

theSun

SATURDAY
APR 12, 2025



Malaysian Paper

www.thesun.my RM1.00 PER COPY

No. 8758 PP 2644/12/2012 (031195)

**We are now a
7-day Paper**

starting from April 2025, featuring the latest news and trends.
Get local, world, business, entertainment & sports stories
in 32 Full Colour pages

Finding the best newspaper subscription deal is no longer an arduous task. Subscribe now to theSun, delivered to your doorstep.



DAWN DELUGE ... Residents on higher ground inspecting the situation at Kampung Tengah Puchong in Selangor after the area was flooded subsequent to a downpour before sunrise yesterday. — **AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN**

Eight held over Ponzi ring

More than RM3 billion in cash, funds in accounts, properties and luxury items seized after series of raids executed based on Interpol Red Notice.

Report on
page 5

'No need to fuss over imposition of travel control order'

All high-ranking individuals subject to same measures and monitored for security reasons, says PM.

Report on
page 2

Spotlight on construction near gas pipelines

Recent blast highlights need for better planning, execution of projects to prevent encroachment into protected zones.

Report on
page 3

Challenges in sex education for special needs children

Such individuals have same bodily rights as others and should be made aware of unsafe touching: Ministry official

Report on
page 4



Anwar downplays fuss over travel control orders

► 'All high-ranking individuals are subject to same measures, including myself'

■ BY DEEPAKSHMI MANICKAM
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim played down the fuss over travel control orders (TCO), revealing that even he is not exempted from the rule.

"All high-ranking individuals are subject to the same measures, myself included," he said after an event yesterday at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

Anwar was responding to Terengganu Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Samsuri Mokhtar, who claimed he had been flagged as a security risk under the country's border control system.

In a statement on Thursday, Ahmad Samsuri said he was issued a TCO – a label typically reserved for those deemed a "threat".

Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail had also downplayed Samsuri's complaints, saying there was no need to spy on him given his security detail as the menteri besar.

Saifuddin Nasution said Ahmad Samsuri is always accompanied by police officers for his safety, so there is no need to spy on him.

He added that he himself was under surveillance from 2000 to 2004, which he saw as part of the job of the authorities.

He said all VVIPs are monitored for security reasons, and Samsuri is no different.

Addressing around 3,000 attendees at the event, Anwar said Malaysia could only thrive if its people upheld peace.

"And justice must be for all," he said, urging students to reject bigotry and embrace diversity.

He also reflected on his first year in office as prime minister, highlighting efforts to support schools across ethnic lines.

"We can't eliminate poverty overnight, but we can combat hardcore poverty, including helping



Anwar being greeted by attendees at the event in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. – ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

children without uniforms and families in desperate need.

"I've said it before, I don't want anyone left behind. Be they Malays, the indigenous people, Indians or Chinese – they are all our people.

"That's the strength of Islam, extending compassion, supported by government action."

Anwar encouraged graduating students to aim high across disciplines, from digital innovation to liberal arts, while staying true to their values.

"Whatever your field – Islamic studies, *syariah*, science, arts – excel. But never abandon the mission of peace and justice."

He emphasised the importance of IIUM remaining a hub of excellence rooted in Islamic values, while promoting intellectual openness and tolerance.

"This university is unique. It's international. You have all colours,

all cultures. But remember, you must preserve the unity of knowledge. You must understand its comprehensiveness."

He said Islamic educational institutions must produce graduates who are "more knowledgeable, more articulate, more tolerant and more wise".

Anwar urged Malaysians to use social media responsibly and refrain from sharing content that undermines the country's cultural values, particularly those of Malays and Islam.

"You have the freedom to use social media, but what do you do? Abuse it – full of deceit, full of hatred – in the name of Islam and the Malays. I am a proud Malay and I deeply value our cultural heritage.

"I believe Malays possess what I call a beautiful culture – tolerance, the ability to accommodate others and respect differences. No racism."

Anwar announced an allocation of RM5 million to the university for the maintenance of toilets, laboratories and student hostels.

He also witnessed the handover of a RM1.3 million donation to the university's AbuSulayman International Student Fund.

Anwar was awarded an honorary doctorate in law by Shenandoah University, United States in recognition of his contributions to leadership and community development.

The award was presented by Shenandoah University's president Dr Tracy Fitzsimmons during a ceremony held at IIUM's Cultural Activities Centre in Gombak.

"Shenandoah University existed long before I took office. This award isn't for being prime minister, it's for decades of shared work advancing freedom and human dignity," he said in his acceptance speech.

Advocacy for Gaza to continue: PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will continue to raise the issue of Gaza and Palestine while prioritising national interests, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"As an emerging country, we have done our utmost. However, it (the issue) remains unresolved. Make sure we can shout (demonstrate and support the Palestinian cause) as much as we can but we must put our house in order, stop corruption, abuse of power, make sure we govern well and protect the interests of our people. That is the answer. Not short term but long term."

Speaking at the "Meet Anwar@IIUM: A Special Homecoming" programme, an open dialogue session attended by nearly 3,000 students and Islamic University Malaysia staff, he said national weakness could expose the country to exploitation and undermine its ability to support others effectively. – Bernama

Ayer Kuning by-election nomination today

TAPAH: The battle for the Ayer Kuning state seat begins today with the nomination of candidates at Dewan Merdeka here.

Candidates are given from 9am to 10am to submit their nomination forms before the list of those eligible to contest is announced by returning officer Ahmad Redhaudin Ahmad Shokori.

Candidates have 14 days to campaign to garner votes for the seat, one of two state seats under the Tapah parliamentary constituency.

So far, Barisan Nasional (BN), Perikatan Nasional (PN) and Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) have each announced their respective candidates to contest the seat.

BN has named Tapah Umno division secretary Dr Mohamad Yusri Bakir, 54, as its candidate representing the unity government.

PN will be fielding Tapah PN chief Abdul Muhaimin Malek, 44, while PSM has nominated its deputy secretary-general Bawani K.S. 40.

The by-election is being held following the death of its incumbent Ihsam Shahrudin, 58, on Feb 25.

The EC has set April 26 as polling day and April 22 for early voting. – Bernama

Visit by Chinese president expected to strengthen bilateral ties

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia expects Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit next week to pave the way for stronger bilateral and trade relations between the two nations, said Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil.

He expressed hope that people-to-people ties with China would be further enhanced.

"This is a great honour for Malaysia," he said after attending the Asean-China Media and Think Tank Forum 2025 yesterday.

He said there are a lot of opportunities that could be explored while strengthening and building on past achievements.

The forum was opened by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, with Deputy Communications Minister Teo Nie Ching and Xinhua News Agency Chief Editor Lyu Yansong among those present.

Earlier this week, Fahmi, who is the Madani government spokesperson, announced that Xi would undertake a three-day state visit to Malaysia from

April 15.

This will be Xi's second visit to Malaysia. During his first visit in October 2013, Malaysia and China elevated their relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Describing China as an important trading partner, Fahmi said with Malaysia as Asean chair, there would be much to discuss, and the country looks forward to welcoming the Chinese president.

In response to questions on global geopolitical tensions, Fahmi reiterated

that as a sovereign nation, Malaysia holds firm to its principles and policies in managing relationships with other countries.

"Malaysia, as a sovereign nation, of course has its own principles and we have our policies that guide our relations with other countries. We stand guided, especially with some of our commitments as part of Zopfan (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) and also within Asean."

He added that while globalisation continues to face challenges, especially

with the recent tariff announcements by US President Donald Trump, Malaysia, as a trading nation, remains committed to building stronger and closer trade relations with all countries.

Jointly organised by Bernama and Xinhua News Agency under the theme "Strengthening Asean-China Cooperation", the one-day event drew over 200 participants, including influential media leaders, representatives, senior government officials and experts from Asean and China. – Bernama

Fire Dept eyes global best practices after pipeline blaze

PUTRAJAYA: The Fire and Rescue Department is studying the best practices used at international level in the management and safety of gas pipelines in the country as part of efforts to improve the existing system.

Department director-general Datuk Nor Hisham Mohammad said the identified best practices would be proposed to the relevant parties, including Petronas, to prevent a recurrence of the fire tragedy in Putra Heights on April 1.

He told reporters this after the handing over of a Letter of Acceptance (For Supply Tender) between the department and CLW Special Automobile (M) Sdn Bhd yesterday.

The gas pipeline fire, which occurred at 8.10am on April 1, sent flames soaring over 30m high, with temperatures reaching up to 1,000°C. It took nearly eight hours to completely put out the blaze.

Nor Hisham said five department officers are still on duty at the site to obtain data relating to the Putra Heights disaster.

"We are still in the investigation phase and need about two weeks to compile the preliminary data that we receive," he said.

He added that the department is also collaborating with other technical agencies, such as the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) regarding the incident. — Bernama

Rural telco towers in Sarawak set for completion by Q3

KUCHING: The Sarawak Multimedia Authority's ambitious SMART600 project, involving the construction of 600 rural telecommunications towers, is on track to be completed and fully operational by the third quarter of this year.

Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation (SDEC) chief executive officer Datuk Sudarnoto Osman said this represents an earlier-than-expected completion ahead of the original timeline, which targeted the fourth quarter or end of the year.

"The construction of 580 towers is completed. We expect between 60 and 80 towers to be fully functional within this month," he said during the SDEC media appreciation event on Thursday night.

Sudarnoto said work progress has been highly encouraging, with full completion and functionality projected by July or August.

"To date, 456 Smart towers are already operational, equipped with multi operator core network and Sarawak Rural Broadband Network technologies.

"The progress normally accelerates during the hot season as access to construction sites is easier compared with the rainy season, which presents more challenges due to potential flooding and muddy, impassable roads." — Bernama

Encroachment, safety lapses linked to Putra Heights blast

■ BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The gas pipeline explosion has brought to light serious safety lapses in the construction industry, particularly concerning encroachment into protected zones such as pipeline areas. Police have confirmed that excavation activity took place at the site prior to the explosion, which occurred on April 1.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia's Faculty of Built Environment and Surveying dean Prof Dr Kherun Nita Ali said the core issue was not the design of the pipeline, but the alleged breach of safety boundaries.

"Carrying out construction works (allegedly) near the pipeline was a clear violation of safety protocols. The disaster was avoidable, and the failure to respect those boundaries lies at the heart of the explosion."

Under the Occupational Safety and Health (Amendment) Act 2022 and Construction Work Design Management (CWDM) Regulations 2024, developers, designers and

Disaster could have been avoided as construction works near gas pipeline were violation of safety protocols: Expert

contractors are legally obligated to prioritise safety from the outset.

This includes preparing a Construction Design Management (CDM) plan and conducting a Design Risk Assessment (DRA) to mitigate risks posed by underground utilities, such as pipelines.

"If the principal designer had properly mapped out the underground pipelines, and the contractor had adhered to safe excavation practices, the incident could have been prevented," she said, adding that a robust DRA process, which reviews design concepts and safety controls, would have flagged and prevented the encroachment.

Kherun Nita said the CDM framework aims to identify foreseeable risks early and maintain

safety throughout the construction phases.

"Prevention through design, or safe by design is a key principle that could have mitigated risks in this case.

"Failure to comply with safety protocols has left the developer, principal designer and contractor exposed to potential legal action."

Kherun Nita noted resistance among industry professionals, particularly designers, who are often reluctant to take full responsibility for risks, contributing to lapses in safety measures.

"Reluctance is one of the main reasons safety protocols aren't fully implemented," she said, adding that the importance of collaboration and hazard identification early in the project planning can prevent disasters such as the pipeline fire.

"Proper procedures could have enabled the project team to adopt alternative construction methods that could have avoided the pipeline zone altogether," she said.

Kherun Nita said the incident should serve as wake-up call for the industry to take safety more seriously and collaborate more effectively at every stage of construction.

"Safety must begin at the design phase, with a focus on identifying and addressing risks long before construction starts."

Selangor police chief Datuk Hussein Omar Khan was reported to have said that authorities have identified the developer, contractor, subcontractor and workers involved in the excavation, which had stopped on March 30, a day before the tragedy.

Authorities added that two heavy machines, a backhoe and an excavator, were used to replace existing sewer pipes. Investigations also revealed that one heavy machine was buried in the crater that was formed following the explosion.

Residents with damaged homes face uncertain future

■ BY HARITH KAMAL
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

SUBANG JAYA: Some residents of Kampung Kuala Sungai Baru, the village near the site of the gas pipeline explosion, have started returning home, but the road to recovery remains long and uncertain.

Muhammad Asyraf, 28, who had been staying at the Putra Heights Mosque relief centre, said he

returned home three days ago, but life has yet to return to normal.

"My house is damaged, but not so badly that we can't live in it. Alhamdulillah, we have water and electricity. We've cleaned up, and for now, it's liveable," he told theSun.

He said despite regaining basic utilities, there was significant damage to the house, with holes in the roof and weakened structures.

"Whenever it rains, water gets in

and floods the place. It's uncomfortable, but at least it's home. It's better than staying at the relief centre."

Muhammad Asyraf said several household items were destroyed by the heat from the explosion, with some appliances either melted or rendered unusable.

"Luckily, we received essential items, such as a water heater and other donated items," he added.

While some residents have

moved back, many neighbours remain in relief centers or are staying with relatives.

Yesterday, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari announced the closure of the Dewan Camelia relief centre, and the occupants were allowed to return to their homes, while those at the Putra Heights Mosque centre will be allowed to leave gradually by the end of the week.

However, for some, there is nowhere to return to.

Another Kampung Kuala Sungai Baru resident, only known as Nurain, said many victims who were originally at Dewan Camelia have since moved to the relief centre at the mosque.

"Right now, the space at the mosque is about half full. A lot of people don't know what to do next or where to go," she said, adding that she and her husband would remain at the relief centre as their home was destroyed.

"Many of us haven't left simply because we don't have a home anymore."

Although the Selangor government has offered temporary housing at Kota Warisan in Sepang, Nurain said the location is too far.

"We both work nearby here, it doesn't make sense to move so far away," she said. Nurain has also applied for a car to help with transport but has yet to receive updates on her request. She confirmed that she and her husband received financial aid but declined to disclose the amount.

"People here are anxious about what will happen once the relief centre closes down. Some can return to family homes, but many of us have nowhere to go."



Houses at Kampung Kuala Sungai Baru, the village near the site of the explosion, have been completely destroyed and residents sheltered at the relief centre have no homes to return to. — ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

Yangon-Penang direct flights set to boost medical tourism

GEORGE TOWN: The launch of Myanmar Airways International's (MAI) new direct flights from Yangon to Penang is expected to boost medical tourism, capitalising on Penang's reputation as a leading destination for world-class healthcare services.

Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia Aung Soe Win said the launch of the direct flights from Thursday represents a significant milestone, which brings mutual benefits to both nations.

"For the Myanmar community residing in Malaysia, this route offers a convenient and efficient travel option, strengthening family connections and business ties.

"At the same time, it opens the door for Malaysian travellers to explore Myanmar's rich cultural heritage, historical landmarks and breathtaking natural beauty," he said at the inaugural flight welcoming ceremony at Penang International Airport in Bayan Lepas on Thursday.

Penang Tourism and Creative Economy Committee chairman Wong Hon Wai, Tourism Malaysia deputy director-general (Promotion II) Samuel Lee and MAI CEO Tanesh Kumar were also present.

The flight, departing from Yangon at 2.45pm (local time) arrived in Penang at 6.15pm, where it was welcomed with a traditional water salute upon landing.

In his speech, Aung expressed gratitude to the Malaysian government and the people for their prompt and compassionate response in providing humanitarian aid and deploying search and rescue teams to Myanmar.

He added that the recent earthquake has caused a challenging time for the people of Myanmar, and Malaysia's swift support not only offered relief but also demonstrated a strong sense of solidarity during a time of need.

Meanwhile, Wong said the new direct Yangon-Penang route marks a major milestone in aviation connectivity between the two regions, creating promising opportunities for tourism, business and cultural exchange.

"We look forward to welcoming more visitors from Yangon to experience Penang's renowned attractions, including our world-class medical tourism services," he added. - Bernama

Move to train new grads for recruitment

KUALA LUMPUR: Employers will be allowed to use part of the levy collection for the purpose of recruiting new graduates for training platforms as a measure to reduce the unemployment rate among youths.

Human Resources Minister Steven Sim said the move, to be implemented in the second half of the year, is aimed at providing space for new graduates to gain work experience, making it easier for them to get jobs after training.

He said job seekers would complain that companies would not hire them because they had no experience. However, they could not gain experience if they were not given opportunities to work.

"So, we see the hiring of fresh graduates as a form of training," he said at a Hari Raya event at Wisma Perbadanan Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad (HRD Corp) on Thursday.

Also present were Human Resources Deputy Minister Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Mohamad, HRD Corp Board of Directors chairman Datuk Abu Huraira Abu Yazid and HRD Corp CEO Datuk Shahul Dawood.

The event was also attended by Yemen Ambassador Dr Adel Mohammad Ali BA Hamid, Turkiye Ambassador Emir Salim Yuksele and Founder and Advisor of Berjaya Corporation Berhad Tan Sri Vincent Tan. - Bernama

We are now a 7-day Paper

Subscribe now for daily read of theSun newspaper

Sex education for disabled children a delicate matter

➤ Educators say clear communication, accurate signs and visuals needed to avoid confusion as abstract topics like emotions, relationships and personal safety hard to convey

BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Sex education is often seen as a sensitive and overlooked topic, especially when it involves children with disabilities.

As such, educators have emphasised the need for inclusive and accessible sex education that empowers these individuals.

Education service officer under the Education Ministry, Wan Mohammad Fairuz Wan Mohammad, told *theSun* that there is a high level of difficulty in ensuring effective two-way communication with students who suffer from hearing impairments.

"When it comes to teaching sex education, there is a need for clear, accurate signs and visuals to avoid confusion.

"These students depend heavily on sign language, visuals and facial expressions. Abstract topics like emotions, relationships, and personal safety are especially hard to convey.

"Content must be developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive and communicated with care," he said.

He also emphasised the importance of parental support, adding that some parents may be uncomfortable with the subject.

"But these students, just like everyone else, have bodily rights.

"They need to understand how to recognise unsafe touch, how to protect themselves and how to feel confident in their autonomy,"

he added.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia professor of Psychology and deputy dean Prof Dr Siti Aisyah Panatik said children with cognitive impairments are often concrete thinkers who interpret information literally.

"This makes abstract ideas like privacy, love or consent harder to understand unless explained through visual or hands-on guidance."

Siti Aisyah said children with intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder need clear, consistent examples to grasp context based behaviour, such as when a hug is appropriate.

"They may also struggle with executive functioning, including impulse control and memory retention. That's why it's essential to use direct, simple language.

"Instead of using terms like 'violation,' say 'safe touch' and 'unsafe touch'."

"For example, 'A hug from mom when you're sad is a safe touch. Someone touching your private parts is an unsafe touch.' This makes it clearer for them," she said.

Siti Aisyah added that another key concept is body ownership - teaching children that their body belongs to them and they have the right to say "no" to unwanted touch.

"Identifying trusted adults and safe spaces is also important, and visual tools such as picture charts help improve understanding and recall.

"For non-verbal children or those with limited communication skills, augmentative

and alternative communication tools like picture boards and assistive tech can be invaluable.

"Role-play, visuals and real-life examples also reinforce how to respond to unsafe situations.

"We can teach children to ask for permission before physical contact and to respect boundaries. These practices help normalise the concept of consent," she said.

Sam Yoke National Type Primary School (Chinese) special education integration programme teacher Mohd Fadli Md Ali said communication is one of the biggest challenges.

"We often rely on physical objects or images to understand their needs because verbal communication isn't always effective," he said.

"Maintaining their focus also requires creativity and patience. Students with autism, for example, may drift into their own world.

"They get easily distracted, so we need to keep lessons structured yet flexible to help them stay engaged."

Johor Disabled Children Charitable and Cares Organisation founder and president Mohd Yahya Haidrus stressed the urgent need to develop sex education tailored to special needs children.

"A structured, accessible curriculum can help them recognise inappropriate behaviour, understand consent, maintain hygiene and form safe, respectful relationships - both online and offline," he said.

Although Malaysia has laws such as the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, Child Act 2001 and Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, enforcement remains a challenge.

"We need to implement these laws more effectively and educate parents and caregivers so they can advocate their children's rights," he said.



SEA OF BLOOMS ... Zaliha (third from left) admiring a flower bed at the pre-launch ceremony. - BERNAMAPIC

Flora fest in Labuan expected to attract 50,000 visitors

LABUAN: The state is set to transform into a land of colours in July when it hosts the Borneo Flora Festival 2025, showcasing 20 exhibition gardens featuring over 200,000 vibrant flowers and plants of diverse varieties and colours.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa said the event is expected to attract over 50,000 visitors from across Malaysia, with participants and tourists expected from neighbouring Brunei.

"This is not just a visual feast of beautiful flowers, but also a symbol of our nation's rich biodiversity and a potential value-added boost to Malaysia's horticulture industry," she said at the festival pre-launch ceremony at the Labuan International Sea Sports Complex Recreational Park yesterday.

She said the inaugural event would bring together floral enthusiasts, entrepreneurs and exhibitors from various parts of the country,

supported by key strategic partners that include hotels, land and sea transport providers, government agencies, local communities and media.

Zaliha said the festival is a significant initiative under the Labuan Tourism Task Force.

"While Labuan is known for its beaches and diving sites, more engaging programmes like the Borneo Flora Festival are needed to enhance the island's tourism appeal," she said. - Bernama

Floods hit several districts in Selangor

KUALA LUMPUR: Flash floods struck several districts in Selangor following continuous heavy rain early yesterday morning.

Selangor Fire and Rescue Department assistant director of operations Ahmad Mukhlis Mukhtar said Petaling was among the affected districts, with water rising to 0.61m in several areas, including Kampung Tengah in Puchong.

About 20 houses were impacted and six residents were evacuated to a temporary relief centre at the Putra Heights Mosque.

"In Kampung Seri Aman, Puchong, 30 houses were flooded, affecting 120 residents," he said in a statement yesterday.

In Kampung Padang Jawa, Shah Alam, 20 homes were also affected, with three individuals evacuated.

In Klang, flooding was reported in Taman Sri Jaya, leading to the evacuation of eight residents to a temporary relief centre at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Binjai.

In Hulu Langat, floodwaters affected Kampung Sungai Merab Luar, Kajang, prompting the evacuation of 15 people.

Shah Alam police chief ACP Mohd Iqbal Ibrahim said police personnel were deployed to monitor traffic from 7am yesterday in flood-affected areas, including Taman Sri Muda, Budiman Promenade, Perak Jubli Promenade, Jalan Perusahaan, Section 23, Jalan Mat Raji and Padang Jawa.

Other affected locations included Jalan Mantap in Section 25/129, the Federal Highway motorcycle lane at Km 15.3, and the surrounding area of Section 19.

The situation in Shah Alam and surrounding areas was under control, with water levels receding and traffic flow later returning to normal. — Bernama

Two killed in three-vehicle crash

JOHOR BAHRU: Two people were killed and three others seriously injured in a crash involving three vehicles at the Jalan Bestari junction.

Seri Alam police chief ACP Mohd Sohaime Ishak said the incident, which occurred at about 3pm on Thursday, involved a car and two four-wheel drive vehicles.

