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Let us look forward to a wonderful year ahead, filled with prosperity happiness, good health and good fortune for all.

Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali

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SELANGOR JOURNAL



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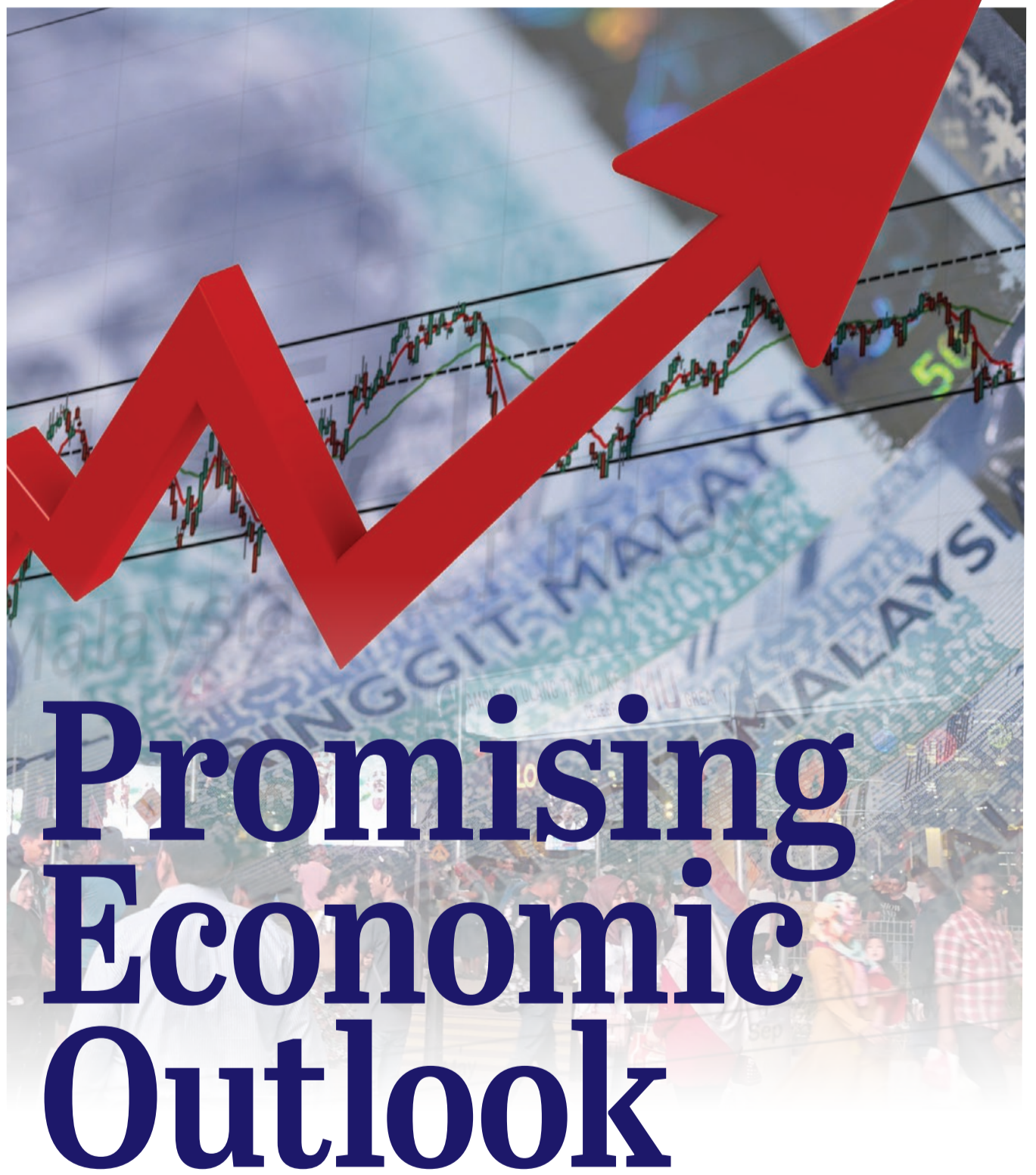
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Promising Economic Outlook

For many years, the cost of living in our country has remained the topmost concern for a substantial segment of the public. In 2017, research house Ipsos Malaysia said that 55 per cent of its survey respondents, involving Malaysians aged 18 to 74, desired the government to reduce the cost of living within the country.

