestine) with Saudi Arabia sometime in June, where we could finalise this movement of mutual recognition by several parties,” he said.

Macron’s remarks come amid mounting international calls for a political resolution to the conflict in Gaza, where Israel has killed more

than 50,000 people since October 2023, as well as the wider Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

In February 2024, Macron said that recognising a Palestinian state is “not a taboo for France”, describing the move as both a moral and political necessity.

“We owe it to the Palestinians, whose aspirations have been trampled on for too long. We owe it to the Israelis who experienced the greatest anti-Semitic massacre of

place in the Shujaiya neighbourhood of Gaza City, said the agency’s spokesman Mahmud Bassal.

“There are still people trapped under the rubble,” he said.

Ayub Salim, a 26-year-old Shujaiya resident, said the area was hit with “multiple missiles” and was “overcrowded with tents, displaced people and homes”.

“Dust and massive destruction filled the entire place, we couldn’t see anything, just the screams and panic of the people.”

Salim said the dead were “torn to pieces”.

A crew from the Gaza civil defence agency rushed to the scene, only to find several people trapped under the rubble, a rescuer said.

When asked by AFP about the strike, the Israeli military said it “struck a senior Hamas official who was responsible for planning and executing attacks” from the area. It did not give the target’s name.

Hamas condemned the strike as one of the “most heinous acts of genocide”. – AFP

## Arabia was once lush and green, study reveals

**LONDON:** One of the world’s largest deserts was once home to a vast lake and river system, an international team revealed in research published on Wednesday.

Recent research suggested the Empty Quarter, the vast desert of the Arabian Peninsula, had been in place for at least 11 million years, making it one of the largest biogeographic barriers on Earth.

Its presence limited the dispersal of early humans and animals

between Africa and Eurasia.

But a new study published in *Nature* says the Empty Quarter was lush and green for 8 million years. At one point it featured a lake that reached a depth of 42m and an area of 1,100 sq km some 9,000 years ago.

Favourable conditions in the area fostered grasslands and savannas and enabled human and animal migration until drought returned, according to the international team.

“Our work highlights the presence of an ancient lake, which reached its peak around 8,000 years ago, as well as rivers and a large valley shaped by water,” said Abdallah Zaki, a postdoctoral fellow at the Jackson School of Geosciences, University of Texas.

Michael Petraglia, professor at Australia’s Griffith University, said the “formation of lake and riverine landscapes, together with grasslands and savanna conditions,

would have led to the expansion of hunting and gathering groups and pastoral populations across what is now a dry and barren desert.”

The authors say that fossil evidence from the late Miocene suggests the presence at times of “water-dependent animals (crocodiles, equids, hippopotamids and proboscideans), sustained by rivers and lakes that are largely absent from today’s arid landscape.” – Bernama



UNDER ONE ROOF

# Restraining anger takes a conscious effort

**Q: I don't get violent when I am angry but I have always tended to just "let it out" when I get frustrated with my wife and children. That is how my parents lived and how I was raised. What is the problem?**

**Focus on the Family Malaysia:** Many people see anger as an uncontrollable emotion – but that is not true. Not only can you control how you express anger, you likely already do.

Here is an example: you are in the car with your spouse, on the way to a friend's house for dinner. It is meant to be a fun evening but the two of you are caught in a heated argument.

No one else is around, so you let your anger spill out – snapping at each other the entire drive. Maybe the argument even continues as you walk up to the door.

But what happens as soon as your friends open the front door? Suddenly, the both of you are all smiles, acting as if nothing is wrong.

The point is this: it is not that you cannot control your emotions – it is that sometimes, you choose not to exercise that ability.

Anger is a powerful emotion and you may feel better letting your frustrations spew all over your family.

However, as cathartic as it might feel to you, uncontrolled anger causes lasting hurt and damages relationships.

Anger can be restrained but it takes a deliberate and conscious effort – and it is worth the change.

**Q: What should I do if I am starting to fear that my marriage was a**

**mistake? It has only been a short time since the wedding and I am already beginning to wonder if I married the wrong person.**

**Focus on the Family Malaysia:** Simply put, marriage is not primarily about finding the right person – it is about being the right person.

First, you have to start by looking inward. If you entered marriage with the expectation that your partner will be the source of your happiness, you will probably be disappointed.

The emotions that we normally experience when we are unmarried do not vanish when we marry – in fact, they can become more intense in marriage.

If you and your spouse were unhappy and unfulfilled as singles, those feelings of discontentment may deepen after marriage.

However, if each of you has a strong sense of meaning and purpose, and a genuine desire to share your lives through mutual commitment, your connection can grow stronger and more fulfilling over time.

The goal is simple: to live contentedly with someone else, you

must first learn to be content within yourself.

Next, try to let go of any lingering idealism from your premarital romance and begin appreciating your spouse for who they truly are.

During courtship, we often get excited with what this wonderful, new relationship will be. As a result, we fill in any perceived gaps in our loved one's personality.

Now that you are married, it is important to accept that both of you have flaws – as all people do.

Finally, remind yourself of what love really means.

Erich Fromm once wrote: "To love somebody is not just a strong feeling – it is a decision, it is a judgement, it is a promise. If love were just a feeling, there would be no basis

for the promise to love each other forever."

*This article is contributed by Focus on the Family Malaysia, a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting and strengthening the family unit. It provides a myriad of programmes and resources, including professional counselling services, to the community. For more information, visit [family.org.my](http://family.org.my). Comments: [letters@thesundaily.com](mailto:letters@thesundaily.com)*

*"As cathartic as it might feel to you, uncontrolled anger causes lasting hurt and damages relationships."*

## COMMENT

By Prof Dr Sivabala Naidu and Racheal Har Ann Li

## The linguistic labyrinth: Unpacking brain rot

**THE** term "brain rot" was named Oxford's word of the year in 2024, which amplifies the influence of the internet and social media on language evolution and change.

The appeal of brain rot language stems from its engaging and attention-grabbing characteristics.

It attracts younger individuals into online spaces where gaining visibility and recognition becomes highly desirable.

Their active involvement within these digital communities provides them with a sense of personal validation, social status and belonging.

Academically, this phenomenon can be understood through the intricate relationship between evolving cultural norms, linguistic shifts and advancements in communication technology.

Research on the influence of emojis, memes and internet slang on contemporary language and interpersonal communication have indicated that the younger generation are facing academic and professional communication challenges.

Formal communication settings, such as academic institutions and work environments, have always adhered to the conventional language rules for coherence and linguistic integrity.

However, these norms are nonexistent with internet slang, shaping communication in ways we had not anticipated.

In addition, the short, bite-sized content that are on social media platforms has the potential to disrupt or diminish

deeper, reflective thinking.

The recent Netflix series *Adolescence* delves deeply into new language norms and communication styles of teenagers, highlighting how emojis and slang were used in ways that carried hidden meanings.

The series also explores how teenagers use emojis to convey nuanced emotions or intentions and sheds light on the complexities of modern teenage communication and the potential for misinterpretation or harm when such language is weaponised.

We, hence, believe that it is crucial to examine the widespread brain rot language being used in communication among our younger generation.

While we accept that this phenomenon is a defining feature of Gen Z and Gen Alpha and is facilitating quick and engaging communication, we are wary of its impact in academic and professional contexts where clarity, structure and grammatical accuracy are essential.

Thus, we argue that there is a need to include digital literacy into the curriculum.

Learning how and when to use the right language is key to equipping our future generations with the tools to engage, interact and integrate with the world around them.

**Prof Dr Sivabala Naidu** is the dean at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Quest International University and **Racheal Har Ann Li** is a senior lecturer at the same faculty. Comments: [letters@thesundaily.com](mailto:letters@thesundaily.com)

# How one balloon man nearly toppled national security

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

**IN** the thrilling pre-Raya episode of *Law & Order: Street Vendor Unit*, our brave DBKL (Kuala Lumpur City Hall) enforcers managed to neutralise an imminent threat to public safety – a balloon man.

Yes, a balloon man – armed with nothing but helium, coloured ribbons and a desperate attempt to make a few ringgit before the festivities – this villain dared to sell smiles without a permit.

Somewhere between Sponge-Bob-shaped inflatables and RM5-animal balloons, the authorities spotted him – a criminal mastermind in slippers.

### The arrest

It was a scene straight out of a budget action film – forget high-speed chases or drug busts. This was raw, heroic enforcement – four to five officers against one man.

A textbook takedown. Because when a man selling balloons to

children gets mouthy, fists must fly. The only threat he posed? Emotional damage from witnessing a fully grown adult being tackled for crimes against municipal order. He pleaded. He reasoned. He used... (harsh?) words. Dangerous!

So, they did what any rational, well-trained force would do: punched first, rationalised later.

### The "trial by headlines" (or lack thereof)

Post-beating, the city PR machine did what it does best: backstory resurrection. Thirteen alleged sins of yesteryear, dug up like lost treasure. A "druggie", they said. "Crook". Labels flung out like confetti to make sure the public would not waste sympathy on the balloon-slinging menace.

Nothing whips up national pride like beating up a man and then telling everyone he deserved it retroactively.

### Race-card declined

Of course, this time, there is no race narrative to ride on. Both parties shared the same ethnic checkbox. So, no performative outrage. No hashtags. No national headlines. Just a bruised Malay man quietly bleeding into the white bedsheets of a government hospital.

Had he been of another race, a refugee, a foreigner or even someone with a more "exotic" name, there might have been protests. But alas, he was just... a local "Melayu". So, naturally, silence is golden.

Public safety first, happiness later? Was this their priority? Could there have been "powder" in those balloons? Or messages of hope and joy – insidious stuff.

Maybe the smiles he sold were laced with subversion. What if a child, God forbid, smiled too hard?

We should thank our stars that the men in uniform took immediate action against this "clear and present danger" to the peace of their beloved city of Kuala Lumpur.

Were they concerned that this balloon man could have floated

away, spreading "Raya" joy without permission.

### Poverty is the real crime

The real lesson here? Do not be visibly poor. Do not try to earn a little extra in public spaces without a laminated, rubber-stamped and approved-by-six-committees permit.

And never, ever resist the boot on your neck – not even with words, especially not near a festive season. It ruins the aesthetic because in a city obsessed with order, you are better off being invisible than colourful.

However, let us play devil's advocate for a second, shall we? Even if the balloon man got lipply; even if he dared to question authority or did not pack up fast enough when told; even if his past was less than squeaky clean, does that now entitle state agents to transform into part-time bouncers with full-time immunity?

Since when did a municipal infraction come with a complimentary hospital stay? What

law, exactly, allows uniformed men to hand out knuckle sandwiches with a side of arrogance, just because someone selling balloons did not vanish into thin air fast enough?

Is there a secret clause in the Local Government Act that reads: "Use excessive force where dignity is detected"?

Or perhaps a footnote that says: "Extra punches if the suspect is poor, Malay and unphotogenic"?

If this is just doing their job, then we need to ask – what is the job? Keeping the peace or peacocking with unchecked power?

So, here is to the balloon man – the villain we did not know we had – may your bruises fade faster than the public's memory. May your spirit inflate again, if not your balloons.

And to our fearless enforcers: sleep soundly. The streets are safe – from smiles, from joy, from hope. Mission accomplished!

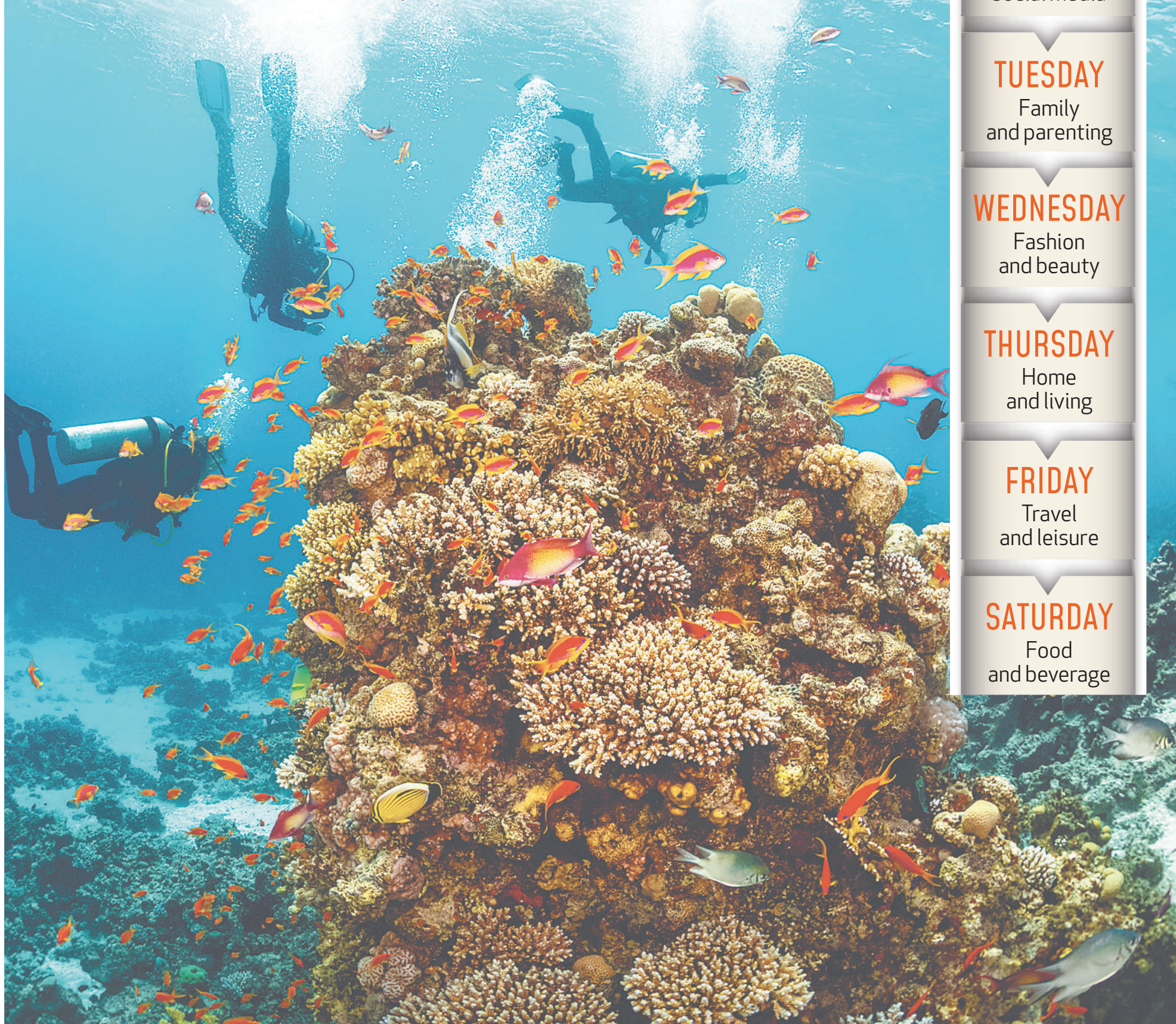
**That One Unlicensed Human with a Pen**





# Scuba getaways

*What divers look for in destinations - P12*



## WEEKLY FOCUS

### MONDAY

Technology and  
social media

### TUESDAY

Family  
and parenting

### WEDNESDAY

Fashion  
and beauty

### THURSDAY

Home  
and living

### FRIDAY

Travel  
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### SATURDAY

Food  
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Jay Park  
announces KL  
date for concert



**S**OUTHEAST Asia continues to attract divers with its rich marine life and breathtaking underwater landscapes, according to Agoda's 2025 Scuba Deals Survey, which highlights the preferences and motivations of scuba diving enthusiasts across Asia.

From dream destinations to travel budgets, the survey revealed trends shaping the underwater travel scene and the region's prominence as a scuba diving haven.

#### ➔ Malaysians appreciate home waters

Indonesia tops the list as the most desired scuba diving destination among Asian travellers, celebrated for its vibrant marine biodiversity and stunning coral reefs.

It leads a ranking that also includes the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam, collectively showcasing the region's rich underwater appeal.

At the same time, Malaysian divers recognise the beauty of their own marine treasures, ranking Malaysia as their top diving destination, ahead of Indonesia, Thailand, the



Affordability is key when booking hotels among divers.

## Underwater adventures

### ➔ Malaysians favour local dive spots

Philippines and Vietnam.

#### ➔ Underwater relaxation is prime travel motivation

For many divers, the ocean offers a sanctuary for stress relief. Nearly 30% of respondents cited relaxation as their primary reason for diving, with this motivation being particularly present among divers from the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.

Exploring marine life also ranks high as a motivating factor, with 24% of divers drawn primarily to the allure of ocean creatures.

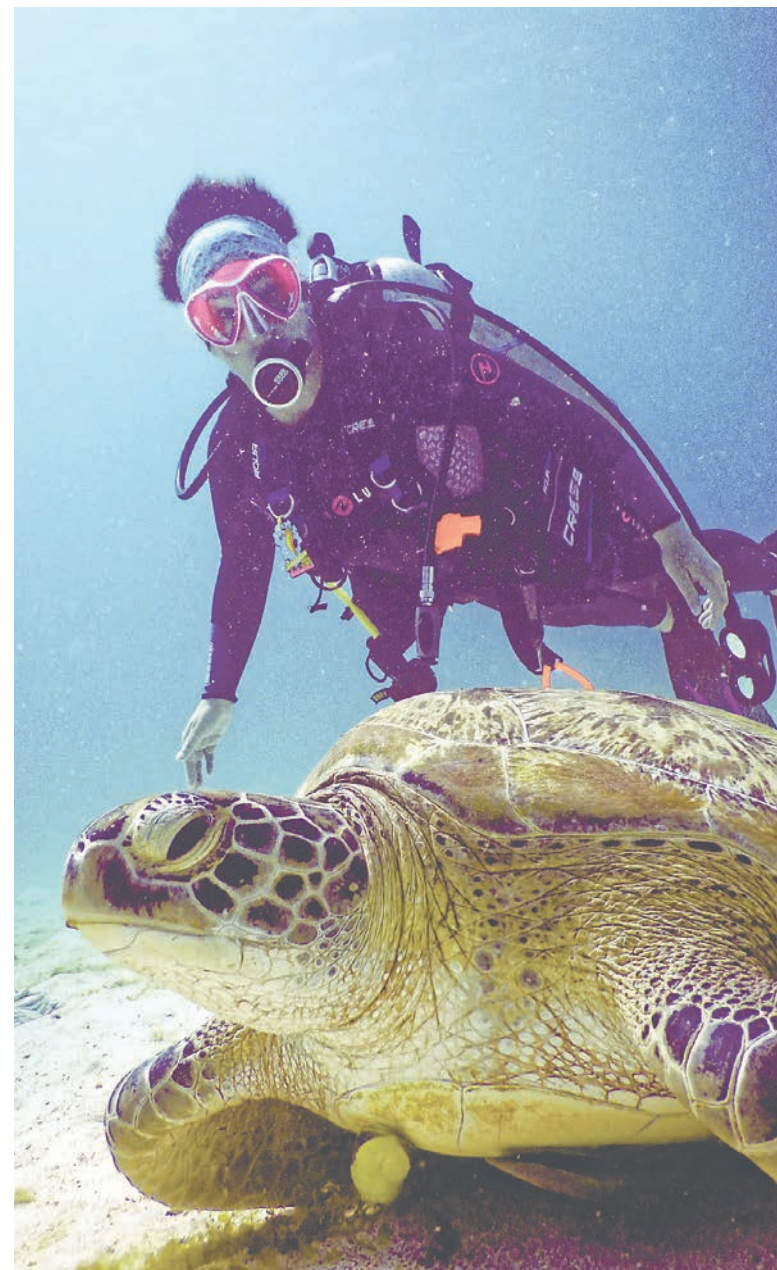
#### ➔ Affordability is priority, but budgets are bigger

While affordability is ranked by respondents as the most important factor when choosing accommodation for the trip, divers are willing to spend more on their underwater adventures.

Two-fifths (40%) of respondents reported spending 15–30% more on scuba trips compared with regular vacations.

#### ➔ Typical scuba trip lasts four to seven days

Short getaways dominate the scuba travel scene, with nearly 48% of divers preferring trips lasting four to seven days. Weekend trips



Divers cite relaxation as the primary reason for a scuba holiday.

– PICS FROM PEXELS

are also popular for 41% of respondents. This highlights the appeal of quick, immersive experiences that fit into busy schedules.

#### ➔ Reefs are preferred dive sites

Reef diving is the top choice for underwater explorers, with 75% of respondents expressing interest in these areas.

The rich ecosystems and

colourful coral formations of Asia's reefs continue to captivate divers, reinforcing their status as must-visit sites for marine enthusiasts.

The platform surveyed 850 scuba divers from 11 markets (Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) in February 2025.



Reef diving is a favourite among divers.