The deceased were identified as the driver of the car, a 58-year-old woman and a one-year-old child.

"The car driver, who was heading from Jalan Bestari towards Pekan Tiram, is believed to have turned right, causing a pickup truck coming from the opposite direction to crash into its right side.

"The impact caused the car to spin, leading to another four-wheel drive crashing into the rear of the vehicle," he said in a statement.

The woman was confirmed dead at the scene after being pinned to her seat, having suffered serious internal injuries.

"The toddler died while receiving treatment at Sultan Ismail Hospital due to severe head injuries," he added. — Bernama

Four Datuks among eight nabbed over Ponzi racket

■ BY ANDREW SAGAYAM
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Eight individuals, including four believed to hold the title "Datuk", have been arrested for alleged involvement in a Ponzi investment scheme known as "Pelaburan MBI", which was reportedly operating out of a neighbouring country.

Police also seized and froze assets linked to the scheme, worth over RM3.17 billion.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain said in a statement yesterday the arrests and asset seizures were made during a series of coordinated raids last month under an operation codenamed Op Northern Star, following a Red Notice alert issued by Interpol.

"The suspects, all Malaysians aged between 44 and 62, were detained on March 20 in an integrated effort by

Over RM3b in cash, funds in accounts and assets seized after series of raids conducted based on Interpol Red Notice

the Anti-Money Laundering Criminal Investigation team from Bukit Aman," he said.

"The operation was launched based on intelligence and information received through the Interpol Red Notice, which identified individuals suspected of international financial crimes.

"All properties and assets seized are believed to be proceeds from unlawful activities linked to the fraudulent investment scheme."

According to Razarudin, the Bukit Aman team carried out raids that resulted in the freezing and confiscation of assets under Sections

44(1) and 45(2) of the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001.

Among the seized items were 638 bank and stock trading accounts involving RM1.16 billion, 35 properties estimated to be worth RM2 billion, 10 luxury vehicles, 12 high-end wristwatches, large amounts of foreign and local currencies, along with assorted jewellery, luxury handbags, mobile phones, laptops and key documents.

Several documents believed to be directly linked to the scam were

also confiscated.

Razarudin stressed that police will continue to pursue all individuals and organisations suspected of laundering or possessing criminal proceeds from the scheme.

"We are committed to ensuring that no one escapes accountability. We will act decisively against anyone found to be benefitting from or abetting such fraudulent activities," he said.

A Ponzi scheme is a type of investment scam in which earlier investors are paid with funds collected from newer investors to create the illusion of high returns.

To attract more participants, such schemes typically promise substantial profits with minimal risk.

It is understood that the MBI scheme has been operating for several years and is believed to have defrauded thousands of investors with promises of high payouts.



Most of the detainees worked at nearby food outlets and factories.
— BERNAMAPIC

288 foreigners detained in Immigration Dept raid

KAJANG: The Immigration Department on Thursday detained 288 illegal immigrants suspected of committing various offences under the Immigration Act 1959/63 (Act 155) during a raid at Hentian Kajang.

Immigration deputy director-general (Operations) Jafri Embok Taha said those detained comprised

242 men and 46 women from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

The operation, which began at 7.30pm, involved the National Registration Department and Civil Defence Force.

A total of 785 foreigners and 250

locals were screened across six blocks of five-storey shop lots housing businesses and foreign worker accommodations.

"Those detained, aged between 18 and 60, are suspected of committing offences such as lacking identification documents, overstaying, violating pass

conditions, holding unrecognised cards and other breaches of Act 155," he said at the raid site.

Jafri added that most of the individuals worked at nearby food outlets and factories.

All detainees have been sent to the Semenyih Immigration Depot for further action. — Bernama

Maritime operation records 619 arrests, RM142m in seizures

MALACCA: Op Naga, a joint maritime enforcement operation now in its sixth year, has recorded 619 arrests along with forfeitures, fines and auction proceeds amounting to RM141,789,783.36.

Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) acting deputy director-general (Operations) Maritime Rear Admiral Mohd Zawawi Abdullah said the figures reflect the operation's progress from its launch in April 2019 up to December last year.

"It is hoped that the overall (success) of these arrests will deliver a return on

investment to the government throughout the implementation of Op Naga," he said in a statement issued after chairing the first Op Naga meeting for this year on Thursday.

Also present at the meeting were Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) assistant chief of staff for operations and training Rear Admiral Datuk Mohd Fadzli Kamal Mohd Mohalidin, Pahang MMEA director First Admiral Mazlan Mat Rejab, Customs Department deputy director Mohd Nasir Mustapha and Bukit Aman Marine Police Force deputy commander ACP Noor

Azman Jamal.

In the same statement, Mohd Zawawi announced that Op Naga has entered a new phase focused on more aggressive and coordinated tactical efforts to combat the encroachment of foreign fishing vessels into Malaysia's maritime zone.

He said Op Naga is not a routine operation but a comprehensive enforcement initiative involving multiple security forces and enforcement agencies.

Its objective is to counter maritime

intrusions — particularly in the South China Sea — and to clamp down on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.

"Cooperation from all parties, security forces and supporting agencies alike, is crucial in strengthening surveillance and proactive enforcement to combat maritime crimes.

"We want to send a clear message that Malaysia's waters are not to be trespassed at will," he said.

Op Naga is a large-scale collaboration involving 14 operational teams and

supporting agencies, including MMEA, police marine and air operations forces, Fisheries Department, Customs Department and RMN.

Also involved are the Royal Malaysian Air Force, Marine Department, Immigration Department, Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry, Eastern Sabah Security Command, Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia, Sabah Ports and Harbour Department, Sabah Parks and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission. — Bernama



FOLLOW **theSun** ON YOUTUBE
@/theSunMedia



SCAN ME



Laila said she has no immediate plans to return to Malaysia.

Malaysians abroad mark *Aidilfitri* in spirit

➤ Some return home while others stay overseas due to careers, studies or global adventures

■ BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: As the *Aidilfitri* celebration enters its second week, more *anak perantau* (Malaysians living abroad) are making their way back to their hometowns, returning to the places they call home.

While some make it a yearly tradition to reunite with family and relatives in Malaysia, others are unable to return due to work or study commitments.

For Nur Fatin Maricar, her career and academic obligations in Qatar have kept her in the Gulf state for about five years.

"Of course, the thought of returning to Malaysia is always at the back of my mind, but I've been kept busy in Qatar, juggling full-time work and completing my Master's degree," she told *theSun*.

Nur Fatin, 35, said her thesis focuses on Qatar, making it logical for her to remain there for now.

"I don't have any immediate plans to return and live in Malaysia anytime soon," she added.

Meanwhile, Muhammad Abu Ihsan Zulkaflee hopes to travel the world before eventually returning to Malaysia – ideally when he reaches retirement.

Fondly known as Abu by his family, he said working for a multinational company with a global presence allows him to move from one major city to another across continents.

"I'm currently based in Munich, Germany, and have worked abroad since 2022. I love travelling, so I consider myself lucky to be with a global company such as my employer," he said when met during the *Aidilfitri* celebration.

The fourth of five siblings, Abu shared that he had grown accustomed to living and working abroad, no longer feeling the homesickness he experienced during his early days overseas.

"I guess because of my age and the fact that I'm from Southeast Asia, some colleagues initially gave me attitude. But over time, I've learnt how to navigate such situations and now things are going smoothly."

"I have great colleagues in Munich who are very respectful of my values and culture, despite coming from a very different background," he said.

While he cannot return home as often as he would like, Abu makes it a point to be present for major family occasions.

"I came back just last year for my younger brother's wedding. But honestly, you don't really get the Hari Raya vibe when celebrating abroad – it just doesn't feel festive," he said.

Another Malaysian, Laila Soraya Mohamad, 35, who also calls Qatar home, shared that she has no immediate plans to return to Malaysia.

"I'm enjoying life at the moment and plan to explore other countries next while I still can," Laila said in a WhatsApp reply to *theSun*.

It was previously reported that a staggering 1.86 million Malaysians have left the country over the past five decades in search of new opportunities abroad.

theSun

"SUBSCRIBE NOW"

Finding the best newspaper subscription deal is no longer an arduous task.
Subscribe now to theSun, delivered to your doorstep.

Stay informed **7 days** a week starting from **1st April 2025**
with the latest news and trends

Get daily local, world, entertainment & sports stories in 32 Full Colour pages

only
RM1
per copy



SCAN TO SUBSCRIBE

**BEST
VALUE**

*Not inclusive of
vendor service charge

☐ 1-year subscription at normal price RM361* (361 issues)

☐ + RM70 administration fee to get **2nd year free** *Special offer only valid until 30th April 2025

☐ 1-year subscription (361 issues) for only RM300* (Normal price RM361)

☐ 6-month subscription (180 issues) for only RM160* (Normal price RM180)

PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Name: _____ NRIC: _____

Race: ☐ Malay ☐ Chinese ☐ Indian ☐ Others

Profession: _____

Commencement date: _____

Delivery Address: ☐ Residence ☐ Office

Postcode: _____ State: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile No: _____

E-mail: _____

DETAILS OF CURRENT NEWS VENDOR (IF ANY)

Vendor name: _____

Contact no: _____

For your convenience, you may call or send in your subscription particulars via any of the following:

Tel: KL/PJ 03-7781 4000, 03-7784 6688 (9.30am - 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Whatsapp No: +6018-292 9936

Post: P.O. Box 179, Jalan Sultan, 46720 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan

Attn: Subscription

Email: subscribe@thesundaily.com

*Terms & Conditions apply

Important note: SMCSB reserves the right to revise the price at any time without prior notice.

Pay to Maybank (Account number 508177700420). Account name : SUN MEDIA CORPORATION SDN BHD.

Enclosed is my payment of RM _____ payable to SUN MEDIA CORPORATION SDN BHD.
(Please WhatsApp your bank-in slip to 0182929936 or email to subscribe@thesundaily.com)

■ BY P. CHANDRA SAGARAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

IPOH: The Perak Sports Council (MSN) became the pioneer sports entity in the country to build hydrotherapy pools for the benefit of injured athletes to recover and get back into action.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad officiated the launching ceremony of the RM1.92 million high-technology facility at the council's premises here on Wednesday.

It is equipped with two pools, one hot and the other cold, both with a depth of 1.4 metres.

Each pool can accommodate ten to 12 persons.

"The facility is a strategic investment to enhance rehabilitation and recovery process through scientific and clinical methods," Saarani said in his speech.

"The pool is not only a facility to recover from injuries, but also to speed up rehabilitation of muscle tissues and place less pressure on joints.

"The process will improve physical strength and prepare athletes mentally to face competitions on local and international arenas."

Saarani also launched the new logo of the council, and presented mock cheques totalling RM125,000 for 45 sports associations and the Persatuan Sukan dan Rekreasi OKU Negeri Perak.

The grant is to help the associations in their administrative functions with the view to bolster the development of a dynamic sports ecosystem.

Meanwhile, Perak Education, Higher Education, Youth and Sports Executive Councillor Khairudin Abu Hanipah, who was

Perak Sports Council opens hydrotherapy pools for athletes

➤ Facility provides process to rehabilitate state's sports competitors to optimum level

present, said: "The pools are not additional facilities but provide an important rehabilitation process to enhance the athletes' performances to optimum level.

"They will also improve blood circulation so that the athletes will be able to return to training as usual.

"That the council became the first to build such pools goes to show the commitment by the state government to prepare sophisticated facilities in line with other international sports centres," he added.

He thanked the state government, as well as other departments and agencies such as the state Finance Office, state Economic Planning Unit and Public Works Department for their assistance in making the project a success.



Saarani (2nd left) says the pools would support recovery through scientific and clinical methods.
— P. CHANDRA SAGARAN/THESUN



Shaik Abdul Rasheed (5th left) launches the exhibitions with governors of central banks of Asean countries.

BNM Museum and Art Gallery unveils dual exhibition

KUALA LUMPUR: The Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Art Gallery (BNM MAG) opened two exhibitions, 'Numismatic Marvel: Minted History, Printed Heritage' and 'Palette and Pen', in conjunction with the 12th Asean Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting that took place here this week.

The exhibitions were launched on Wednesday, graced by the presence of the ten governors from Asean to symbolise regional unity and collaboration.

Present was BNM governor Datuk Shaik Abdul Rasheed Abdul Ghaffour.

'Numismatic Marvel' explores the evolution of currency, showcasing the world's first coin, the first banknote discovered in the seventh century, and cowrie shells which served as money as early as 2,000 BC.

It also brings to life the stories of 18 ancient kingdoms within Southeast Asia through coins and banknotes, alongside an 'Asean Marketplace' diorama depicting famous market spots today.

Visitors will also gain insights into the cultural exchanges that have shaped the region and have the chance to see some rare artefacts or

replicas from Asean countries.

'Palette and Pen' explores the dynamic interplay between art and literature, featuring over 150 artworks from Malaysia and the other countries.

Visitors will experience poetic texts merged with visual forms, music, film and illustrations that adapt literary works. There will also be some rare artworks from Asean countries on display.

"BNM MAG exhibitions are not just displays. They are gateways to understanding the meaningful stories and shared histories that bind Asean together through currency and arts," said gallery director Noreen Zulkepli.

"The 'Numismatic Marvel' and 'Palette and Pen' exhibitions prove that culture has the power to bridge gaps and create dialogues that resonate across time."

Both exhibitions feature photo-worthy corners and interactive activities for an engaging cultural experience for all visitors. Additionally, special merchandise inspired by the exhibitions will be available at the Museum Shop, allowing guests to take home a piece of the experience.

The exhibitions will be open to the public until October 12.

Firefighter departs on mission to ascend Mt Everest for charity

SELANG: Several well-wishers and members of the Fire and Rescue Department recently gathered at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport's departure terminal to see off Mohd Fakhru Munir Mohd Isa who is on a mission to scale Mount Everest.

The senior fire officer is undertaking the quest to ascend the world's highest peak for the "Mencari Hati Emas" 2025 Firefighters Charity Climbing Project.

He boarded a Malaysia Airlines flight to Kathmandu after undergoing intensive training sessions for three years, which included climbing Mount Kinabalu.

Last February, he successfully conquered Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, which is 5,895 metres above sea level.

The experience in Kilimanjaro helped him adapt to the altitude, especially in terms of breathing, appetite and sleep patterns.

"Upon arrival in Kathmandu, Nepal, I will do a few climbs first to get used to the altitude and avoid acute mountain sickness (AMS)," he said at the airport.

"I am expected to be in Nepal for two months before starting the climb to Mount Everest and will wait for the best weather and permission from the sherpa before continuing the climb to the summit."

He said the highland activities also helped him to adapt to high altitude climbing.

"I am physically and mentally ready to climb Mount Everest. This is the best time for me," he said.

Also present at the airport was the department's director-general Datuk Nor Hisham Mohammad.

The project aims to raise funds to help firefighters who were injured or killed in the line of duty, as well as those who are still in service.

It also aims to raise funds for kidney transplant surgeries and treatment, as well as heighten awareness among the public to become kidney donors, while raising educational funds for the Al Baghdadi Foundation.

Supported by the department's leadership, the project is organised by the Kosmopolitan Adventure Club, Gedung Penawar Sdn Bhd, and Kumpulan AL Baghdadi Group Sdn Bhd.

To raise funds, Mohd Fakhru Munir has also launched a charity sale of 1-kg fire extinguishers along with items such as T-shirts and durable hats.

"I hope Malaysians will continue to support this effort. Every contribution will benefit the firefighters who sacrifice themselves for the sake of national security. Together, we can bring about change," he said. Malaysians are invited to continue to support this noble effort for the welfare of firefighters and the spirit of volunteerism among the community.



Mohd Fakhru (centre) bidding goodbye while accompanied by Nor Hisham (right) at the departure lobby.



BLISSFUL
ESCAPE AMIDST NATURE
berjyahotel.com

BERJAYA
LANGKAWI RESORT
MALAYSIA

Fake accounts drove social media support for Duterte

Disinformation shaping election discourse

BANGKOK: A sophisticated network of fake social media accounts sprang to the impassioned defence of former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte after he was sent to the International Criminal Court to face charges over his bloody drug war.

Around a third of accounts discussing the arrest on X, mostly praising Duterte and lambasting the court, were fake, according to research shared with Reuters by a tech firm that termed it a "deliberate, organised" campaign.

The accounts acted with a sophistication that made them hard to distinguish from real people, it said.

Such aggressive proliferation of disinformation has now begun shaping discourse around the Southeast Asian nation's mid-term elections next month, said the company, Israel-based Cyabra, which uses artificial intelligence to identify fake accounts.

Its findings echo warnings from lawmakers and researchers in the Philippines and indicate increasingly sophisticated and "seamless" manipulation in a country dubbed "patient zero" for global disinformation.

In another, upcoming study also seen by Reuters, up to 45% of discussions about the elections – a showdown between President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and the Duterte camp – have been driven by inauthentic accounts, including sock puppets (online identity), avatars and bots.

"What we found in the Philippines isn't just disinformation spike – it's digital warfare," said Cyabra's chief executive, Dan Brahmy.

"These fake networks didn't just show up – they shaped the conversation," Brahmy said, adding the election-related accounts could garner around 54 million views.

"And if it's happening this visibly in the Philippines, it's naive to think it's not happening elsewhere too."

The firm said it did not trace the origins of the fake accounts. Spokespeople for the Marcos government and Duterte did not respond to requests for comment.

The level of "coordinated disinformation" seen in the Philippines was far above the typical 7-10% range of online conversations globally about "highly sensitive or polarising" issues, according to Cyabra, which has monitored similar campaigns worldwide.

It found that 16% of X accounts involved in discussions about a December election in Romania that were cancelled over accusations of Russian meddling had been fake.

The use of fake accounts and paid influencers for political operations is widespread in the Philippines, with political parties turning to "click armies" credited with helping sweep Duterte into the presidency in 2016.

Analysts saw the hallmarks of a troll army in the days after his arrest last month, when a surge of false claims swept social media, with supporters claiming the ICC had no jurisdiction, calling its move a "kidnapping" and harassing victims.

Cyabra, which says its machine learning can identify fake accounts through behavioural signals, analysed 1,890 profiles that generated more than 5,500 posts and comments on X about Duterte's arrest.

About a third were flagged as fake, responsible for more than 1,300 posts generating more than 7,000 engagements, including likes, comments and shares, potentially reaching more than 11.8 million views, the company said.

Cyabra said the accounts posted simultaneously, with coordinated activity spikes, identical content and promotion of the same hashtags and narratives.

"The content produced by the fake profiles revealed a clear objective: to bolster public support for Duterte and shape a sympathetic narrative around his arrest," it said. – Reuters

Legendary singer Titiek Puspa dies, aged 87

JAKARTA: Legendary singer, songwriter and actress Titiek Puspa breathed her last at the age of 87 in South Jakarta on Thursday.

"Grandma Titiek Puspa passed away at Medistra Hospital," said Puspa's manager, Mia.

In an Instagram post earlier, music industry commentator Stanley Tulung posted that Puspa suffered a stroke and collapsed at a television studio in Jakarta.

Culture Minister Fadli Zon described Puspa as an important figure whose contribution as a singer, songwriter and artiste laid a foundation for Indonesia's music history.

"Indonesia has lost a figure inseparable from its national music development for over six decades," he said.

He said Puspa's songs are "embedded in the nation's collective memory," and her works have inspired succeeding generations.

Puspa, whose real name was Sudarwati, was born in Tabalong in Kalimantan on Nov 1, 1937. Her career, which spanned over 60 years, started after she won a singing competition in Semarang.

She acted in several films such as *Inem Pelayan Sexy* (Inem the Sexy Maid, 1976), *Karmineem* (1977) and *Apanya Dong* (1983). She also performed in several theatre plays.

She was nominated for the Citra Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in *Ini Kisah Tiga Dara* (2016). She also received lifetime achievement awards from the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission and Anugerah Musik Indonesia.

Rolling Stone Indonesia magazine named her as one of "The Immortals", the 25 greatest Indonesian artists, in 2008, recognising her place among the greatest music legends in the country.

The magazine also selected two of her songs, *Kupu-Kupu Malam* (Night-time Butterflies) and *Bing*, a homage to famous comedian and actor Bing Slamet, among the 150 best Indonesian songs of all time in 2009. – Bernama

China pledges US\$137m for quake relief

BEIJING: China has pledged emergency humanitarian assistance of US\$137 million (RM608 million) to earthquake-stricken Myanmar, its embassy in the southeast Asian nation said.

The March 28 quake of magnitude 7.7 was one of Myanmar's strongest in a century, killing 3,645 people, as it toppled buildings, flattened communities and deprived many of food, water and shelter.

In a statement on Thursday, the Chinese embassy said the funds would provide urgently needed food, medicines and prefabricated homes, as well as pay for medical, epidemic prevention and disaster assessment expert groups.

Beijing has sent first-response teams, including dozens of medical workers, earthquake experts, field hospital workers and rescue dogs to alleviate the suffering.

China, which has sent more than 30 rescue teams to Myanmar, has said it would take part in disaster loss assessment and reconstruction.

The Chinese Red Cross has also provided about US\$206,000 in cash.

China's search-and-rescue team left Myanmar on April 9 upon completing its mission, the embassy said. – Reuters



Shan boys prepare to be initiated as novice monks at the Wat Ku Tao temple in Chiang Mai. – AFPIC

Shan boys ordained into monkhood

CHIANG MAI: Dressed in flowers, finery and makeup, scores of boys were paraded around a temple in Thailand before having their heads shaved in a symbolic start to a Shan monkhood ordination.

The Buddhist celebration is unique to the Shan people of northeastern Myanmar, hundreds of thousands of whom have moved to Thailand.

In shimmering robes, jewellery and colourful floral headpieces, more than 40 boys were carried around Ku Tao temple in Chiang Mai three times on relatives' shoulders, to the beat of gongs.

Monks shaved their heads with a razor, tufts of hair falling onto a lotus leaf.

"I've made this decision myself ...

I am glad and happy," said nine-year-old Donlaphat Lungta, whose parents migrated from Myanmar and was born in Thailand, where the Shan are known as *Tai Yai*.

The *Poy Sang Long* tradition, meaning, "ordaining beloved sons" is a vibrant three-day ritual held before the boys enter monastic life for between three days and one month – a rite of passage believed to bring merit and good fortune.

"Boys who take part in this tradition are considered students of Buddha. It is a meritorious event," said Chaiya Kongcheun, president of the Tai Yai Education and Culture Association, which works to preserve Shan culture.

The elaborate attire symbolises a prince from Myanmar's history,

explained Chaiya, while being carried on someone's shoulders represents power and a semi-divine status.

For Donlaphat's father, Nu Lungta, the ceremony was a valuable investment in his son's future.

The 40-year-old who works as a vegetable delivery driver estimated his spending on the celebration at 150,000 baht (RM19,057).

Around 50 of his relatives helped cover the cost, he said, watching a monk shave his son's head, adding that he would have delayed if he could not afford to celebrate appropriately.

"I hope he grows into a good man and helpful, never taking advantage of others," he told AFP.

Storms leave 100 dead in India, Nepal

NEW DELHI: Nearly 100 people have died since Wednesday after heavy rain lashed parts of India and Nepal, officials and media said, and the weather department has predicted more unseasonal rain for the region.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) had on Wednesday raised a hazard warning for the country, with heatwave in the western parts and thunderstorms in the eastern and central region.