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61% Satisfied with Amirudin Shari's Administration

SHAH ALAM - A total of 61 per cent of the voters in the Semenyih State Assembly are satisfied with the administration of the Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari.

Deputy Chairman of the Institute of Darul Ehsan (IDE), Prof. Dato' Dr Mohammad Redzuan Othman said the achievement could be an attraction and asset to Pakatan Harapan (PAKATAN) in Semenyih.

"Based on age, those within 21 to 30 years of age are 64 per cent satisfied

with his administration; those 31 to 40 years of age are 63 per cent satisfied; those 41 to 50 years of age are 62 per cent satisfied; those 51 to 60 years of age are 52 per cent satisfied, while those who are 60 years and above are 57 per cent satisfied."

"Meanwhile, for the Malays, it is 54 per cent, Chinese, 78 per cent while for Indians it is a 82 per cent satisfaction rate," he said at the N24 Semenanjung Review Council.

According to him, voters still held PAKATAN in highly esteem in various issues except subsistence and the price of goods.

He said this was because the public is still looking forward to the government's efforts in addressing the issue of rising subsistence costs.

However, he said, the community's response was still positive towards the Inisiatif Peduli Rakyat (IPR) programme introduced by the State Government since 2008, which has helped the people of Selangor.

"Meanwhile, 84 per cent of respondents are positive that they will be coming out to vote, while another 16 per cent said they will be working," said Mohammad Redzuan. The survey also found that some locally-registered voters live outside the Semenyih area.

Hence, he said, IDE has proposed the election to be held on Sunday compared to Saturday or a working day to make it easier for voters especially private workers working in the industrial and manufacturing sectors.

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The public is still looking forward to the government's efforts in addressing the issue of rising subsistence costs

- Prof. Dato' Dr Mohammad Redzuan Othman

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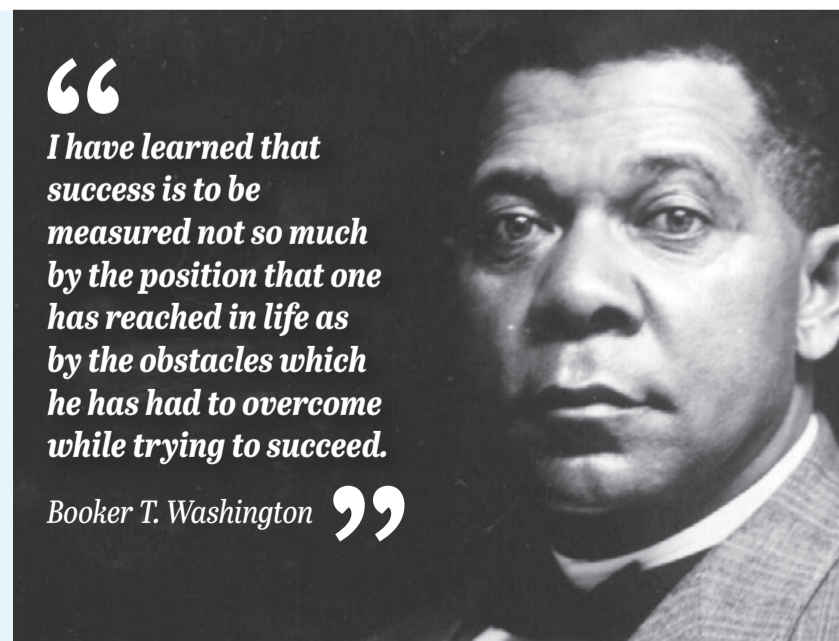
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I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has had to overcome while trying to succeed.

Booker T. Washington ”





MBI CHANNELS RM 1.6 MILLION FOR TANJONG KARANG STORM VICTIMS

TANJONG KARANG - The Menteri Besar Selangor Incorporated (MBI) has channelled around RM 1.6 million for all 183 storm victims here.