## Raya travel trends

**AS** the Hari Raya holiday ends, Agoda has tracked an almost 80% month-on-month increase in accommodation searches from travellers in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore for this year's festive period.

For those operating in the travel

sector, it is also a critical peak period that offers plenty of opportunities to deliver services tailored to the needs of Muslim travellers during this period.

According to the Global Muslim Travel Index 2024, over 70% of the global Muslim population is under 40 years old. This younger and tech-savvy demographic has higher disposable income and is eager to travel, representing a major market for halal-compliant services.

#### Key insights on Hari Raya travel trends

- ➔ Thailand and Japan lead the way as the top two most-searched destinations among travellers from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.
- ➔ China, South Korea and Taiwan complete the top five.
- ➔ Bangkok steals the spotlight as the most-searched destination, followed by Tokyo and Seoul.
- ➔ Hong Kong secures the fourth spot, while Taipei rounds out the top five.



Japan is one of the top destinations during the Raya holidays. – PEXELSPIC

#### What does this mean for hoteliers?

##### • Family friendly packages

Preparing packages or making it easy to search for large group options will support booking conversions.

Enhancing guest experience with specialised concierge services that arrange local cultural tours, family-friendly transportation and personalised recommendations to

suit a diverse age group as well as diverse cultural interests.

##### • Elevating dining and in-house celebrations

Hotels can seize this opportunity by offering exclusive festive-themed such as Hari Raya dining experiences within their restaurants.

This includes specially curated menus and family meal packages.

They can also provide catering services for in-house festive gatherings and banquets.

##### • Showcasing halal credentials

With growing demand for halal-compliant travel options, ensuring there are offerings such as halal food, and prayer facilities will attract a broader audience. Prominently display certifications will also verify your adherence to halal standards.

##### • Commitment to community and inclusivity

Highlight your dedication to inclusion and community. For example, Muslim travellers during this season value brands that resonate with their cultural and ethical principles.

Hotels should showcase real guest experiences and community initiatives, reinforcing brand values. By conducting cultural training for hospitality staff, hoteliers promote cultural understanding, which will resonate with travellers such as the Muslim demographic.



Prominently display halal certification to put Muslim travellers at ease.

– PIC FROM FACEBOOK  
@NAZRANABDMUTALIB





the Sun

# Biz & Finance

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## Apac in position to drive global green energy shift: Fadillah

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia and the broader Asia-Pacific region have the potential to be global leaders in the clean energy revolution, said Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Transition and Water Transformation Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

He said this includes the expansion of renewable energy with Malaysia well-positioned to be a solar powerhouse due to its strategic geographical location, abundant sunlight and strong political will.

"Furthermore, the country has significant potential for biomass energy, and hydropower development.

"The successful implementation of floating solar farms and large-scale solar projects across the country demonstrates our capabilities in harnessing clean energy resources," he said during his keynote address at the United Nation Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2025 yesterday.

Fadillah highlighted the importance of the Asia-Pacific Green Deal, a strategy designed to steer the region towards a low-carbon, sustainable future.

The Asia-Pacific Green Deal is a guiding framework to drive cross-border cooperation, optimise renewable energy resources, and position Asean as a globally visible and competitive leader in sustainability.

By adopting a holistic approach that integrates economic development with environmental responsibility, the Green Deal provides a roadmap for nations to align their energy policies with global climate commitments.

"For the Green Deal to become a reality, nations in the Asia-Pacific must work collectively by sharing best practices, investing in clean technologies, and developing regional carbon markets," he said.

As Asean chair, Fadillah said. Malaysia is committed to elevating Asean's role in the global energy transition by fostering stronger regional integration, innovation, and investment in clean energy. — Bernama

# Xi's visit to M'sia set to trigger new investments into Asean

**PETALING JAYA:** Chinese President Xi Jinping's official visit to Malaysia next week will be pivotal in not only triggering new investments in Southeast Asia but also pave the way for further economic development and prosperity in the region.

In expressing confidence over the positive outcome from the visit, Malaysian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China (MayCham) chairman Loh Wee Keng (*pic*) cited the enormous potential for the development of digital currency and cross-border digital payment systems between China and Asean in the financial sector.

"(Although) the trade volume between China and Asean in 2023 exceeded US\$900 billion (RM4 trillion), there is an urgent need for an efficient and cost-effective cross-border transfer (payments) system for the region.

"With the high-level visit from the Chinese president, we expect this will be one of the major topics to be discussed (so) our industry players should get ready to take on the opportunity derived from the discussions," he told Bernama recently.

Loh said Malaysia was one of the earliest supporters of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and, therefore, one can expect some of the BRI projects such as the high-speed train, Malacca port, green energy and Kuala Ketil power plant to feature prominently at high-level discussions between Malaysia and China.

## ➤ MayCham China chairman expresses confidence over positive outcome from Chinese president's trip

"These mega infrastructure projects will have long-term implications for Malaysia's economic development," he said.

Loh noted that the discussions could also look into issues regarding rare earth exports.

"For instance, Malaysia has huge reserves of rare earth, which are highly in demand by industries in China; but Malaysia does not allow rare earth exports while China's mining technology for rare earth is not allowed to be transferred to foreigners."

With this scenario, Loh said, the high-level meeting would be the perfect platform to discuss the trade in rare earth and achieve a win-win situation to help each other.

On conventional items such as palm oil and derivatives, rubber products, bird's nests and agricultural products, the MayCham chairman expressed hope that China would increase its imports from Malaysia.

He added that there is also room for increased investments between China and Malaysia as well as between China and Asean.

Loh said China possesses the most advanced electric vehicle manufacturing technologies and

artificial intelligence in the world — industries which are in high demand in Malaysia and Asean countries.

"I would strongly recommend Malaysian businesses to take advantage of these two fields and encourage Chinese companies to work closely with Malaysian entrepreneurs to develop new products with shared intellectual property rights and market them to the world," he said.

Loh said President Xi's visit to Malaysia is very timely and will bring more economic opportunities to Asean, especially with the crippling US tariffs on Asean

countries as well as on China which have started a trade war and global economic chaos.

Economic linkages with China should be fully exploited as Asean has collective strength, being the fifth-largest economic bloc globally with a gross domestic product of US\$3.8 trillion and population of 680 million.



## Asean must remain neutral in US-China trade war: Andrew Sheng

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Asean must remain neutral in the escalating global trade war over tariffs between superpowers the United States and China, former Bank Negara Malaysia assistant governor Tan Sri Andrew Sheng (*pic*) said.

"It is not going to be healthy for anyone to be seen taking sides, more so with Asean economies inextricably linked in both trade and investment to Washington and Beijing," Sheng told Bernama at the Asean Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governor's Meeting here on Wednesday.

He said Malaysia, as the Asean chair this year, has the influence to help shape the grouping's views toward neutrality as regional leaders converge for their 47th annual summit here on May 26-27.

"Asean's neutrality is critical right now," said Sheng, who is also chairman of the George Town Institute of Open and Advanced Studies and distinguished fellow at the Institute for Capital Market Research.

Since US President Donald Trump announced sweeping tariffs against 168 countries on April 2, both countries have been engaged in a tit-for-tat tariff retaliation. This has culminated in the US announcing a staggering 104% tariff on Chinese imports while the latter has hit back with a 84% import levy on American goods entering its own market.

The global backlash has escalated with Canada hot on the heels of China, imposing a 25% tariff on selected American vehicle imports.

The 27-member European Union, meanwhile, is also planning retaliatory tariffs on America although it has expressed willingness to negotiate first.

(In the latest development yes-



terday Malaysian time, Trump paused the higher reciprocal tariffs for 90 days, authorising a universal lowered 10% tariff, but he increased the tariffs on Chinese goods to 125%.)

Besides roiling global markets and bringing chaos to the world trading system, the trade war has stoked fears of rising

inflation and an impending global recession.

Asked whether it could be time for Asean+3 (China, South Korea, and Japan) to unite against the US, Sheng said, "That is clearly a 'No' as America's biggest power is being the largest importer of all you produce."

He likened the US-China trade tension to a "war of the elephants" — the *Sang Kancil*, or mousedeer, in reference to small countries, "must be

very clear about how to stay nimble, fast and flexible".

Southeast Asian economies should reaffirm their diversities and economic strengths.

In doing business, Sheng said, they must hold onto an open trading approach, allowing for flexibility and discretion in choosing partners without necessarily revealing their identities.

To suggestions that Indochinese countries Cambodia and Laos are the hardest hit because of their dependence on China, Sheng said this is not true as both are heavily reliant on the US market.

That's why the US wants to remind Cambodia, "You're ultimately selling to me."

Sheng emphasised that trade and investment cooperation "is not something you can achieve overnight as every country is different (and) as long as everybody is nimble and fast on your feet, you will survive".

"This entails Asean countries being open to the idea that non-tariff barriers are not necessarily sacred cows that you cannot remove," he said.

Malaysia, as Asean chair, has the opportunity to introduce fresh ideas such as the Asean Business Entity, proposed by the Asean Business Advisory Council, which accords trade privileges to companies operating regionally.

Sheng pointed out that Trump's shocking tariffs have inevitably started an economic revolution for which economies must upgrade and achieve competitiveness or risk losing out to the vagaries of the international marketplace.

"Tariffs have changed the competitive game," he said, adding that this is not a crisis but rather a massive shock for which the good news is that "you do something you don't want to do" such as reducing non-tariff barriers.





## Asean Infrastructure Fund launches four-year action plan

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Asean Infrastructure Fund (AIF), one of the region's largest infrastructure financing initiatives funded by member contributions, has launched the AIF Action Plan 2025-2028.

Endorsed at the 12th Asean Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting here, the action plan charts a strategic and actionable guide for the fund's next four years of growth to spur sustainable infrastructure projects across the region.

Launched under Malaysia's chairmanship of the AIF, the Ministry of Finance said in a statement yesterday that the plan is a "living document" subject to ongoing guidance of its Board, comprising 10 Asean member states (AMS) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan said the endorsement will catapult Asean's role as the global standard in governance and sustainable development. "The AIF Action Plan 2025-2028 serves to secure confidence among potential investors and co-financiers, which then produces tangible benefits to AMS in the form of sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects that will contribute to Asean's growth and development for years to come."

The action plan's immediate priorities are set out as to expand the fund's financial capacity by securing new capital, allowing greater lending to Asean member states; improve the price competitiveness of the AIF's loans through policy adjustments and periodic reviews; expand the AIF's range of financing solutions through new innovative facilities, including those for preparing regional connectivity projects, such as the Asean Power Grid and pilot loans in Islamic finance; and expand the Asean Catalytic Green Finance Facility's collaboration with other multilateral development banks and development finance institutions, and widen access to more public and private capital donors, channel more expertise, and grow the AIF's pipeline of projects.

With the strong support of all Asean member states and its funding partners, the AIF looks forward to a new phase of expanded scale and impact in support of Asean's efforts to finance more green and resilient infrastructure in the region. To date, the AIF has committed over US\$500 million (RM2.23 billion), and disbursed over US\$460 million, to support 15 projects in six Asean countries.

"Malaysia, as the AIF chair, remains resolute in advancing the AIF Action Plan," said Finance Ministry deputy secretary-general of the Treasury (policy) and AIF chair Datuk Zamzuri Abdul Aziz.

He added that the commitment ensures that Asean's infrastructure financing is not only innovative and impactful but also aligns with their collective vision for a more integrated, resilient and sustainable Southeast Asia.

# High-impact projects will transform Perak's economy

BY JOHN GILBERT  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Lumut Maritime Industrial City (LuMIC) and other high-impact projects in Perak are demonstrating significant progress, strengthening the state's leading position in the nation's economic development.

Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad said apart from LuMIC, the other high-impact projects in the state are the Kerian Integrated Green Industrial Park, Sungai Perak Raw Water Transfer Project, Automotive High-Tech Valley and the Silver Valley Technology Park.

"The development of LuMIC is expected to be carried out in phases over 25 years and has the potential to create more than 50,000 job opportunities while also opening new avenues for local entrepreneurs and businesses.

"LuMIC will also strengthen public infrastructure, including the transportation system and educational facilities, which will directly enhance the quality of life for the people," he told delegates during the unveiling of the feasibility study for the LuMIC project by Perak State Development Corporation (PKNP) and Port of Antwerp-Bruges International (PoABI) yesterday.

With the goal of positioning Perak as a key destination for both local and international investments, PKNP, together with PoABI, is moving forward with the development of LuMIC.

Spanning 23,000 acres and involving an investment of €15 billion (RM72 billion), LuMIC encompasses an international-standard port, an eco-friendly industrial zone and a sustainable smart city.

Backed by the completed European Union-funded feasibility study, the next steps will see the proposal and masterplan put in place to attract RM72 billion in investments over the next 25 years.

The bold plan is set to drive Perak's socio-economic growth, generating over 50,000 new jobs and transforming the region into a vibrant industrial and maritime hub.

The feasibility study evaluating the state and country's potential in the competitive maritime and industrial sectors, also highlighted Lumut's captive industry, abundant resources, skilled workforce, and strong state support as key success factors.

The findings and masterplan were presented to key stakeholders, including ambassadors from Belgium, the European Union (EU), Croatia, Spain, the Netherlands, France and Poland, along with representatives from federal ministries, the Perak state government, and

One of the major developments is EU-backed Lumut Maritime Industrial City, which involves investment of RM72 billion over 25 years and is set to create 50,000 job openings



Front row, from left: Redza Rafiq, Perak Infrastructure, Energy, Water and Public Transport Committee chairman Datuk Seri Mohamad Nizar Jamaluddin, Perak State Secretary Datuk Ahmad Suaidi Abdul Rahim, Saraani, Belgium ambassador to Malaysia Peter Van Acker, European Union ambassador to Malaysia Rafael Daerr and Port of Antwerp-Bruges International (PoABI) director Mario Lievens. Back row, from left PoABI consultant Michiel Heleven, Lumut Maritime Industrial City director business development Alex Staring and project manager Johannes Schmidt.

industry leaders from maritime, port, logistics, and industrial sectors.

LuMIC is expected to have a positive impact on the services sector, such as tourism and retail, and has the potential to elevate the socio-economic status of the local community. At the same time, it will strengthen Malaysia's position in the global industrial and maritime sectors.

Saarani said, "The close collaboration between PKNP and PoABI reflects a strategic international synergy and enhances global confidence in the prospects of the LuMIC project's success. Since the partnership was established in 2022, efforts have been further intensified with the support of an EU grant worth RM9.5 million, which was announced in December 2023 for the implementation of the project's feasibility study.

"In May 2024, the first phase of the study was presented, covering six key focus areas developed through a combination of local expertise and the professional network of European port authorities.

"As a result of the signing of this strategic agreement, LuMIC Development Sdn Bhd (LuMIC DevCo) was established as the main driver of a new, more competitive, strategic and future-oriented economic growth."

Furthermore, Saarani said, the implementation of the National Research, Development, Innovation, Commercialisation and Economy Roadmap is expected to increase the contribution of the marine and maritime sectors to national gross domestic product from 21.3% to 31.5% by 2030, equivalent to a value of RM1.4 trillion.

He said LuMIC is also positioned to address global challenges through sustainable approaches such as carbon reduction, the use of renewable energy, and the development of a resilient supply chain. At the same time, this project supports the National Energy Transition Roadmap, positioning Perak as one of the pioneers of maritime sustainability in Asean, Saarani noted.

PKNP chief executive Datuk Redza Rafiq Abdul Razak said the findings of this feasibility study mark an important milestone in the agency's collaboration with the PoABI, which is not only the second-largest industrial port in Europe but also one that has an established track record in this area.

"Together, we are preparing a comprehensive and actionable framework that will transform Lumut into a world-class maritime and industrial nerve centre," he said.

## West River to acquire land, build factory and warehouse in Klang Valley

BY AIMIE SHAZRIE  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** ACE Market-bound mechanical and electrical (M&E) engineering services provider West River Bhd, which launched its initial public offering (IPO) prospectus yesterday, plans to expand its manufacturing capabilities with the development of a new facility in the Klang Valley.

The IPO is expected to raise RM27.9 million, of which RM10 million (35.84%) has been earmarked for the acquisition of land and construction of a manufacturing facility and warehouse in the Klang Valley.

Managing director Lim Yong Lai said the proposed facility, with an estimated built-up area of 35,000 square feet (sq ft), will

accommodate expanded production space for electrical panels and distribution boards, and 25,000 sq ft of dedicated storage for M&E project-related inventories including cables, wires and spare parts.

"The new facility will allow West River to triple our annual production capacity over the next three years, strengthen supply chain efficiency and enable bulk procurement directly from manufacturers, further reducing reliance on trading intermediaries and securing more competitive pricing.

"Our expansion into a larger facility is a strategic move to meet growing demand for our services while improving operational efficiency. This IPO marks a pivotal milestone as we scale our operations and unlock greater value across the M&E engineering sector," he said at the prospectus launch.

Of the remaining proceeds from the IPO, RM5.6 million (20.07%) will be used for the repayment of borrowings to strengthen the company's capital structure and improve gearing; RM7.8 million (27.96%) for general working capital, including workforce expansion and the purchase of materials for the manufacturing of electrical panels and distribution boards, and RM4.5 million (16.13%) to cover estimated listing expenses.

West River's IPO entails a public issue of 71.54 million new shares and an offer for sale of 35.77 million existing shares, priced at 39 sen per share. The IPO values the company at RM139.5 million, with a price-to-earnings ratio of 12.19 times based on its FY 2024 profit after tax of RM11.46 million.

According to independent market research by Providence Strategic Partners Sdn Bhd,

Malaysia's M&E engineering industry is projected to grow from RM8.5 billion in 2024 to RM10.9 billion in 2026, underpinned by rising investments and increased construction activities across the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.

Lim said the company is well-positioned to progress towards greater innovation, expansion and long-term success in the M&E engineering sector. "This year will be significant for West River as we embark on our IPO journey for the listing on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities."

The application period of West River's IPO commenced yesterday and will close on April 17 at 5pm. The company is slated for listing on May 5. M&A Securities Sdn Bhd is the principal adviser, sponsor, underwriter and placement agent for the IPO.



# AmBank extends **RM307m** financing to Chin Hin units

➤ Funds allocated to key projects in Sungai Besi, Bandar Kinrara and East Malaysia

**KUALA LUMPUR:** AmBank Group has granted RM307 million in financing facilities to Aricia Sdn Bhd and Makna Setia Sdn Bhd, subsidiaries of Chin Hin Group Bhd, for the development of multiple new projects in Klang Valley and East Malaysia.

The financing facilities will support the development of Aricia Residences @ Sungai Besi – a modern residential development in the heart of Sungai Besi, featuring functional layouts ranging from 550 sq ft to 1,420 sq ft. It includes 787 serviced apartments, the area's first freehold 3-bedroom sky duplexes, and state-of-the-art amenities such as a multi-tier security system and smart home technology. With a GDV of RM467 million, the project was launched in Q1'25 and is set to redefine contemporary urban living.

The other developments are a mixed-use development in Bandar Kinrara and civil infrastructure works in East Malaysia.

AmBank Group business banking managing director Christopher Yap said that these developments align with their commitment to fostering sustainable growth.

"AmBank Group remains dedicated to

## Signing Ceremony for Financing Facilities between AmBank (M) Berhad, Aricia Sdn Bhd and Makna Setia Sdn Bhd

Wednesday, 9 April 2025  
Menara Chin Hin, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur



From left: Chin Hin Construction Engineering Sdn Bhd group CEO Khor Kai Fu, Makna Setia Sdn Bhd CEO Liew Jor Ho, AmBank Group commercial banking 1 head (business banking) Yeow Swee Yun, SVP commercial banking 1 (business banking) Edmund Tay, Yap, Chin Hin Group Property Bhd CEO Chang Tze Yoong and Chiau at the signing ceremony.

supporting initiatives that drive progress and create lasting value for communities. This collaboration underscores our ongoing efforts to contribute to Malaysia's development and construction landscape," he added.

The residential developments in Sungai Besi and Bandar Kinrara are designed to integrate modern architecture, smart home technology, and family-centric facilities – ensuring security, convenience, and connectivity for homeowners. Meanwhile, the infrastructure works in East Malaysia will play a crucial role in enhancing

regional connectivity and economic expansion.

Chin Hin Group Bhd managing director Chiau Haw Choon said, "At Chin Hin Group, we do more than build homes — we create spaces where people can live better, connect, and grow. Our partnership with AmBank Group helps us deliver innovative, future-ready homes like Aricia Residences, raising the standard for urban living. Our infrastructure projects in East Malaysia also show our commitment to supporting national growth and improving regional connectivity."

## Malaysian, Thai central banks boost cybersecurity ties

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) and Bank of Thailand (BoT) yesterday signed a MoU to strengthen joint efforts in cybersecurity and digital fraud protection.