In the eastern state of Bihar, at least 64 people died in rain-related incidents since Wednesday, said a senior official from the state's disaster management department.

Local media reported that more than 20 people have died in India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh.

In Nepal, lightning strikes and heavy rain killed at least eight people, National Disaster Authority officials said.

India's weather office expects heavy rain with thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds over central and eastern India till today.

The monsoon season usually begins in June in southern India, and summer months in the recent past have been marked by intense heatwaves. – Reuters

Mumbai attacks accused held in Delhi

► First such US transfer to India

NEW DELHI: A Pakistani-born Canadian businessman accused of helping orchestrate the 2008 attacks in Mumbai, one of India's deadliest, arrived in New Delhi on Thursday after the US extradited him in the first such transfer in a terrorism case.

Tahawwur Rana, 64, a doctor-turned-businessman, was extradited in connection with the attacks that killed more than 160 people.

"The National Investigation Agency on Thursday successfully secured the extradition ... after years of sustained and concerted efforts

to bring the key conspirator ... to justice," India's anti-terror agency, NIA, said in a statement.

He was accompanied by Indian security agencies after his petitions challenging the extradition were rejected by the US Supreme Court.

Rana's extradition is a "great success" of the diplomacy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday.

"It is the responsibility of the Indian government to bring back all those who have abused the land and people of India," he posted on X.

India formally sought Rana's custody in June 2020, and President Donald Trump

announced Rana's transfer in February this year during a joint press conference with Modi in Washington.

"The United States has long supported India's efforts to ensure those responsible for these attacks are brought to justice," State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce told reporters in Washington.

"He (Rana) is in their possession and we're very proud of that dynamic."

Rana was sentenced to 14 years in prison in the US in 2013 for providing support to Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistani group that India says was responsible for the 2008 attacks.

"As far as our record indicates, he (Rana) did not even apply for renewal for his Pakistani-origin documents for the last two decades,"

Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan told a media briefing on Thursday.

Rana's lawyer has said that Rana was a "good man and got sucked into something".

Over the course of three days in November 2008, 10 heavily armed attackers targeted major landmarks across Mumbai, including two luxury hotels, a Jewish centre and the main train station, killing 166 people.

India has said Pakistan's Lashkar-e-Taiba, which the State Department has designated a terrorist organisation, orchestrated the attacks. Pakistan denies supporting extremist activities.

Rana was also found guilty in June 2011 of conspiring to attack a Danish newspaper. - Reuters

Russia, US swap detained ballerina for smuggler

WASHINGTON: A Russian-American ballerina who was sentenced to 12 years in prison in Russia for donating to a charity aiding Ukraine landed in Washington on Thursday after being freed in exchange for a man the US had accused of forming a global smuggling ring to spirit sensitive electronics to Russia's military.

The exchange, which took place on the tarmac of an airport in Abu Dhabi, indicates significant detailed contacts between Kremlin and the White House.

Ksenia Karelina is a dual citizen whom a Russian court found guilty last year of treason for donating US\$51.80 (RM229) to a US-based charity providing humanitarian support to Ukraine.

When the plane carrying Karelina landed in Washington late on Thursday night, she was met by her boyfriend, UFC fighter Chris van Heerden, who hugged and kissed her as others around them cheered.

During the exchange, Arthur Petrov, a dual German-Russian citizen arrested in 2023 in Cyprus at the request of the United States after being accused of exporting sensitive microelectronics, was shown by Russian state television walking past Karelina towards a Russian plane, where he underwent medical check-ups.

"Petrov was exchanged for US citizen Ksenia Karelina, who also holds Russian citizenship and was sentenced to 12 years in a penal colony for treason in the form of financial assistance to a foreign state," said Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), the main successor to the Soviet-era KGB.

A US official told Reuters that special envoy Steve Witkoff brought up the case of Karelina with President Vladimir Putin during a call last week and that Putin's reaction was to "do something as a goodwill gesture because he wants to settle the war".

US talks with Russia and Ukraine about ending the war were to continue and Witkoff would travel to Russia soon, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio was also involved in the negotiations, and CIA Director John Ratcliffe brought the deal over the finish



line, a second US official said.

President Donald Trump publicly thanked Russia for the release of the ballerina. He said he had received a call advocating for her release from a friend, UFC Chairman Dana White.

"They released the young ballerina, and she is now out, and that was great. So we appreciate that. We hope that we're going to be able to make a deal relatively soon with Russia and Ukraine to stop the fighting," Trump told reporters. - Reuters

Australia set on buying nuclear subs

SYDNEY: Australia is buying nuclear-powered submarines as a deterrent, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said yesterday.

The US sale of three nuclear-powered submarines under AUKUS treaty is facing new doubts amid concern in Washington that providing the subs to Canberra may reduce deterrence to China.

The US Navy in September set a deadline of 2027 for its forces to be prepared for a conflict with China.

Reuters reported, citing US defence experts and documents, consternation that Australia's reluctance to even discuss using the attack submarines against China means transferring them out of the US fleet in 2032 could hurt deterrence efforts.

Campaigning for a May 3 election in the northern garrison town of Darwin, Albanese told reporters he was "confident about AUKUS".

"We're investing in our assets so that we're more secure. Obviously you have assets there as deterrents," he said.

"The great benefit of nuclear-powered submarines is their stealth capacity."

On comments by a US defence strategist that Australia was unwilling to talk about the offensive capability of the submarines, Albanese said it was not responsible "to talk up war".

Opposition Liberal Party leader Peter Dutton said Australia needed nuclear submarines because it is an island nation. - Reuters

China on alert for typhoon-like winds

BEIJING: Northern China is bracing for typhoon-like gales this weekend, with the Chinese capital postponing major sporting events, closing parks, suspending train services and warning its 22 million residents against nonessential travel.

A powerful current of cold air is forecast to sweep across northern provinces, bringing unusually powerful winds, China Central Television (CCTV) reported, with gusts in some areas potentially reaching 150 kph.

Beijing has issued its first orange alert in 10 years, the second-highest in a four-tier colour-coded system for gales.

Temperatures in Beijing could plummet by as many as 12° Celsius, CCTV said, with meteorologists warning that wind speeds may rival or exceed April records dating back to 1951.

Heavy snow is expected to blanket parts of Inner Mongolia as well as northeast China, while southern China could be hit by intense hailstorms, the state broadcaster added.

A half marathon in Beijing scheduled for tomorrow in which humanoid robots will race alongside humans in a showcase of advances in frontier technologies has been postponed to April 19.

Several train routes operating in Beijing and nearby areas were suspended. - Reuters

Panama agrees to American troop deployment

PANAMA CITY: US troops will be able to deploy to bases along the Panama Canal under a deal seen by AFP on Thursday, a major concession to President Donald Trump as he seeks to reestablish influence over the vital waterway.

The agreement, signed by top security officials, allows US military personnel to deploy to Panama-controlled facilities for training, exercises and "other activities".

The deal stops short of allowing the United States to build its own permanent bases on the isthmus.

But it gives the United States broad sway to deploy personnel to bases, some of which Washington built decades ago.

Trump has repeatedly claimed that China has too much influence over the canal, which handles about 40% of US container traffic.

His administration has vowed to "take back" control of the strategic waterway that the United States funded, built and controlled until 1999.

The United States has long taken part in military exercises in Panama.

However, a longer-term rotational force, such as the one the United States maintains in Darwin, Australia, could prove politically toxic for Panama's centre-right leader Jose Raul Mulino.

Mulino was in Peru, when he revealed that the United States had asked to have its own bases.

Mulino said he had told visiting Pentagon

chief Pete Hegseth that US bases, allowed under an earlier draft, would be "unacceptable".

He warned Hegseth: "Do you want to create a mess, what we've put in place here would set the country on fire?"

In the watered-down "Memorandum of Understanding", signed by Hegseth and Panama's security chief Frank Abrego on Wednesday, Panama won its own concessions.

The United States recognised Panama's sovereignty - not a given following Trump's refusal to rule out an invasion - and Panama will retain control over any installations.

Panama will also have to agree to any deployments. - AFP



Hudson River helicopter crash kills six

NEW YORK: A tourist helicopter plummeted upside down into New York City's Hudson River on Thursday killing all six people on board, including a Spanish family with three children and the pilot.

Agustin Escobar, an executive at Germany-based technology company Siemens, was among those killed, according to the *New York Times*, which cited unnamed law enforcement sources.

Video of the crash showed what appeared to be a large object plunging into the river, followed seconds later by what appeared to be a helicopter blade. Afterwards, emergency and police boats were seen circling around a patch of river where the helicopter was submerged, with only what appeared to be the aircraft's landing gear poking above the water's surface.

The Bell 206 chopper, operated by New York Helicopter Tours, departed from a helicopter pad and flew north over the Hudson River, New York Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said.

It turned south when it reached the George Washington Bridge and crashed minutes later, hitting the water upside down and sinking near Lower Manhattan, just off Hoboken, New Jersey.

Dani Horbiak, a 29-year-old resident of Jersey City, New Jersey, said she witnessed the crash from her home.

Horbiak said she called emergency services, which said it had already dispatched responders to the scene.

Divers helped remove the victims from the water. Four were pronounced dead at the scene, while two others were taken to area hospitals, where they died.

The airspace around Manhattan is crowded with helicopters offering tourists a bird's-eye view of the sights, with at least two dozen operators listed on tour website Viator. Many of the operators also offer helicopter shuttle services to airports.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said the tour helicopter was in a Special Flight Rules Area, which means no air traffic control services were being provided when it crashed.

The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board will investigate the crash. — Reuters

UN: 36 strikes in Gaza killed 'only women and children'

► 'Evacuation orders are actually displacement orders'

GENEVA: The United Nations said yesterday its analysis of 36 recent Israeli strikes in Gaza showed only women and children were killed and decried the human cost of the war.

The UN rights office also warned that expanding Israeli evacuation orders were resulting in the "forcible transfer" of people into ever-shrinking spaces in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

Office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani warned the military strikes across Gaza were "leaving nowhere safe".

"Between March 18 and April 9 there were some 224 incidents of Israeli strikes on residential buildings and tents for internally displaced people," she told reporters in Geneva.

"In some 36 strikes about which the UN Human Rights Office corroborated information, the fatalities recorded so far were only women and children," she said.

"Overall, a large percentage of fatalities are children and women, according to information recorded by our office."

Shamdasani cited an April 6 strike on a residential building of the Abu Issa family in Deir al Balah, which killed one girl, four women, and one four-year-old boy.

She highlighted that even the areas where Palestinians were being instructed to go in the expanding number of Israeli "evacuation orders" were also being subjected to attacks.



Palestinians mourn their loss at the site of a strike in Shejaia, Gaza City, on Thursday. — REUTERS/SPIC

"Despite Israeli military orders instructing civilians to relocate to the Al Mawasi area of Khan Younis, strikes continued on tents in that area housing displaced people, with at least 23 such incidents recorded since March 18," she said.

Shamdasani referred to a March 31 order by the Israeli military covering all of Rafah, the southernmost governorate in Gaza, followed by a ground offensive.

Israel has said its troops are seizing "large areas" in Gaza and incorporating them into buffer zones cleared of their inhabitants.

"Large areas are being seized and added to Israel's security zones, leaving Gaza smaller and more isolated," Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said on Wednesday.

"Let us be clear, these evacuation orders are actually

displacement orders, leading to displacement of the population of Gaza into ever shrinking spaces," Shamdasani said.

"Permanently displacing the civilian population within occupied territories amounts to forcible transfer, which is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and it is a crime against humanity."

In Gaza City, Gaza's civil defence agency reported that a pre-dawn Israeli airstrike yesterday killed 10 members of a family, including seven children, in the southern city of Khan Younis.

"Ten people, including seven children, were brought to the hospital as martyrs following an Israeli airstrike that targeted the al-Farra family home in central Khan Younis," said agency spokesperson Mahmud Bassal.

When contacted by AFP about the strike, the Israeli military said it was looking into the attack.

Witnesses reported intensive tank fire in Khan Younis.

The civil defence agency also reported two people killed in an Israeli strike that targeted a group of civilians in the Al-Atatra area in the northern city of Beit Lahia.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated his pledge to bring back hostages held in Gaza.

His comments came after US President Donald Trump suggested progress in hostage release talks, telling a Cabinet meeting on Thursday that "we're getting close to getting them back".

Israeli media reported yesterday that Egypt and Israel had exchanged draft documents on a ceasefire-hostage deal. — AFP

ENJOY A SEAMLESS READING EXPERIENCE.

Read our iPaper at <https://www.thesun.my/>



Or download **theSun** app
on the AppStore or Google Play





Penang unveils strategic response to Trump tariffs

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang state government will establish a tariff monitoring task force as part of its strategic response to the United States' recent tariff announcement.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the task force will function as a central coordination platform to track trade developments, engage with affected sectors and inform of responsive policy action.

The initiative will support Penang's efforts to collaborate closely with the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry and its agency, Malaysian Investment Development Authority.

"The recent announcement by the US to impose broad tariff on imports from Malaysia, rising to 24% in most cases, has raised serious concerns for the nation and particularly Penang.

"As one of Malaysia's most trade-dependent and export-driven states, Penang is directly exposed to the implications of these measures. Therefore, Penang outlines two key initiatives," he said in a press conference after a

State to set up task force to monitor situation, work with federal government on toolkit to help exporters and SMEs adapt

discussion on "Strategic Response to US Tariffs: Safeguarding Penang's Economic Interests" at the Penang Institute yesterday.

Another key initiative is for Penang to work with the federal government to develop a trade adaptation toolkit to help its exporters and small and medium enterprises navigate the terrain of tariffs, compliance and origin restructuring, he said.

The toolkit includes practical resources to help firms tap into alternative markets under regional trade agreements within Asean and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

"These measures are part of Penang's proactive approach to safeguard our economy, support

our businesses and maintain investor confidence. However, these are not overnight solutions. We will need time to finalise the mechanisms, consult with stakeholders and secure interagency alignment," Chow said.

He said Penang could not and should not face this challenge alone. "We call upon the federal government to support these state-led initiatives, particularly in ensuring that smaller firms, vendors, and export-reliant SMEs are not left to shoulder these shocks alone," he added.

Chow said a coordinated Asean stance could help preserve open supply chains, investor confidence and the spirit of rules-based trade.

"Penang is not retreating. We are realigning, recalibrating and reaffirming our role as a key economic driver for the nation. We

have faced storms before, and we will overcome this one as well, through collaboration, coordination and confidence in our people and industries."

Thirty-five participants took part in the roundtable discussion, including representatives from the state government, state and federal agencies, Bank Negara Malaysia, educational institutions, trade associations, chambers of commerce, SMEs and multinational corporations.

Meanwhile, InvestPenang chief executive officer Datuk Loo Lee Lian, at the same press conference, said there are no immediate concerns of massive unemployment or companies shutting down in Penang following the US tariff event the last 10 days.

"We are not at that stage yet," she said. — Bernama

MARC: Malaysia's growth to stay manageable despite US levies

KUALA LUMPUR: Sensitivity analyses by MARC Ratings Bhd show that the impact of US reciprocal tariffs on Malaysia would be manageable, with growth forecasts likely to be at the lower end of what is usually expected in a normal economic cycle.

Given the reciprocal tariff shock coupled with a decline in regional and global growth, the rating agency estimates that Malaysia's 2025 gross domestic product (GDP) could decrease by up to 1% per annum from MARC's prior baseline growth forecast of 5%.

Furthermore, the adverse effects of the trade war are likely to persist into 2026, it said.

To note, Malaysia's net exports to the US edged up to 4.4% of GDP in 2024, showing only mild fluctuations since the pandemic.

MARC said, because of this, uncertainty remains high, as forecasts could worsen if tariff retaliation continues for a long time and if the US holds separate, uncoordinated talks with other countries, creating complicated ripple effects.

"Nonetheless, Malaysia's overall GDP is buffered by its strong, domestically driven economic base, at almost two-thirds of GDP. Another mitigating factor is the semiconductor sector being partially exempted from the tariffs; this sector contributes more than a quarter of Malaysia's exports to the US."

MARC noted that Malaysia's position in the tariff negotiations is strengthened by its role as chair of Asean and its participation in multiple trade blocs, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

MARC pointed out that US President Donald Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act could be challenged under World Trade Organization rules, such as the Most Favoured Nation obligation, which requires equal tariff treatment for all countries.

Other rules also apply, including proper dispute resolution processes and proof that these broad tariffs are truly a national security issue, it said.

MARC said the global protectionism tends to follow a cyclical pattern, and the reciprocal adjustment of tariffs can lead to price convergence between countries, potentially improving trade relations.

"Economies hit by tariffs in the goods sector might react by focusing more on service industries, bringing in foreign investment, and expanding their operations around the world, including in the US, to find new customers and protect themselves from supply chain issues caused by changing trade protection rules.

"Apart from the intention to raise the growth of domestic US industries through reshoring, an additional subset of tariff policy is to increase US government revenues; it is likely that some achievement of these objectives to enhance the US economic position will eventually limit the extent of the ongoing trade war," MARC said.

Fibromat to use IPO proceeds to purchase new machinery, expand in-house capabilities

BY HAYATUN RAZAK
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Geotechnical solutions and specialist engineering company Fibromat (M) Bhd aims to raise RM17.8 million to fund the purchase of new machinery in conjunction with the transfer of the company's listing to the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia.

Fibromat was listed on the LEAP Market on May 30, 2019.

Of the total proceeds, RM7.6 million (42.6%) will be used for the purchase of machinery, RM6.7 million (37.8%) for working capital and RM3.5 million (19.6%) for listing expenses.

Fibromat's managing director and CEO Ng Kian Boon said the company plans to utilise the initial public offering (IPO) proceeds to purchase new machines to be installed in its factory at Rasa, Selangor.

"We intend to expand our offering of erosion control blankets by purchasing two units of stitching machines that can produce jute-based erosion control blankets and four units of multifilter bag dust collectors with ducting, which can be connected to the erosion control blanket stitching machine," he said at the company's IPO prospectus launch yesterday.

Ng said Fibromat also intends to expand its in-house capabilities to



From left: M&A Securities head of corporate finance Gary Ting, M&A Equity Holdings Bhd managing director Datuk Bill Tan, Ng Kian Boon, Fibromat chairman Professor Dr Fauziah Ahmad and executive directors Mohd Tarmim Sidek and Ng Chun Hou at the IPO prospectus launch.

include the installation of prefabricated vertical drains (PVD) – geosynthetics that are installed in soft ground for ground improvement purposes – by setting up a PVD installation team and purchasing five units of hydraulic excavators.

Furthermore, the company intends to expand its market presence in East Malaysia, where it first ventured into in 2017.

"We are now actively bidding for multiple work packages for the Sabah Pan Borneo Highway Phase 1B project worth RM15.7 billion

and the Sarawak-Sabah Link Road project worth RM7.4 billion in East Malaysia.

"We also actively bid for multiple work packages for the maintenance of state roads and infrastructure worth RM5.4 billion under Budget 2024," he shared.

Based on the enlarged share capital of 248.3 million ordinary shares and IPO price of 55 sen per share, Fibromat is expected to have a market capitalisation of RM136.6 million.

Fibromat's IPO encompasses a public issue of 32.3 million new

shares, representing 13% of its enlarged issued share capital as well as an offer for sale of 24.8 million existing shares, representing 10% of its enlarged share capital.

The public issue comprises 12.4 million new shares made available to Malaysians, 6.2 million new shares made available to the eligible parties under pink form allocations and 13.7 million new shares that will be allocated by way of private placement to identified Bumiputera investors approved by the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (Miti).

The offer for sale comprises 17.4 million and 7.4 million existing shares will be allocated by way of private placement to identified Bumiputera investors approved by Miti and to selected investors, respectively.

Based on a report by Independent Market Researcher, Fibromat captured a market share of 1.11% in 2024, based on the revenue contribution of RM36.8 million from the company's design and installation of geotechnical solutions segments for FY24 when compared to the Malaysian geotechnical solutions industry size of RM3.3 billion in 2024.

M&A Securities Sdn Bhd is the principal adviser, sponsor, sole underwriter and sole placement agent for Fibromat's IPO.



PETALING JAYA: Bin Zayed International (BZI), through its Singapore entity Bin Zayed (S) Pte Ltd (BZS), has acquired a 28.89% stake in Turiya Bhd, a prominent Malaysian conglomerate listed on Bursa Malaysia.

The acquisition by BZI is part of the company's commitment to Malaysia as its regional hub to drive investment into the region.

The deal, which was finalised on March 26, involved the purchase of 66,080,324 million ordinary shares from Khidmat Kejora Sdn Bhd. As a result, BZS became one of Turiya's largest shareholders.

The investment marks the first step for BZI into the Malaysian capital market as it seeks to embed its footprint in Malaysia and the region. The move also augments BZI's belief that there are abundant opportunities for value creation in Malaysia.

The acquisition is based on a capabilities-driven approach, even as Malaysia's economic growth is expected to maintain a steady trajectory in 2025, despite external headwinds such as uncertainties in US tariff policies and global trade dynamics.

Bin Zayed International (M) Bhd (BZIM) managing director Datuk Seri Dr Shamir Kumar Nandy said the acquisition reflects the company's confidence in Turiya's potential.

"Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it demonstrates our commitment to the long-term prospects of the Malaysian and Southeast Asian economies as a whole," he said in a statement.

Founded in 1961, Turiya operates in two primary sectors, namely real estate and specialty chemicals for the semiconductor industry. The company maintains an active presence across Malaysia and Singapore. It currently owns and operates Wisma Chase Perdana, an office building strategically located in Damansara Heights, Kuala Lumpur.

Turiya's subsidiary, Pyramid Manufacturing Industries Pte Ltd, plays a pivotal role in producing electroplating chemicals used in high-tech industries, including the electronics and automotive sectors.

The company's diversified portfolio and consistent revenue streams make it a

Bin Zayed acquires 28.89% stake in Turiya

Deal reflects UAE-based conglomerate's commitment to Malaysia as its regional hub to drive investment into region

compelling strategic partner for regional investors seeking stable, innovation-driven growth.

Shamir said BZI is here to build, to collaborate and to create lasting value across the region. "This acquisition is an important step in that journey and a signal of our continued belief in Southeast Asia as a global centre for opportunity."

The United Arab Emirates-headquartered conglomerate has been strategically expanding its regional presence, having established offices in Singapore and Malaysia last year.

The group's Malaysian office, located at Kuala Lumpur's iconic Tun Razak Exchange, is projected to anchor more than US\$2 billion (RM8.8 billion) in investments over the next five years, targeting high-potential sectors such as technology, renewable energy, infrastructure, and real estate.

The move to acquire a stake in Turiya is closely aligned with BZI's overall investment strategy across six high-impact sectors, namely real estate, sustainable and renewable energy, infrastructure and government concessions, technology, and financial services. The move



Bin Zayed International has been expanding its presence in Southeast Asia. The conglomerate opened offices in Singapore (above) and Kuala Lumpur last year, signifying its commitment to anchoring high-impact investments across the region.

will strengthen BZI's positioning globally while opening up further avenues for synergy and expansion across the region.

Turiya's strong fundamentals and presence in future-facing sectors make it an ideal partner as BZI looks to entrench its operations.

Despite recent internal and external geopolitical pressures, including tariffs imposed by the US Trump administration, Southeast Asia is viewed as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, with Asean having been projected to become the fourth-largest economy globally by 2030.

by 2030.