This initiative also fosters a stronger collaborative relationship between the two central banks, paving the way for more effective information sharing, enhanced capacity building efforts, and the continuous exchange of best practices.

The MoU was signed by BNM Governor Datuk Seri Abdul Rasheed Ghaffour and BoT Governor Dr Sethaput Suthiwartnarueput.

This MoU exemplifies the shared commitment of BNM and BoT to enhancing cybersecurity preparedness and strengthening the cyber defenses of the financial sectors in both countries, ensuring greater resilience against emerging threats.

Abdul Rasheed said, "BNM remains committed to enhance the resilience of our financial institutions and strengthen protection of our financial consumers against current and emerging cyber threats. This partnership with Bank of Thailand will significantly deepen our cooperation in cybersecurity and the fight against digital fraud."

Suthiwartnarueput said, "This MoU reflects our commitment to working together with Bank Negara Malaysia to strengthen cybersecurity and combat digital fraud. As cyber threats become increasingly sophisticated, close collaboration and knowledge sharing are essential.

"Through this partnership, we aim to enhance the resilience and security of our financial systems for the benefit of consumers in both countries."

theSun

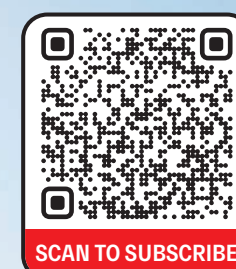
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# Asean at critical juncture as global landscape shifts

➤ Political will and coordinated efforts are crucial, says Zeti

**KUALA LUMPUR:** As the global economic landscape shifts dramatically, Asean stands at a critical juncture, ready to navigate the challenges ahead, but the region's success hinges on the strength of its political will and coordinated efforts, said Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz.

Unlike in the past, Asean is now positioned from a place of strength, said the former Bank Negara governor.

Two decades of concerted efforts have significantly strengthened the 10-member bloc through enhanced regional economic and financial integration, along with more robust networks, she said.

This solid foundation enables it to harness its collective comparative advantages to address challenges such as excess capacity, job losses, and supply chain disruptions resulting from global shocks, she said at the *Eminent Persons' Dialogue: Asean Financial Integration in a Multipolar World* here on Wednesday.

Greater reliance on new technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) will also be required,

coupled with the best minds that reside in Asean and the greater Asia, who must be mobilised to design such a coordinated transformation in the region.

"While this vision is entirely within reach, it will, however, require political will, institutional capacity, and continued public-private collaboration. It will require investment in digital infrastructure, harmonised regulatory frameworks, and mechanisms that support financial inclusion," she said.

Vital, she added, will be the continued commitment to regional solidarity toward building a stronger, more secure, and more prosperous region.

Asean, she said, must also shape, and not merely adapt to the evolving global financial architecture and environment.

"The world today is characterised by multiple centres of economic influence, and Asean must navigate this shifting landscape with confidence and agility to adjust.

"While recognising these realities, the region should actively shape international financial

and trade norms to ensure Asean's perspectives and priorities are reflected in global decision-making," she added.

In her address, Zeti also cited the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) as a hallmark of regional cooperation – an assertion of regional solidarity and greater financial self-reliance – signalling that the region has the capacity and political will to stand together in times of stress.

She said the CMIM has further fortified the region's financial safety net to provide crucial liquidity support during turbulent times and security during tranquil periods.

"This mechanism reinforces our collective ability to respond swiftly to external shocks and to safeguard our macroeconomic and financial stability."

The CMIM involves the 10 Asean member countries, as well as China, Japan, and South Korea, forming the Asean+3 regional financial safety net.

It was established in May 2000 as the Chiang Mai Initiative in response to the 1997/98 Asian Financial Crisis.

It was later multilateralised and became the CMIM in 2010, with the total funding size increased to US\$240 billion (RM1.07 trillion) from US\$120 billion previously. – Bernama

## Amcor builds cutting-edge coating facility in Malaysia

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Amcor, a global leader in developing and producing packaging solutions, has completed construction of its advanced coating facility for healthcare packaging in Selangor.

This state-of-the-art facility is the first in Asia to leverage cutting-edge air knife coating technology, strengthening the supply of high-quality, sterile packaging for healthcare customers across the region.

The new facility expands Amcor's existing healthcare packaging plant in Selangor, creating an integrated campus that makes Amcor the first in Asia to produce both top and bottom substrates for medical device packaging.

This development delivers critical benefits to customers, including enhanced supply chain resilience and reduced lead times.

Equipped with advanced technologies such as water-based coating systems, online inspection systems and air knife technology, the facility sets new standards for precision and efficiency.

The air knife technology, in particular, uses high-speed air streams to ensure uniform coating application, enhancing product consistency and reducing material waste.

"Amcor's investment in this new facility reflects our unwavering commitment to support our customers across the Asia Pacific region," said Amcor Flexibles Asia Pacific president Chris Kenneally.

By introducing advanced coating technology and boosting local production capacity, he added they are better positioned to meet the growing regional demand for sterile, reliable packaging and to offer their customers greater flexibility and security.

Amcor global healthcare vice president Virginie Maes said that producing their industry-leading global product platform locally brings them closer to their customers, enhancing supply security and flexibility.

"By investing in advanced coating technologies and expanding our regional capabilities, we are not only addressing the growing demand for high-performance healthcare packaging but also reinforcing our promise to deliver a consistent and innovative value proposition to our customers worldwide," she added.

This new facility is part of Amcor's broader commitment to expanding its healthcare capabilities in the Asia Pacific region.

Recent initiatives by the company include the acquisition of healthcare packaging company MDK in China, the establishment of a grid lacquer paper unit in India and the construction of a co-extrusion blown film and printing plant in Singapore.



Representatives from Petronas, PetroVietnam and Hibiscus Petroleum at the signing ceremony.

## Petronas and PetroVietnam strengthen partnership

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Petronas, through Malaysia Petroleum Management (MPM), and Vietnam Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) signed a Key Principles Agreement (KPA) to extend the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) and Upstream Gas Sales Agreement (UGSA) for the PM3 Commercial Arrangement Area (CAA) for another 20 years.

Covering more than 2,000km of offshore fields straddling the maritime border of Malaysia and Vietnam, the PM3 CAA is a prime showcase of enduring cross-border collaboration.

This milestone underscores the strong bilateral ties and shared commitment between both countries towards energy security and affordability.

"With an estimated remaining reserve of up to 60 million barrels of oil equivalent (MMBoe), the

abundant hydrocarbon resources in PM3 CAA plays a key role in contributing towards sustainable energy security in the region," Petronas senior vice-president of MPM Datuk Bacho Pilong remarked.

"The agreement underscores the unwavering commitment from both Petronas and PetroVietnam to further enhance their long-term collaboration which has been crucial to the progress of PM3, from exploration, development to eventual monetisation of the resources."

The KPA sets the framework for the continuation of the PSC and UGSA until Dec 31, 2047, ensuring production continuity across seven fields and unlocking further potential PM3 CAA.

The PM3 CAA PSC facilities are also positioned as a strategic hub to support tie-ins

from nearby discoveries – optimising asset utilisation and reinforcing energy security in both Malaysia and Vietnam.

The domestic market UGSA has been structured to maintain the economic viability of future gas field developments.

Key terms for a new UGSA will ensure continued supply to Malaysia via Kertih and to Vietnam via Ca Mau, supporting national energy demands of both countries.

The PM3 CAA is also expected to include plans for the reinjection of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced from petroleum production activities – positioning the area as a potential hub for CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration.

This approach supports the net-zero aspirations of both countries' net-zero ambitions by 2050.

## March palm oil exports up 0.9%, CPO output jumps 16.7% from previous month: Board

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia's palm oil exports rose 0.91% in March to one million tonnes from 996,460 tonnes in February, the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) said.

In its March 2025 industry performance report, MPOB said crude palm oil (CPO) production climbed 16.76%, or 199,164 tonnes, to 1.38 million tonnes from 1.18 million tonnes in the previous month.

Palm kernel output increased 18.23% to 336,918 tonnes in March from 284,959 tonnes in February.

Crude palm kernel oil production rose 15.20% to 149,923 tonnes from 130,146 tonnes, while palm kernel cake output advanced 20.74% to 172,655 tonnes from 142,997 tonnes.

CPO stocks fell 5.68% to 779,233 tonnes in March, compared with 826,145 tonnes a month earlier.

Processed palm oil stockpiles grew 14.63% to 783,353 tonnes from 683,380 tonnes in February, while total palm oil inventories increased 3.52% to 1.56 million tonnes from 1.50 million tonnes.

MPOB said palm kernel oil exports slipped 3.11% to 56,333 tonnes in March from 58,144 tonnes in February.

Palm kernel cake exports tumbled 36.90% to 122,977 tonnes from 194,894 tonnes, while

biodiesel exports dropped 64.46% to 14,947 tonnes from 42,052 tonnes.

Oleochemical exports, however, rose 5.74% to 209,610 tonnes from 198,238 tonnes a month earlier.

No CPO imports were recorded in March, while palm kernel oil imports edged down 0.17% to 12,678 tonnes from 12,699 tonnes in February. – Bernama



The prime minister said he would telephone world leaders to discuss how to strengthen the rules-based global trading system. – AFP





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## White House backs off Nvidia H20 chip crackdown

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Donald Trump's administration has reversed course on plans to restrict exports of Nvidia's H20 AI chips to China after CEO Jensen Huang attended a Mar-a-Lago dinner last week, NPR reported on Wednesday.

The planned American export controls on the chips – the most advanced AI processor legally available in China under US export controls – had been in the works for months, NPR reported, citing two sources, and were ready to be implemented as soon as this week.

The change in plans came after Nvidia promised the Trump administration new US investments in AI data centres, the NPR report said.

The White House and Nvidia did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Trump's administration was considering tightening restrictions on the AI leader's sales of its H20 chips designed for the China market, Reuters had reported in January.

The idea to restrict shipments of those chips to China has been under consideration since Democratic former president Joe Biden's administration.

In February, Reuters exclusively reported a surge in orders for the H20, driven by booming demand for Chinese startup DeepSeek's low-cost AI models.

China firms, including ByteDance, Alibaba and Tencent, have placed at least US\$16 billion in orders for Nvidia's H20 server chips in the first three months of the year, *The Information* reported last week.

Two American lawmakers, Republican John Moolenaar and Democrat Raja Krishnamoorthi, called for more restrictions on exports of Nvidia's AI chips in January. – Reuters

## Philippine central bank cuts policy rate by 25 bps

**MANILA:** The Philippine central bank resumed its easing cycle yesterday, as expected, cutting its key policy rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 5.5% to help the economy cope with global challenges, including US trade policy.

The quarter-point reduction in the benchmark interest rate, which was forecast by 20 out of 23 economists in a Reuters poll, came after data last week showed inflation eased to a near five-year low of 1.8% in March.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Eli Remolona said a "more challenging external environment" was a risk for global and domestic growth.

"On balance, the more manageable inflation outlook and the risks to growth allow for a shift toward a more accommodative monetary policy stance.

"Looking ahead, Bangko Sentral ng will continue to take a measured approach in deciding on further monetary easing."

Though less affected than some of its neighbours, the Philippines has not been spared from the global trade wars, with the US threatening tariffs on its exports.

Manila is targeting growth of 6%-8% this year, up from last year's 5.7% expansion. – Reuters

# TSMC's Q1 revenue surges 42%, ahead of forecasts

**TAIPEI:** Taiwanese chipmaking giant TSMC reported yesterday a better-than-expected revenue for the first quarter on strong demand for AI technology, after tariffs slapped onto major economies by US President Donald Trump caused global uncertainty.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company is the world's largest contract maker of chips that are used in everything from Apple's iPhones to Nvidia's cutting-edge artificial intelligence hardware.

TSMC said revenue in the first three months of 2025 rose nearly 42% to NT\$839.25 billion (RM114 billion) on-year, beating a forecast of around NT\$830.5 billion by analysts surveyed by Bloomberg News.

The company is scheduled to

➤ Contract chipmaker expects 2025 to be 'another strong growth year'

release full first quarter earnings in an online briefing next week.

TSMC chairman and chief executive C.C. Wei has said the firm expected "2025 to be another strong growth year" as AI-related demand continues to surge.

And its full year revenue was expected to increase "by close to mid-20s per cent in US dollar terms", Wei said at an earnings conference in January.

But in light of Trump's ongoing trade war with China – the world's second-largest economy – and his threats to slap tariffs on semiconductor imports, Taiwan's

own industry could experience reverberations across the global chip supply chain.

Taiwan had sought to avoid Trump's threatened levies by pledging increased investment in the United States, more purchases of US energy and greater defence spending.

Also last month, TSMC said it would invest US\$100 billion (RM447 billion) in the United States in what was hailed by Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te as a "historic moment" for Taiwan-US relations.

The planned investment followed Trump's accusations that

Taiwan stole the US chip industry and his threats to impose tariffs of up to 100%.

In the end, Trump imposed a hefty 32% on Taiwanese imports – excluding semiconductor chips – though the mercurial Republican on Wednesday abruptly paused the implementation for almost all countries except China for 90 days.

TSMC has long faced demands to move more of its production away from Taiwan, with fears that supplies of the critical technology could be disrupted in any conflict with Beijing.

China has upped military pressure on Taiwan in recent years to press its claim of sovereignty over the self-ruled island, where TSMC has its headquarters and the bulk of its fabrication plants. – AFP



Volkswagen electric cars on display at a storage facility in Wolfsburg, northern Germany. – AFP/PIIC

## Volkswagen earnings dragged down by EU carbon provision, US tariffs

**BERLIN:** Volkswagen's first-quarter earnings fell far short of market expectations, plunging about 40%, as Europe's biggest carmaker factored in costs for penalties of missing EU carbon emissions targets and for cars affected by US tariffs.

Volkswagen's shares were up 8.2%, as relief swept through markets after the US administration's announcement of a 90-day pause on tariffs imposed less than 24 hours earlier on dozens of countries, but a 25% tariff on autos imports remains

in place and Volkswagen is heavily exposed.

After lobbying from the car sector, the European Commission, the EU executive, has proposed to loosen rules that most of the industry is likely to breach this year, leading to billions of euros in fines.

The proposal, which would give Volkswagen and the rest of the industry more time to boost sales of low emission electric vehicles, has yet to be approved by the European Parliament.

As a result, Volkswagen included a €600 million (RM2.9 billion) provision for potential fines in its first-quarter result, as well as €200 million for restructuring at its software unit Cariad, which is in the midst of layoffs.

That lowers its operating return on sales to around 3.6%, down from 6% last year.

A spokesperson declined to provide detail on the costs related to US tariffs.

Those linked to the valuation of vehicles in transit to the US, where a

25% import tariff was imposed from April 3, weighed on results.

The bulk of the VW brand's US sales is from cars made in Mexico and its Audi and Porsche brands have no US manufacturing base.

The company confirmed its full-year outlook of up to 5% sales growth and operating return on sales of between 5.5% and 5.6% but said in its results statement these forecasts excluded the possible impact of tariffs since it was too early to assess their impact. – Reuters



MARKET ROUND-UP: APRIL 10

### Bursa Trade Statistic

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Inter-Pacific Research

10 April 2025

Participation


Retail (20.85%)  
Net (in RM mil.)  
**-248.31**  
Bought (in RM mil.) 670.56  
Sold (in RM mil.) 918.87


Institution (38.52%)  
Net (in RM mil.)  
**+133.62**  
Bought (in RM mil.) 1534.83  
Sold (in RM mil.) 1401.20

Foreign (40.63%)  
Net (in RM mil.)  
**+114.69**  
Bought (in RM mil.) 1605.96  
Sold (in RM mil.) 1491.27

Preliminary status (Excluding Trade Amendments) | Final data, refer to Bursa website


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**SUNBIZ** presents a summary of the day’s trading activity on Bursa Malaysia and other markets in an easy to digest format.

 Sources: *Bursa Malaysia, Bernama, shareinvestor.com and websites*

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Bursa Indices		
INDEX	CHANGE	
FBMEMAS	10,842.41	+498.63
FBMKLCI	1,463.13	+62.54
CONSUMER PRODUCTS & SERVICES	471.97	+14.71
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES	138.80	+6.76
CONSTRUCTION	246.68	+14.36
FINANCIAL SERVICES	17,764.21	+859.39
ENERGY	659.94	+47.35
TELECOMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA	459.73	+8.58
HEALTH CARE	1,880.00	+89.94
TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS	950.59	+23.85
PROPERTY	926.89	+36.66
PLANTATION	7,045.89	+206.80
FBMSHA	10,568.82	+466.13
FBMACE	4,369.73	+223.47
TECHNOLOGY	43.63	+4.51
TURNOVER: 4.411 bil		VALUE: RM3.811 bil

Bursa rebounds sharply as US tariff pause brightens mood

**BURSA** Malaysia rebounded sharply to close higher yesterday, with the benchmark index rising 4.47%, amid improved market sentiment across the region following the US tariff pause announcement.

At 5pm, the FBM KLCI rose 62.54 points to 1,463.13 from Wednesday’s close of 1,400.59.

The benchmark index opened 63.71 points higher to 1,464.30, then retreated a low of 1,453.13 after 15 minutes of trading before continuing to trend to a high of 1,473.36 at mid-morning and maintained its positive momentum towards closing.

Market breadth was positive, with gainers overwhelming decliners 1,075 to 183, while 261 counters were unchanged, 847 untraded, and 10 suspended.

UOB Kay Hian Wealth Advisors Sdn Bhd head of investment research Mohd Sedek Jantan said the FBM KLCI recovery was broad-based across all index components, reflecting improved investor sentiment following an overnight rally on Wall Street.

“The catalyst behind the renewed optimism was US President Donald Trump’s decision to delay the implementation of higher reciprocal tariffs, which offered temporary relief to global markets.

“However, the existing 10% tariffs remain in effect and continue to pose downside risks to market stability,” he told Bernama.

Among heavyweights, Maybank jumped 49 sen to RM9.99, Public Bank rose 16 sen to RM4.25, Tenaga Nasional climbed 48 sen to RM13.30, CIMB bagged 56 sen to RM6.91, and IHH Healthcare gained nine sen to RM6.80.

For the actives, MYEG rose eight sen to 83.5 sen, Top Glove garnered nine sen to 91 sen, Inari Amertron jumped 27 sen to RM1.72, Supermax put on 4.5 sen to 85 sen, and SumiSaujana edged up one sen to 19 sen.

Top 20 Actives				
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
MYEG	0.835	+0.080	+10.60	1,564,855
HSI-CWC4	0.080	+0.015	+23.08	1,511,659
HSI-PWFK	0.225	-0.040	-15.09	1,059,066
TOPGLOV	0.910	+0.090	+10.98	954,639
SUMI	0.190	+0.010	+5.56	895,436
HSI-CWEI	0.140	+0.025	+21.74	838,334
SUPERMX	0.850	+0.045	+5.59	723,835
INARI	1.720	+0.270	+18.62	712,327
HSI-PWD3	0.055	-0.020	-26.67	637,808
HSI-PWDT	0.125	-0.035	-21.88	631,689
SAPNRG	0.045	-	-	586,235
GAMUDA-C2R	0.035	+0.015	+75.00	578,442
HSI-CWCE	0.035	+0.010	+40.00	545,368
NATGATE	1.190	+0.170	+16.67	538,944
VELOCITY	0.075	+0.005	+7.14	510,404
GAMUDA	3.850	+0.260	+7.24	468,524
HARTA	2.300	+0.330	+16.75	459,315
VELESTO	0.145	+0.010	+7.41	448,104
CIMB	6.910	+0.560	+8.82	439,591
VS	0.770	+0.115	+17.56	410,481

Top 20 Gainers (By RM)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
NESTLE	78.980	+5.260	2,402
MPI	15.080	+1.480	8,300
PETDAG	19.280	+1.240	7,189
HLBANK	19.260	+0.760	20,721
PETGAS	16.080	+0.720	13,680
KLK	19.400	+0.700	6,752
BLDPLNT	10.520	+0.620	60
HLFG	16.600	+0.600	5,489
HEIM	26.180	+0.580	2,065
CIMB	6.910	+0.560	439,591
FRONTKN	3.200	+0.500	248,005
KGB	3.110	+0.490	97,406
MAYBANK	9.990	+0.490	151,729
TENAGA	13.300	+0.480	126,185
UTDPLT	21.240	+0.420	3,377
ALLIANZ-PA	17.200	+0.400	40
ITMAX	3.670	+0.370	32,808
KGB-WB	1.580	+0.360	21,903
HARTA	2.300	+0.330	459,315
ALLIANZ	17.000	+0.320	611

Top 20 Gainers (By %)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
KGB-CJ	0.025	+400.00	200
GAMUDA-C2V	0.020	+300.00	20
GREATEC-C16	0.020	+300.00	3,720
KGB-CI	0.020	+300.00	12,290
MYEG-C8E	0.040	+300.00	6,941
NATGATE-CK	0.020	+300.00	13,097
FRONTKN-C38	0.055	+175.00	15,825
EG-CC	0.040	+166.67	2,501
FBMKLCI-CQX	0.025	+150.00	17,778
SUNCON-C27	0.025	+150.00	7,389
FRONTKN-C39	0.060	+140.00	20,767
MYEG-C7Q	0.035	+133.33	6,300
RHBBANKC60	0.035	+133.33	122,554
KGB-CL	0.080	+128.57	24,069
PETGAS-C6	0.055	+120.00	405
99SMART-CP	0.020	+100.00	344
BINACOM-WA	0.010	+100.00	2
CIMB-CIW	0.010	+100.00	21,248
DIALOG-C1W	0.010	+100.00	12,000
DIALOG-C1Z	0.020	+100.00	5,500

World Stocks/Commodities			
INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	40,608.45	2,962.86	7.87
S&P 500 [US]	5,456.90	474.13	9.52
NASDAQ [US]	17,124.97	1,857.06	12.16
NYSE [US]	18,398.48	1,210.02	7.04
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	4,869.78	247.64	5.36
FTSE 100 [UK]	7,980.57	301.09	3.92
DAX [GER]	20,708.46	1,037.58	5.27
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	34,609.00	2,894.97	9.13
TOPIX INDEX [JPN]	2,539.40	190.07	8.09
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	20,681.78	417.29	2.06
CSI 300 [CHN]	3,735.11	48.32	1.31
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	163.9	-2.42	-1.46
SHANGHAI SE COM [CHN]	3,223.64	36.83	1.16
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	2,445.06	151.36	6.6
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	73,847.15	-379.93	-0.51
ASX 200 [AUS]	7,709.55	334.6	4.54
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	7,913.85	352.15	4.66
FBM KLCI	1,463.13	62.54	4.47
STRAITS TIMES INDEX [S'PORE]	3,573.85	180.16	5.31
WTI [US\$/BBL.]	60.46	-1.89	-3.03
BRENT [US\$/BBL.]	63.52	-1.96	-2.99
GOLD [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	3,125.50	46.1	1.5
SILVER [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	30.88	0.47	1.53
PLATINUM [US\$/T OZ]	935.93	-0.19	-0.02
COPPER [COMEX] [US CENTS/LB.]	435.5	16.25	3.88
COPPER 3MO [LME] [US\$/MT]	8,613.00	-42.5	-0.49
CORN [US CENTS/BU.]	481.75	1.25	0.26
WHEAT [US CENTS/BU.]	544.5	2.25	0.41
SOYBEAN OIL [CBOT] [US CENTS/LB.]	46.3	-0.3	-0.64
COCOA [ICE] [US\$/MT]	8,257.00	-60	-0.72
RUBBER [S'PORE] [US CENTS/KG]	165.7	7.4	4.67

As at 5pm, April 10

Top 20 Losers (By RM)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
SP500-H53	1.680	-0.700	974
NDX-HK	0.835	-0.425	1,421
NIKKEI-HM	2.370	-0.410	45
NIKKEI-HK	0.810	-0.300	770
WARISAN	1.200	-0.210	2
HSI-CWCL	0.050	-0.190	200
HSI-PWD5	0.510	-0.145	8,045
KLCI1X1	1.860	-0.140	5
FBMKLCI-HA9	0.290	-0.135	2,600
FBMKLCI-HB2	0.260	-0.125	9,832
FBMKLCI-HB3	0.245	-0.125	37,580
HSI-PWD7	0.670	-0.120	3,754
FBMKLCI-HB4	0.290	-0.115	13,189
HSI-PWD1	0.470	-0.110	4,374
SKPRES-C28	0.040	-0.110	1,000
HSI-PWFH	0.625	-0.105	115,420
WCEHB-CK	0.045	-0.105	62,300
HSI-PWD4	0.360	-0.090	52,393
HSI-PWD6	0.510	-0.090	71,460
HSI-PWFG	0.395	-0.090	530

Top 20 Losers (By %)			
STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
ITMAX-CO	0.005	-90.91	290
HSI-CWCL	0.050	-79.17	200
AEON-C29	0.005	-75.00	2,000
SKPRES-C28	0.040	-73.33	1,000
WCEHB-CK	0.045	-70.00	62,300
CYPARK-CF	0.005	-66.67	1
FBMKLCI-HA2	0.035	-66.67	21,580
HIAPTEK-CG	0.005	-66.67	3,000
WCEHB-CI	0.005	-66.67	2,600
TSH-C11	0.010	-60.00	10
FRONTKN-C37	0.030	-57.14	3,200
INARI-C3K	0.065	-56.67	6,500
HSI-PWDS	0.025	-54.55	7,948
HSI-PWDO	0.060	-52.00	2,000
DNEX-C36	0.005	-50.00	10
HSI-CWCS	0.020	-50.00	209
JIANKUN-WB	0.005	-50.00	600
KEYFIELD-CA	0.005	-50.00	566
SKPRES-WB	0.005	-50.00	10,260
SNS-CC	0.005	-50.00	10



# 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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## Agrobank to equip 18 branches with solar power by year-end

**BAGAN SERAI:** Bank Pertanian Malaysia Bhd (Agrobank) aims to use solar power at 18 branches by year-end.

Its president and CEO Datuk Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah Raja Hussin, said the bank also targeted an additional 50 branches nationwide to adopt green technology by 2025.

"We are committed to supporting the government's environmental efforts by planning to install solar energy at 138 more branches over the next five years.

"This initiative aligns with Agrobank's commitment to reduce the impact of climate change and achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050," he said at a press conference yesterday.

He made these remarks after attending the inauguration of Agrobank's first Green Branch in Bagan Serai, officiated by Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad.

Tengku Ahmad Badli Shah added that the Bagan Serai branch has been fitted with 40 solar panels at a cost of RM45,000, capable of generating 20 kWp of energy with an average of 2,400 kWh of electricity each month.

"In addition to being equipped with a solar system, this branch also features a 350-litre rainwater collection system for general use and landscaping, an energy-efficient cooling system, and LED lighting designed to reduce energy consumption.

"Through this initiative, we can reduce monthly electricity and water bills by 45%, with an estimated monthly savings of RM1,530.90 on electricity bills," he said.

He added that green technology is expected to help fight climate change and cut carbon dioxide emissions by 1.91 tonnes each month. – Bernama

## Ringgit ends three-day losing streak against US dollar

**THE** ringgit ended firmer against the US dollar yesterday, snapping a three-day losing streak following US President Donald Trump's 90-day pause in reciprocal tariffs for all countries except China.

At 6pm, the ringgit strengthened to 4.4670/4730 against the US dollar, marking a 0.58% gain from Wednesday's close of 4.4935/4990.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said the pause lifted market sentiment and paves the way for countries to negotiate with the US government and, perhaps, achieve a more favourable outcome.

"That has contributed to the rebound in risky assets in equities and currency markets," he told Bernama.

It was reported that during the 90-day pause, tariffs will revert to a baseline rate of 10% even as negotiations with the US progress.

Downplaying the risk of further escalation, Trump sharply raised tariffs on Chinese goods from 104% to 125%.

Meanwhile, the ringgit was traded higher against major currencies yesterday.

It appreciated against the Japanese yen to 3.0594/0639 from 3.0921/0964, increased against the euro to 4.9401/9467 from 4.9640/9700 and rose against the British pound to 5.7566/7644 from 5.7629/7700 on Wednesday.

The local note traded mixed against Asean currencies.

It slid versus the Thai baht to 13.0618/0866 from 12.9915/13.0153 and was weaker against the Singapore dollar at 3.3361/3411 from 3.3349/3395 previously.

Exchange Rates			
FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.5410	4.4070	4.3970
1 Australian Dollar	2.7940	2.6820	2.6660
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3800	3.2810	3.2730
1 Canadian Dollar	3.2160	3.1290	3.1170
1 Euro	4.9940	4.8320	4.8120
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.5700	2.4750	2.4590
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3800	3.2810	3.2730
1 Sterling Pound	5.8350	5.6510	5.6310
1 Swiss Franc	5.3610	5.1330	5.1180
100 UAE Dirham	125.0800	118.6200	118.4200
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.8150	3.5530	3.5330
100 Chinese Renminbi	62.2000	59.5900	59.5900
100 Danish Krone	68.5600	63.1000	62.900
100 Hongkong Dollar	59.1400	56.2100	56.0100
100 Indian Rupee	5.3300	5.0000	4.8000
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0279	0.0252	0.0202
100 Japanese Yen	3.0980	2.9980	2.9880
100 New Taiwan Dollar	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	43.2800	39.7700	39.5700
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.6500	1.5400	1.3400
100 Philippine Peso	8.0500	7.5800	7.3800
100 Qatar Riyal	125.9700	119.5800	119.3800
100 Saudi Riyal	122.3100	116.1100	115.9100
100 South Africa Rand	24.3000	21.9400	21.7400
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.5500	1.4200	1.2200
100 Swedish Krona	47.0200	42.8000	42.6000
100 Thai Baht	13.8600	12.2800	11.8800

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

## Market Strategy

### Trump's tariffs rattle markets



Source: Bloomberg, RHB

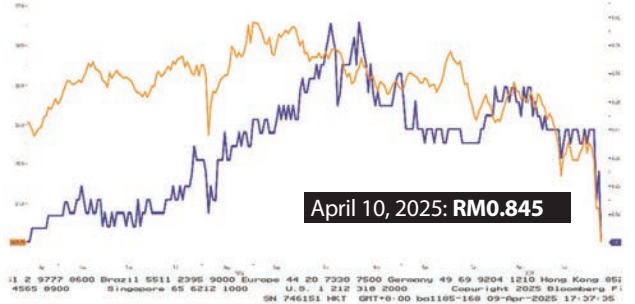
**THE** chaotic start to US President Donald Trump's second coming has left equity markets reeling. Robust domestic growth and liquidity conditions are at risk from poorly communicated US policy revolving around on/off tariff threats and its impact on global macroeconomic, inflation and US monetary policy direction that has cratered investor sentiment.

RHB Economics has turned more cautious on the global macroeconomic outlook on the back of elevated protectionist risks, dwindling risk appetite and potential downside to global economic growth. A global economic recession is not the RHB base case scenario, but US stagflation risks are now more elevated and 2025 US GDP growth is cut to 1.5% (from 2%). Expect a weaker DXY, with three potential US Federal Funds Rate (FFR) cuts in 2025. China's GDP growth forecast is also slashed to 4.2% (from 4.8%) following the US tariff broadside and headwinds from a persistently weak property sector.

In light of rising external uncertainties and growing challenges to global economic growth, we have accordingly revised our GDP forecast for Malaysia downwards to 4.5% for 2025, from the earlier projection of 5%. While we acknowledge that Malaysia's strategic growth initiatives are expected to support and stimulate investment flows over the medium term, we maintain a cautious outlook given the potential negative spillover effects stemming from intensifying global trade tensions. – RHB Research, April 10

## KIP REIT

### Buy. Target price: RM1.15



Source: Bloomberg

**KIP REIT** has proposed to acquire four retail assets for a total consideration of RM118 million. In tandem, the trust has also announced a private placement of up to 160 million new units to raise proceeds of up to RM132 million. The funds will be used to partially finance the acquisitions and undertake asset enhancement initiatives (AEIs) at KIPMall Tampoi. While the proposed acquisitions align with the REIT's long-term strategy to scale up its operations and grow its total assets under management (AUM) to RM2 billion within the next three years, we remain neutral due to near-term earnings dilution stemming from the enlarged unit base post-placement.

To partially fund the proposed acquisitions and planned AEIs at KIPMall Tampoi, KIP REIT intends to undertake a private placement to raise gross proceeds of up to RM132 million via a book-building exercise. Based on an illustrative issue price of 82.5 sen per unit, the placement will involve the issuance of up to 160 million new units, representing approximately 20% of the existing fund size of 798.6 million units. Upon completion, the enlarged fund size will increase to 958.6 million units.

The AEIs at KIPMall Tampoi are targeted at strengthening the mall's market position through improvements in infrastructure, enhancement of F&B offerings, incorporation of digital solutions, and sustainability-focused upgrades.

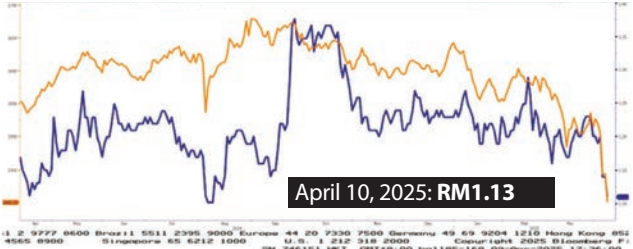
Both the acquisition and placement proposals are subject to the approval of non-interested unitholders at an extraordinary general meeting to be convened. Completion is expected by Q1'26 (or Q3'26).

Assuming an NPI margin of 85%, the assets are projected to deliver a net yield of 7.1%, based on gross rental income of RM9.8 million and an acquisition cost of RM118 million.

BUY with RM1.15 TP. – TA Research, April 10

## Duopharma Biotech Bhd

### Buy. Target price: RM1.62



Source: Bloomberg

**DUOPHARMA** has received and accepted a letter of offer from Pharamianga to supply additional 3 pharmaceutical and/or non-pharmaceutical products, with a total estimated value to RM16.6 million, to the offices and facilities operated and controlled by the government of Malaysia. The additional contracts will remain in effect until Dec 31, 2026, or until another date is specified by the government of Malaysia, in accordance with the terms outlined in the contracts previously awarded in April and October 2024.

With this additional contract win, Duopharma's Approved Products Purchase List (APPL) contract stood at 99 products, with a total estimated value of RM682.3 million until Dec 31, 2026.

We are not surprised by Duopharma's latest APPL contract win, as we believe it is a natural outcome of the recent expansion in Pharamianga's concession agreement with the government, which increased the number of approved SKUs to approximately 1,200 from the previous 815. This will expand Duopharma's APPL to 99 SKUs (vs. 50 SKUs under the old APPL contract), which bodes well for the group. Additionally, Duopharma would benefit from stronger ringgit as the new APPL contract term is based on an exchange rate of RM4.70/USD (vs. RM4.20 in 2017).

All in all, we remain optimistic about the group's prospects. We expect earnings to increase by 41.2% to RM88.4 million, driven by: i) higher demand, ii) lower Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) costs and iii) cost efficiencies.

Duopharma Biotech Bhd is primarily involved in the manufacturing, distribution, import, and export of pharmaceutical products and medicines. The company provides a broad range of products and services catering to the chemicals, healthcare, and agricultural sectors.

BUY with RM1.62 TP. – TA Research, April 10



**W**HEN it comes to cherry blossom viewing, Japan and South Korea often come to mind first. However, Taiwan's cherry blossom season is equally breathtaking, showcasing a diverse array of cherry blossom species and scenic spots for families and friends to enjoy together.

Visitors can immerse themselves in the mesmerising sea of pink blossoms, experiencing the beauty of spring in a relaxed and enchanting atmosphere.

Taiwan's cherry blossom scenery is not only breathtaking but also set within a welcoming environment for Muslim travellers, allowing them to explore spring's beauty with ease. Whether in the north, central or southern regions, Taiwan's cherry blossom season is enchanting, offering a romantic springtime ambience.

Below are three of Taiwan's top cherry blossom hotspots, promising a picturesque and unforgettable floral experience.

#### Taipei: Romantic cherry blossom tunnel in city

Lohas Park, Neihu is Taipei's most magical nighttime cherry blossom walkway.

For those seeking an effortless cherry blossom experience within Taipei city, Lohas Park in Neihu is the choice. The park features various cherry blossom species, including Taiwan cherry, Yoshino cherry and double-flowered cherry trees, which bloom beautifully along the Neigouxi river trail, adding a romantic charm to the urban landscape.

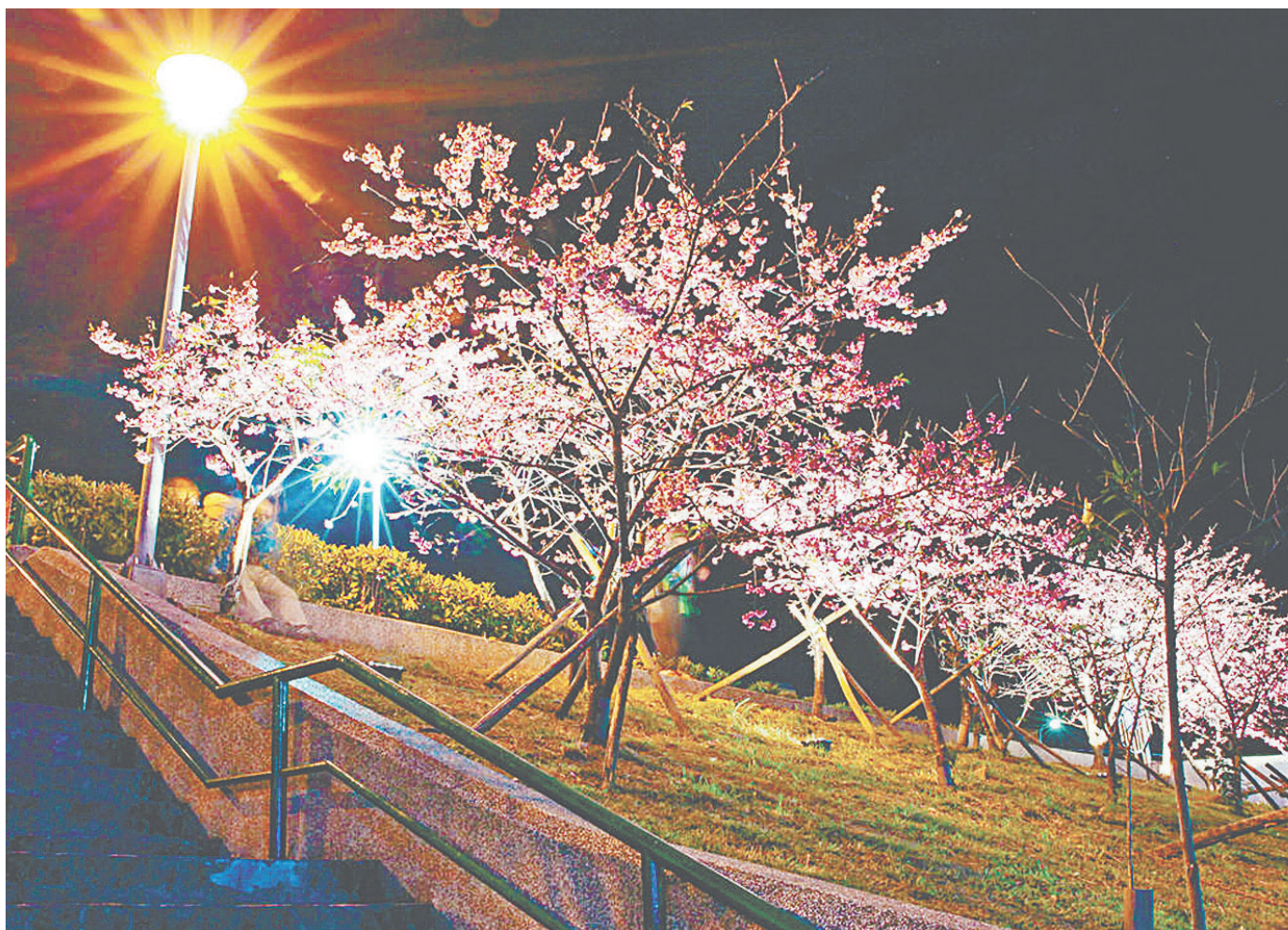
Highlights:

- ➡ Daytime viewing: Delicate cherry blossoms flutter in the wind, painting a dreamy picture along the riverbank – ideal for photography and social media posts.
- ➡ Illuminated night blossoms: The cherry blossom tunnel is softly lit in the evening, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of Japan's cherry blossom festivals.
- ➡ City's most accessible cherry blossom trail: Enjoy a leisurely stroll surrounded by falling petals without the need for long-distance travel.

#### Taichung: Taiwan's largest cherry blossom festival

The Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village is a Japan-certified cherry blossom destination.

The cherry blossom festival there is one of Taiwan's most iconic spring events, attracting numerous visitors each year. The park



Taiwan's cherry blossom season offers a romantic springtime ambience.

## Taiwan in pink

### ➡ Best spots to see cherry blossoms in full glory

features over 5,000 cherry trees, including Yoshino cherry, double-flowered cherry and Taiwan cherry, creating a mesmerising spectacle.