Against this backdrop, BZI is positioning itself as a key stakeholder in the region's transformation.

"This acquisition is just one of the many initiatives in the pipeline in this direction. Whether building infrastructure, empowering local enterprises, or supporting human capital through education, we aim to invest in ways that are financially sound, environmentally responsible, and socially inclusive," Shamir said.

Shangri-La Rasa Ria is Malaysia's first hotel with ISO 20121 for sustainable event management

KOTA KINABALU: Shangri-La Rasa Ria Kota Kinabalu has become the first hotel in Malaysia, and the first in the Shangri-La group, to achieve ISO 20121 certification for sustainable event management.

The resort is at the forefront of redefining event management practices while fostering a culture of responsibility, environmental stewardship and respect.

In managing 460 acres of land, including 64 acres of forest reserve and an 18-hole championship golf course, Shangri-La Rasa Ria remains steadfast in its mission to protect its pristine surroundings.

Through sustainability initiatives, the resort provides eco-conscious solutions that benefit both guests and the local community.

Shangri-La Rasa Ria general manager Fiona Hagan said the resort is proud to be pioneers in this movement, as this achievement reflects its deep commitment to creating events that leave a positive impact on the environment.

"Operating within a sprawling resort, surrounded by lush landscapes and wildlife, required more than just small adjustments – it demanded a relentless pursuit of change.

"The decision to pursue the ISO 20121 certification was a push to go beyond the status quo, to challenge long-held practices, and to embrace a vision of sustainability that would echo through every event we host and community we engage.

"We hope our achievement inspires more industry players to take meaningful steps to drive sustainable business events in the country," she said in a statement.



Shangri-La Rasa Ria remains steadfast in its mission to protect its pristine surroundings.

Shangri-La Rasa Ria's ISO 20121 certification focuses beyond just minimising waste and reducing carbon footprints for events. It represents a commitment to practice sustainability that integrates environmental, social and governance.

The resort actively collaborates with local suppliers and partners to empower small businesses and local artisans. This approach ensures that sustainability is not just a practice within the resort but a movement that benefits the people and ecosystems that surround it.

A key aspect of this commitment has been the partnership with Pacos Trust, a community-based organisation dedicated to supporting indigenous communities in Sabah.

The resort's journey towards sustainability began in 2012 with a simple yet impactful initiative.

The resort said the implementation of measures to address glass bottle waste and the elimination of all single-use plastics.

This early commitment reduced environmental impact and laid the foundation for the resort's broader sustainability practices, leading to its first ISO 14001:2015 certification for environmental management, followed by ISO 22000:2018 certification for food safety.

Earning the ISO 20121 certification involved a rigorous process of self-examination, setting measurable goals, regularly monitoring its performance, and continuously striving to improve sustainability efforts.

HLIB: Palm oil stocks likely to increase further this month

KUALA LUMPUR: Palm oil stocks will likely rise further this month on the back of weak crude oil prices, an absence of festive-driven demand and natural cyclical patterns.

In a note yesterday, Hong Leong Investment Bank Bhd (HLIB) said palm oil stock level rose by 3.5% month-on-month to 1.56 million tonnes in March, the first increase in six months due to output recovery.

It is, therefore, maintaining 2025-2026 crude palm oil (CPO) price assumptions of RM4,000 and RM3,800 per tonne, with a view that CPO price strength will dissipate when supply prospects recover.

HLIB said the escalating US-China trade tension will likely result in China turning to palm oil as part of its vegetable oil imports, but this may be weighed down by demand uncertainties.

Meanwhile, MIDF Amanah Investment Bank anticipates CPO prices will remain stable, hovering within the lower range of RM4,000–4,500 per tonne in April.

"This is typical in line with seasonal production trends. The pollination period ends in March with palm oil output expected to recover, which may lead to a rise in closing stock levels," it said in a note yesterday.

MIDF said the sector's top line will continue its uptick in the first half of 2025 in line with higher average CPO price assumptions. However, it added, margins are likely to remain under pressure due to the persistent elevated production cost because of high locked-in fertiliser costs in the second half of 2024. – Bernama

Hedge funds miss out on rally in American equities

NEW YORK: Global equities long/short hedge funds missed out on most of Wednesday's massive rally in US stocks, triggered by President Donald Trump's pause on some tariffs for 90 days, but managed to limit their losses during Thursday's sell-off.

The funds were up 0.98% on April 9, while the S&P 500 index soared 9.5%, according to numbers compiled by Morgan Stanley sent to clients.

US hedge funds posted higher gains, up 2.28%, but still underperformed the index.

These funds turned negative on Thursday as the S&P 500 slumped 3.5% and the MSCI World index fell 1.2% on market jitters of more risks ahead.

Global fundamental long/short funds tracked by Goldman Sachs' prime brokerage desk were down 0.7% while systematic ones fared better, down 0.2%.

US-focused funds led the losses on the day, returning -1.4%.

In a U-turn, Trump paused tariffs on Wednesday following a day when US Treasuries sold off and showed signs of dislocations as investors feared the new trade policy could drive the world's largest economy into a recession.

Stocks rallied and Treasury yields pared back some of their gains after the announcement.

The rally caught hedge funds with increased

short positions, or bets that stock prices would fall, by surprise.

Hedge funds underwent the largest selling on a net basis in almost 15 years a week ago, while also turning the most bearish since 2011, Goldman said.

With a reduced portfolio of long positions (betting prices would go up), hedge funds did not take much advantage of the rally, but also managed to avoid oversized losses in Thursday's plunge.

"Some of the activity (on Wednesday) was down to hedge funds covering their shorts after Trump's 90-day pause announcement," said Jon Caplis, CEO of hedge fund research firm PivotalPath.

According to Goldman, hedge funds bought US equities at the largest notional value in more than a decade on Wednesday, due to short covering in macro products.

Still, equity hedge funds are outperforming the S&P in 2025.

Year-to-date through April 10, global fundamental long/short funds were down 4.3%, Goldman said. The S&P 500 dropped 10.4% in the same period.

Morgan Stanley's numbers also showed that managers continued to cut leverage in their portfolios. Amid uncertainty around tariffs, hedge fund managers have slashed positions to reduce risk. – Reuters

Dollar and stocks tumble while gold hits record high

➤ China slaps 125% duties on US goods, Trump admits trade war 'cost'

HONG KONG: The dollar tumbled with most stocks while gold hit a fresh record high as panic gripped markets again yesterday, while China retaliated against Donald Trump's latest tariff blitz against the world's number two economy.

The US president's decision to delay crippling duties for 90 days sparked a frenzied scramble for equities that had been beaten down since his "Liberation Day" announcement unleashed a global panic.

However, the realisation that nothing had been resolved, coupled with Trump's decision to double down on his battle with economic superpower China, fuelled another bout of selling of US assets.

The dollar tanked against the yen, euro, pound and Swiss franc – investors dropping what is usually considered a key safe haven currency as they look to unload US risk assets.

Gold-standard Treasuries were also under pressure amid speculation that China was offloading some of its vast holdings in retaliation for Trump's measures.

The weaker dollar and the rush for safety has also sent bullion to a fresh record high above US\$3,220.

Chinese President Xi Jinping urged the European Union yesterday to join Beijing in resisting "unilateral bullying" by Washington,

state media said as he met Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.

Shortly after, Beijing said it would ramp up levies against the United States to 125%, compared with the 145% China faces.

It added that Washington's moves defied "basic economic laws and common sense" and "seriously violates international trade rules" but said it would "ignore" future US hikes.

After blockbuster rallies on Thursday in response to the 90-day tariff pause, markets across the region were back deep in negative territory at the end of a highly volatile week.

Tokyo shed 3% – a day after surging more than 9% – while Sydney, Seoul, Singapore, Wellington and Bangkok were also in the red.

However, Hong Kong and Shanghai rose as traders focused on possible Chinese stimulus measures.

Beijing said earlier yesterday it would implement a moderately loose monetary policy in a bid to reassure investors.

London and Paris rose in the morning but Frankfurt reversed early gains.

There were gains in Taipei and Ho Chi Minh City stocks as the leaders of Taiwan and Vietnam said they would hold talks with Trump.

Manila, Mumbai and Jakarta also rose.

The generally downbeat mood came after losses on Wall Street, where the S&P 500 lost 3.5%, the Dow 2.5% and the Nasdaq 4.3%.

That ate into the previous day's gains of 9.5%, 7.9% and 12.2% respectively.

"There has been a pronounced 'sell US' vibe flowing through broad markets and into the classic safe-haven assets, with the dollar losing the safe-haven bid put in over the past week,"

said Pepperstone group's Chris Weston.

He added that the moves had "the feel of repatriation flows by foreign entities, with many re-focused on the idea that Trump's reluctant pause on tariffs was due to increased system risk and migrating capital away from Ground Zero".

With Treasuries being sold off, sending their yields higher and making US debt more expensive, there is a fear of a bigger calamity down the line.

Michael Krautzberger at Allianz Global Investors wrote: "A fall in the dollar could be a sign that markets are questioning its status as a global reserve currency."

"Looking forward, the big fear is that the response to the additional US tariff threats in recent days, especially on Chinese goods, is the opening salvo from the big foreign holders of US Treasuries in tariff-hit countries, as they sell their US Treasury holdings."

"A trade war morphing into a capital war would represent a significant escalation in recent tensions."

Trump says he wants to use tariffs to reorder the world economy by forcing manufacturers to base themselves in the United States and for other countries to decrease barriers to US goods.

While he acknowledged on Thursday there would be "a transition cost and transition problems", the Republican dismissed the global market turmoil and insisted that "in the end it's going to be a beautiful thing".

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick also posted on social media that "the Golden Age is coming. We are committed to protecting our interests, engaging in global negotiations and exploding our economy". – AFP

Taiwan in first group for US tariff talks: Lai

TAIPEI: Taiwan was in the first group for trade negotiations with the US, the island's President Lai Ching-te said yesterday, as he seeks to shield its exporters from a 32% tariff.

US President Donald Trump earlier this week postponed punishing levies on multiple trade partners, including Taiwan, for three months after trillions of dollars were wiped off global markets.

He has maintained a 10% blanket duty on most countries, but paused plans for steeper measures on others, except China.

"We want everyone to know that Taiwan is on the first negotiating list of the US government," Lai told a gathering of machinery and equipment manufacturers.

"The government will be well prepared to negotiate with the United States to ensure our national interests and protect the future development of the industry."

Lai said Taiwan had received a "positive response" to the "countermeasures and plans" it had sent to Washington.

Taiwan currently faces a 10% tariff and its negotiators would seek to strike a deal with Washington to bring that down to zero, Lai said.

Negotiators would also discuss boosting procurement and investment in the United States and eliminating non-tariff and other trade barriers.

Taiwan's trade surplus with the US is the seventh highest of any country, reaching US\$73.9 billion (RM327 billion) in 2024. – AFP

Fed official warns of 'marked increase' in inflation risks

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump's tariff policy has caused a "marked increase" in the risks of higher inflation and slower growth, a senior Federal Reserve official said yesterday, adding he would prioritise tackling inflation.

The US president's stop-start tariff rollout has roiled global markets and tanked consumer confidence, although it has not yet fed through into higher prices for consumers.

"Relative to earlier this year ... it appears as though we have seen a marked increase in the upside risks around inflation along with elevated downside risks to the outlook for employment and growth," Kansas City Fed president Jeff Schmid told an event in the city.

"Based on what I have heard from our business contacts, there is a growing possibility that in setting policy the Fed will have to balance inflation risks against growth and employment concerns," he said.

"When contemplating this balance, I intend to keep my eye squarely focused on the outlook for inflation," added Schmid, who is a voting member of the Fed's rate-setting committee this year.

Financial markets see a roughly 80% probability that the Fed will make no change to its interest rate next month, holding it at between 4.25% and 4.5%, according to data from CME Group. – AFP



An electronic board showing Shanghai and Shenzhen stock indices on a pedestrian bridge at the Lujiazui financial district in Shanghai. – REUTERS/SPIC



Prada to buy Versace for €1.25 billion

► The two Italian fashion labels have starkly different styles

MILAN: Prada said on Thursday that it had reached a deal to buy Versace for €1.25 billion (RM6.11 billion), building a new Italian fashion powerhouse and hoping to insert much-needed "spark" into its smaller, flashier rival.

The much anticipated acquisition, from US group Capri Holdings, will create a group with revenues of over €6 billion that could better compete with giants such as the French conglomerates LVMH and Gucci owner Kering.

"We are delighted to welcome Versace to the Prada Group and to build a new chapter for a brand with which we share a strong commitment to creativity, craftsmanship and heritage," Prada Group chairman Patrizio Bertelli said.

In 2018, Capri paid €1.83 billion to acquire Versace, which was previously owned 80% by the Versace family and 20% by the American investment fund BlackRock.

But amid declining sales it sought a buyer, opening exclusive negotiations with Prada at the end of February.

Capri, which also owns Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors, had to accept a reduced price from Prada amid the market turmoil caused by US President Donald Trump's tariffs.

The *Financial Times* newspaper had reported that the price was initially expected to be about US\$1.6 billion but had been negotiated downwards in recent days.

Last month, Donatella Versace stepped down as creative director after more than 30 years, a move widely seen as a prelude to the accord.

She took over in 1997 following the murder of her older brother Gianni, who founded the label in 1978.

But on April 1, she was replaced as creative director by Dario Vitale, who has overseen soaring sales at Miu Miu, Prada's sister brand targeting a younger clientele.

Donatella will now serve as Versace's chief brand ambassador.

While still a label associated with the jet set, some of Versace's lustre has faded in recent years.

Capri had expected turnover to fall to US\$810 million during its 2025 fiscal year, according to Prada, down from US\$1.03 billion a year earlier.

By contrast, Prada, under the creative helm of Miuccia Prada, the 76-year-old granddaughter of group founder Mario, is in robust health.

Despite a global slowdown in luxury good sales in recent years, Prada's net profit jumped 25% to €839 million last year, on revenues that grew 15% to €5.4 billion.

Andrea Guerra, Prada's group chief executive, said yesterday that Versace had "huge potential" but warned there was work to do.

"The journey will be long and will require disciplined execution and patience," he said.

The deal, funded through €1.5



A man walking by a Versace store in New York. – REUTERS/PIC

billion of new debt, is expected to close in the second half of 2025.

For its part, Capri said the sale would allow it to step up investments in Michael Kors and strengthen its balance sheet.

The two fashion labels have starkly different styles, with Versace's exuberance contrasting with Prada's sophisticated minimalism.

Prada said its new acquisition "constitutes a strongly complementary addition" to its portfolio and promised to "maintain its creative DNA and cultural authenticity".

"I don't think we need to change the brand, to revolutionise it," Prada's marketing director, Lorenzo Bertelli, told analysts during a conference call.

"We need to just evolve it... all together, they're going to make, hopefully, a huge spark and bring back Versace to be a huge success."

The deal bucks the trend of recent years, which has seen major names in Italian fashion such as Gucci, Fendi, and Bottega Veneta fall under the control of their French competitors. – AFP

Flows into Indian equity mutual funds slump to 11-month low in March

MUMBAI: Flows into India's equity mutual funds moderated to 11-month low in March, falling sequentially for the third straight month, hurt by lower inflows into sectoral and thematic funds.

Net inflows into equity mutual funds fell 14.4% month-on-month in March to approximately 251 billion rupees (RM12.9 billion), the Association of Mutual Funds in India's (AMFI) data showed yesterday.

The moderation in March follows a sharp 26% sequential decline in February, the steepest monthly drop since April 2023, as heightened volatility dampened sentiment.

Flows into mutual funds that focus on particular sectors or themes, which were the top performers in fiscal year 2025,

declined 97% year-on-year in March after a 37% fall in February.

AMFI attributed the drop to temporary caution due to market volatility triggered by tariff concerns.

Large-cap funds saw a marginal drop in inflows to 24.79 billion rupees in the reported month, while mid- and small-cap funds grew 0.2% and 10%, garnering 34.15 billion rupees and 40.92 billion rupees, respectively.

The segments had confirmed a technical bear market in February.

"Some investors are capitalizing on deep-value opportunities in the small- and mid-cap segments, while others are opting for the relative stability of large-cap stocks," said Devang Kabra, partner and co-fund manager at Wallfort PMS.

While inflows moderated, mutual fund investors bought India's equity mutual funds for the 49th straight month.

Analysts expect the positive momentum to return as the recent drop offered attractive opportunities for investors and on India's perceived well-positioning compared to emerging markets peers amid the ongoing global trade adjustments.

The benchmark Nifty 50 index rose 6.3% in March, ending its longest monthly losing streak in nearly 30 years.

The small-cap and mid-cap indexes gained 9.5% and 7.8%, respectively.

Contributions via Systematic Investment Plans decreased 0.3% to 259.26 billion rupees in March, while the number of new SIP accounts fell to 81.1 million from February's 82.6 million. – Reuters

Indonesia's social security fund eyes doubling equities exposure

JAKARTA: Indonesia's US\$48 billion (RM212 billion) social security fund BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, the country's largest institutional investor, aims to boost the share of local equities in its portfolio to up to 20% within three years, with a recent market crash creating room to invest in undervalued shares, a top official told Reuters yesterday.

Edwin Ridwan, the agency's director of investment development, said that since the Indonesian market slump, the state-owned fund has been increasing its investment gradually in stocks with big market capitalisation.

"These are the conditions where people are selling, if we look at history ... whenever the market overshoots, people are selling, it's the best time to buy," he said in an interview, referring to financial crises of 1998 and 2008 and the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The window has started to open up for us to increase our exposure to equities, because we need volume, we need liquidity, and with everybody selling, that liquidity is being provided."

BPJS Ketenagakerjaan currently has about US\$4.8 billion of assets under its management directly in the stock market or through mutual funds, the company said.

The largest portion is invested in bonds, and the rest in deposits and other instruments.

Indonesia's stock market tanked when it reopened on Tuesday after an extended holiday break, triggering a 30-minute trading halt. – Reuters

TikTok fuels ByteDance revenue as US ban looms

SAN FRANCISCO: TikTok's international revenue boomed last year as China-based parent ByteDance faced a deadline to sell the app or have it banned in the United States, *The Information* reported on Thursday.

The technology news outlet cited an unnamed person with knowledge of ByteDance financial data as saying the firm's revenue from international operations, mostly TikTok, soared 63% to

US\$39 billion (RM172.6 billion) in 2024.

ByteDance did not immediately reply to a request for comment on the data.

Money taken in by TikTok last year accounted for a quarter of ByteDance's overall revenue, which reached a new high despite China operations slowing, according to the report.

ByteDance's profit grew 6% to US\$33 billion in 2024, *The Information* reported.

US President Donald Trump last week

extended an April 5 deadline for 75-days for TikTok to find a non-Chinese buyer or face a ban in the United States.

Trump said on Sunday there was a deal on the sale of TikTok, but tariffs recently imposed by Washington on Beijing derailed it.

ByteDance, while confirming recently that it was in talks with the US government toward finding a solution, warned that there remained "key matters" to resolve. – AFP

TOP SHOTS OF THE WEEK



CYBERSECURITY PACT ... Bank Negara Malaysia governor Datuk Seri Abdul Rasheed Ghaffour (left) and Bank of Thailand governor Dr Sethaput Suthiwartnarueput exchanging documents after signing a memorandum of understanding to increase cooperation on cybersecurity and efforts to combat digital fraud in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.



SHOP AND WIN ... From left, Queensbay Mall assistant marketing communication manager Vennila Velafa; Gurney Plaza, Queensbay Mall and East Coast Mall general manager Peter Chan; Tourism Malaysia Northern Region director Abdul Hadi Che Man; Capitaland Investment managing director, Retail Malaysia, Selina Ng and Queensbay Mall marketing communication manager Patricia Chin at the launch of the 'Shop Smart Win Smart' campaign at Queensbay Mall in Penang on Wednesday.



NEW ARRIVALS ... GMT Plus 8 Sdn Bhd has taken delivery of its first two units of Scania Super trucks. GMT Plus 8 director Lee Zi Yang (left) is shown receiving a mock key from Scania Southeast Asia dealer director of East Region Rini Sabir Mässgård at a ceremony to mark the handover of the trucks in Johor Bahru on Tuesday.



STRATEGIC ALLIANCE ... OnInfinity by OneDegree chief operating officer Rex Zhang (left) and SlowMist partner and chief product officer Keywolf announcing a partnership between the two companies during the Hong Kong Web3 Festival this week. OnInfinity by OneDegree is a Hong Kong-based provider of digital asset insurance and risk management solutions. SlowMist is a China-based blockchain security firm.



NEW LANDMARK ... TA Global Bhd is introducing The Arden, a first-of-its-kind Grade-A strata office suite poised to transform Bandar Sri Damansara's corporate landscape. At the show gallery of The Arden in Kuala Lumpur yesterday are, from left, TA Global sales and marketing director Ken Choy, chief operating officer Lee Yen Foong and senior manager Mohd Saiful Mohd Tajudin.



STAR STRUCK ... A visitor admiring exhibits by Berjaya Starbucks Coffee Company Sdn Bhd during an event at which the company was recognised by the Malaysia Book of Records for having the most number of Bearista art pieces in a community project, featuring 25 life-size displays at Pavilion Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur. — **ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN**



COOL AID ... Volunteers from the Ihsan Madani Squad installing fans at the Putra Heights Mosque for the comfort of residents affected by the gas pipeline blast who were being temporarily housed there earlier this month. — **ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN**



REFRESHING BEVERAGES ... A Ramadan bazaar trader selling a variety of flavoured drinks during the fasting period last month. — **ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN**



FESTIVE FAVOURITE ... A *lemang* trader tending to the bamboo-cooked glutinous rice treat at a stall in Gombak, Selangor. — **AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN**



CONTENT KITTIES ... A pair of cats rescued from the Putra Heights area after the recent gas pipeline fire incident being housed at a temporary shelter in a temple. — **ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN**



CONFLICT EXODUS ... Palestinians evacuating along the coastal al-Rashid road linking Gaza City in the north and Nusseirat in the central part of the Palestinian territory after Israel announced the launch of a new ground offensive on April 4. — **AFPPIC**



REVELRY BOOM ... Children using tree-trunk cannons to create an explosive sound during the Kuluwung Festival, a two-day traditional event held annually between two villages on opposite sides of a river in Balekambang, West Java. — **AFPPIC**



HEALING SIGHT ... A building in the neighborhood of Zacamil in El Salvador has drawn attention for its feature of a mural titled 'Temples Mayas' as part of an initiative aimed at strengthening social ties, breaking mental barriers and improving quality of life through art. — **AFPPIC**



INSTANT LAKE ... Frankfort district residents in the US state of Kentucky evacuating in a canoe as floodwaters inundate the area on April 6. — **AFPPIC**



Journey of forgiveness

IN my recent Hari Raya social media post, I wrote: "On this blessed day, whether you are asking for forgiveness or giving it, remember to forgive yourself too."

This simple reminder sparked numerous responses, revealing how many of us struggle more with self-forgiveness than with forgiving others.

While Malaysia's *Eid* celebrations create a structured opportunity for personal, family and communal forgiveness, the journey to forgive oneself often remains a solitary and unguided path.