Highlights:

- ➡ Pink cherry blossom tunnel: Stroll through breathtaking cherry blossom-lined walkways, where every corner is a picturesque moment.
- ➡ Romantic night blossoms: The illuminated cherry blossoms at night create a dreamy and surreal landscape.
- ➡ Traditional Japanese cultural experience: Visitors can rent kimono and participate in a Japanese tea ceremony, enhancing the Kyoto-like ambience.
- ➡ Spring-exclusive market: A vibrant marketplace featuring a fusion of Taiwanese indigenous

culture and Japanese flavours, adding a unique touch to the cherry blossom festivities.

#### Tainan: Unique cherry blossom, railway journey

The Alishan National Forest Recreation Area offers a double dose of romance with cherry blossoms and a vintage train ride.

Alishan is not only famous for its breathtaking sea of clouds and sunrise views but is also a premier cherry blossom viewing destination. With over 40 species of cherry trees blooming in the area, the entire mountain transforms into a fairytale-like pink paradise every spring.

Highlights:

- ➡ Alishan Forest Railway: Take a nostalgic ride on the vintage railway, passing through cherry



Taiwan offers stunning cherry blossom landscapes. – PICS FROM DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM, TAIPEI

blossom tunnels for an unforgettable scenic journey.

- ➡ King of Sakura: A majestic Yoshino cherry tree over a century old, creating an awe-inspiring bloom each year.
- ➡ Alishan Police Station: One of only two police stations in Taiwan

where cherry blossoms bloom, making it a must-visit Instagram hotspot.

- ➡ Zhaoping Railway Station Cherry Blossom Trail: A serene railway walkway lined with cherry blossoms, offering a calming and picturesque experience.



The Alishan Forest Railway passes through cherry blossom tunnels. – KLOOKPIC



The cherry blossom festival at the Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village is one of Taiwan's most iconic spring events, attracting numerous visitors each year. – PIC FROM FORMOSAN ABORIGINAL CULTURE VILLAGE





SCAN ME

# Beijing's Chaoyang Garden Festival

## Urban vibrancy meets floral splendour

A floral symphony is unfolding across Chaoyang District in Beijing, China, transforming this bustling hub into a vast garden, with every street corner adorned with floral displays.

To celebrate this floral splendour, the district government has established a Garden City Demonstration Zone and launched the Chaoyang Garden Festival.

During this grand festival, parks across the district showcase their unique floral displays in different months, offering visitors a visual and spiritual feast.

From the "Field of Flowers" season at the Olympic Green to the tulip festival at Chaoyang Park, from the crabapple blossom viewing season of

the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park to the lotus festival at Honglingjin Park – throughout the year, flowers bloom in succession. This fusion of urban vibrancy and natural beauty creates an atmosphere where residents and visitors can enjoy the harmony of nature and culture as well as the comfort of a refined lifestyle.

Themed "Beautiful Chaoyang: A Garden City", this year's Garden Festival features the brand Yi Lu Xiang Yang (literally growing toward the sun), featuring a stylised Chinese character "flower" in its logo, symbolising the district's growth toward sunlight.

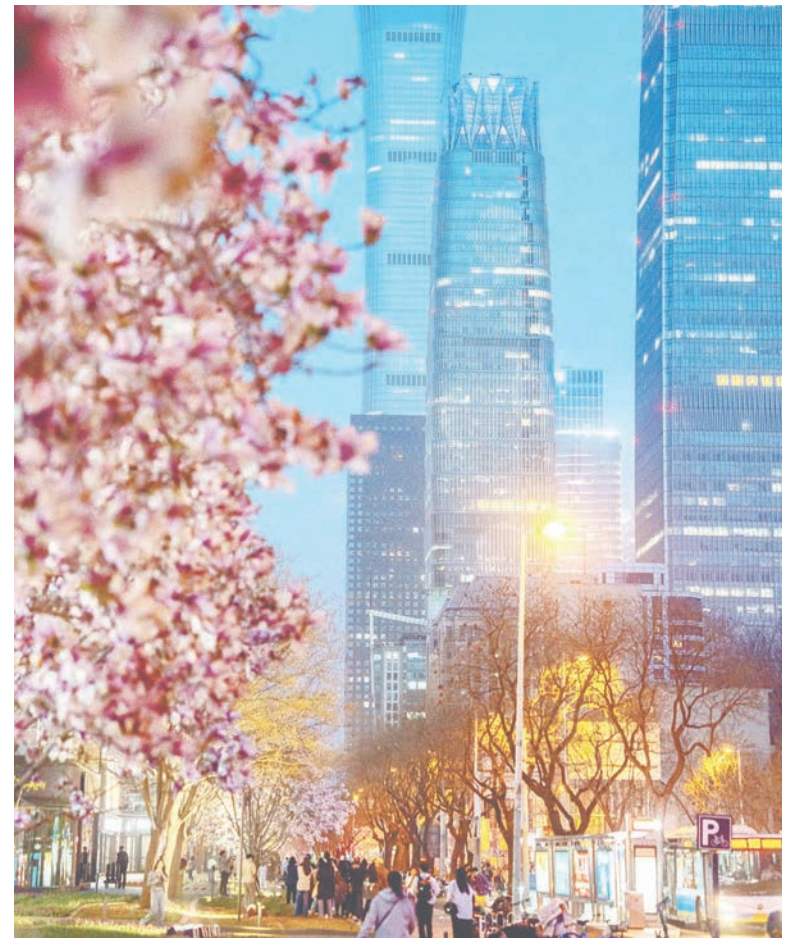
In recent years, Chaoyang has been working to create an eco-friendly living quarter that blends parks, commerce, technology and culture, enhancing residents' quality of life. By the end of 2024, the district had opened 68 boundary-free parks, renovated 12 age-inclusive parks and built 310km of greenways, laying the

foundation for its garden city vision.

This year, Chaoyang plans to further expand its parks, connect greenways, upgrade age-inclusive parks and implement the "One Park, One Specialty Flower" and garden-esque block initiatives, striving to create a garden city that is surrounded by forests, dotted with parks, with blended scenes and colourful blossoms.

Covering an area of 470.8 sq km, Chaoyang is a vital window to Beijing's international exchanges. It is home to nearly all foreign embassies in China, as well as 90% of foreign media outlets, 80% of international organisations and chambers of commerce, 70% of multinational corporations' regional headquarters stationed in Beijing, and hosts over 50% of the city's international conferences. Many expatriates from around the world live and work here.

As flowers bloom across Chaoyang, explore the district with all its urban vibrancy and natural beauty.



Chaoyang is a vital window to Beijing's international exchanges.



Authorities are striving to create a garden city.



During the festival, parks will showcase their unique floral displays. – PICS FROM FACEBOOK @AMAZING CHAOYANG

## 'Vibe'-certifying platform highlights Penang as inaugural destination



The first BeLocal initiative launches in Penang. – PEXELSPIC

**BELOCAL** Global, the world's first authority for certifying real vibes in key cities has launched, spotlighting Penang as its inaugural destination.

BeLocal aims to redefine how people experience and connect with destinations in key cities around the world by capturing the authentic vibes of local hotspots through bite-sized content, The Vibe Awards and influential personalities.

BeLocal goes beyond traditional city guides to spotlight the energy, atmosphere and people that shape a destination's identity and vibe. It is a media and talent-driven platform that features and certifies the best local destinations and experiences.

Through video content and collaborations with key personalities, it aims to provide a trusted standard for recognising local standout destinations and vibe-centric influential personalities who define a city's vibe.

### Bite-sized content

BeLocal delivers on-point and engaging videos that capture the essence of a destination in just 15 seconds – enough time for someone to feel the vibe and decide if it belongs on their must-visit list. This approach ensures quick, impactful storytelling that resonates with today's fast-paced audience.

### The Vibe Awards

Unlike platforms that focus solely on food or travel, BeLocal captures the essence of a destination, comprising its people, culture and atmosphere. The Vibe Awards will certify the most exceptional destinations, creating a "Michelin-style" recognition system for vibes and experiences. Awarded destinations are setting a new global benchmark for what makes a destination truly special within their

respective categories.

### Spotlighting local talent, elevating influential personalities

BeLocal is more than a media platform, it wants to be a talent management powerhouse. It wants to identify and elevate personalities such as chefs, artists, musicians and content creators, transforming them into influential personalities. Through media collaborations, brand partnerships and public recognition, it will provide talents with visibility, career growth and commercial opportunities.

The first BeLocal initiative launches in Penang. The next phase will see expansion to cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Singapore and beyond, with hopes to make The Vibe Awards the ultimate standard for discovering authentic vibes and experiences worldwide.





# Charming stays

BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

## Curated glimpse into Malaysia's latest hotels

**M**ALAYSIA'S hospitality scene continues to evolve with the emergence of upscale and thoughtfully curated stays that combine cultural nuance and contemporary comforts. A new wave of hotel openings offers travellers tailored experiences grounded in design and service. Here is a closer look at three new properties redefining hospitality in Malaysia.

### The Millen Penang, Autograph Collection

Positioned on Penang's storied Millionaire's Row, The Millen Penang marks the debut of Marriott's Autograph Collection in the state. This 146-room hotel stands out for its deliberate blend of colonial charm and modern refinement. Set against the historical backdrop of Northam Road, the property breathes new life into the 19th-century neighbourhood with its moody interiors, contemporary luxuries and locally inspired details.

Each guestroom is a study in design and comfort, offering uninterrupted views of the Andaman Sea and the Penang skyline. Floor-to-ceiling windows, dual vanity marble

bathrooms and bathtubs overlooking the ocean add to the ambience. The property champions sustainability through organic amenities with a focus on locally crafted elements.

Dining is an immersive affair. Lili pays tribute to Penang's diverse culinary heritage, reinterpreting Malaysian flavours with a modern, conscious approach. The Good Society draws from the British tea culture, serving Devonshire tea in an elegant setting, while The Millen Espresso offers locally roasted blends and fresh pastries.

For events, Upperton Hall presents a striking venue with one of Penang's longest LED screens, while smaller meetings can be held in light-filled boardrooms fitted with Bose systems. Wellness and leisure facilities include a 24-hour gym and a saltwater infinity pool overlooking the Straits of Malacca. Coming soon are Nut&Meg Wellness Spa, highlighting treatments with local ingredients such as nutmeg, and Blacklinen Restaurant, focused on charcoal-grilled meats and seafood. Located near key attractions including Gurney Drive and George

Town's Unesco heritage zone, The Millen Penang offers a rich, central base for leisure and business travellers.

### M Social Resort Penang

Millennium Hotels and Resorts brings its urban-lifestyle brand to Penang's northern coastline with M Social Resort Penang. Located in Tanjung Bungah, this reimagined property (formerly the Copthorne Orchid Hotel) offers 318 rooms in two wings, fusing Peranakan charm with playful modernity.

Drawing from Penang's colourful streetscapes, the hotel features a vivid palette of rose pinks, sea greens and blues. Its architectural inspiration from Peranakan shophouses is evident in structure and detailing – geometric tiles and floral motifs evoke the multicultural blend of the region. The Sunset Bay Wing offers sea-facing rooms suited for solo travellers and couples, while the soon-to-open Azure Wing caters to families and groups with larger room options and direct beachfront views. All rooms come equipped with smart amenities, including in-room voice

assistants, 55-inch smart TVs and high-speed Wi-Fi.

Dining at M Social centres around Beast and Butterflies, a concept restaurant marrying local Peranakan flavours with global cuisine, emphasising fresh, locally sourced ingredients. For light bites and cocktails, Breezy Bites serves up poolside refreshments, while The Social Hub offers a quieter space for afternoon tea and evening drinks.

Events are well catered for with a Grand Ballroom, designed to accommodate corporate functions and private celebrations. The location provides convenient access to George Town's cultural sites, upscale shopping at Gurney Plaza, and Penang's famed street art installations.

### Park Hyatt Kuala Lumpur

Set to open in June 2025, Park Hyatt Kuala Lumpur is already generating buzz as one of the capital's most exclusive new addresses. Located at the pinnacle of Merdeka 118, the tallest building in Asia Pacific, the hotel promises a luxurious sanctuary high above the city.

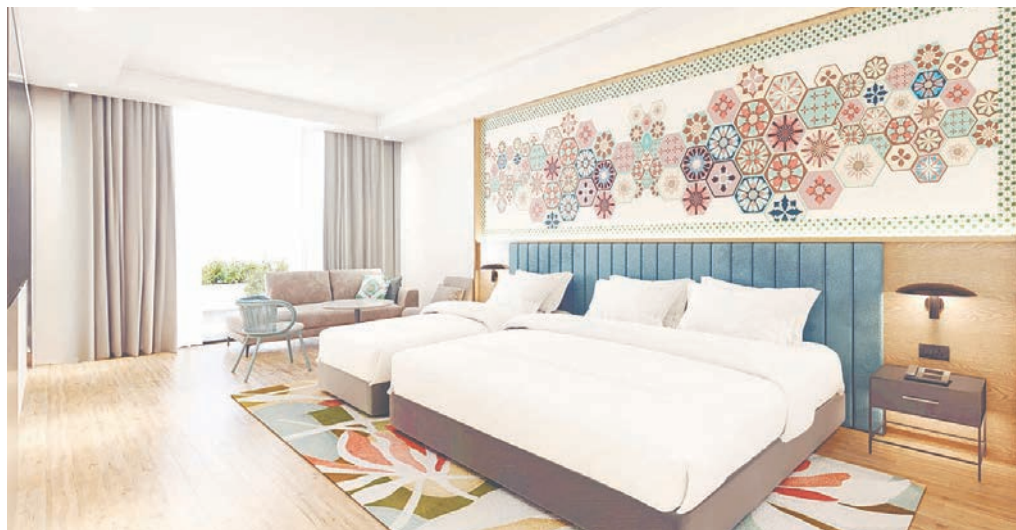
The 252 guestrooms and suites, designed by London's G.A Group, draw heavily from Malaysia's artisanal traditions. Expect elegant,

understated interiors with nods to *batik*, woodwork and local crafts. Floor-to-ceiling windows offer panoramic views across Kuala Lumpur, while a wellness centre on the 99th floor invites guests to escape into a sky-high cocoon of fitness and spa treatments.

Park Hyatt's signature culinary ethos will debut in Malaysia with a suite of dining venues on the 75th floor. These include an all-day restaurant, dedicated grill and speciality bar, all showcasing elevated interpretations of Malaysian cuisine using sustainably sourced ingredients. The dining experience is designed to reflect Malaysia's rich food heritage while offering a refined, globally minded perspective.

Opening offers include breakfast for two, complimentary parking, and Hyatt loyalty points, with special packages such as The Suite Escape that offers bespoke experiences including guided cultural tours and artisanal pastry tastings.

Malaysia's hotel scene is undergoing a striking evolution. These stays underscore a growing trend – hospitality in Malaysia is becoming not only about where you stay but how you connect with the place.



M Social Resort, Penang.



Park Hyatt, Kuala Lumpur.



# Tourism of **tunes**

## » Europe's must-visit spots for music fans

**M**ANY European cities are hotspots for music lovers, with a variety of experiences to discover and enjoy. Whether it is huge concerts, vibrant festivals or exceptional nightlife, some destinations stand out when it comes to making music the star of the show.

To identify these must-visit cities, the travel booking platform Omio carried out a detailed examination of 50 major European cities according to their musical offerings, event prices and their festive vibrancy. Unsurprisingly, Paris remains a choice destination for attending concerts by the world's biggest stars, with an average ticket price of €122 (RM606).

But Nantes takes first place in France for the richness of its music scene. Between its quality operas, classical concerts and numerous

festivals, the city on the Loire River shines with the diversity and accessibility of its musical events. Lyon also stands out with much more affordable prices, at around €63 per ticket for pop or rock concerts, making the city an economical alternative to Paris.

France is also one of the most attractive European destinations for musicals and operas without breaking the bank. For around €60, you can enjoy an internationally renowned show, well below the prices charged in London, where tickets for musicals in the famous West End cost an average of €130.

For night owls, Ibiza remains the undisputed capital of European clubbing. Every summer, the island welcomes the world's top DJs, such as David Guetta and Martin Garrix, rocking its legendary clubs Ushuaia and Hi. In Manchester, it is the underground and authentic atmosphere of clubs such as The Warehouse Project that attracts electronic music fans.

The Omio study also revealed some hidden gems, such as



Music fans can find a dizzying variety of shows and events to enjoy in Europe.



France is one of the most attractive European destinations for musicals and operas. – **PICS FROM PEXELS**



Ibiza remains the top destination for electronic dance music fans.

Budapest, which is ideal for those who want to experience major musicals without breaking the bank (around €33 per ticket). Naples, on the other hand, offers the most affordable concerts in Europe at only €43 on average, a real bargain compared to Paris prices.

Finally, opera, often perceived as a luxury event, is becoming accessible in cities such as

Marseille (€45) or even Lisbon and Aarhus, with performances costing less than €30.

In the face of the widespread increase in concert ticket prices (+74% since 2011 according to Pollstar), these destinations offer a great opportunity to enjoy musical experiences of all kinds, whether you are a fan of modern pop, classical music or electro nights. – **ETX Studio**

**ONE** lucky visitor will soon become the first ever to sleep overnight at Britain's National Gallery, after the 200-year-old museum launched a competition on Monday to mark the reopening of a wing housing celebrated European paintings.

When the Sainsbury Wing reopens after a two-year refurbishment on May 10, the overnight guest, to be picked at random from a list of newsletter subscribers, will wake up to breakfast in bed and the chance to explore the gallery before the crowds arrive.

The renovated wing will see some of earliest paintings in the collection rehoused, a chapel-like room for Piero della Francesca's 15th-century *Baptism of Christ* and a new frame for Jacopo di Cione's 14th-century *San Pier Maggiore Altarpiece*, while Paolo Uccello's *Battle Of San Romano* will be back after a three-year restoration process.

## Night at museum

Western European paintings from the 13th to 20th centuries will be "completely redisplayed", the museum said, with dedicated rooms for works by artists including Claude Monet, Titian, Rembrandt and Thomas Gainsborough.

The guest will spend the night in a bed near the paintings and take a private late-night tour with a gallery curator before being allowed to roam about the following morning.

The gallery said the winner would be able to "see over 1,000 works of art, which trace the development of painting in the Western European tradition – from iconic masterpieces to paintings which have never previously been seen in the National Gallery".

"The carefully curated rehang will enable them to not only see their

favourites returned to the walls, but also those paintings in the context of history," it said, calling the prize a chance to "experience the wonder of art".

The Sainsbury Wing opens to the public on May 10, and the gallery's competition is open until April 28.

Though the National Gallery said this would be its first official sleepover, it has hosted late-night events before.

On Jan 17, it announced it was opening through the night to give art lovers a final chance to see its blockbuster Vincent van Gogh exhibition, following a similar experiment in 2012 for a Leonardo da Vinci display.

The National Gallery, which is free to enter, was founded in 1824 and has a collection of more than 2,300 paintings. – **AFP**



Founded in 1824, Britain's National Gallery has a collection of more than 2,300 paintings. – **AFPPIC**



# Turn on, tune in, zone out

» What to watch on streaming platforms this weekend

**O**N the lookout for something to watch this weekend? We have got you covered, whether it is an immersive visit to a hospital being put to the test in Miami, a journey into the polite society of 1880s Madrid, a pact with the devil, a harrowing odyssey or an anime adaptation of a video game.

## » *Pulse* (Netflix)

If you were transfixed by *The Pitt* with its ultra-realistic atmosphere and frazzled doctors, get ready to dive right back in with *Pulse*, Netflix's new medical procedural. It follows Dr Danielle Simms (Willia Fitzgerald), a brilliant emergency medicine resident, back in a hospital that was not really expecting her. But why? Let's just say she called out a big honcho for inappropriate behavior. Since then, the atmosphere has been icy.

Between critical cases, judgmental glances and radio silence in the corridors, *Pulse* is about both the patients and the unspoken tensions among the staff. Justina Machado plays a department head who has no time for all the emotional drama, while Colin Woodell plays a complex troublemaker.

As taut as a tourniquet, this medical drama raises

questions about the place of whistle-blowers in a system under pressure.

## » *The Lady's Companion* (Netflix)

Compared to *Bridgerton*, this new Spanish costume drama uses fun modern music and a direct narration style to give the period piece a youthful, contemporary feel. Centering around a chaperone hired to find husbands for wealthy young women of marriageable age and her charges, there is the requisite scandal as well as humour.

Fans of the first season have been already calling for a second and creator Gema R. Neir and star Isa Montalban have suggested there is one in the works.

## » *The Bondsman* (Prime Video)

Kevin Bacon's character is back from the dead – in *The Bondsman*, he plays Hub Halloran, a bounty hunter resurrected by the devil to track down hellish creatures that have escaped to Earth. *The Bondsman* is a supernatural series that is totally uninhibited, an explosive mix of modern western, old-school horror and dark humour.

A series for those who like their heroes with a kooky twist and stories of satanic pacts set



*Devil May Cry* is an adaptation of a video game franchise. – NETFLIXPIC

to guitar music. And do not forget that Bacon also contributed to the country soundtrack.

## » *Dying for Sex* (Disney+)

Molly (Michelle Williams) has been diagnosed with incurable cancer. So she leaves her husband and decides to really live it up. And for her, that means exploring herself. Unfiltered, uncensored, with disarming energy, *Dying for Sex* is an ode to freedom, friendship and self-recovery.

Adapted from an acclaimed podcast, it is raw, funny and moving – a genuine emotional

rollercoaster ride. A poignant and ultra-vivid feminist drama.

## » *Devil May Cry* (Netflix)

This animated Netflix series is based on the iconic video game franchise by Capcom. It follows Dante, a stylish and wisecracking demon hunter with a mysterious past, as he battles supernatural threats across a dark, gothic world.

Blending fast-paced action, dark fantasy and razor-sharp humour, the series explores Dante's origins and his role in the eternal conflict between demons and humanity. – ETX Studio



Bacon plays a resurrected bounty hunter. – IMDBPIC



*The Lady's Companion* features scandal and humour. – PIC FROM FACEBOOK @NETFLIXDIARIES

## Cruise to showcase last *Mission: Impossible* at Cannes

**TOM CRUISE** is set to return to the Cannes Film Festival to present the latest and last episode of his *Mission: Impossible* series, joining Robert De Niro and French actress Juliette Binoche among the confirmed A-list attendees.

Cruise's presence, three years after he lit up the French Riviera while promoting *Top Gun: Maverick*, marks a major coup for festival organisers.

*Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* is one of the most hotly awaited blockbusters of the year and is set for release in cinemas worldwide from May 17.

"After nearly three decades of thrills, stunts and twists, *Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* promises to deliver an unforgettable cinematic experience," the festival said in a statement.

On Monday, it announced De Niro, star of *Taxi Driver* and *Godfather Part II*, would be given an honorary Palme d'Or at the opening ceremony of the world's premier film festival on May 13.

Cannes president Iris Knobloch and long-time director Thierry Fremaux unveiled the selection of in-competition films and other major premieres at a press conference in Paris yesterday.

The industry is buzzing with speculation about who will attend one month before the red carpet rolls out on the seafont

Croisette in Cannes.

Cinemas are desperate for some stardust and sparkling new films after a series of expensive Hollywood flops this year.

These include Disney's live-action *Snow White*, superhero sequel *Captain America: Brave New World* and bizarre sci-fi movie *Mickey 17*.

The much-hyped *A Minecraft Movie*, released last week, was panned by critics but might help to lift the gloom after a record-breaking opening weekend in the US.

The head of the Cannes jury this year is French screen legend Juliette Binoche, who will hand out the famed Palme d'Or for best film.

Around 20 movies are set to compete in the top category, looking to emulate the success of last year's winner *Anora* by Sean Baker.

Terrence Malick, who won the Palme d'Or for *The Tree of Life* 14 years ago, has been tipped to return with a long-awaited project inspired by biblical stories.

Other festival veterans could also return, such as Jim Jarmusch (*Broken Flowers*, *Dead Man*), whose latest film *Father, Mother, Sister, Brother*, stars Cate Blanchett and Adam Driver.

Wes Anderson, 55, has also assembled

yet another star-studded cast for his latest film *The Phoenix Scheme*, featuring Benicio Del Toro, Tom Hanks and Scarlett Johansson.

Johansson, 40, could bring a breath of fresh air to the festival by presenting her directorial debut *Eleanor the Great*.

Another actress-turned-director, Kristen Stewart, 34, has also recently completed her first feature film.

Experts have also suggested the new master of American horror 38-year-old Ari Aster, known for his chilling films *Hereditary* and *Midsommar*, could make his Cannes debut with a movie starring Joaquin Phoenix and Emma Stone.

Three French female directors, Julia Ducournau (2021 Palme d'Or winner for *Titane*), Rebecca Zlotowski (*Other People's Children*, *An Easy Girl*) and Alice Winocour, who has made a film about Paris Fashion Week starring Angelina Jolie, have also been named as contenders.

Exiled Russian filmmakers such as Kirill Serebrennikov, Andrey Zvyagintsev and rising talent Kantemir Balagov could also feature.

The festival has yet to announce its opening film on May 13 or the full composition of the jury.

*Mission: Impossible* will screen on the second day, May 14. – AFP



*Mission: Impossible*, starring Cruise, will screen on the second day of the Cannes Film Festival. – AFPPIC





Hamasaki is Japan's best-selling solo artiste.

## J-pop star celebrates 27th anniversary with new song

**JAPANESE** pop star Ayumi Hamasaki is celebrating her 27th anniversary in music with the release of her latest single *Mimosa*.

Acting as the theme song for the TV drama *Second to Last Love*, the single marks Hamasaki's first self-written drama soundtrack in 25 years.

Its release also continues a collaboration between the singer and the series, with Hamasaki having provided theme songs for all three seasons – *How Beautiful You Are* for season one, *Hello New Me* for season two and now, *Mimosa* for the final season.

"I am truly honoured to have had the opportunity to provide the theme song once again, following *How Beautiful You Are* and *Hello New Me*. Through the years, there are things that change and things that remain the same – this song reflects both sides of life that everyone

experiences.

"I hope this track can resonate with those who have followed the drama from the beginning, as well as those who are hearing it for the first time," said Hamasaki about the song.

Composed by Kunio Tago, who has previously collaborated with Hamasaki, *Mimosa* is a tune of encouragement, supporting listeners in life's journey.

In addition to the single, Hamasaki will kick off her Asia tour Ayumi Hamasaki Asia Tour 2025 I Am Ayu – Epi.II –.

Renowned for her powerful vocals and innovative music, Hamasaki has been a trailblazer since her debut in 1998, holding the title of the best-selling solo artiste in Japan.

To date, she has sold over 50 million albums in Japan and released the most number-one hits by a female artiste.

## Devin Kennedy drops soulful single

**SINGER-SONGWRITER**, producer and multi-instrumentalist Devin Kennedy has kicked off 2025 with a brand new, soul-infused single *Everywhere All the Time*.

The song marks his first solo release of the year, showcasing his signature blend of pop, alternative and R&B.

"*Everywhere All the Time* delves into those universal moments of mental escapism. It is about the feeling of being physically present but mentally adrift, yearning for a person or place that feels just out of reach.

"We have all experienced that disconnect, that sense of leaving pieces of ourselves behind while trying to keep pace with life's relentless rhythm," Kennedy said.

The new song comes after his collaboration with fellow musician Johnny Stimson on the song *New Friends*, which garnered not only significant traction across Southeast Asia but also positioned Kennedy as a rising voice in alternative pop.

Both songs are likely a prelude for the next year being as big as 2024 was for the musician, which was highlighted by the release of his



Kennedy's music has been likened to having a John Mayer vibe.

– PIC BY KORY LUKE

album *In My Imagination*. The album's singles such as *Falling For You* and *In My Imagination* enjoyed widespread radio play throughout Southeast Asia last year.

*Everywhere All the Time* can be sampled on all major streaming platforms.

# Jay Park to perform in KL this June

➤ This marks singer's first world tour in six years

**JAY** Park is set to make his return to Kuala Lumpur with his world tour 2025 Jay Park World Tour Serenades & Body Rolls, marking his first world tour in six years.

The multi-talented artiste, entrepreneur and founder of AOMG, HIGHR Music, Won Soju and More Vision will bring his signature blend of R&B, hip-hop and performances to fans at Zepp KL on June 14.

The tour blends the heartfelt allure of sweet serenades with the

captivating rhythm of body rolls, offering fans a diverse and unforgettable musical experience.

With his vast performance experience, Park has headlined some of the biggest domestic and international festivals.

His exceptional showmanship elevates his performances, leaving audiences craving more. Known for his high energy, dynamic stage presence and chart-topping hits, Park will deliver a setlist packed

with fan favourites, new releases and surprises for the audience.

Park has continued to dominate the global music scene, releasing critically acclaimed albums, collaborating with international artistes and solidifying his status as a trailblazer in the industry.

For the concert, Live Nation members can secure tickets during the exclusive Live Nation pre-sale on April 15, from 11am. Tickets to the public will be available on April 16, from 11am onwards.



Park is one of the most influential artistes in hip-hop and pop music.







PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: KB-38-1272-12/2024	
Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965 Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 7363/2021 (bertarikh : 19/04/2021) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah GRN 32191, Lain-lain 31 Seksyen 35, Mukim Bandar Kulim, Daerah Kulim, Kedah Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Aturan 83 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012	
ANTARA <b>PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat : 197301001433)</b>	... PLAINTIF
DAN	
SUBBULETCHUMI A/P SUBRAMANIAM (No. Kad Pengenalan: 771228025366)	... DEFENDAN
Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di SUNGAI PETANI mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 11 September 2024 dan 26 Mac 2025, adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa Timbalan Pendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan	
AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM Pada Hari Selasa, 27 Mei 2025, Pada Jam 9:00 pagi, SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PANGSAR DARUL MAKMUR	
NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua tanqangan, bebanan serta mengenai pasti dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.	
Sila layari <a href="https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb">https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb</a>	
<b>BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:</b> No. Hakmilik : GRN 32191 No. lot : Lain-lain 31 Seksyen 35 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri : Bandar Kulim / Kulim / Kedah Pegangan : Hakmilik Kekal No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan : Keluasan Tanah : 7460.0000000000 kaki persegi Pemilik Berdaftar : SUBBULETCHUMI A/P SUBRAMANIAM Syarat Nyata : (i) Tiada boleh diikat atau bina apa2 bangunan diatas tanah yang berkenaan dengan tempat kediaman yang diluluskan oleh Majlis Bandararan Kulim (ii) Tiada boleh ditanam atau dibenar tumbuh diatas tanah ini apa2 pokok getah (iii) Hendaklah tuan tanah bina simpanan2 jalan mengikut perincisan Jabatan Kerja Raya dan pelihara jalan2 itu sepuas hati Jabatan Kerja Raya (iv) Ditegah pindah milik, sewa atau pajak tanah melainkan syarat (iii) di atas telah disempurnakan	
<b>Sekatan Kepentingan</b> <b>Bebanan / Lain-Lain</b> : Tidak : Digadaiakan kepada Public Islamic Bank Berhad melalui Gadaian Perserahan No. 7363/2021 yang didaftarkan pada 19-04-2021	
<b>Kawasan Rizab</b> <b>Kaveat</b> :	
<b>LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH :</b> Hartanah tersebut adalah detached house plot yang beralamat pos di Lain-Lain 31. Seksyen 35, Lorong Sekolah Convent, 09000, Kulim, Kedah. <b>HARGA RIZAB :</b> Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 330,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: TIGA RATUS TIGA PULUH RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belan hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-	
<b>Firma Guaman :</b> WONG & LOH <b>Alamat :</b> NO. 44, CANTONMENT ROAD, 10350, PG, MY <b>No. Telefon :</b> 04-2286989 <b>No. Fax :</b> 04-2287989 <b>No. Rujukan :</b> GT/LYK/PH/VN/PIBB/L/2024/031	

PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: PA-38-191-02/2025	
Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965 Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 0799SC202303708 ( bertarikh : 14/07/2023) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah Hakmilik Strata No. Hakmilik Pejabat Negeri 2316/M2/14/276, Lot 12034, Mukim 12, Daerah Barat Daya, Pulau Pinang Dan Dalam perkara mengenai Aturan 83 Kaedah- Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012	
ANTARA <b>PUBLIC BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat : 6463-H)</b>	...PLAINTIF
DAN	
VINOTH RAJ A/L PALANY (No. Kad Pengenalan : 901202075405)	...DEFENDAN
Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh 19 Disember 2024 dan 20 Mac 2025, adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa Timbalan Pendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan	
AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM Pada Hari Isnin, 28 April 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi, SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PANGSAR DARUL MAKMUR	
NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua tanqangan, bebanan serta mengenai pasti dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.	
Sila layari <a href="https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb">https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb</a>	
<b>BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:</b> No. Hakmilik : Hakmilik Strata No. Hakmilik Pajakan Negeri 2316/M2/14/276 No. Lot : Lot 12034 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri : 12 / Barat Daya / Pulau Pinang Pegangan : Hakmilik Pajakan No. Petak/No. Tingkat/No. Bangunan : 276 / 14 / M2 Keluasan Tanah : 818.0000000000 kaki persegi Pemilik Berdaftar : VINOTH RAJ A/L PALANY Syarat Nyata : Petak ini hendaklah digunakan untuk tujuan pangsapuri sahaja. Sekatn Kepentingan : Tanah yang diberi milik ini tidak boleh dipecah sempadan, pindah milik, cagar, pajak, pajak kecil atau dengan apa aka urusan sekali pun dilupuskan tanpa kebenaran bertulis daripada Pihak Berkuasa Negeri.	
<b>Bebanan / Lain-Lain</b> <b>Kawasan Rizab</b> <b>Kaveat</b> :	
<b>LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH :</b> Hartanah tersebut adalah Pangsapuri yang beralamat pos di 104-12B-10, Persiaran Bayan Indah, Villa Enas Condo, 11900, Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang <b>HARGA RIZAB :</b> Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak RM 450,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: EMPAT RATUS LIMA PULUH RIBU SAHAJA) dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendeposikan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama PUBLIC BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belan hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada PUBLIC BANK BERHAD dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-	
<b>Firma Guaman :</b> TOH THEAM HOCK & CO. <b>Alamat :</b> NO. 155, 1ST FLOOR MEDAN KIKIR SATU TAMAN INDERAWASHI, 13600, PG, MY <b>No. Telefon :</b> 04-3981917 <b>No. Fax :</b> 04-3981921 <b>No. Rujukan :</b> TTH/PBB/HL-198/2024/OSY/DURA	

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI DI SHAH ALAM DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN SAMAN PEMULA NO.: BA-24NCVC-145-01/2025	
Dalam perkara Perjanjian Jual Beli bertarikh 10.08.2012 bagi Unit No. C-18-70 Dan	
Dalam perkara Jadual H Akta Pemaju Perumahan (Kawalan dan Pelesenan) 1966 dan Peraturan-Peraturan Pemaju Perumahan (Kawalan dan Pelesenan) 1989 Dan	
Dalam perkara Seksyen 25, 37, 57 dan 66 Akta Kontrak 1950 Dan	
Dalam perkara Seksyen 25, 37, 57 dan 66 Akta Kontrak 1950 Dan	
Dalam perkara Mayland Valiant Sdn Bhd v Majlis Perbandaran Subang Jaya [2018] 7 CLJ 165 Dan	
Dalam perkara Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi bertarikh 29.06.2016 melalui Guaman No. 21NCVC-160-09/2012 Dan	
Dalam perkara Aturan 5, Aturan 7, Aturan 28 & Aturan 92 Kaedah 4 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah 2012 ANTARA	
PACIFIC VALIANT SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 200801013584 (814782-D))	... PLAINTIF
DAN	
JUDE ALBERT BRAGANZA (No. K/P: 621115-10-7505)	... DEFENDAN
<b>NOTIS PENYAMPAIAN GANTI – BENTUK IKLAN</b>	
Kepada:	
JUDE ALBERT BRAGANZA No. 1 Jalan Sembilang 2, Taman Teluk Pulai, 41100 Klang, Selangor	

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam dalam Saman Pemula No. BA-24NCVC-145-01/2025 oleh Pacific Valiant Sdn Bhd dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Saman Pemula bertarikh 19 Januari 2025 dan Affidavit Sokongan yang diikrarkan oleh Rahmat bin Dahalan pada 7 Januari 2025 (selepas ini dirujuk secara kolektif sebagai "Kertas-kertas kausa tersebut") disampaikan kepada kamu secara penampalan salinannya bersama dengan satu salinan Perintah Untuk Penyampaian Ganti yang dimeterai di atas Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam, menyerahkan secara Pos Berdaftar kepada Jude Albert Braganza, Defendan yang beralamat di No. 1 Jalan Sembilang 2, Taman Teluk Pulai, 41100 Klang, Selangor, dan dengan mengiklankan satu Notis sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan The Sun dan bahawa penampalan, pengeposan dan pengiklanan tersebut merupakan dan disifatkan sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna dan memuaskan bagi kertas kausa tersebut selepas empat belas (14) hari dari tarikh empalan atau pengiklanan; dan kos permohonan ini adalah kos dalam kausa.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membela tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguamcara kamu di hadapan Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam pada 17 April 2025 pada pukul 9.00 pagi. Jika kamu atau wakil kamu tidak hadir, penghakiman boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.

Saman Pemula dan Affidavit Sokongan boleh disemak oleh kamu dengan memohon kepada Mahkamah.

Bertarikh 19 Mac 2025

TT  
Tetuan Mastura Partnership  
Peguamcara bagi Plaintiff

Notis Iklan ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Mastura Partnership bagi pihak Plaintiff yang dinamakan di atas yang mempunyai alamat penyampaian di K-5-3, Solaris Mont Kiara, Jalan Solaris Mont Kiara, 50480 Kuala Lumpur.  
Tel No. : 03-6201 5566 & 03-6201 6655; Fax No. : 03-6201 0000  
Email: info@masturapartnership.com.  
my [Ruj: OS-PV-Jude]

DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI DI SHAH ALAM DALAM NEGERI SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN SAMAN PEMULA NO.: BA-24NCVC-147-01/2025	
Dalam perkara Perjanjian Jual Beli bertarikh 10.08.2012 bagi Unit No. A-18-32 dan Perjanjian Jual Beli bertarikh 02.10.2012 bagi Unit No. C-11-71 Dan	
Dalam perkara Jadual H Akta Pemaju Perumahan (Kawalan dan Pelesenan) 1966 dan Peraturan-Peraturan Pemaju Perumahan (Kawalan dan Pelesenan) 1989 Dan	
Dalam perkara Seksyen 25, 37, 57 dan 66 Akta Kontrak 1950 Dan	
Dalam perkara Seksyen 25, 37, 57 dan 66 Akta Kontrak 1950 Dan	
Dalam perkara Mayland Valiant Sdn Bhd v Majlis Perbandaran Subang Jaya [2018] 7 CLJ 165 Dan	
Dalam perkara Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi bertarikh 29.06.2016 melalui Guaman No. 21NCVC-160-09/2012 Dan	
Dalam perkara Aturan 5, Aturan 7, Aturan 28 & Aturan 92 Kaedah 4 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah 2012 ANTARA	
PACIFIC VALIANT SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 200801013584 (814782-D))	... PLAINTIF
DAN	
CHIN LEE LEE (No. K/P: 720908-14-5046)	... DEFENDAN
<b>NOTIS PENYAMPAIAN GANTI – BENTUK IKLAN</b>	
Kepada:	
CHIN LEE LEE F-310, No.15, Perdana Condo, Jalan PJU 8/1, Bandar Damansara Perdana, 47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor	

AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam dalam Saman Pemula No. BA-24NCVC-147-01/2025 oleh Pacific Valiant Sdn Bhd dan Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Saman Pemula bertarikh 19 Januari 2025 dan Affidavit Sokongan yang diikrarkan oleh Rahmat bin Dahalan pada 7 Januari 2025 (selepas ini dirujuk secara kolektif sebagai "Kertas-kertas kausa tersebut") disampaikan kepada kamu secara penampalan salinannya bersama dengan satu salinan Perintah Untuk Penyampaian Ganti yang dimeterai di atas Papan Notis Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam, menyerahkan secara Pos Berdaftar kepada Chin Lee Lee, Defendan yang beralamat di F-310, No.15, Perdana Condo, Jalan PJU 8/1, Bandar Damansara Perdana, 47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, dan dengan mengiklankan satu Notis sekali di dalam akhbar tempatan The Sun dan bahawa penampalan, pengeposan dan pengiklanan tersebut merupakan dan disifatkan sebagai penyampaian yang sempurna dan memuaskan bagi kertas kausa tersebut selepas empat belas (14) hari dari tarikh empalan atau pengiklanan; dan kos permohonan ini adalah kos dalam kausa.

Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membela tindakan tersebut, kamu mestilah hadir sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui peguamcara kamu di hadapan Mahkamah Tinggi di Shah Alam pada 22 April 2025 pada pukul 9.00 pagi. Jika kamu atau wakil kamu tidak hadir, penghakiman boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.

Saman Pemula dan Affidavit Sokongan boleh disemak oleh kamu dengan memohon kepada Mahkamah.