As a somatic psychotherapist, I have witnessed how our body reacts when we harbour resentment towards others; we may feel it as tension in our shoulders or a knot in our stomach.

However, when we cannot have compassion for ourselves, the physical manifestation is more profound; showing up as chronic pain, disrupted sleep or a persistent feeling of heaviness.

What makes internal reconciliation so challenging? Unlike the cultural rituals that guide us in forgiving others, we have few roadmaps for extending this same grace inward. Asking for forgiveness needs to come with an apology, and that in itself requires self-reflection and honesty. It is not enough to just say "I'm sorry".



LIFE, UNSCRIPTED
BY NAHALANA T. KRESHNAN

Turning inwards

The late psychiatrist Dr Aaron Lazare noted that a good apology needs to have four essential components:

➔ **Acknowledging your mistake:** Be specific, not vague. State clearly what your mistake or fault was.

➔ **Explaining the scenario and what actually happened:** Do not give excuses; state the facts as they were.

➔ **Expressing remorse:** Do you feel shame, regret or guilt? Say it.

➔ **Offering to make amends:** What does the injured party need? Restitution? Redoing a project? Working extra hours? Ask how you can make amends.

It is not enough to say "sorry" or "sorry, I hurt you" – you need to say, "sorry, I offended you when I slammed the door in your face" or "sorry, I hurt you by speaking about you behind your back".

If you are resisting making the apology, is it fear or self-righteous indignation? Maybe you need to self-reflect and/or speak to a trusted and objective person to get a different point of view.

The same principles that apply to seeking forgiveness from others should guide our path to self-forgiveness. We may accept an apology from a friend who made a mistake but berate ourselves endlessly for similar actions. Why is self-forgiveness so difficult?

Did we learn it from society, religion or family?

The cost

Holding onto self-blame and shame exacts a heavy toll. Often, shame is a large component that many struggle with when it comes to self-forgiveness.

Shame can come from the smallest of actions or words, yet we carry them as defining moments of our character.

Research shows that inability to forgive oneself is linked to depression, anxiety, substance abuse and even physical health problems.

What we resist persists and the energy spent maintaining self-judgement drains us of the very resources we need to make positive changes.

I have worked with clients who spent decades punishing themselves for past choices, far beyond what anyone else would expect. Those internal prisons serve no one – not the person suffering, nor those they may have harmed.

If we apply Lazare's framework to ourselves, this is how self-forgiveness should be:

➔ **Acknowledge your mistake to yourself:** Be specific about what you did, without minimising or exaggerating. "I lied about my qualifications in that interview" rather than "I'm a terrible, dishonest person".

➔ **Understand the context:** What was happening in your life? What pressures were you under? Not as excuses but as important context for understanding your actions with compassion.

➔ **Feel the remorse:** Allow yourself to fully experience the regret, without trying to bypass it.

➔ **Make amends to yourself:** This is perhaps the most overlooked step. How can you heal the part of you that feels damaged by your actions? What wisdom have you gained?

Forgiveness, both of others and ourselves is not a one-time event but needs practice. Consider writing a letter to yourself or even looking in the mirror and saying, "I forgive you".

The gift

When we forgive ourselves, we model compassion for others. We demonstrate that one's worth is not determined by perfection but by the courage to acknowledge mistakes and the willingness to grow from them.

Self-forgiveness can be difficult – just start by being willing or by having the intention. As you practise self-forgiveness, you may feel lighter emotionally and have a greater capacity to connect authentically with others. This is the true gift of forgiveness.

Nahalana T. Kreshnan is a somatic psychotherapist and life and executive coach. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

Trump's climbdown will be turning point in presidency

COMMENT

HE blinked. Not since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 has an American president engaged in such a high-risk, high-stakes game of chicken with the future of his nation and the world.

In that lost age of American leadership, John F. Kennedy faced down the Russians – and won. This week, President Donald J. Trump tried to face down China, the European Union and, most foolhardy of all, the capital markets. He lost.

Trump may or may not have thought himself playing some grandiose global poker match, but, in any case, he folded.

He is left with what remains of his credibility in shreds, an unwelcome reputation as being even more unpredictable than previously assumed (a perversely awesome achievement), and the two largest economies in the world remain locked in something even worse than a trade war.

The capital markets have bounced back, but from a brief but vicious bear market. Confidence has been drained from the world economy, and investors, businesses and households remain in a state of post-traumatic stress, despite the palpable relief.

Some, like Trump's cult apostle Scott Bessent, installed as treasury secretary, claim with an impressively straight face that this was all some grand plan by Trump to "goad" the Chinese into a corner and force them into a deal.

Implausible as it certainly is, this fanciful account is contradicted by the president himself, who wandered out of the White House to shrug his capitulation off.

The president freely conceded that he had changed course because of the reaction in financial markets, especially US Treasury bonds: "You have to be flexible... I thought that people were jumping a little bit out of line. They were getting yippy, a little bit afraid."

The "Trump put", in other words – a policy correction called forth by market volatility and observed during various crises in his first term – is still operational. It is also, evidently, still

required to save the world economy from the ever-present danger of some blunder that would result in a Trump slump.

The "bond vigilantes" administered some strong discipline on the White House in recent days, and, after some windy reluctance, the president eventually meekly complied. If only he were so obedient to the courts and the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

Trump is a man so lacking in self-awareness that his reflections on his tariff fiasco carry a satirical air. "No other president would do what I did," he proudly declared.

And he was right. No other president in history would have been so foolish. He has deliberately taken an economy in rude health and subjected it to the punishment he has meted out since he returned to office.

The 45 men who served before Trump had to face wars, depressions, inflation, riots and countless crises but none has so deliberately unleashed such harm on the living standards of Americans and on the world economy.

Nor would they have been so asinine as to tell the Chinese leadership to call them first for negotiations, at the same time as they were bragging that world leaders were queuing up to "kiss my ass".

President Xi Jinping, Trump also observed, correctly, is a proud man who wants to find a way to strike a deal. Why, then, insult him? Why let the vice-president scorn "Chinese peasants"?

China – unlike Denmark, Panama or Ukraine – is far too big to be pushed around by the US. It will lose perhaps US\$500 billion (RM2.23 trillion) in export earnings soon, but that is also half a trillion dollars that will not be lent to the US Treasury to keep the federal government afloat. Such is globalisation. Such is the reliance of America on borrowed money and a vigorous world economy to fund its giant twin deficits: the federal budget and international trade.

"Panicans", Trump called those who expressed doubt about the ability of tariffs to rebalance these deficits and make America wealthy again. These sirens hopelessly appealed to reason and the political damage he was



Confidence has been drained from the world economy, and investors, businesses and households remain in a state of post-traumatic stress, despite the palpable relief. – **REUTERSPIC**

causing to Republicans. They were being rational. In the end, though, it was he who panicked, and for that small mercy, all should be grateful.

We have known for some considerable time that Trump is not always a man of his word. We also know him to be a menace to constitutional governance, continually testing the limits of his powers and pushing his luck.

He has seen off multiple legal challenges, packed the Supreme Court, appointed the most unworthy and under-qualified cabinet in history, captured the Republican Party and converted it into a personality cult, ignored Congress, suppressed the media and generally behaved as a disgrace to the office he holds.

He has betrayed allies and forfeited trusted

alliances. In around 80 days, he has dismantled the international frameworks that served the US well for eight decades. He has appeased enemies. He knows no other way of operating.

Yet this week, he has met his match, at least in the financial sphere. But the markets care about money more than politics or morality. The checks and balances that should restrain Trump in areas of life that are of no interest to the markets also need to be restored, strengthened and brought into contention.

Congress, the independent judiciary and the agencies need to recover their nerve. This week has proved that Donald Trump is not invulnerable. It should be a turning point. – **The Independent**



Poultry wars

**chicken
tenders put
to taste test**
- P20

WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY

Technology and
social media

TUESDAY

Family
and parenting

WEDNESDAY

Fashion
and beauty

THURSDAY

Home
and living

FRIDAY

Travel
and leisure

SATURDAY

Food
and beverage

INSIDE

p21 Cracking shelled
sunflower seeds
ruins teeth

p22 Jeff's Chefs
gastronomic
culinary journey

p23 Recipes to
conquer
meal prep

p26 Xdinary Heroes
to play gig
in Kuala Lumpur

Best chicken tenders in town

➤ Which one reigns supreme?

■ BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

THOSE crispy, golden strips of boneless chicken are a favourite comfort food for many. Unlike chicken nuggets, which are typically made from ground chicken, tenders come from the tenderloin, making them naturally juicier and more flavourful. There are several fast-food joints and speciality spots that have perfected their versions of this classic favourite. But which one truly stands out? In this ultimate food showdown, we are putting five different chicken tenders from popular fast-food joints to the test.



— TEXASCHICKENPIC

Texas Chicken

Texas Chicken has built a strong reputation for its bold and crunchy fried chicken. Its tenders come in original or spicier spicy, offering diners a choice between a mild but flavourful classic and a fiery alternative. The breading is light and crispy, with a noticeable peppery kick in the spicy version. While the tenders are well-seasoned, the texture can sometimes be on the drier side, especially if they have been sitting for too long. However, Texas Chicken redeems itself with a fantastic range of dipping sauces, including the rich spicy honey BBQ and creamy garlic mayo, which add an extra layer of indulgence.

Verdict: 7/10

A solid choice for those who love crispy chicken with a good crunch and dips, though some may find the meat slightly dry.



— FOWLBOYSPIC

Fowlboys

Fowlboys may not be as mainstream as the other names on this list, but its chicken tenders deserve serious recognition. With outlets in Hartamas and SS15 in Subang Jaya, this speciality fried chicken spot is known for its perfectly crispy yet tender chicken strips. Their seasoning is well-balanced, offering the right blend of savoury, slightly spicy and smoky notes. Unlike some fast-food tenders that rely on excessive breading, Fowlboys keeps it simple with a light, airy crunch that lets the natural flavour of the chicken shine. They also offer a range of dipping sauces, including Cluck Sauce (house special), garlic mayo and buffalo sauce.

Verdict: 8/10

A hidden gem for chicken tender lovers. Fowlboys's chicken tenders have an excellent balance of crunch, seasoning and juiciness. Definitely worth trying.



— HOTBIRDPIC

Hot Bird

For those who crave serious heat, Hot Bird in Damansara Uptown delivers a Nashville-style hot chicken experience like no other. Hot Bird's chicken tenders are brined for five hours, double-fried for extra crunch and coated in spicy oil before being dusted with a peppery seasoning. The spice levels range from No Heat to Reaper, ensuring both spice lovers and the faint-hearted have options. What truly sets Hot Bird apart is its juicy meat. The long brining process

ensures each bite is packed with moisture and deep umami flavour. The crispy, well-seasoned coating has a satisfying crunch, making it a textural delight. Pair it with garlic mayo or tangy buffalo sauce and you have a well-balanced, fiery treat.

Verdict: 9/10

The go-to option for those who want an authentic Nashville hot chicken experience.



— MCDONALDSPIC

McDonald's

McDonald's recently introduced new chicken tenders, hoping to challenge established brands in the fried chicken game. While McDonald's is usually associated with nuggets, their tenders are an improvement in texture and size. The coating is noticeably lighter and less greasy but still offers a satisfying crunch. However, compared with the other options, McDonald's tenders are less juicy and slightly underwhelming in seasoning. On the plus side, the price point is affordable, and McDonald's offers classic dipping sauces such as BBQ, sweet & sour and spicy chilli sauce. If you are looking for a convenient, fuss-free tender, this could be a decent option.

Verdict: 6/10

Not the best in terms of juiciness, but a budget-friendly alternative for those who want a quick chicken fix.



— KFCPIC

KFC

KFC is a household name for fried chicken lovers, and its original recipe chicken tenders stick to the signature 11 herbs and spices that fans adore. Unlike some of the crispier options on this list, KFC tenders have a softer, more seasoned coating, making them incredibly flavourful with each bite. However, what makes KFC's tenders stand out is its sauce, a slightly peppery dip that adds a tangy twist to the traditional fried chicken taste. The tenders are juicy, but because they are pressure-fried rather than double-fried, they may lack the extreme crunch that some people prefer.

Verdict: 7/10

A great choice for those who love KFC's signature taste, though not the crispiest option in the showdown.

Final verdict

After putting these chicken tenders to the test, Hot Bird takes the crown! Personally, this one stands out as a favourite. However, at the end of the day, the best chicken tenders come down to personal preference.

SUNFLOWER seeds are a popular snack in Southeast Asia, cherished for their rich nutritional value and health benefits. Packed with antioxidants, protein, healthy unsaturated fats, fibre, iron and essential trace elements, they contribute to overall well-being and may help prevent conditions such as hypercholesterolemia, hypertension, obesity and even cancer. However, while these seeds offer numerous health benefits, consuming them in their shelled form may pose significant risks to dental health and jaw function.

Popular snacking habit

The practice of eating shelled sunflower seeds is deeply ingrained in the culture of many Southeast Asian communities. They are commonly consumed at social gatherings, during leisure time or as a stress-relieving snack. Easily available in dried, roasted and salted forms, shelled sunflower seeds require a unique method of consumption placing them between the front teeth, applying biting force to crack the shell, discarding the husk and eating the kernel. Unfortunately, this repeated crunching action can lead to various dental and joint issues over time.

Potential impact of shelled sunflower seeds on teeth, gums

➡ **Notching of front teeth**
Frequent and prolonged consumption of shelled sunflower seeds can cause irreversible tooth surface loss, particularly on the central and lateral incisors. This leads to V- or U-shaped notches that not only affect the teeth's appearance but also increase teeth sensitivity and pain.

➡ **Crack lines, tooth discoloration**
The constant force applied while breaking sunflower seed shells can result in microfractures and visible crack lines in the teeth. Over time, these fractures may worsen, leading to structural damage, discoloration and even pulp death, which can necessitate extensive dental treatments.

➡ **Chipping, fractures of teeth**
One of the most common dental



Constantly using teeth to crack sunflower seed shells can cause dental problems. – 123RFPI

Crunching with caution

➡ How shelled sunflower seed consumption could damage your teeth

consequences of shelled sunflower seed consumption is chipping and fracturing of the front teeth. The repeated stress weakens the enamel, making teeth more prone to breakage, sensitivity and pain. Severe cases may require multiple dental visits and restorative procedures.

➡ **Increased risk of tooth decay**
Salted sunflower seeds are a preferred choice due to their enhanced flavour. However, excessive salt intake can lead to dehydration, reducing saliva production. Saliva plays a crucial role in neutralising acids and washing away food debris, and its reduction increases the risk of tooth decay and cavities.

➡ **Gum irritation, periodontal problems**

The sharp, broken husks of sunflower seeds can cause gum irritation, inflammation and bleeding. Husk fragments often get lodged between teeth, making it difficult to maintain proper oral hygiene. Over time, plaque accumulation may lead to bad breath, gum disease and even tooth loss. The strong masticatory forces used to break the shells are not limited to the crowns of the teeth but also extend to the underlying bone, potentially leading to tooth loosening and eventually tooth loss.

➡ **Impact on jaw joint, muscles**
The repeated forward positioning of the lower jaw and the abnormal

forces exerted while cracking shells can strain the temporomandibular joint and associated muscles. This may result in symptoms such as joint pain, clicking sounds, muscle fatigue and tenderness.

➡ **Exacerbation of pre-existing dental conditions**

For individuals with existing dental issues such as tooth wear, tooth sensitivity or gum disease, frequent sunflower seed consumption can worsen their condition, leading to increased complications that require complex and costly treatments.

How to minimise consequences

➡ **Switch to unshelled sunflower seeds**
Opting for unshelled sunflower seeds

(ready to eat) eliminates the need for excessive biting force, reducing the risk of dental and joint damage. If consuming harder seeds, use molar teeth instead of front teeth, as molars are stronger and better equipped to handle such forces.

➡ **Practice moderation**
Limit the frequency and quantity of shelled sunflower seed consumption. While seeds offer nutritional benefits, excessive intake can contribute to dental wear and other health concerns. Moderation is key to minimising risks.

➡ **Avoid roasted and salted seeds**
Choose natural, unsalted sunflower seeds to prevent dehydration and excessive wear on teeth. Checking nutritional labels for sodium content can help consumers make healthier choices.

➡ **Maintain good oral hygiene**
Brush your teeth twice daily to remove plaque and food particles. Floss daily to dislodge any trapped husk fragments and reduce plaque buildup. Rinse your mouth with water after eating sunflower seeds to help wash away remaining debris and protect dental health.

➡ **Visit your dentist regularly**
Routine dental check-ups are essential for detecting early signs of damage and maintaining optimal oral health. Dentists can provide professional advice and preventive measures for those who frequently consume shelled sunflower seeds.

Conclusion

While shelled sunflower seeds are a nutritious snack, frequent and prolonged consumption can lead to significant dental and joint issues. Switching to unshelled seeds, consuming them in moderation, and maintaining good oral hygiene can help prevent these adverse effects. Regular dental visits are also crucial to detecting early signs of damage and ensuring long-term oral health. By making informed choices, you can enjoy the benefits of sunflower seeds without compromising your dental well-being.

This article is contributed by Segi University Faculty of Dentistry associate professor Dr Suresh K.V.

Eateries in Singapore close as costs rise, spending falls

SINGAPORE'S well-known food scene has been battered by closures in the past year, affecting low-cost hawker stalls, mid-sized operators and Michelin-star restaurants, which said costs are rising and consumers are spending less.

Closures in the food and beverage sector have averaged 307 per month so far this year, up from 254 per month in 2024 and around 230 a month in 2023 and 2022, government data showed.

Alvin Goh, a co-founder of Wine RVL, is set to add to the statistics later this year.

He said he will not renew his lease when it runs out in August after almost a decade serving natural wines and bar bites in the wealthy Asian financial hub of 6 million people.

"We have been in the red since June 2023. We have been topping up money to ensure that rent, salaries and suppliers are being paid," he said.

Like other operators, Goh has been hit by rising costs for goods, utilities, rent and salaries. He has

fewer patrons and those who do dine and wine are spending less than during what Goh called the 2022 "euphoria of opening up" following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ratio of closures to openings this year and last was higher than before and during the pandemic, pointing to a shrinking sector.

Closures since last year have affected a range of establishments, from low-cost hawker stalls to rooftop bar Smoke & Mirrors and a string of Michelin-starred restaurants such as Art di Daniele Sperindio and Sommer and Braci.

Maybank economist Brian Lee expects closures to remain elevated this year. Operating costs remain high and many Singaporeans are prioritising travel over dining out, he said.

One of those is Glenn Chew, 26, who works in public relations. He said he travels to other Southeast Asian cities where dining out can cost 30-40% less than in Singapore.

The concern is that closures will



A view of Wine RVL natural wine bar, which does not plan to renew its lease ending in August, in Singapore. – REUTERSPI

lead to a loss of the island's culinary heritage and its status as an Asian food capital, said food blogger Seth Lui, 40.

"We will start to see more fast food-style concepts with automation

and franchise brands everywhere rather than having unique, quaint concepts," he said.

Still, there are hopefuls like Jay Gray, 34, co-owner of Club Street Laundry restaurant which opened this

year, his sixth venture in 11 years.

"I guess I believe in the Singapore market enough and I do believe if you focus on hospitality, which is the most important thing, you will be able to sustain it," he said. – Reuters



THE Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat in Ipoh has become one of the most desirable destinations for discerning foodies seeking a one-of-a-kind epicurean experience with its signature restaurant Jeff's Cellar nestled in a softly lit 260-million-year-old cave.

To celebrate its 15th anniversary, Jeff's Cellar will undergo a major transformation from April to June this year to elevate its gastronomic experience. Meanwhile, The Banjaran unveiled "Jeff's Chefs", a three-month-only culinary tribute that celebrates Ipoh's rich heritage through the personal stories of the Jeff's Cellar team.

Far from a simple relocation, Jeff's Chefs is a culinary journey set in an intimate alcove within the resort. With only eight tables per night, guests will embark on a seven-course experience that blends French-inspired gastronomy with the finest imported produce and Ipoh's freshest local and organic ingredients.

Rooted in homecoming

At the heart of this experience lies a tribute to Ipoh, told through the lens of chefs who ventured abroad to refine their craft yet found themselves drawn back to their roots. Each dish is a personal narrative, reflecting the memories, inspirations and flavours that have shaped their journeys. Through this menu, Jeff's Cellar's chefs honour the past while reimagining the future, offering guests an opportunity to taste the essence of homecoming, told plate by plate.

➔ **Homage to Home** – Jason Cha Kian Heng
A tribute to Ipoh's quintessential



Embrace the Sunlight & Gloom

Culinary celebration of Ipoh

➔ Restaurant unveils three-month-only menu that draws from personal stories of its chefs

breakfast – eggs, toast and white coffee – this appetiser reflects Cha's return home after years away. Inspired by the journey of rediscovering one's roots, the dish layers crab roe, Arpege egg, sea urchin, kombucha and white coffee, embodying the idea that the best things have always existed at the source.

➔ **To the Sea & To the Land** – Tan Yean Nian
Inspired by the ever-shifting landscapes of Ipoh, this dish mirrors the tectonic interplay of oceans and mountains. Tan explores the delicate balance of land and sea with a composition of cured *tenggiri bunga* (spotted mackerel), fermented tomatoes, marigold flower vinaigrette and fresh physalis, reflecting the



To the Sea, To the Land

constant transformation of nature, just like the encounters that shape us.

➔ **The Verdant, The Vibrant** – Chong Mun Fai
Time is the most essential element in fermentation, just as it is in human connection. Set against The Banjaran's ancient limestone formations, this dish is a reflection on patience, resilience and renewal. Featuring homemade sourdough, truffle butter, barrio salt, fermented garlic, hydrated mushrooms and a herb crumb, it pays homage to the passage of time and the richness it brings.

➔ **To My Original Inspiration** – Vincent Tung Kean Wei
A fish swims tirelessly, searching for water, only to realise it has been surrounded by it all along. Inspired by this parable of self-discovery, Tung's dish expresses the journey of seeking purpose and coming full circle. Monkfish, symbolising the



Lee is The Banjaran's executive chef.

relentless pursuit, is paired with *borage*, *beurre blanc* and Royal Beluga caviar, capturing the moment of realisation, that what we seek is often right before us.

➔ **Re-define** – Lee Choon Boon
The Banjaran executive chef Lee presents a dish that embodies boldness and legacy. Reinterpreting the French classic *poulet en vessie* – a time-honoured dish that demands patience and precision – he takes an unconventional approach by slow-cooking seaweed-fed local chicken in the geothermal waters of The Banjaran's natural hot springs. Infused with the essence of its surroundings and enhanced with truffle, wood sorrel and seasonal mushrooms, this dish is a testament to the balance between tradition and innovation. By daring to challenge convention, Lee redefines what it means to honour the past while forging a new culinary path.

➔ **Embrace the Sunlight & Gloom** – Yoka Yeong Kai Wai
The rainforest at The Banjaran teaches a lesson in balance – light and shadow, growth and decay, unpredictability and beauty. This philosophy is reflected in Yeong's composition of A5 Miyazaki beef,

aged duck breast, lime *kosho*, fermented garlic, glazed fig, seasonal vegetables, peppercorn jus, potato pave and spices and salt rub where every element is a play on contrast.