Bertarikh 24 Mac 2025

TT  
Tetuan Mastura Partnership  
Peguamcara bagi Plaintiff

Notis Iklan ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Mastura Partnership bagi pihak Plaintiff yang dinamakan di atas yang mempunyai alamat penyampaian di K-5-3, Solaris Mont Kiara, Jalan Solaris Mont Kiara, 50480 Kuala Lumpur.  
Tel No. : 03-6201 5566 & 03-6201 6655; Fax No. : 03-6201 0000  
Email: info@masturapartnership.com.  
my [Ruj: OS-PV-ChinLL]

# De Villiers gets a Masters hit

**S**OUTH AFRICAN cricket legend A.B. de Villiers (*pic*) was bowled over at Augusta National yesterday thanks to his golfing pal Christiaan Bezuidenhout.

De Villiers served as caddie for 57th-ranked Bezuidenout in the Par-Three Contest, played on the eve of the 89th Masters, and tested his luck with a sand wedge.

"I hit a nice little sand wedge in there, found the green, spun back to the front fringe area. I'm pretty happy," de Villiers said. "I was completely numb. Could hardly breathe. I'm happy with the result."

"Absolute privilege," he added. "Glad to be here. I've been watching this event since I was three-years old. It's great to be here with my mate and walk the golf course."

The Par-Three Contest gives players a relaxing afternoon before the

intensity of the year's first major begins.

"It was great to have one of my friends here as well to caddie for me," said Bezuidenhout, who is preparing for his fourth Masters appearance.

"We've probably known each other 10, 12 years. We've played a lot of golf together. We played a lot of pro-ams together back in South Africa."

"I'm really scared of a cricket ball," Bezuidenhout said. "I've never played cricket with him. I've played a lot of golf with him."

"He's probably not as famous in America, but around the world he's very famous. He's like the Tom Brady of cricket," Bezuidenhout said.

De Villiers spent 14 years on South Africa's national team, captaining them in all three formats of the game, and his pal added details on his time in the Indian Premier League (IPL) T20 competition. – AFP



322 Notices
<p><b>IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT JOHOR BAHRU (COMMERCIAL DIVISION) COMPANY WINDING UP PETITION. NO.: JA-28NCC-39-03/2025</b></p> <p>In the matter of FY Metal Resources Sdn Bhd</p> <p>And</p> <p>In the matter of Sections 465(1)(e) and 466(1)(a) of the Companies Act 2016 ("CA 2016")</p> <p>And</p> <p>In the matter of the Companies (Winding-Up) Rules 1972</p> <p><b>BETWEEN</b> <b>MESSRS. KHENG HOE &amp; LEE YUEN (Suing as a firm)</b></p> <p>... Petitioner</p> <p><b>AND</b> <b>FY METAL RESOURCES SDN BHD [Company No.: 201501021604 (1146932 - X)]</b></p> <p>... Respondent</p>

**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 7th March 2025, presented by MESSRS. KHENG HOE & LEE YUEN.

And that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at Johor Bahru High Court at 9.00 a.m. on 9th May 2025.

And any creditor or contributory 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 contributory of the said company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's registered address is at A3-3-6, Block A3, Solaris Dutamas, 1 Jalan Dutamas 1, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Kheng Hoe & Lee Yuen  
Messrs. Kheng Hoe & Lee Yuen  
The Petitioner

**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. Kheng Hoe & Lee Yuen notice in writing of his intention to do so. The notice must state the name and address of the firm, and must be signed by the person or 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 abovenamed not later than twelve o'clock noon of 8th May 2025 (the day before the day appointed for the hearing of the petition).

**THIS ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION** is issued by Messrs. Kheng Hoe & Lee Yuen, the Petitioner, with the address for service at A3-3-6, Block A3, Solaris Dutamas, 1 Jalan Dutamas 1, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.  
[Ref: 23041759/Tel: 03-6205 3928/Email: ask@khlylaw]

322 Notices
<p><b>IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA IN KUALA LUMPUR IN THE FEDERAL TERRITORY OF KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA COMPANIES (WINDING UP) NO.: WA-28NCC-225-02/2025</b></p> <p>In the matter of sections 465(1)(e) &amp; (h) and 466 of the Companies Act 2016</p> <p>And</p> <p>In the matter of EXYTE MALAYSIA SDN BHD (Company No.: 200301034750 (637171-K))</p> <p><b>BETWEEN</b> <b>BRILLIANT STAR CONSTRUCTION (M) SDN BHD (Company No.: 201401011081(1087157-U))</b></p> <p>...PETITIONER</p> <p><b>AND</b> <b>EXYTE MALAYSIA SDN BHD (Company No.: 200301034750 (637171-K))</b></p> <p>...RESPONDENT</p>

**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 the 26th day of February 2025, presented by BRILLIANT STAR CONSTRUCTION (M) SDN BHD.

And that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the court sitting at the High Court of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur at 9.00 a.m., on the 16 th of June 2025; and any creditor or contributory 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 contributory of the said company requiring the same from the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's registered address is at 64, Persiaran 65C, Perkillling Business Centre, 53000 Kuala Lumpur and the business address is at PT 12941, 1st Floor, Jalan BBN 1/7D, Putra Indah, Nilai, 71800 Negeri Sembilan,

The Petitioner's solicitor is Messrs. Amar Syilmir Izzat & Sham, whose address of service is at B-05-07, Plaza Mont Kiara, No. 2 Jalan Kiara, Mont Kiara 50480 Kuala Lumpur.

t.t  
Messrs. Amar Syilmir Izzat & Sham  
Petitioner's solicitor

Any person who intends to appear on the hearing of the said petition must serve on or send by post to the above-named Petitioner or his advocate or solicitor, notice in writing of his intention to do so. The notice must state the name and address of the person, or, if a firm, the name and address of the firm, and must be signed by the person or 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 twelve o'clock noon of the 15th June 2025 (the day before the day appointed for the hearing of the petition).  
[Ref No.: ASIS/2025-16]

322 Notices
<p><b>DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI GEORGETOWN DALAM NEGERI PULAU PINANG PETISYEN PENGULUNGAN SYARIKAT NO.: PA-28NCC-39-03/2025</b></p> <p>Dalam perkara berkenaan MOON GOOD SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 201801034917 [1296944-X])</p> <p>dan</p> <p>Dalam perkara berkenaan Seksyen 464 dan Seksyen 465(1)(c) dan 465(1)(h) Akta Syarikat-Syarikat 2016</p> <p>dan</p> <p>Dalam perkara berkenaan Kaedah-Kaedah (Pengulangan) Syarikat-Syarikat 1972 dan peruntukkan undang-undang berkaitan</p> <p>Antara</p> <p><b>LEONG CHOOI YIN (No. K/P: 610117-10-5892)</b></p> <p>...PEMPETISYEN</p> <p>Dan</p> <p><b>MOON GOOD SDN BHD (No. Syarikat: 201801034917 [1296944-X])</b></p> <p>...RESPONDEN</p>

**PENGKILANAN PETISYEN**

NOTIS DENGAN INI ADALAH DIBERI bahawa suatu petisyen untuk mengulungan **MOON GOOD SDN BHD** oleh Mahkamah Tinggi telah, pada 17 Mac 2025 dikemukakan oleh LEONG CHOOI YIN dan bahawa petisyen tersebut adalah diarahkan untuk didengar di hadapan Mahkamah yang bersidang di Mahkamah Tinggi Malaysia di Georgetown, Pulau Pinang pada pukul 9.00 pagi pada tarikh 19 Mei 2025; dan sesiapa pemuitang atau penyumbang MOON GOOD SDN BHD yang ingin menyokong atau membantah terhadap pemberian suatu perintah atas petisyen tersebut boleh hadir pada masa pendengaran secara kediri atau melalui peguamcaranya untuk tujuan itu; dan sesalanan petisyen tersebut akan dibekalkan kepada sesiapa pemuitang atau penyumbang MOON GOOD SDN BHD yang memohon sedemikian oleh peguamcara Pempetisyen atas bayaran untuk caj seperti yang ditetapkan untuk sedemikian.

Alamat Pempetisyen adalah di 11 Gurney, Unit 7-1, Persiaran Gurney, 10250 Pulau Pinang. Peguamcara Pempetisyen adalah Tetuan Wong Xian Zheng & Co., yang beralamat di Unit 9-C, Level 9, Wisma Boon Siew, No. 1, Penang Road, 10000 Pulau Pinang.

Bertarikh pada 9 April 2025.  
T.T.  
Peguamcara Pempetisyen

Nota- Sesiapa orang yang ingin menghadiri pendengaran petisyen tersebut semestinya menyampaikan kepada menghantar melalui pos kepada peguamcara Pempetisyen yang dinamakan di atas, suatu notis bertulis berkenaan dengan niatnya untuk berbuat sedemikian. Notis tersebut semestinya menyatakan nama dan alamat orang itu, atau, sekiranya merupakan sebuah firma, nama dan alamat firma itu, atau peguamcaranya atau peguamcara mereka (sekiranya ada) dan semestinya disampaikan, atau, sekiranya dihantar melalui pos, semestinya dihantar melalui pos dengan masa yang mencukupi untuk sampai kepada peguamcara Pempetisyen yang dinamakan di atas tidak lewat dari 12.00 tengah hari pada tarikh 16 Mei 2025(hari sebelum tarikh yang ditetapkan untuk pendengaran petisyen itu)

**PENGKILANAN PETISYEN** ini telah difailkan oleh Tetuan Wong Xian Zheng & Co., Peguamcara bagi pihak Pempetisyen yang beralamat di Unit 9-C, Level 9, Wisma Boon Siew, 1 Penang Road, 10000 Georgetown, Pulau Pinang.  
[Ruj Fail: W/L/76/LCY]

322 Notices
<p><b>IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT KUALA LUMPUR IN THE STATE OF WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA (COMMERCIAL DIVISION) COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) PETITION NO.: WA-28NCC-293-03/2025</b></p> <p>In the matter of Section 464, Section 465 (1)(e) read together with Section 466 (1) (a) of the Companies Act 2016;</p> <p>And</p> <p>In the matter of the Companies (Winding-Up) Rules 1972;</p> <p>And</p> <p>In the matter of VELFLARE ENERGY SDN. BHD. (Company No. 202301008686 / 1502807 – U).</p> <p><b>BETWEEN</b> <b>MOHAMED NAZIM BIN MOHAMED AZMAN (NRIC NO.: 010817-10-1893)</b></p> <p>...PETITIONER</p> <p><b>AND</b> <b>VELFLARE ENERGY SDN. BHD. (COMPANY NO.: 202301008686 / 1502807 – U)</b></p> <p>...RESPONDENT</p>

**ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION**

NOTICE is hereby given that a Petition for the Winding-up of the abovenamed Respondent by the High Court was on the 13.03.2025 presented by Mohamed Nazim Bin Mohamed Azman (NRIC No.: 010817-10-1893) and that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at Kuala Lumpur on **24.06.2025 at 9.00 o'clock** in the morning and any Creditor or Contributory of the said Company desiring to support or oppose the making of an Order on the said Petition may appear at the time of the hearing by himself or his Counsel for that purpose and a copy of the Petition will be furnished to any Creditor or Contributory 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 1 Jalan Sehiabakti 2, Bukit Damansara, 50490 Kuala Lumpur.  
The Petitioner's Solicitors are Messrs. Krishand G Krishnan of 40-1, Jalan Telawi, Bangsar Baru, 59100 Kuala Lumpur.  
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**Messrs. Krishand G Krishnan**

**NOTE:** Any person who intends to appear on the hearing of the said Petition must serve personally or send by post to the abovenamed Messrs. Krishand G Krishnan, notice in writing of his intention to do so. The Notice must state the name and address of the person or, if a firm, the name and address of the firm, and must be signed by the person or his firm or his or their Solicitors (if any) and must be served, or if posted, must be sent in sufficient time to reach the abovenamed Messrs. Krishand G Krishnan not later than 12.00 o'clock noon of 23.06.2025.

**THIS ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION** is issued by Messrs. Krishand G Krishnan (a member of Liquid Group Law Practice), Solicitors for the Petitioner whose address for service is at 40-1, Jalan Telawi, Bangsar Baru, 59100 Kuala Lumpur.  
tel : 603-2201 3350  
faks:603-2201 3351  
email:krishand@gkgklaw.com.my / rujukan:thagi@gkgklaw.com.my



## No impact on Haas F1

"It's business as usual regarding the team and there is no change to

Putintseva added: "It was definitely a good game for me and I love playing in Brisbane. I think today was just one of those days when everything was working."

# Max out to **silence**

## McLaren

*Norris arrives in Bahrain with Verstappen in hot pursuit*

## Norris arrives in Bahrain with Verstappen in hot pursuit

“But it (the Japanese GP) does show that if we really nail everything,

"It doesn't take much of a mistake from us - or certainly from myself - to let the others in," said Piastrì, who finished ninth in Melbourne after

Friday's opening practice will feature a host of teams giving potential stars of the future a spin. Among them is Dino Beganovic, who holds dual Swedish and Bosnian nationality. The Ferrari academy Formula Two driver takes Leclerc's seat in 'FPI'. – Reuters/AFP

# Joker falls in Monte Carlo, Alcaraz wins



"It was actually more like the worst day (at the office)," said Djokovic. "I was hoping it was not going to happen,

– AFP

## 'Versatile' Sudharsan helps Gujarat to top of IPL table

Gujarat registered their fourth successive victory in five matches to lead the 10-team table.

"I always try to see what I can do better, trying to improve my awareness and skill," Sudharsan said after being named player of the match.

"When you lose games, we also feel should we have chased?" said Samson. "But we want to be a team that wins games while chasing, not just win batting first." – AFP

322	Notices	322	Notices
<p><b>DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI JOHOR BAHRU DALAM NEGERI JOHOR DARUL TAKZIM GUAMAN NO. JA-A72NCC-275-02/2025</b></p> <p>ANTARA</p> <p>AMMETLIFE INSURANCE BERHAD [NO. SYARIKAT: 15743-P] ...PLAINTIF</p> <p>DAN</p> <p>CHONG YET PEI [NO. K/P: 770330-13-5620] ...DEFENDAN</p> <p><b>PENYAMPAIAN GANTI - BENTUK IKLAN</b></p> <p>Kepada : CHONG YET PEI B-09-15 D, Secret Garden Jalan Kempas Indah Taman Kempas 81300 Johor Bahru Johor</p> <p>AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret di Johor Bahru Writ No. JA-A72NCC-275-02/2025 oleh AmMetLife Insurance Berhad yang mempunyai alamat berdaftar di Tingkat 22, Bangunan AMBank Group, No. 55, Jalan Raja Chulan, 50200 Kuala Lumpur dan alamat perniagaannya di Tingkat 24, Menara 1 Sentrum, No. 201, Jalan Tun Sambanthan, 50470 Kuala Lumpur untuk jumlah RM66,322-01 dan faedah pada kadar 5% setahun ke atas jumlah RM66,322-01 dari tarikh 12/09/2022 sehingga penyelesaian sepenuhnya, kos guaman setakat pemfailan Writ ini sebanyak RM5,000-00 dan kos tindakan ini.</p> <p>Dan adalah diperintahkan bahawa penyampaian writ dalam tindakan ini kepada kamu kena dilaksanakan melalui iklan ini. Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membeli tindakan ini kamu hendaklah dalam tempoh 21 hari dari tarikh pengiklanan notis ini, tidak termasuk hari pengiklanan, memasukkan kehadiran di Pendaftar Mahkamah. Jika kamu ingkar memasukkan kehadiran, penghakiman boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.</p> <p>Bertarikh pada 10 April 2025</p> <p>t.t.</p> <p><b>WONG LU PEEN &amp; TUNKU ALINA</b> Pegumcara bagi pihak Plaintiff</p> <p>Penyampaian Ganti-Bentuk Iklan ini dikeluarkan oleh WONG LU PEEN &amp; TUNKU ALINA, pegum cara bagi Plaintiff yang beralamat di No. 21-6, Block B, The Boulevard Mid Valley City, Lingkaran Syed Putra, 59200 Kuala Lumpur. [No. Tel: 03-2201 8378] [Rujukan Fail: L3 16272] [Email: andrew_teh@wlpta.com. mylan_chongpei@wlpta.com. mylaqlah@wlpta.com.my]</p>		<p><b>DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI JOHOR BAHRU DALAM NEGERI JOHOR DARUL TAKZIM Writ NO. JA-A72NCC-272-02/2025</b></p> <p>ANTARA</p> <p>AMMETLIFE INSURANCE BERHAD [NO. SYARIKAT: 15743-P] ...PLAINTIF</p> <p>DAN</p> <p>PEE KAR SEIN [NO. K/P: 910912-01-6017] ...DEFENDAN</p> <p><b>PENYAMPAIAN GANTI - BENTUK IKLAN</b></p> <p>Kepada : PEE KAR SEIN [NO. K/P: 910912-01-6017] No. 24, Jalan Bakti 60 81300 Johor Bahru Johor</p> <p>AMBIL PERHATIAN bahawa suatu tindakan telah dimulakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret di Johor Bahru Writ No. A-A72NCC-272-02/2025 oleh AmMetLife Insurance Berhad yang mempunyai alamat berdaftar di Tingkat 22, Bangunan AMBank Group, No. 55, Jalan Raja Chulan, 50200 Kuala Lumpur dan alamat perniagaannya di Tingkat 24, Menara 1 Sentrum, No. 201, Jalan Tun Sambanthan, 50470 Kuala Lumpur untuk jumlah RM81,342-93 dan faedah pada kadar 5% setahun ke atas jumlah RM81,342-93 dari tarikh 30/03/2023 sehingga penyelesaian sepenuhnya, kos guaman setakat pemfailan Writ ini sebanyak RM5,000-00 dan kos tindakan ini.</p> <p>Dan adalah diperintahkan bahawa penyampaian writ dalam tindakan ini kepada kamu kena dilaksanakan melalui iklan ini. Jika kamu berhasrat untuk membeli tindakan ini kamu hendaklah dalam tempoh 21 hari dari tarikh pengiklanan notis ini, tidak termasuk hari pengiklanan, memasukkan kehadiran di Pendaftar Mahkamah. Jika kamu ingkar memasukkan kehadiran, penghakiman boleh diberikan terhadap kamu.</p> <p>Bertarikh pada 10 April 2025</p> <p>t.t.</p> <p><b>WONG LU PEEN &amp; TUNKU ALINA</b> Pegumcara bagi pihak Plaintiff</p> <p>Penyampaian Ganti-Bentuk Iklan ini dikeluarkan oleh WONG LU PEEN &amp; TUNKU ALINA, pegum cara bagi Plaintiff yang beralamat di No. 21-6, Block B, The Boulevard Mid Valley City, Lingkaran Syed Putra, 59200 Kuala Lumpur. [No. Tel: 03-2201 8378] [Rujukan Fail: L3 16288] [Email: andrew_teh@wlpta.com. mylan_chongpei@wlpta.com. mylaqlah@wlpta.com.my]</p>	





## Ranieri eyeing Champions League for Roma before derby swansong

**CLAUDIO RANIERI** faces his final Rome derby Monday (2.45am Malaysian time) as he leads Roma on a charge for the Champions League before finally, definitively sailing off into the distance.

Veteran coach Ranieri has dragged Roma to just four points behind Serie A's top four positions since coming out of retirement in November, when his boyhood club looked to be heading towards the relegation zone.

This weekend's clash with fellow Champions League chasers Lazio is a key moment in a tight

battle for two spots in Europe's elite club competition, with Inter Milan and Napoli out on their own contesting the *Scudetto*.

Roma are seventh, two points behind sixth-placed Lazio with seven matches remaining in the season, and have not lost a league fixture since their dismal defeat at Como in mid-December.

A 1-1 home draw with Juventus last weekend ended a seven-match winning streak but the performance highlighted how far Roma have come since Ranieri became their third manager

of the season after Daniele De Rossi and the disastrous, but mercifully short reign of Ivan Juric.

Ranieri is set to step aside for a new coach in the summer but the 73-year-old's success as stopgap has been such that he has faced frequent calls to further postpone his retirement for another season, something he insists he will not do.

After Roma's draw with Juve former Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon asked Ranieri why he would not reconsider, calling his insistence on

stepping aside "absurd" given the turnaround he has mastered.

"Honestly Gigi, I'd already quit last year... I said to myself that I'd only come back for Roma or Cagliari, and I prayed to God that I wouldn't have to because it would have meant that they were going through hard times," said Ranieri.

"I've been travelling around the world for more than 35 years but I don't know anything about it. I want to see what else there is beyond football before I die.

"Big Ben has said 'stop'" - AFP

## Coventry into top six with late win over Portsmouth

**COVENTRY CITY** snatched a dramatic late win against Portsmouth to boost their Championship playoff hopes.

The Sky Blues looked destined to settle for a frustrating goalless stalemate, only for Jamie Paterson to score in the fourth minute of stoppage time, with virtually the last kick of the game.