➔ **Of East and West** – Lilian Chan Li Lian
Blurring the boundaries between Eastern wellness philosophies and Western artistic expression, this dessert mirrors chef Chan's own journey: a Westernised local girl finding inspiration in duality. Featuring lotus root, lotus seed, custard and 24-karat gold, it is a reflection of cultural convergence, where two worlds merge into something entirely new.

Rare dining experience, historic transformation

Jeff's Chefs will be available for only three months while Jeff's Cellar embarks on its historic transformation – the newly reimagined restaurant will be revealed in July.

The Jeff's Chefs menu is available until June 30, daily from 6pm to 11pm, and advanced reservations are essential. For non in-house guests: RM550 nett per guest and add-on RM398 nett per guest for wine pairing.



The Jeff's Chefs team consists of (standing, from left) Yeong, Tung, Chong, Chan, Tan, (seated, from left) Lee and Cha.

Advanced meal prep for busy people

➤ Seven easy recipes to save you time, stress

BY THASHINE SELVAKUMARAN

FIGURING out what to eat every day can feel like a full-time job. Enter meal prep: A simple, budget-friendly way to plan and prepare your meals in advance. Not only does meal prep help you eat better, but it also saves time, reduces food waste and makes those busy weekdays way less chaotic. Here are seven easy recipes to get you started, all with minimal effort and maximum flavour.

Honey garlic chicken with veggies and rice

This is considered a classic meal prep. Juicy chicken coated in sweet and savoury honey garlic sauce, paired with fluffy rice and stir-fried vegetables.

Ingredients

- 2 chicken breasts (cubed)
- 2 tablespoons of honey
- 3 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 tablespoons of soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon of sesame oil
- 2 cups of broccoli florets
- 1 cup of sliced carrots
- 2 cups of cooked rice
- Sesame seeds (optional)

Instructions

1. In a pan, cook chicken until lightly browned.
2. Add garlic, honey, soy sauce and sesame oil. Simmer till sauce thickens.
3. Stir-fry broccoli and carrots in another pan.
4. Portion rice, chicken and veggies into containers. Garnish with sesame seeds.

Spicy tuna pasta salad

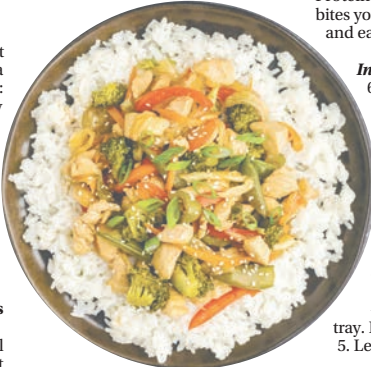
Quick, protein-packed and can be eaten cold. Excellent for grab-and-go lunches.

Ingredients

- 1 can of tuna in olive oil
- 2 cups of cooked pasta (fusilli or penne)
- ½ cup of cherry tomatoes (halved)
- ¼ cup of chopped cucumber
- 2 tablespoons of mayo
- 1 teaspoon of sriracha
- Salt & pepper to taste



Creamy pasta tossed with tuna, chili and fresh herbs.
– PIC FROM YOUTUBE @VINCENZOSPLATE



Tender chicken glazed in sweet garlic sauce served with crisp veggies and rice. – PIC FROM YOUTUBE @AMANDASCOOKING

Instructions

1. Mix tuna, mayo, sriracha, salt and pepper in a bowl.
2. Add pasta, cherry tomatoes and cucumber. Toss everything together.
3. Store in containers. Add extra sriracha if you like it spicy.

Teriyaki tofu and quinoa bowl

A plant-based option loaded with flavour and texture. It is crispy tofu paired with nutty quinoa and colourful veggies.

Ingredients

- 1 block firm tofu (cubed)
- 2 tablespoons of teriyaki sauce
- 1 cup of cooked quinoa
- ½ cup of edamame
- ½ cup of corn
- ½ cup of bell peppers (sliced)

Instructions

1. Pan-fry tofu till golden. Add teriyaki sauce and coat well.
2. Steam or blanch edamame and corn.
3. Portion quinoa, tofu and veggies into containers.

Egg muffins with spinach & cheese
Protein-rich breakfast bites you can just heat and eat in the morning.

Ingredients

- 6 eggs
- ¼ cup of milk
- ½ cup of chopped spinach
- ¼ cup of shredded cheese
- Salt & pepper

Instructions

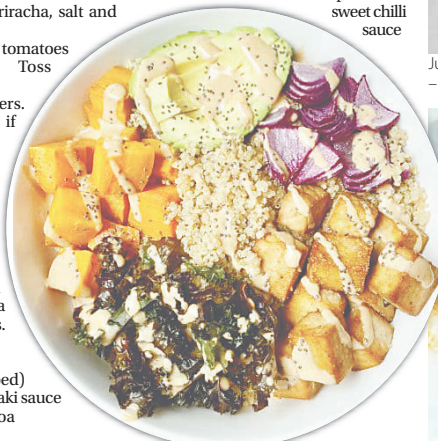
1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Whisk eggs with milk, salt and pepper.
3. Add spinach and cheese.
4. Pour into a greased muffin tray. Bake for 20 minutes.
5. Let cool and store in the fridge.

Sweet chilli prawn stir-fry

A fast, flavourful meal that reheats beautifully for lunch or dinner.

Ingredients

- 200g of prawns (peeled & deveined)
- 2 tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce



Savory tofu in teriyaki sauce over nutty quinoa and steamed greens.
– PIC FROM YOUTUBE @SERENE

- 1 tablespoon of soy sauce
- 1 cup of mixed vegetables (carrot, capsicum, broccoli)
- 2 cups of cooked noodles or rice

Instructions

1. Stir-fry prawns in a hot pan till pink.
2. Add sweet chilli and soy sauce. Toss well.
3. Stir-fry mixed vegetables.
4. Portion prawns, veggies and noodles/rice into containers.

Creamy butter chickpea curry

Comfort food vibes without the guilt, this vegetarian-friendly curry is rich, creamy and packed with protein from chickpeas.

Ingredients

- 1 can of chickpeas (drained & rinsed)
- 1 cup of tomato puree
- ½ cup of coconut milk
- 1 small onion (chopped)



Fluffy baked egg bites loaded with cheese and wilted spinach.
– PIC FROM YOUTUBE @COOKINGQUEEN



Juicy prawns tossed in sweet chili sauce with stir-fried veggies.
– PIC FROM YOUTUBE @THAIGIRLINTHEKITCHEN



Bite-sized egg cups baked with veggies, cheese and a golden top.
– PIC FROM YOUTUBE @STIRTOMIX

- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 teaspoon of garam masala
- 1 teaspoon of turmeric
- 1 teaspoon of chilli powder
- Salt to taste.
- 2 cups of cooked basmati rice
- Fresh coriander for garnish

Instructions

1. Saute onion and garlic until soft.
2. Add tomato puree, garam masala, turmeric and chilli powder. Cook for five minutes.
3. Stir in chickpeas and coconut milk. Simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Portion rice and curry into containers. Garnish with coriander.

Egg muffin cups

The ultimate breakfast meal prep is portable, customisable and super easy to reheat.

Ingredients

- 6 large eggs

- ½ cup of chopped spinach
- ¼ cup of diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup of shredded cheese
- Salt & pepper to taste.
- Cooking spray

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Whisk eggs with salt and pepper.
3. Spray muffin tray and divide spinach, bell peppers and cheese into each cup.
4. Pour egg mixture over the fillings.
5. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until set.
6. Cool and store in containers. Great with toast or on their own.

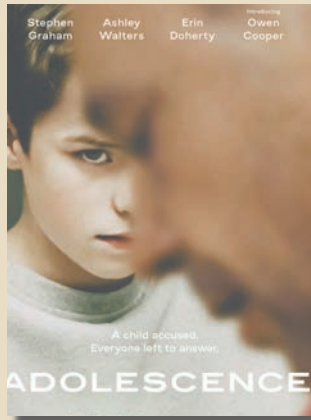
Meal prep does not have to be boring or complicated.

Switch up your proteins, sauces or sides to keep things interesting. And always label your containers with the date and the future-you will thank you.



HYPE ZONE

Binge-worthy flicks

**Adolescence (Netflix)**

Creators: Stephen Graham, Jack Thorne
Cast: Owen Cooper, Graham, Ashley Walters

Based on real stories, the mini-series follows the aftermath of a murdered 13-year-old girl and the boy accused of committing it. The psychological drama delves into the teen psyche and the dangers of online radicalisation.

The White Lotus (Max)

Creator: Mike White

Cast: Jason Isaacs, Natasha Rothwell, Patrick Schwarzenegger, Lalisia Manobal
 The social satire (black comedy) is a fictional commentary on the dynamics between the rich and working class. Set in a luxury resort, the film unravels the dark twisted secrets of its characters and explores just how far intent, pent-up frustration and "life" can push a person to losing their moral bearings.

**When Life Gives You Tangerines (Netflix)**

Creator: Kim Won-Seok

Cast: IU, Park Bo-gum, Moon So-ri

A South Korean slice-of-life romance drama, it is a story of love, resilience and triumphs. Set in the land of tangerines, Jeju, the tale follows a nuclear family, story unfolding in an authentic Korean experience. Told in the non-linear fashion, the story proves love endures.

- ALL PICS FROM IMDB

**Test (Netflix)**

Creator: Suman Kumar

Cast: Madhavan, Siddarth, Nayanthara

Three polarising characters come collide in the climax and ends their tale in a dramatic fashion. The film explores the extend a person is willing to go when all buttons are pushed. Under pressure, will they prevail or crumble?

Ne Zha 2 (Cinema)

Creator: Yu Yang

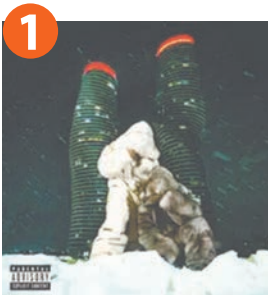
Cast: Lu Yanting, Mo Han, Hao Chen

Part two of *Ne Zha*, this instalment follows the main characters and uncovers new secrets along the way. In the mid of a soul-searching journey, the film explores the possibility of good and evil being two sides of the same coin.



- ALL PICS FROM APPLE MUSIC

Lyfe's chartbusters



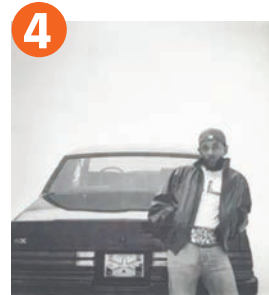
Song: *Nokia*
Album: *Some Sexy Song 4 U*
Artist: Drake



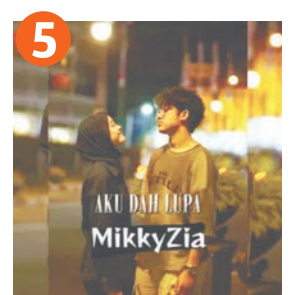
Song: *Drowning*
Album: *Oo-Li*
Artist: Woodz



Song: *God Bless U*
Album: *Good Bad Ugly*
Artist: Anirudh Ravichander



Song: *Luther*
Album: *GNX*
Artist: Kendrick Lamar & Sza



Song: *Aku Dah Lupa*
Album: *Aku Dah Lupa (Single)*
Artist: Zia & Mikky

MOVIE REVIEW

BY YASMIN ZULRAEZ

THE *Amateur* might sound like another espionage-laced action romp with a tragic backstory, but beneath the high-stakes CIA jargon and global manhunts lies something surprisingly tender: a broken man, a lost love and a whole lot of emotional unpacking... with guns, of course.

Directed by James Hawes, this adaptation of Robert Littell's 1981 novel is not trying to reinvent the spy genre, but it does manage to slide a tissue-worthy tale of grief and purpose into a movie filled with encrypted data, shadowy figures and international conspiracies. Viewers expecting John Wick: CIA Edition might be caught off guard, in the best way. What starts with loss quickly snowballs into one man's mission that feels less like a standard hero arc and more like an internal combustion of rage and regret wrapped in a trench coat.

Sadboy spy supreme

Casting Rami Malek as Charlie, a socially awkward decoder from Langley who gets thrust into a very literal world of hurt, is a masterstroke. Malek does not just act, he simmers. His performance brings a haunting intensity to a character who is anything but typical. There is no bravado here, just a quiet desperation fueling his every move. Somehow, Malek manages to blend vulnerability with sharp, unnerving precision, making his transition from cryptographer to unorthodox field operative feel oddly plausible.

And while the script dances with the usual tropes (wife lost in tragic explosion, upper management refuses to act, lone man goes rogue), Malek ensures Charlie never becomes a cardboard cutout. He is not slick or suave, he is smart, sad and severely out of his depth, but also frighteningly determined. By the end of the film, viewers might find themselves wondering if he is still the same man who once translated coded memos in a basement.

Revenge is love language

Beneath the espionage and tension lies the film's secret weapon: heart. While not marketed as a romance, *The Amateur* hinges entirely on one. Every decision, every desperate move, every coded message is rooted in a profound love story and that is what gives the film its emotional heft.

But make no mistake, this is not a Nicholas Sparks novel with silencers. The action is crisp, the tension palpable and the chases, physical and psychological, are executed with sharp direction and a strong supporting cast. Laurence Fishburne brings gravitas as a conflicted superior, while Rachel Brosnahan gives soul to a character that might have otherwise been reduced to a narrative device. Caitriona Balfe, Jon Bernthal and Michael Stuhlbarg also add depth, keeping the momentum grounded with layers of murky morality and shifting allegiances.

Questionable realism, CIA-level trickery

Now, let us talk about that ending without talking about that ending. Yes, it is emotionally satisfying. Yes, it ties things together in an unexpected way. But is it believable? Well, not entirely. Some might argue it stretches logic like a wiretap on a dial-up modem. Yet somehow,

Cast:
Rami Malek,
Laurence Fishburne,
Rachel Brosnahan,
Caitriona Balfe,
Jon Bernthal

Director:
James Hawes

E-VALUE

7

ACTING

7

PLOT

6



Charlie (Malek) is a brilliant mind burdened by unimaginable loss.

Grief-fuelled spy thriller

► Malek shines as unlikely hero in this espionage drama



Charlie (right) prepares to confront one of the men responsible for the tragedy that changed his life.

the film earns the right to get away with it. It is as if the audience has been conditioned by the film's slower, cerebral build-up to accept a little narrative absurdity for the sake of emotional payoff.

By the time the credits roll, there is a collective feeling of "Wait, he actually did that?" but not in a groan-worthy way. It is less about what happens and more about the fact that he pulled it off. Like a twist pulled from the same drawer as a magician's final trick, it is undeniably flashy and slightly suspect but satisfying all the same.

Genre-bender worth watching

Despite its title, *The Amateur* is anything but

clumsy. It walks the tightrope between action and introspection with surprising finesse. It is part spy thriller, part character study, part love letter to anyone who has ever whispered I told you so while stepping over a pile of bureaucratic red tape.

It may follow the nice guy goes rogue formula to some extent, but it plays out with an emotional honesty that sets it apart from other entries in the genre. Think *Taken*, but the dad has a psychology degree, speaks five languages and flinches when he fires a gun. That is the kind of film this is.

The Amateur should not be approached as an adrenaline-fueled blockbuster. Instead, it is best viewed as a love story cleverly disguised as a spy



The Amateur involves a world of espionage, deception and one man's pursuit of justice.

thriller. With Malek's nuanced performance leading the charge, it is a gripping, if sometimes implausible, portrait of grief, vengeance and what happens when an ordinary man decides he has had enough.

It is not flawless but it is fearless in its emotional ambition. A film that asks: what if the quiet guy in the back room is the most dangerous man in the building?



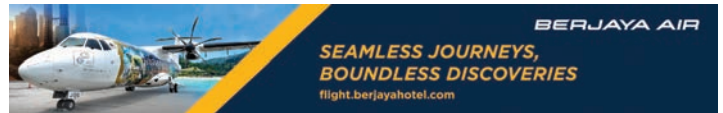
Charlie and Inquiline (Balfe) share a quiet moment amid the chaos, their bond hinting at trust forged in dangerous territory.



Charlie and CIA deputy director Alex (McCallany) face off in a tense exchange, where protocol clashes with personal vengeance.



Robert (Fishburne) is Charlie's morally conflicted superior who walks the line between duty and empathy.



Xdinary Heroes performing in Kuala Lumpur

► Six-member South Korean band to play on May 31

FOLLOWING the release of its highly anticipated new EP *Beautiful Mind*, South Korean rock band Xdinary Heroes has announced its 2025 world tour.

Produced by JYP Entertainment and promoted by Live Nation, the concert will be held on May 31, 5pm at Zepp KL.

This will be the band's first concert in Malaysia since bursting onto the global music scene in 2021.

The critically acclaimed sextet has

continued to rise to prominence after their first world tour, making waves at Korean and major international festivals.

Malaysian villains can expect a captivating and high energy show with an

electrifying setlist filled with the band's unique style and heavy hitting tones.

Mastercard cardholders in Kuala Lumpur have special access to presale tickets from next Wednesday and Live Nation members can secure tickets during the exclusive Live Nation pre-sale next Thursday. Tickets to public will be available next Friday.



This will be the band's first concert in Malaysia since bursting onto the global music scene.



Xdinary Heroes is a six-member South Korean band.

— PIC FROM INSTAGRAM @XDINARYHEROES_OFFICIAL

Cristoph invites clubbing fans to experience *Life Through A Different Lens*

TRYING to capture a special vibe, Cristoph (Christopher Costigan) set upon a vision to release a debut artiste album that truly captures the essence of dusk until dawn clubbing.

The result is an 18-track escapade of extended mixes designed to emulate the journey of an open-to-close DJ set. It invites listeners to leave reality at the door and experience *Life Through A Different Lens*.

Mirroring the ebbs and flows, peaks and drops of a real-time DJ set, *Life Through A Different Lens* calls to be played in chronological order for maximum impact. The track list moves in key and seamlessly harmonises, yet each tune holds its own sonic identity, spanning the full breadth of house and techno.

Opening track *See Me Now* features the soft lyricism of Afnan Prince over empowering keys that soon succumb to a steady house beat. This transitions into *A New Chapter*, featuring Manny, and is soon followed by debut single *String Thing*.

Curated by Cristoph's own COS Recordings, he takes full liberty in scouring the label's ever-growing community of cutting-edge artistes to form meaningful collaborations – the likes of which are heard on dystopian dance number *Surrender*, featuring Luke Coulson, Harry Diamond hook-up *Raise the Alarm* and *Fractal* with ADZ.

Preparing the listener to enter peak time, Cristoph unites with long-standing



Cristoph's debut album is an 18-track escapade of extended mixes designed to emulate the journey of an open-to-close DJ set.

collaborator Jem Cooke on progressive powerhouse *Paradise* and demonstrates his signature clean-cut production intent on inflicting pure rapture on the club dancefloor.

Now in the thick of the 18-record track list, Cristoph's sense of experimentation exploits even further. Tech-dubbed *Cicada* carries industrial attitude yet borrows its intricate mood-shifting effects from samples Cristoph recorded of the insect by which the track is named. Dark undercurrents continue into minimal mover *Set the Scene* before *Redwood* with Weska readies the senses to be heightened once again.

Lasting impressions come from album single *Where Do We Go* and *Looks Like I'm Waiting* with CultureKind, featuring Afnan Prince, as Cristoph closes out the LP on final notes of dark etherealism.

Cristoph's mass appeal unsurprisingly transfers directly onto the dancefloor. Coinciding with the new album, Cristoph's O2C North America and Canada tour of exclusively open-to-close shows commenced in Toronto yesterday, with Chicago, Detroit and New York in the dates that follow. The artiste is inviting fans to quite literally leave reality at the door, venture into a dark club room of like-minded beings and take a journey into the depths of soul-led electronic music.

Cristoph's *Life Through A Different Lens* is out now on Consequence of Society Recordings.

Arch Enemy in fine form on latest album

FORMED in 1995 by ex-Carnage members – Michael Amott and Johan Liiva – Arch Enemy gained prominence for skilfully blending crushing heavy riffs with plenty of melodic moments.

However, Arch Enemy truly started to gain attention when the band installed female lead vocalist Angela Gossow in 2000. Having a sculpted Amazonian blonde fronting the band certainly help set Arch Enemy apart from the sea of identikit death metal bands.



A dozen albums into its career, Arch Enemy show no signs of taking its collective foot off the pedal. — PICS FROM FACEBOOK @ARCHENEMY

Arch Enemy's popularity soared and this was backed up by some seriously solid albums, cementing its place as genuine player in the death metal scene. Then Gossow decided to take a step back in 2014. Not wanting to cede ground, Arch Enemy stuck to its tried and trusted formula of having a female lead singer.

In stepped Alicia White-Gluz, while possessing the requisite deathly growl, is also significantly enough eye candy to keep legions of male metalheads interested.

So, here is album number 12 in Arch Enemy's storied career. Released on March 28, the latest opus is produced by Jens Brogren and has all the hallmarks of a great Arch Enemy album. Soaring guitar licks, super memorable riffs and roaring vocals, the album is quality melodic death from start to finish.

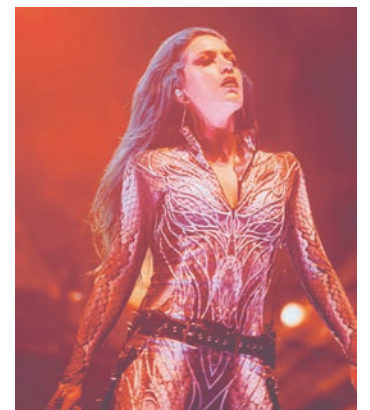
White-Gluz's death growls are terrific but it is when she lets her clean vocals fly on tracks such as *Illuminate the Path* and *Vivre Libre* that she truly stands out as a death metal singer.

However, the real stars of the show remain Amott and Joey Conception on guitars, who take their Iron Maiden-tinged solos to new heights on tracks such as *Paper Tiger* and *Pendulum*.

Never slowing down, Arch Enemy take the fast and melodic route to get those craniums shaking with 11 quality tracks that are sure to have extended stays on fan playlists.

While not ground breaking, this is a solid album from one of the scene's veteran bands. *Blood Dynasty* pales in comparison to The Halo Effect's *March of the Unheard* for melodic death metal chutzpah but Arch Enemy's album does hold an ace up its sleeve in the form of the striking White-Gluz.

In a scene populated by bearded, middle-aged growlers, a splash of electric blue (White-Gluz's favoured shade) is a welcome respite from all the blackness that surrounds death metal. — by **R.BALA**



White-Gluz is the band's main draw.

CARLOS ALCARAZ cruised into the Monte Carlo Masters quarterfinals for the first time yesterday with a straight-sets win over Daniel Altmaier.

British fifth seed Jack Draper was knocked out by Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, while Lorenzo Musetti won an all-Italian duel against a limping Matteo Berrettini.

Elsewhere, Alexei Popyrin saved match points as he beat 2024 runner-up Casper Ruud and eighth-seeded Alex de Minaur dismantled ninth seed Daniil Medvedev in straight sets.

Stefanos Tsitsipas, who has won the tournament in three of the last four years, brushed aside Nuno Borges. Grigor Dimitrov ended the day by overcoming Alejandro Tabilo.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Alcaraz brushed aside 84th-ranked German Altmaier 6-3, 6-1 to set up a last-eight clash with rising French star Arthur Fils.

"His (Fils') level is really high right now," said Alcaraz. "I saw a little bit from his match today, and he's playing great."

"At the beginning of the match, we played really long and tough rallies, really close games," added Alcaraz.

The 21-year-old, the reigning French Open and Wimbledon champion, is the favourite to lift the

Alcaraz marches on

Spaniard eases into Monte Carlo quarterfinals but Draper out

title this weekend after early exits for top seed Alexander Zverev and Novak Djokovic.

Alcaraz lost in his first match on his only previous appearance at the tournament in 2022.

Fils eased into his third successive Masters quarterfinal with a 6-2, 6-3 thrashing of 2023 champion Andrey Rublev.

The 20-year-old Fils is aiming to reach the semis of a Masters event for the first time, after losing in the last eight at both Indian Wells and the Miami Open this year.

"If it's him, it's going to be the first time I'm going to play him," Fils said of meeting Alcaraz.

"It's going to be a good experience. He's a big champion. He won four Grand Slams already. I didn't win a single one."

Draper lost in three sets to Spaniard Davidovich Fokina.

Draper, who won the Indian Wells title last month, slipped to a 6-3, 6-7



Delhi Capitals' KL Rahul plays a shot during the match againsts Royal Challengers Bengaluru yesterday. — AFP/PI

(6-8), 6-4 loss as he failed to reach a first Masters quarterfinal on clay.

Davidovich Fokina will take on Australian Popyrin in the quarterfinals.

Popyrin, the world No. 27, beat Ruud 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, after saving two match points at 3-5 in the third set.

Musetti, seeded 13, beat Davis Cup teammate Berrettini 6-3, 6-3 and then talked of "the difficulty of playing a friend, a mate, a teammate."

"This is a special court for me and also for Matteo. We share a lot of moments here in Monte Carlo where we live," Musetti said.

"Definitely one of the toughest challenges for me."

Musetti will face sixth-seeded Tsitsipas who beat Borges 6-1, 6-1.

World No. 10 De Minaur crushed former US Open winner Medvedev 6-2, 6-2.

"I'm finding my feet on clay," said De Minaur.

"It's taken me a while in my career. I can be dangerous on this surface."

The Australian will play Dimitrov, after the 15th-seeded Bulgarian overcame Chilean Tabilo 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. — AFP

Rahul shines for Delhi

KL RAHUL smashed an unbeaten 93 as Delhi Capitals beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by six wickets to maintain their winning streak in the Indian Premier League yesterday.

Rahul, 32, hit six sixes and seven fours in his scintillating 53-ball knock to help Delhi overhaul Bengaluru's 163-7 with 13 balls to spare at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

Tristan Stubbs chipped in with 38 not out and shared 111 runs with Rahul off just 56 balls to steer Delhi to their fourth consecutive win.

Delhi now sit second in the table while Bengaluru are third in the 10-team competition. Bengaluru bowlers picked some early wickets but ran into the in-form Rahul who batted with composure and ease.

Delhi had a wobbly start, losing openers Faf du Plessis and Jake Fraser-McGurk cheaply with just 10 runs on the board.

Captain Axar Patel tried to steady the innings but holed out to Tim David off impact sub Suyash Sharma for 15. Stubbs said the win was "really satisfying".

"I came in a tricky situation, but the run-rate never got out of hand," he said. "I did not need to do much — KL played the way he did."

Earlier, Bengaluru were off to a flier, with openers Virat Kohli and Phil Salt taking the attack to the opposition.

The duo smashed 30 runs in the third over off Mitchell Starc before guiding Bengaluru to the fastest team 50 of the season.

The batting assault ended when Salt (37) was run-out after a mix-up and Virat (22) lobbed a catch to Starc who dived forward to take a fine catch at long-off.

Bengaluru lost regular wickets after the twin setbacks, with Delhi left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav picking two, including the scalp of captain Rajat Patidar for 25.

David provided a late flourish with an unbeaten 20-ball 37, studded with four sixes and two fours.

Patidar conceded his team did not bat well despite showing "nice intent".

"We were lacking in assessing the conditions and the situation. (But) the way David accelerated at the end, it was really amazing," he said. — AFP

302

Jobs



WE ARE HIRING!

- 1) EXECUTIVE / SENIOR - HR & Admin
- 2) ASST MANAGER / MANAGER - HR & Admin

Job Description

- Maintain HR records, including employee files, salaries and benefits information.
- Handle employee attendance records, payroll and claims.
- Handle employee relations and resolve any workplace conflicts or issues.
- Provide HR support and guidance to managers and employees.
- Ensure compliance with all employment laws and regulations.
- Stay updated on changes in work legislation and industry standards.
- Handle employee training and development programmes.
- Manage employee benefits programmes and ensure compliance with regulations.
- Stay updated on current industry trends and best practices in HR management.
- For Senior/Assistant Manager — with supervisor skills.
- Handle staff training and recruitment matters.
- Experience in payroll system would be advantageous.
- Handle General Admin and other HR duties.

Requirements

- Diploma/Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management or related field.
- Executive: 1+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Senior: 3+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Asst Manager: 5+ years of experience in HR & Admin or related field.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply for Assistant Executive post.
- Basic HR knowledge and proficiency in Microsoft Office.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

3) EXECUTIVE - Safety & Building Maintenance

Job Description

- Perform routine and preventive maintenance on factory & office building systems, including HVAC, electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems.
- Conduct regular inspections of the factory & office building to identify and address maintenance issues.
- Respond promptly to maintenance requests and ensure timely resolution.
- Maintain accurate records of maintenance activities, including work orders, inspections and repairs.
- Ensure all maintenance activities comply with relevant health, safety and environmental regulations.
- Coordinate with external contractors and vendors for specialised maintenance and repair works.
- Monitor and optimise energy usage to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Assist in preparation and management of maintenance budget.
- Assist in any ad-hoc operations and admin tasks assigned by Management from time to time.

Requirements

- Diploma/Degree in Building or Facilities Management, Safety & Health or related field.
- Additional certificate: Electrical Chatterman, preferably A4 or minimum A1 would be an added advantage.
- Minimum of one year of experience in Building Maintenance or Safety & Health.
- Adequate technical knowledge of building systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing etc).
- Excellent problem-solving and troubleshooting skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Able to work flexi hours.
- Able to handle urgent and last-minute job request.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to: thesun.hr2@gmail.com
(Closing Date: April 30, 2025)

302

Jobs



WE ARE HIRING!

1 MEDIA SALES - Specialist

Job Description

- Building and sustaining strong working relationship with advertising agencies and clients.
- New business development and business retention.
- Conceptualise, plan and execute creative and innovative marketing campaigns to enhance brand visibility and engagement.
- Create, develop and continuously improve marketing material, presentations and proposals that showcase our products/services effectively.

Requirements

- SPM level with at least two years of experience.
- Diploma or Bachelor's degree in business, marketing or other related fields.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply, training will be provided.
- Good communication, presentation, problem-solving and organisational skills.
- Passionate in client servicing.
- Possess own transport and willing to travel.
- Able to start work immediately.

Office based in Petaling Jaya (Five-day week)

2 MEDIA SALES - Representative/Agent (Freelance)

Requirement

- Minimum one year sales experience in classified ad, print and digital advertising.
- Those without sales experience but with media advertising knowledge may also apply.
- Attractive commission package and incentives.
- Able to start immediately.
- Central, Northern, Southern, East Coast and Sabah/Sarawak.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to: thesun.hr2@gmail.com

We are now a 7-day Paper
Subscribe now for daily read of the Sun newspaper

Rose blooming at Augusta

Veteran Englishman looking to fill 'resume gaps' after strong start

JUSTIN ROSE delivered a sparkling opening-round 65 yesterday and grabbed a three-stroke lead at the Masters as the veteran Englishman looks to add to his already impressive list of accomplishments.

Rose, 44, got off to a scorching start with birdies on the first three holes and kept the momentum going through the back nine, rolling in a lengthy putt on 16 for his eighth birdie of the day and going 8-under.

A poor tee shot on 18 led to his lone bogey, breaking up what he later described as a "no-hitter," but the former world No. 1 was nonetheless delighted with the opening round of his 20th Masters.

"For the first few holes everything was going exactly where I was looking," he said.

"Certainly the first hole, which is definitely one of the trickier holes on the golf course, to knock in a nice 25-footer down the hill right-to-left, exactly what you need to settle yourself into the Masters.

"And then two and three are birdie opportunities. So to be 3-under through three really got me on the front foot and felt like I was playing great golf."

Rose is three strokes clear of the trio of Scottie Scheffler, Corey Connors and Ludvig Aberg, who are all 4-under heading into the second round.

Strong starts at Augusta National are nothing new for Rose, who has now been either in the lead or tied for it after the first round for a record fifth time.

"I've played well enough to win this tournament. I just feel like I don't have the jacket to prove it," he said. "Ultimately, you want to be last man standing on Sunday."

Rose, an Olympic champion who won the 2013 US Open and placed second at the Masters in 2015 and 2017, said he wants to finish his career with a bang.

"I played a lot of golf here," Rose said. "So to come away with my equal best score is certainly an achievement for me."

"I do feel that I could make a statement with how well I played the back end of my career," he said.

"My resume is nicely rounded out. There's a few big glaring gaps. Obviously three major championships I haven't won. Maybe a Players Championship as well."

"So there's tons of opportunity to do things I haven't done before, but the major headlines are kind of all in place for me."

"So I should use that as freedom to take these opportunities and use them to kind of freewheel and use it all as upside."

Rose lost a playoff to Spain's Sergio Garcia in 2017 and finished four adrift of 2015 winner Jordan Spieth.

"I've had my luck on occasion and been a champion, but you've got to be playing the golf to keep creating those opportunities," Rose said.

"And the only way to do that is to get your name on the leaderboard. I definitely don't shy away from it." - Reuters/AFP

Scheffler makes strong start to defend Masters title

DEFENDING champion Scottie Scheffler is a bit surprised that most recent Masters champions have scored in the top 10 after the opening round.

The world No. 1 isn't complaining, however, after grabbing a share of second with a bogey-free, 4-under 68 in yesterday's first round of the 89th Masters.

"I felt pretty good. Anytime you can keep a card clean out here, it's a really good thing," Scheffler said.

"The golf course was in front of me most of the day, kept the ball in play, did a lot of really good things out there."

Scheffler was tied with Canada's Corey Connors and three strokes adrift of leader Justin Rose of England.

Scheffler, the 2022 and 2024 Masters winner, is trying to join Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Nick Faldo as the only players to win back-to-back green jackets.

The 28-year-old American could also match Nicklaus as the only other player to win the Masters three times in four years.

Since Tiger Woods won in 2005 after sharing 33rd for 18 holes, 18 of 19 Masters

winners have been in the top 10 after the opening round, the exception being Woods winning after starting 11th in 2019.

The past five green jacket winners have been in the top three after 18 holes, including Scheffler in second last year and third in 2022.

But the fast-start stat for Masters winners isn't something Scheffler ponders often, simply because he sees opportunities all over Augusta National in every round.

"Anytime you get close to the lead, it's going to be easier to win the golf tournament. You get off to a good start, statistically you're going to have a better chance to win," Scheffler said.

"It's funny because this is a golf course where there's a lot of opportunities. There's a lot of opportunity over the weekend. There's a lot of opportunity on Sunday with where they put the pins."

"I'm a bit surprised that it's like that, but I wouldn't say that it can't be done (to win from outside a top-10 start)." - AFP

England's Justin Rose plays his second shot on the 18th hole during the first round of the 2025 Masters Tournament. - AFP/PIX

Canada's Connors plays his way into conversation

COREY CONNORS was not garnering much attention in the lead-up to the year's first major but the Canadian announced his presence yesterday with his best-ever start to a Masters that left him firmly in contention.

The build-up to the Masters focused mainly on defending champion Scottie

does suit my eye really well and plays into some of my strengths."

Connors arrived at the major in solid form after top-10 finishes in four of his nine PGA Tour events this season and looked very comfortable as he made his way around Augusta National.

Connors was even par when he reached the par-four seventh where he looked headed for a sure bogey after he failed to get out of a greenside bunker with his third shot.

But Connors, hoping to follow in 2003 winner Mike Weir's footsteps and become the second Canadian to slip into a Green Jacket, jump-started his round with his next shot when he managed to chip in for par.

"To see that go in, that was great. I was trying hard to get it up-and-down the second time, and it went in," said Connors. "That was a nice bonus and definitely a momentum builder."

There is plenty of golf to be played but Connors likes where he stands and feels comfortable on Augusta National's notoriously tricky and undulating greens.

"They're obviously very fast. You don't need to work too hard to get the ball to the hole. I feel like just the rhythm I have is good," said Connors.

"I have confidence I'm getting started online, and I was able to hole some nice ones today." - Reuters

Scheffler and Rory McIlroy, the world's two best golfers, but Connors muscled his way into the conversation for at least one day with an opening 4-under 68.

That left Connors, who finished inside the top 10 at Augusta National in three consecutive years from 2000-22, in a share of second place, four shots back of first-round leader Justin Rose and level with Scheffler and 2024 runner-up Ludvig Aberg.

"It's a golf course that I love coming to. I don't know how you couldn't love coming here. It's a spectacular event, a spectacular golf course," Connors said.

"Yeah, I feel like the course

down there so I could hit an iron in there."

"But obviously you're playing with fire when you're messing with that front, especially with a short pin."

Aberg had to withdraw from the Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February, and missed the cut in the Players Championship and the Texas Open in the final round-up to the Masters.

But he said his experience last year had helped him.

"This place, experience goes a long way, and I felt like we played a very disciplined round of golf today," he said. "When you execute the shots, it makes it a whole lot easier, obviously, but I felt like we managed sort of the shots where we were in between clubs in the right way and didn't try to force anything."

"(I'm) proud of the way that I finished and looking forward to (Friday)." - AFP



Aberg closes strong at 'sneaky hard' Augusta

LUDVIG ABERG'S disciplined approach paid off yesterday as he positioned himself for another run at the Masters one year after a runner-up finish in his major championship debut.

"It was sneaky hard," Aberg said of the conditions at Augusta National. "There isn't a ton of wind, but it still swirls."

"There's a few greens that get a little crusty towards the end of the

afternoon, and you really have to place your second shots if you're good off the tee."

"It makes it tricky when the wind kind of goes back in your face and then down."

Aberg was even through the first nine holes with one birdie and one bogey, but a birdie at the par-three 12th ignited his round.

He added birdies at the par-five 13th and par-five 15th, his birdie at

the 18th putting him in a tie for second on 68, alongside defending champion Scottie Scheffler and Canadian Corey Connors and three strokes behind Justin Rose.

Aberg said the 15th was a great example of the danger lurking around Augusta.

"It's tricky," he said. "The green is new so it gets a little bit firmer than some of the other ones. I was fortunate to get my drive pretty far

SHORTS

FIA deputy president resigns, attacks boss

THE FIA's deputy president Robert Reid resigned on Thursday with a damning parting shot at the head of motorsport's governing body Mohammed Ben Sulayem.

"I took on this role to help deliver greater transparency, stronger governance and more collaborative leadership.

"Over time, those principles have been increasingly set aside and I can no longer, in good faith, remain part of a system that no longer reflects them," Reid posted on Instagram.

In a swipe at Mohammed, Reid said motorsport "deserves leadership rooted in integrity, accountability, and respect for process".

"That's the minimum standard we should all expect, and demand," he concluded.

The FIA issued a strong defence of itself in the wake of Reid's departure.

"The FIA has exceptionally robust corporate governance policies which guide our operations and ensure our rules, practices and processes are adhered to," a statement read.

Reid's resignation comes as Formula One gathered in Bahrain for Sunday's fourth race of the season.

Reid is the latest in a long line of high profile figures to quit the FIA since Ben Sulayem's appointment in 2021, including its sporting director, F1 technical director and head of the women in motorsport commission.

Sainz risks further fine for bad language

WILLIAMS Formula One driver Carlos Sainz (pix) could face a further hefty fine after he swore on Thursday while defending lateness that cost him €10,000 (RM45,000) in Japan last weekend.

The Spaniard was fined €20,000 (RM90,000), with half suspended, after a "stomach issue" delayed him getting to the national anthem in time before Sunday's race at Suzuka.

"I don't know if I'm going to get another fine for saying this, but sh*t happens. It's the way it is. It's the way it goes sometimes," he said in a press conference organised by the governing FIA at the Bahrain Grand Prix.

The FIA delegate, who was in the room, confirmed Sainz's case was being assessed and could be referred to the stewards for consideration today.

Sainz said he was a big supporter of punctuality, particularly for a national anthem attended by all the authorities.

"For five seconds, it's disappointing. I hope someone tells me where this €10K goes and they say 'OK, at least it went to a nice cause. I will be looking forward to seeing where they go.'"

Hamilton 'excited' with Ferrari upgrade

LEWIS HAMILTON is optimistic an upgrade to Ferrari's car this weekend in Bahrain will improve the *Scuderia*'s pace after a tough start to the 2025 F1 season.

Seven-time world champion Hamilton, who moved to Ferrari in the off-season after 12 years and six world titles with Mercedes, has endured a mostly disappointing start to his time at the Italian giants.

While the 40-year-old did win the sprint race in China, he only finished 10th and seventh in Australia and Japan respectively while he was disqualified, alongside teammate Charles Leclerc, from the main grand prix in Shanghai after both cars failed post-race technical checks.

As a result, Hamilton is only eighth in the

championship standings – 47 points behind leader Lando Norris – but insists Ferrari are eyeing an improvement in performance in race four this weekend.

"We've got an upgrade this weekend, I'm excited," he said on media day in Bahrain.

"We should hopefully have a bit more downforce. I'm not feeling a huge amount of issues, we lack overall performance at the moment pace-wise.

"Hopefully we take a step this weekend. From my side, it's rear-end – and that's it."

However, Hamilton's teammate Leclerc admitted he is not expecting the upgrade to close the gap to frontrunners McLaren completely.

"We have some new bits on the car coming which I hope will help us close that gap a little bit," the Monegasque said.

"Whether it will be enough to close the complete gap, I don't think so.

"I hope it will help us to be at least closer. It's still quite a significant step. In Suzuka, that was the gap between McLaren and ourselves, which is three-tenths. We need to work very hard in order to catch that.

"That's what we are doing, I'm confident we can close that. Whether what we're bringing, I don't think will be enough, but short-term hopefully we have other things which will help us be closer." – The Independent

Piastri bites back at Horner

McLaren driver confident car will stay strong all year despite rule change

OSCAR PIASTRI has dismissed talk of McLaren being slowed by a rule change in June and says he expects the champions to stay strong all season.

The FIA, Formula One's governing body, will introduce more stringent front wing load tests from the Spanish Grand Prix on June 1 to reduce the permitted level of flex after already addressing rear wings.

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said in Japan last weekend that the change would be significant and there was "an unknown" as to who would be affected.

"We have a big regulation change coming at race nine. You know, how is that going to affect the run of play?" the Briton told *Sky Sports* television.

Piastri doubted it would make much difference to McLaren, who lead both championships with Lando Norris a point clear of Red Bull's four-times world champion Max Verstappen, the winner at Suzuka last Sunday.

"I'm pretty confident we'll be strong all year," the Australian told reporters ahead of the Bahrain Grand Prix, round four of the won the Australian opener, said he would rather be driving his car than a Red Bull.

"I don't think it'll change too much. I've not spoken to the team about it massively, in all honesty, which probably tells you enough about that.

"Let's see when we get to Spain, but we've still got a lot of races until then and I think we'll be a strong team all year round."

Piastri, winner in China after Norris

While Verstappen has shown it can be a winner, he is already on his second teammate of the season after Liam Lawson was demoted back to Racing Bulls with Yuki Tsunoda going in the opposite direction.

"Clearly the car looks pretty difficult. We've seen that with Liam. We saw it with Checo (Sergio Perez) last year, even with Yuki in Japan," said Piastri.

"I think going into an

environment that has been so focused on the way Max drives for nearly 10 years now – it would be a very tough environment to go into and have immediate success.

"I'm quite happy that I'm driving a McLaren and not a Red Bull at the moment."

Piastri said the McLaren was a tricky car to extract maximum performance from but a lot of the ideas and philosophies were similar to last year.

"If I had to pick out of all 10 cars on the grid right now, I'd still pretty happily be choosing ours," he said.

Heading into Sunday's race, the Drivers' Championship fight is wide open. Verstappen's victory in Japan closed the gap to leader Norris to just one point, while Piastri is also within touching distance, 12 points back from the Red Bull driver.

All of those drivers have won a Grand Prix in the opening three rounds of the season, although McLaren will be disappointed not to have achieved a clean sweep, such is their advantage over rivals Mercedes, Red Bull, and Ferrari.

Andrea Stella's squad are already 36 points clear of second-placed Mercedes in the Constructors' Championship standings as they look to retain the trophy that they claimed in 2024.

Red Bull, however, have their attention fully focused on Verstappen's title fight following a challenging start to the campaign in their second year. – Reuters/ Express Newspapers

Ancelotti questioned as Real Madrid face Alaves

CARLO ANCELOTTI and his faltering Real Madrid side are under the microscope ahead of their visit to Alaves tomorrow (10.15pm Malaysian time), fighting to break out of a slump and stay in the La Liga title race.

Los Blancos are four points behind leaders Barcelona, who visit Leganes tomorrow (3am), and need to bounce back from their 3-0 thrashing by Arsenal on Tuesday in the Champions League.

Madrid host Arsenal next week in the second leg of that tie, in which they insist they can come back, but by focussing on that they would be at risk of slipping up in Vitoria.

Alaves, 17th, are fighting for La Liga survival and despite Madrid's status as Spanish and European champions, will believe they can get at Ancelotti's fragile side.

They have let in 11 goals in the last four games and have suffered two consecutive defeats, by Arsenal and last weekend in La Liga against Valencia.

"I feel responsible for what happened," admitted Ancelotti after the crushing loss at the Emirates.

Madrid's defeat has led to reports in Spanish media that they will not keep coach Ancelotti beyond the end of the season, with Bayer Leverkusen's Xabi Alonso, a former Madrid star, linked.

After just two defeats across all competitions last season, this season Madrid have suffered 11.

"Ancelotti is playing... for the credibility of his project, and maybe his position ahead of next season," wrote Madrid daily *Marca*.

Ancelotti may insist his team work together more against Alaves, criticising his collection of stars for trying to fight their way back individually after Declan Rice's free-kick double for Arsenal.

"We were not capable of a joint reaction, united," reasoned the coach.

"We tried too many individual moves, and that cost us because we lost our order, and from there they controlled the ball and the result."

The coach said his team has struggled throughout the current campaign to defend as a unit.

"It's something we've had a problem with through the season, the difficulty of being a compact block in the good moments but also in the ones which are not good," he added.

Madrid are hopeful Dani Ceballos can return to the squad for the Alaves match, with the midfielder out since February with a leg injury.

The former Arsenal playmaker has found form this season and his absence further exacerbates Madrid's difficulty in coping without departed midfield maestro Toni Kroos, who left last summer.

Aurelien Tchouameni's return should also help protect the defence, after he missed the Arsenal first leg through suspension.

Madrid's goal is a victory to maintain their title defence ambitions, before they try to rescue their Champions League campaign against Arsenal at the Santiago Bernabeu. – AFP



Salah signs Liverpool contract extension

MOHAMED SALAH has extended his Liverpool contract until 2027 following months of speculation surrounding the Egyptian international's future.