Pompey's defence misjudged a long ball forward, allowing Jack Rudoni to float a cross in for Paterson to volley home.

The victory lifts Frank Lampard's men into sixth spot, two points above Middlesbrough, while defeat leaves Portsmouth in 17th place, three points off the drop zone.

"We got what we deserved. It was amazing because I thought it would be one of those nights. They were dogged and made it hard for us. But we pushed and we pushed, and for 'Pato' to score that goal is something very special.

"He's a fan of the club, Coventry is him. For him to score a goal of that quality is very special. To show such agility is top level. He's added to the group in the dressing room, and the training ground, and he gives me good options," Lampard told *BBC*.

"It was a tough game. We hit the post, they threw their bodies in front of us, but we showed great character. If you have spirit you push to the end, so it's a big plus for us.

"We know the race we're in. We were looking downwards when I came in, now we're pushing for the playoffs."

Plymouth Argyle's Championship survival prospects suffered a damaging blow as they were beaten 3-0 at Swansea City.

Plymouth were outplayed and outfought by a Swansea side who seized the early initiative through Lewis O'Brien's diving header and never looked like losing from that point on.

Harry Darling then headed in at a set-piece before Josh Key's stunning long-range strike sealed a comprehensive victory after only 35 minutes.

QPR resisted late pressure to comfortably beat Oxford United 3-1 and move seven points clear of the Championship bottom three. - Agencies



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal (right) in action with Borussia Dortmund's Waldemar Anton. - REUTERS/PICT

## Barca still improving

**B**ARCELONA coach Hansi Flick warned their Champions League rivals his team are still looking to improve after beating Borussia Dortmund 4-0 yesterday.

The Catalans put one foot into the semifinals with the first leg thrashing of last year's runners-up at the Olympic Stadium.

Barca are the competition's top scorers with 36 goals and their dynamic attacking trio of Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Lamine Yamal strike fear into the hearts of opponents.

"I want to keep improving, today we saw some points we can improve on," Flick told reporters.

"We will analyse this game and I will tell the players they did very well, but there are still things to improve.

"I'm very happy with the result today but it's just the first step."

Raphinha netted his 12th Champions League goal of the season - he is the top scorer in the competition - and added two assists.

The Brazilian has 19 direct goal contributions this season in Europe, equalling former Barca great Lionel Messi's record for the club.

"I always thought he's an extraordinary player... the team is set on his shoulders, his dynamism," said the coach.

His opposite number Niko Kovac was disappointed with Dortmund's performance.

"It was a deserved defeat (but) we could have got a goal, as we all know the return leg will be very difficult," said coach Kovac.

"I am optimistic but I have to be a realist... it was a very big result, our

## Flick warns rivals after thrashing Dortmund

chances of going through are minimal.

"We know it will be difficult but we have to have a spark of hope, because without that spark it will be impossible."

Lewandowski hit a brace to help a devastating Barcelona rout Dortmund 4-0 in a one-sided match yesterday, told *Movistar*: "I think we played very well but we have one more game to go... we always want to play our football and we want to play it there and we will win.

Flick warned his team that the job was not done yet.

"You never know what will happen, football is a crazy sport, we have to play like today," he said.

"I am very happy, 99 goals for the club," added Lewandowski.

"In my head I always have not just winning, but helping the team with my qualities, goals. I think strikers always have to think about goals."

Yamal, who had toyed with Dortmund's defence all night, deservedly got on the scoresheet as the visitors left themselves wide open and Raphinha sent the youngster through on goal.

The only worry for Barca was Yamal asking to be replaced in the final stages, although he was smiling as he was afforded an ovation.

"He's fine, he had played too many minutes (lately)," explained Flick.

Barca are aiming for a potential quadruple this season and on this evidence, they will take some stopping. - AFP

**KHVICHA KVARATSKHELIA** scored one of the greatest Champions League goals as Paris Saint-Germain came from behind to beat Aston Villa 3-1 in the first leg of their quarterfinal tie yesterday.

Morgan Rogers had given Villa a 35th-minute lead at the Parc des Princes to silence the home fans, but PSG were quickly back level through a fine strike by Desire Doue.

Kvaratskhelia then took centre stage with a stunning effort on 49 minutes, before Nuno Mendes added a crucial third in stoppage time, giving PSG a significant two-goal cushion to take into the return in Birmingham next Tuesday.

## Dazzling Doue inspires transformed PSG

Having eliminated Liverpool in the last 16, Luis Enrique's team are now in a very strong position to reach the semifinals for the second season running.

"We are happy with this result but we have to keep going because there is the second game and the job is not finished," Kvaratskhelia told broadcaster *Canal Plus*, before claiming he could not clearly recall his sublime goal.

"It was OK. I didn't remember it exactly but now I will check inside so I will see if it was

quite good."

Villa, who had Prince William in the Paris crowd backing them along with his son George, will need to produce a memorable fightback at home if they are to make the last four of Europe's elite club competition for the first time since they lifted the trophy in 1982.

"We managed to get the opening goal which is about the hardest thing to do, but we were up against a great team. You have to admit that," Lucas Digne told *Canal Plus*.

"They produced moments of brilliance. Now we have to do the job in the return. We will have to open up a bit more but it is still doable."

Villa have a colossal task to overturn a deficit next week. Beaten by the youthful spirit of Doue and the idiosyncratic virtuosity of Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, any comeback would have to come at the expense of a PSG side staking their claim to be Europe's finest. - AFP/The Independent



## SHORTS

## Milligan leaves Harimau Malaya

**HARIMAU MALAYA** head coach Peter Klamovski has confirmed that his assistant, Mark Milligan, is no longer part of the national team.

Klamovski shared this in a post on the official Harimau Malaya social media page, where he also acknowledged and thanked the Australian-born coach for his contributions to the Malaysian national team.

"Although his tenure was brief, he helped us take our first step as a team in an important time preparing for our first match vs Nepal.

"We understand and support his decision to pursue an opportunity abroad, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors," Klamovski said.

In a separate post, Milligan said that to be granted the opportunity to be a part of such a professional set up really taught him a lot of things.

"Learnings and standards of an elite level that I can only hope and aspire to reach in my own journey moving forward.

"I wish the Malaysian players, staff and fans the best of luck in the pursuit of Asian Cup qualifiers in the short term and to continue to build growth and strong foundations to keep Malaysian football moving forward," he said.

## Compound archery to make LA28 debut

**COMPOUND** archery will make its Olympic debut at the 2028 Los Angeles Games (LA28) with the inclusion of the mixed team event, following an announcement by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Wednesday.

This marks the first time a new bowstyle has been added to the Olympic archery programme since 1972, bringing the total number of medal events to six, including five recurve events: men's and women's individual, men's and women's team, and mixed team.

World Archery president Prof Dr Ugur Erdener welcomed the decision, calling it a major step forward for the sport and its global community.

"My profound gratitude goes to the IOC, not least IOC president Thomas Bach for his great interest in this important project, and the LA28 Organising Committee for their support throughout the process.

"I am deeply proud of the work of the whole archery community and our athletes, who have helped make this a reality, and I am so excited to witness what our first Olympic compound archers will achieve in Los Angeles," he said, as quoted by the World Archery website.

## Cub Prix 2025 roars into action

**THE** 2025 Malaysia Cub Prix Championship calendar will feature 10 rounds, with the season opener scheduled at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) on April 19.

Promotions director Ron Hogg said 17 teams will participate this season, competing across the same seven categories as last year.

"The 2025 season will follow the same competition format, with no changes. This has already been discussed and agreed upon with the participating teams.

"We did have discussions about revising the format, but any changes are likely to be implemented next year," he told a press conference at the LYL International Circuit in Sungai Long yesterday.

Meanwhile, Malaysia Cub Prix also announced a collaboration with the Social Security Organisation (Perkeso) aimed at boosting road safety awareness across the country.

Dr Azlan Darus, Head of the Prevention, Medical and Rehabilitation Division at Perkeso, said the partnership will leverage Cub Prix's wide reach and popularity to deliver important road safety messages, particularly to motorcyclists.

"Road safety is a paramount concern, and we are dedicated to reducing the number of accidents, particularly those involving motorcyclists," he said.

**THE** days of free entry to watch Mobile Legends: Bang Bang Professional League (MPL) Malaysia 'live' are over.

Starting from Season 15, which kicks off on April 19, fans will be charged RM10 per entry for the tournament at Stadium Juara, Bukit Kiara.

MOONTON Games Malaysia E-sports Lead Fikri Rizal Mahrudin explained that the decision was made to enhance the fan experience and contribute to the growth of the local esports ecosystem in the country.

"So it's basically for us to elevate our fans' experiences... when they see MPL Malaysia, they know for a fact that they are watching a professional, highly entertainment and highly engaged e-sports tournament.

"This is also part of our multi-year strategy to ensure that Malaysia is always seen as a top ecosystem in the world while we are always leading the e-sports ecosystem in the country," he said during the MPL Malaysia S15 & beyond

## MPL Malaysia to charge entry fee to boost fan experience

group interview online today.

Fikri said they are not shy away from exploring something new for MPL Malaysia and the response from the community so far had been quite positive.

He said that ticket sales could play a crucial role in educating fans, encouraging them to invest more in the future, including purchasing team merchandise.

Season 15 will return with the same two-staged format comprising the regular season followed by the playoffs.

The regular season will feature 10 of the nation's top MLBB teams who will compete

every week from April 19 to May 25. The top six teams from the regular season will advance to the playoffs.

In season 15, the top two teams will represent Malaysia at the E-sports World Cup x Mobile Legends: Bang Bang Mid Season Cup 2025 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, scheduled to be held this July.

Established in 2014, MOONTON is a global video game company dedicated to gaming development, publication and e-sports.

Mobile Legends: Bang Bang is its current star game and the leading mobile multiplayer online battle arena game worldwide. – Bernama

## Aaron-Wooi Yik live up to expectations

... as Pearly-Thinaah crash out of BAC 2025 opening round

**N**ATIONAL men's doubles duo Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik made a commanding start to their Badminton Asia Championships 2025 campaign in Ningbo, China by marching to the second round on Wednesday.

The tournament held at the Ningbo Olympic Sports Centre Gymnasium saw the sixth seeded pair toiling over a 40-minute duel before disposing Japan's Kenya Mitsuhashi-Hiroki Okamura 21-18, 21-15 in straight sets to stretch their unbeaten run against the Japanese combination to a dominant 4-0.

Next up for the former 2022 world champions in the second round are lesser-known Indian pair, Hariharan Amsakarunan-Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi, who outplayed Sri Lanka's Madhuka Dulanjana-Lahiru Weerasinghe, 21-3, 21-12.

Despite their best efforts, national No. 1 women's doubles pair, Pearly Tan-M. Thinaah once again found themselves up against a brick wall as they were unable to break the jinx against Kim Hye Jeong-Kong Hee Yong, losing 19-21, 26-28, in 58-minutes.

This marks their third straight loss to the South Korean pair, who first took them down in the semifinals of the India Open 2025, 21-18, 21-18, last January.

Meanwhile, professional mixed doubles, Goh Soon Huat-Shevon Lai Jamie advanced to the quarterfinals in Ningbo after defeating Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh-Supissara Paewsampran in the second round yesterday.

The third seeds faced no problems when they won in straight sets 21-17, 21-14, thus making up for the disappointment of losing to the same opponents in the quarterfinals of the Swiss Open last month.

The husband and wife pair are



Aaron Chia (left) and Soh Wooi Yik. – BERNAMAPIC

scheduled to meet the Indonesian pair, Jafar Hidayatullah-Felisha Pasaribu, who defeated the Taiwanese pair, Chen Cheng Kuan-HsunYin Hui 21-9, 21-7 to vie for a ticket to the semifinals today.

Meanwhile, another Malaysian pair in the mixed doubles sector, Yap Roy King-Valeree Siow, failed to follow the footsteps of Soon Huat-Shevon when they lost to the Japanese pair, Hiroki Midorikawa-Natsu Saito 6-21, 16-21.

Also suffering the same fate were the country's men's and women's singles, Justin Hoh and Goh Jin Wei who were eliminated in the second round.

Justin lost to world No. 4 from Indonesia, Jonatan Christie 13-21, 19-21 in 45 minutes while Jin Wei lost to Thailand's Supanida Katethong 15-21, 16-21.

On Wednesday, it was a return to forget for national men's singles player Ng Tze Yong, who was easily dispatched by reigning world champion and third seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand, 9-21, 12-21, in 44-minutes.

Previously, the 24-year-old was sidelined for more than a year since February 2024 due to a back injury.

Leong Jun Hao's campaign came to a premature end as the 25-year-old was shown the exit by Taiwan's seventh seed, Lin Chun Yi, 11-21, 19-21. – Bernama

## Vietnam's Sang-sik to lead Asean-all stars

**THE** Asean Football Federation (AFF) has announced that head coach Kim Sang-sik of the Vietnam national football team will lead Asean-All Stars as manager for the international friendly match against Manchester United on May 28 at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium.

In a statement today, AFF shared that the highly respected Sang-sik was selected based on his outstanding record in the 2024 Asean Cup, where he led Vietnam to victory with an

unbeaten record.

"With an excellent track record and strong faith within the football community, Sang-sik has been chosen as the best candidate to lead the Asean-All Stars," the statement read.

In what will be Manchester United's first appearance in Malaysia in 16 years (since 2009), Sang-sik said it was an honour for him when commenting on his appointment.

"We are not just representing our countries, but together, we are demonstra-

ting to the world the pride, spirit and strength of this entire region," he said.

Meanwhile, AFF president Major General Khiev Sameth of Cambodia described Sang-sik as a symbol of progress and professionalism.

According to him, the South Korean-born coach's leadership inspires not only the team but an entire generation of football players, including fans.

"This match is a moment of regional pride, proving that football has the power to uplift lives," he said. – Bernama

## RESULTS &amp; STANDINGS

**CHAMPIONS LEAGUE** (Quarterfinals, first leg): **Barcelona 4** (Raphinha 25, Lewandowski 48, 66, Yamal 77) **Borussia Dortmund 0**, **Paris Saint-Germain 3** (Doue 39, Kvaratskhelia 49, Mendes 90+2) **Aston Villa 1** (Rogers 35).

**ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP:** Coventry 1 Portsmouth 0, Oxford 1 Queens Park Rangers 3, Swansea 3 Plymouth 0.

TOP 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	41	24	13	4	80	28	85
Burnley	41	23	16	2	55	12	85
Sheff Utd	41	26	7	8	56	31	83
Sunderland	41	21	13	7	57	37	76
Bristol City	41	16	15	10	53	44	63
Coventry	41	18	8	15	58	53	62





**Max out to silence McLaren**

Story  
on page 29



**Barca still improving**

Story  
on page 30

# Emery remains bullish

*Aston Villa boss believes Villans can beat PSG in Champions League despite defeat in Paris*

**A**STON VILLA coach Unai Emery insisted he still believes his side can get the better of Paris Saint-Germain and reach the Champions League semifinals despite a 3-1 defeat in the first leg of their last-eight tie yesterday.

Villa took the lead in the first half in Paris through Morgan Rogers only for the hosts to turn the game on its head thanks to stunning strikes by Desire Doue and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia either side of the interval.

And a Nuno Mendes effort in stoppage time which gives PSG a two-goal cushion to take to Villa Park for the return appears to leave Emery's side with a huge task to turn the tie around.

"At 2-1 we were thinking about playing to win in the next match, and at 3-1 it is still the same," Emery said.

"But we are here and enjoying it, and I am very proud of the players. We competed fantastically and we were close to getting a good result.

"At the end, with this goal, it is still more or less the same.

"Villa Park is our home, and hopefully there we will be stronger. But of course they are still favourites. They showed their power and individual quality."

Villa came to the French capital on a streak of seven straight wins in all competitions which has boosted their chances of qualifying for the Champions League again next season and taken them to the FA Cup semifinals.

However, it will likely now require a special performance in Birmingham next Wednesday for them to carry on their current run in the Champions League.

"I am not happy but I am satisfied with the performance of the team. It is special for us to be in Paris and playing a Champions League quarterfinal," Emery added.

"The second leg will be just as difficult at 3-1 as it was at 2-1. We have to win."

Meanwhile Emery's opposite number, Luis Enrique, expressed delight with his team's performance as he emphasised that PSG would not sit back and "speculate" in the second leg next Wednesday.

"The game had a bit of everything but we controlled it," said the former Barcelona coach.

"It is always difficult to attack a team who sit in a medium to low block and they scored on a transition from practically the first time they got into our box.

"But then 'Des' got the equaliser and again in the second half I thought we deserved to score more goals and win the game. The third

goal at the end was the finishing touch."

The quality of PSG's goals was exceptional, with Doue's marvellous strike for the equaliser probably topped by Kvaratskhelia's remarkable individual effort.

Mendes then rounded Emiliano Martinez to make it 3-1 following a superb Ousmane Dembele pass, capping PSG's victory in a game which saw them enjoy 68 percent possession and 30 attempts on goal to Villa's eight.

"I think the last-minute goal reflects, or rewards, what we did over the 90 minutes," said Luis Enrique, who won the Champions League with Barcelona in 2015.

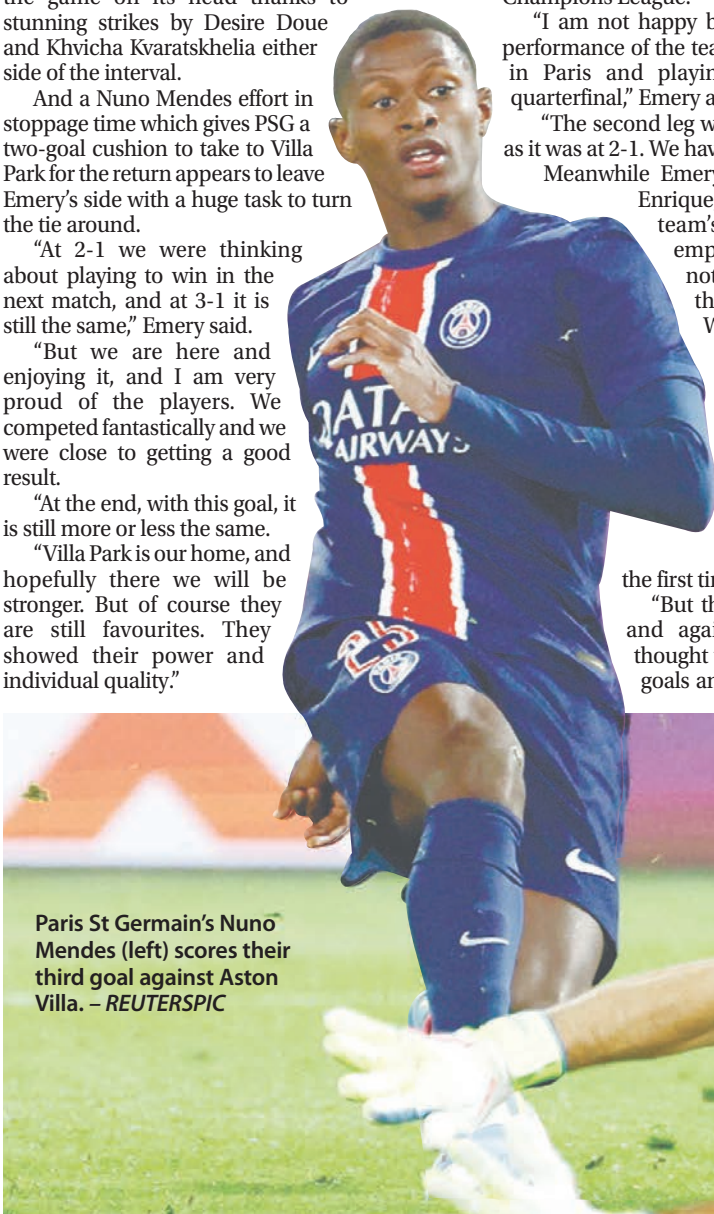
"Our objective in Birmingham is clear, to try to win the game. We don't know how to speculate, or to sit back and defend deep.

"We will try to have the ball and attack more than the opposition. I don't doubt it will be harder there but that is what we will try to do."

PSG will have skipper Marquinhos available again to line up in central defence in the return after he sat out the first leg due to suspension.

The Parisians, who wrapped up the French title last Saturday, now have a free weekend to prepare for the second leg after their scheduled Ligue 1 game at Nantes was postponed.

Villa, meanwhile, must travel to Southampton on Premier League duty tomorrow (10pm Malaysian time). - AFP



Paris St Germain's Nuno Mendes (left) scores their third goal against Aston Villa. - REUTERS/PIC