Salah, who has 54 goals and assists to his name already this season, has opted to stick around so that he and Liverpool can win more "big trophies together".

Liverpool's talisman had been free to sign a pre-contract agreement with clubs outside of England from January onwards, with talk of the 32-year-old attracting interest from Saudi Arabia.

However, as the Reds' second title

in five years began to edge closer, it became clear that Liverpool's hierarchy were "increasingly confident" of tying down the marksman to a new deal.

Upon the announcement of his new contract, Salah vowed to continue delivering silverware to Anfield.

Speaking to Liverpool's official website, Salah said: "Of course I'm very excited. We have a great team now. Before also we had a great team."

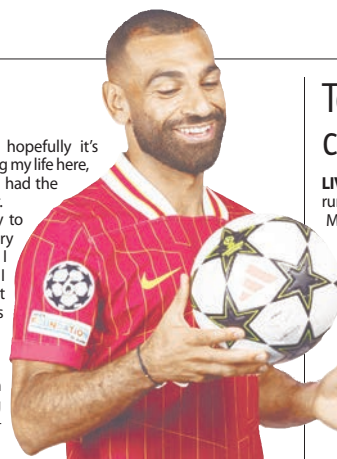
"But I signed because I think we have a chance to win other trophies and enjoy my football."

"It's great, I had my best years here.

I played eight years, hopefully it's going to be 10. Enjoying my life here, enjoying my football. I had the best years in my career."

"I would like to say to (the fans), I am very, very happy to be here. I signed here because I believe we can win a lot of big trophies together."

"Keep supporting us and we'll give it our best, and hopefully in the future we're going to win more trophies." - Express Newspapers



Tension mounts as Reds close in on Premier title

LIVERPOOL will look to bounce back from a rare defeat as the runaway Premier League leaders host West Ham tomorrow. Meanwhile Chelsea, Manchester City, Newcastle, Nottingham Forest and Aston Villa are embroiled in a tense battle to qualify for the Champions League. Here's a look at three talking points ahead of this weekend's action:

LIVERPOOL NOT 'COMPLACENT'

Having sucked any drama out of the title race weeks ago, Liverpool suffered a rare defeat against Fulham last weekend that sparked accusations the leaders are getting complacent.

But despite their second league defeat this season, Liverpool have an 11-point lead over second-placed Arsenal with just seven games left.

It would take an astonishing collapse for the Reds not to claim a record-equalling 20th English crown and Slot is convinced his players remain firmly focused on getting the job done as soon as possible.

"I think there is no reason for us to be complacent," manager Arne Slot said ahead of West Ham's visit to Anfield.

"I think everyone that has seen our games knows that it takes us so much effort, so much hard work to win."

"The team that won the League in the last four seasons were already 3-0 up at half-time almost every single game they played. That is not the way for us."

TOP FIVE RACE HOTS UP

With five places in next season's Champions League now available to English clubs, the race for those lucrative berths is set to go down to the wire.

Third-placed Nottingham Forest, who host Everton today, hope to reach Europe's elite club competition for the first time since 1980-81 and hold a five point lead over sixth-placed Manchester City.

Chelsea, in fourth place, are ahead of fifth-placed Newcastle only on goal difference, with the League Cup winners holding a game in hand that could prove crucial.

This weekend, Chelsea face struggling Ipswich, while Newcastle host Manchester United and seventh-placed Aston Villa - two points adrift of the top five - visit relegated Southampton.

City, who entertain Crystal Palace today, are a point behind Chelsea and Newcastle and arguably have the most to lose as they bid to salvage a wretched season with Champions League qualification.

LEICESTER ON THE BRINK

Leicester's dismal campaign looks destined to end in relegation and a loss at Brighton today would push them to the brink of returning to the second tier after one season.

Beaten 3-0 by Newcastle early this week, the Foxes are the first side in English football's top four divisions to lose eight successive home League games without scoring.

Ruud van Nistelrooy's second-bottom team have not netted at the King Power Stadium since Dec 8 against Brighton and have gone seven League games at home and away without scoring.

Van Nistelrooy is only the second manager in Premier League history to lose eight successive home games in the competition, after Daniel Farke with Norwich in 2021.

Mired in a woeful run of nine consecutive defeats in all competitions, Leicester will be 18 points adrift of safety with only six games left if they lose at Brighton and fourth-bottom Wolves beat Tottenham tomorrow.

FIXTURES & STANDINGS

(All in M'sian time/ 10pm unless stated)		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TODAY	Liverpool	31	22	7	2	72	30	73
Man City vs Crystal	Arsenal	31	17	11	3	56	26	62
Palace (7.30pm),	Nottm Forest	31	17	6	8	51	37	57
Brighton vs Leicester,	Chelsea	31	15	8	8	54	37	53
Nottingham Forest vs	Newcastle	30	16	5	9	52	39	53
Everton, Southampton	Man City	31	15	7	9	57	40	52
vs Aston Villa.	Aston Villa	31	14	9	8	46	46	51
	Fulham	31	13	9	9	47	42	48
	Brighton	31	12	11	8	49	47	47
	Bournemouth	31	12	9	10	51	40	45
TOMORROW	Crystal Palace	30	11	10	9	39	35	43
(9pm unless stated)	Brentford	31	12	6	13	51	47	42
Arsenal vs Brentford	Man Utd	31	10	8	13	37	41	38
(12.30am), Chelsea vs	Tottenham	31	11	4	16	58	45	37
Ipswich, Liverpool vs	Everton	31	7	14	10	33	38	35
West Ham, Wolves vs	West Ham	31	9	8	14	35	52	35
Tottenham, Newcas-	Wolves	31	9	5	17	43	59	32
tle vs Manchester	Ipswich	31	4	8	19	31	65	20
United (11.30pm)	Leicester	31	4	5	22	25	70	17
	Southampton	31	2	4	25	23	74	10
	RELEGATED							
TUESDAY								
Bournemouth vs								
Fulham (3am)								

Note: Top five qualify for the 2025/ 26 Champions League; bottom three relegated to Championship.

The Gods must be crazy

Postecoglou retains belief after Spurs squander chances against Frankfurt

ANGE POSTECOGLOU cursed the "football gods" after Tottenham spurned several second-half chances in a 1-1 home draw with Eintracht Frankfurt, but firmly believes they can reach the Europa League semifinals.

Spurs regrouped impressively from Hugo Ekitike's fine sixth-minute opener for the visitors in their last-eight first-leg tie and forced a leveller after 26 minutes through an exquisite Pedro Porro back-heel.

It gave Tottenham a platform and they looked back to their best after the break during wave after wave of attacks as Lucas Bergvall and Rodrigo Bentancur hit the crossbar, while Son Heung-min and James Maddison were denied by excellent saves from Frankfurt back-up goalkeeper Kaua Santos during four dazzling second half minutes.

Postecoglou rolled the dice late on and watched Brennan Johnson fire over before Micky van de Ven sent a close-range header onto his own foot which allowed Kaua

to tip over and leave the tie finely poised ahead of next week's second leg at Deutsche Bank Park.

"I'm resigned to the fact that the football gods have got their eyes elsewhere this year."

"They're obviously busy with other clubs and other managers so whatever we get we're going to have to do it without them this year," Postecoglou smiled, in reference to Spurs' hefty injury list in the winter.

"If we can repeat that (performance) next week, and there's no reason we can't, we'll give ourselves a good chance."

"I really felt like we overwhelmed them with our football, with our running and with our press. It wasn't just the chances we created, but the chances we almost created."

"It's going to be that sort of season. Nothing is going to come to us easy. We're

going to have to go there and fight now to get what I thought we deserved tonight and that's what we'll try to do."

Even though Spurs face an

uphill task next week in Germany, Frankfurt's recent form at home has been mixed, with three defeats in March.

Tottenham's own inconsistency has been their Achilles heel this term but Postecoglou did take encouragement from this display.

He added: "A little bit frustrated by the result obviously, but I thought the performance in general was really good from the boys."

"We conceded early which was not ideal and it was a fair strike by the lad, but I thought our response to that was really good."

"We stayed in control, we scored a good equaliser and we made them work hard in the first half so we knew in the second half, with our ability to break teams open, we would put them under pressure."

"It is exactly what happened and the boys did everything right. I couldn't ask for anything more from them."

"On any other night we would have a comfortable victory. If we can perform like that over

there, and there is no reason why we can't, then we still give ourselves a good chance." - The Independent

Academy duo shine for Chelsea

TYRIQUE GEORGE scored his first Chelsea goal as Enzo Maresca's side eased past Legia Warsaw to take a 3-0 lead into the second leg of their Conference League quarterfinal.

Next week's return at Stamford Bridge should be little more than a formality and it would take an almighty collapse for Chelsea not to reach the last four from here, after three second-half goals helped purge the memory of another uninspiring first period.

The moment of the match came from academy graduate George, the 19-year-old winger reacting quickest inside the box after Reece James' effort was saved, before substitute Noni Madueke doubled the lead minutes later.

Madueke hit his second 15 minutes from time, tapping in just seconds after Christopher Nkunku had had a penalty saved.

Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca praised George and fellow teenager Josh Acheampong after yesterday's win in Warsaw.

George has been with Chelsea's academy since the age of eight and Maresca said: "I'm happy first of all for the Chelsea academy because he is one of our boys."

"He was quite good in the first half, taking responsibility. He was probably better in the

middle."

Former Chelsea attacker Joe Cole, who helped the club win three Premier League titles, has been impressed with George.

"What a moment for the young man," he told *TNT Sports*. "It's beautiful to see when an academy player scores their first goal."

"In what has been an indifferent season for the club, he has been a real bright spark. He has played in these games and taken his opportunities."

"He is direct, affects the games, he is a dribbler and every fullback's nightmare as he goes at players and makes things happen."

"The fans have been calling for him to start Premier League games and they really like him."

But Maresca reserved his greatest praise for 18-year-old rightback Acheampong.

"The one I fell in love with tonight is Josh Acheampong," added the Italian. "He can be a fantastic player for this club. A good player can play in different positions and he showed that."

"The best thing for Josh is that he's open - he wants to learn. Fullback? No problem, what do I have to do?" - The Independent/Agencies



Chelsea's Noni Madueke (right) celebrates scoring their second goal with Tyrique George. - REUTERS/PIC

Junior Tour back for two more years

THE 4th Edition of the Srixon 100Plus Malaysian Junior Development Tour went live on Wednesday and is now open for registration for all amateur golfers aged between 9-18 years old.

For 2022-2023, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Dunlop Srixon Sports Asia and Golf (Malaysia) Publications, appointing Golf Malaysia as the Tour Promoter of what became a sensation in junior golf development circles.

This year, another two-year agreement has been signed for Golf (Malaysia) to run the series designed to provide junior golfers with an engaging, fun and elite golf experience.

Three professional-standard golfing events for junior golfers will be hosted between May to July. A fourth event, the Srixon 100Plus International Championship, will take place in Q4 2025, with the top-5 overall Gross scorers in the boys and girls A & B Categories in each leg going head-to-head with elite teams from regional Asian countries.

Host venues for the series include Templer Park Country Club, Selangor, May 6-8; Eastwood Valley Golf & Country Club, Sarawak, June 24-26; and Glenmarie Golf & Country Club, Selangor, July 8-10.

The Srixon 100Plus International Championship will be held at Kota Permai Golf & Country Club, Selangor.

Winners of the Junior Development Tour will earn prizes, World Amateur Golf Rankings points (WAGR). Additional rewards will include places to play in yet-to-be announced top amateur and professional tournaments.

The tournaments are stroke play format, with a Gross and Nett Category. The number of 18-holes rounds at each tournament will be Three (3) for Category A & B and Two (2) for Category C, while a practice round will be arranged a day before the tournament is held.

Group A & B will qualify for WAGR points and all players can submit their scores to Junior Golf Scoreboard.

AGE GROUPS

Group A – Boys & Girls 16-18 years

Group B – Boys & Girls 13-15 years

Group C – Boys 10-12 & Girls 9-12 years

Gross winners in all age groups will receive prizes from 1st to 5th place, while Nett winners in every category will receive prizes from 1st to 3rd place.

Junior Golfers can register on a first-come-first-served basis by contacting myjdtour@gmail.com or WhatsApp to 011-65636868.

Southern Tigers maul Kelantan FC

FIVE GOALS from Johor Darul Ta'zim's (JDT) goal machine Bergson Da Silva powered the Southern Tigers to a crushing 9-0 victory over Kelantan Darul Naim FC (KDN FC) in the Super League at Sultan Ibrahim Stadium (SSI) in Iskandar Puteri on Thursday night.

Bergson opened the scoring in the eighth minute after finishing off a cross from Park Junheong, before netting his second in the 20th minute from a corner delivered by Nazmi Faiz Mansor.

The JDT talisman completed his hat-trick with a left-footed strike that beat KDN FC goalkeeper

Da Silva hits five as JDT go on rampage against helpless KDN

Mohammad Fikri Che Soh in the 25th minute.

JDT's fourth goal came when Bergson again punished Mohammad Fikri's handling error on a cross from Jese Rodriguez, firing home in the 27th minute.

Bergson continued his rampage by finding the back of the net once more in the 36th minute.

In the second half, Romel Morales extended JDT's dominance with two quick goals in the 54th and 57th minutes.

The visitors' misery deepened when Shahrul Saad added the eighth goal in the 62nd minute.

Shafiq Rahim capped off JDT's emphatic win by scoring the ninth goal in the 84th minute.

Thursday's emphatic win is expected to provide a significant morale boost ahead of the Malaysia Cup final.

JDT head coach Hector Bidoglio said the win also builds momentum for their final Super League fixture next week, allowing each player to deliver their best performance before the league season ends.

"Although this season has been more challenging due to its length compared to previous seasons, all JDT players who have featured have delivered solid performances.

"If the match gets a positive result, it will be good moral support when we play Sri Pahang later," he told a press conference after the game.

Meanwhile, KDN FC assistant head coach Rezal Zambery Yahya, despite the heavy defeat, commended his players' commitment on the field.

"I hope we will continue playing until the final match of the season, as we still honour the contracts we have in this league competition.

"The players gave their all despite conceding nine goals... but we know our opponents tonight were JDT, a very strong team made up of top-class players," he said. – Bernama



JDT's Bergson Da Silva celebrates the third goal against KDN during the Super League match at the Sultan Ibrahim Stadium.
– BERNAMAPIC

Sports complex cheer for Tanah Merah folk

THE dreams of people in Tanah Merah, especially in Gual Ipoh to have a sports complex is now almost a reality when the first phase of the construction project starts in early May.

The planned sports complex will be built on 15.33 acres of land that has been gazetted as a recreational and leisure reserve strategically located in the heart of Gual Ipoh, near mosques, police stations, clinics, Rural Transformation Centres (RTCs) as well as major towns and the location is expected to facilitate

access for local residents.

Kelantan State Youth, Sports and Unity, NGOs and Community Unity Committee deputy chairman Bahari Mohamad Noor said the first phase of the project involves the construction of a football field complete with a pavilion, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Local resident Muhammad Shukri Abd Rashid, 60, said the existence of the sports complex is expected to bring economic benefits to the residents.

Another resident, Che Sanusi Ismail, 29, said the construction of the sports complex was very timely as there were no complete sports facilities in the area.

"In Gual Ipoh, there is no football field for young people. We used to play on the school field, but now it's not allowed for some reason.

"If we want to play futsal, we have to go to the town of Tanah Merah almost 25 kilometres away. In fact, to play football at night, we are forced to go to Pasir Mas or Kota Bharu," he said. – Bernama

SHORTS

Nova not surprised

NATIONAL doubles head coach Nova Widianto says he is not surprised to see Hoo Pang Ron-Cheng Su Yin crash out in the first round of the 2025 Badminton Asia Championships (BAC) in Ningbo, China.

Nova said he had expected the result as he wasn't sure how they would handle the pressure that comes with competing in the tournament.

He was referring to world No. 14 Pang Ron-Su Yin's 21-15, 12-21, 11-21 loss to India's Dhruv Kapila-Tanisha Crasto on Wednesday.

"I wasn't surprised but they seemed to lose focus in the second and third games, especially Su Yin after they took an 8-6 lead in the second game... they started making mistakes.

"The higher their ranking, the higher the pressure. They must be strong...

players can't bottle it mentally. Don't keep thinking about your previous defeats," Nova told reporters after the national team's training session at Akademi Badminton Malaysia (ABM) at Bukit Kiara in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Nova has called on the pair to be wiser in dealing with the pressure.

Last month, Pang Ron-Su Yin also crashed out in the first round of the All England Badminton Championships.

Pandelela fails to make final

NATIONAL diving queen Datuk Pandelela Rinong failed to qualify for the women's 10m platform final at the World Aquatics Diving World Cup 2025 in Windsor, Canada.

In the preliminary round early yesterday morning (Malaysian time), she finished 20th with a total score of 235.90 points, thus missing out on a spot among the top 12 divers to advance to

the final on Sunday.

China's Quan Hongchan and Chen Yuxi dominated the event to claim the top two spots.

Hongchan, the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympics 10m platform gold medallist, amassed 404.15 points to finish top while Chen Yuxi, who partnered Hongchan to clinch the women's 10m platform synchronised gold in Paris 2024, finished second with 376.45 points.

Ice hockey team eyes promotion

THE national ice hockey team are eying the third spot when they compete in the 2025 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World Championship Division IV in Yerevan, Armenia from April 13-20.

Malaysia Ice Hockey Federation deputy president Dr Nurhidayah Datuk

Badarudin is confident the team can achieve third placing based on the thorough preparations they have undergone since January.

"Previously, we finished fourth... this time we will try to beat Indonesia, Iran and Kuwait to, hopefully, finish third.

"If we can get on the podium, we will move up to Division III in the next tournament," she said.

She added that Malaysia will be represented by 20 players, with seven of them based overseas, including in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Malaysia will begin their Division IV campaign against the host on Sunday (April 13), before facing Iran (April 14), Indonesia (April 16), Kuwait (April 17) and Uzbekistan (April 19).

The tournament uses the round-robin format and the team with the highest number of points will be declared champions.

RESULTS

EUROPA LEAGUE (Quarterfinals, 1st leg): **Bodo/Glimt 2** (Salsnes 47, 69) **Lazio 0, Lyon 2** (Almada 26, Cherki 90+5) **Manchester United 2** (Yoro 45+5, Zirkzee 88), **Rangers 0** **Athletic Bilbao 0, Tottenham Hotspur 1** (Porro 26) **Eintracht Frankfurt 1** (Ekitike 6).

CONFERENCE LEAGUE (Quarterfinals, 1st leg): **Legia Warsaw 0** **Chelsea 3** (George 49, Madueke 57, 74), **Celje 1** (Delaurier-Chaubet 68-pen) **Fiorentina 2** (Ranieri 27, Mandragora 62-pen), **Djurgarden 0** **Rapid Vienna 1** (Finndell 62-og), **Real Betis 2** (Bakambu 24, Jesus Rodriguez 45+2) **Jagiellonia Bialystok 0**.



Read **theSun** iPaper at
www.thesun.my
Free access to iPaper PDF Download
or download **theSun** app from
the App Store or Google Play™.

SCAN ME

Oh-nana!

Goalkeeper's dire performance leaves United's Europa League quarterfinal on knife edge

IF THERE was a little to support Andre Onana's theory Manchester United are "way better" than Lyon, there was further fuel for Nemanja Matic's accusation.

For the goalkeeper branded one of the worst in United's modern history came one of his worst nights in their shirt, a pair of mistakes to strengthen Matic's argument.

Arguably United were superior to Lyon but it was not reflected in the scoreline as a semifinal spot remained on a knife-edge.

That was due to Onana, who bookended the scoring with blunders, affording Lyon a 95th-minute equaliser when he pushed Georges Mikautadze's shot straight back out. Rayan Cherki, following up, tapped in.

"The worst moment to concede a goal," said Leny Yoro. There was no attempt to sugarcoat it; nor could there be.

Amorim argued the tie is "50-50" though home advantage could render them slight favourites to secure a semifinal against Athletic Bilbao or Rangers.

Yet this had promised so much more - one of the best results of Amorim's reign, salvation to their season in the form of silverware and Champions League qualification - when Joshua Zirkzee headed them into an 88th-minute lead.

But Onana, the man who may have talked too much, contrived to have the final say.

The first error saw Onana dive too late to stop Thiago Alcantara's freekick and the ball bounced over his head into the back of the net in the first half before a fumble late in stoppage time of the second allowed Cherki to score an equaliser and leave the tie delicately poised at 2-2.

His performance seemed to back up Matic's assertion but Amorim backed his No. 1 by adding that he is "confident in Andre" during his post-match interviews.

"We are really disappointed," explained the Manchester United boss when speaking to TNT Sports

following the draw.

"We should have taken a one goal advantage to the next game but we have the next game at home - we will try to win that game."

"It is important to focus on the next game for the League and then think about the second leg against Lyon."

When asked for his thoughts on Onana's errors the Portuguese was diplomatic and said the whole team has to be responsible for individual errors.

He added: "When one player has a mistake, all the team has a mistake so we continue like that. We continue to do the same thing."

"Training, seeing the games, trying to choose the best eleven to win every match."

"It (mistakes) can happen. If you play football, and we play a lot of games, you can make mistakes," added Amorim.

"There's nothing I can say to Andre in this moment that will help

him, so the most important thing is to be natural and then when the time comes I will choose the best XI to play."

As part of his punditry duties for the broadcaster, former Man Utd midfielder Paul Scholes labelled Onana's role in the first goal as "an awful mistake".

During the half-time break, Scholes said: "He's probably wishing he'd kept his mouth shut. It's a really bad mistake. The ball bounces in front of him and it's an awful mistake."

Former Tottenham midfielder Aaron Lennon declared that Onana's teammates will be "fuming" over his errors and claimed that the 29-year-old cost United the game.

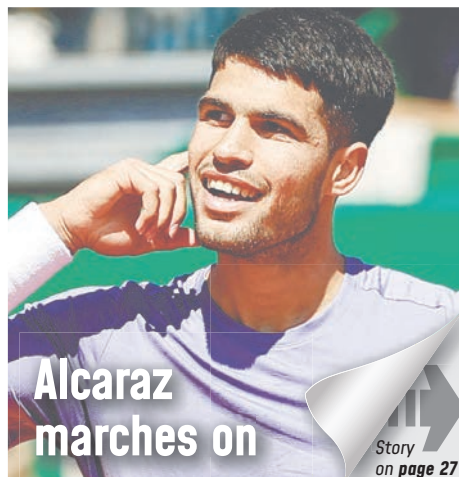
Speaking to BBC Radio 5 Live he said: "You're fuming (if you're Onana's teammate). They're two massive mistakes. He has got to save both of them in my opinion and he has cost United today."

"He was in the headlines before the game and now he is going to be all over the headlines again."

Yoro, who played for Lyon boss Paulo Fonseca while at Lille, is confident United can get the job done after scoring his first goal for the club.

"We know that matches like these, away from home, if we win it puts us in a really good position for the return at home," he said.

"Unfortunately we conceded that goal at the end so come away with a draw and will do everything to win the second leg" - The Independent/AFP



Alcaraz marches on

Story on page 27



Salah signs Liverpool contract extension

Story on page 30



Southern Tigers maul Kelantan FC

Story on page 31