The amount includes aid for home repairs amounting to as much as RM 500 for minor damage, RM 5,000 for moderate damage, RM 20,000 for serious damage, and RM 50,000 aid for reconstruction.

Kuala Selangor District Officer Shamsul Shahril Badliza Mohd Noor said the State Government also channelled RM 500 to the victims.

“The Selangor Zakat Board (LZS) is also pleased to allocate RM300 per family.”

“The MBI will rebuild 14 houses that have been damaged, while LZS will assist 19 families with *asnaf* (deserving poor) status here,” he said.



MBI will rebuild 14 houses that have been damaged, while LZS will assist 19 families with *asnaf* status here,
– Shamsul Shahril Badliza Mohd Noor



He said this when speaking at the Storm Aid Contribution Ceremony, at Seri Tiram Hall in Tanjung Karang yesterday.

Also present was Chief Operating Officer of MBI, Soffan Affendi Aminudin; Permatang State Assemblyman, Rozana Zainal Abidin; Kuala Selangor District Council secretary, Azman Dahlan and Head of Department of LZS Distribution Operations Management Department, Huzairi Ibrahim.

Shamsul emphasized that it was necessary to ensure that the aid was distributed to the target groups without losing track of it.

“The allocation money is slow [to be distributed] because at first we were told of only 163 families, then the number increased to 171 families and after that we asked the village chief to investigate the damage and so on, and it was the ascertained that there were 183 victims.”

“This is the first time that the number of victims is this high, so I ask everyone to be patient and hopefully the repair and restoration work will proceed smoothly,” he said.

Previously, villages in Tanjung Karang were hit by the worst storm in 20 years, which resulted in damage to dozens of houses. Two villages, Kampung Tiram Jaya and Kampung Sawah Sempadan, were the worst-hit by the storm.

The incident on 10 February surprised the residents, as the weather earlier that day was clear and sunny, and did not hint at the disaster that would befall on the evening of the same day.



Azmin: EAC Formation Not Due To Cabinet Performance

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The council comprises people with different sets of expertise. All their input is important, and we will use this to decide on the right course of action,

– Azmin Ali

”

Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali has refuted the claim that the Economic Action Council (EAC) was created because Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is unhappy with the performance of the current cabinet.

Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin, who is among the 16 EAC members, said the council comprises experts as well as those with a good reputation among the public.

“The council comprises people with different sets of expertise. All their input is important, and we will use this to decide on the right course of action,” Azmin added.

Dr Mahathir announced on Monday the formation of the EAC comprising himself as chairman, along with several ministers, as well as business and economic leaders. Azmin said that the new council will be action-oriented. “Among the main goals are to address the well-being of the people, the high cost of living, and the increasing cost of goods. The council will look at what immediate and medium-term actions can be taken,” he added.

“We already have a long-term economic policy. We just need to work on the implementation,” he said, adding that he did not know when the first council would convene a meeting but expected it to be soon.

Selangor Records Highest Investment Rate in History



The statement was given by Amirudin at a morning gathering ceremony with Civil Servants in Hulu Langat in conjunction with the “Jelajah Maju Bersama” (Moving Forward Together) programme held at the Demesne Main Hall of the Hulu Langat District Office on February 15.

On that account, Amirudin said civil servants need to keep their eyes open to continue to mobilise the energy that will be needed to maintain this success. The Selangor Menteri Besar noted that the figures will not remain unchanged forever, thus the state should be prepared to face a new situation in the near future.

“The number recorded in the state includes a 23 per cent contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), hence this figure should move state ambitions to compete in the wider arena and prepare for the international and regional stage to bring the state’s name, as well as Malaysia’s, to greater heights,” he said.

As the most developed and prosperous state in Malaysia, Selangor has a track record of being successful in its business endeavours. With its invest-

ment arm Invest Selangor at the forefront, the state actively pursues business opportunities and courts investors to further enhance its economic performance and fiscal earnings.

Selangor exco in charge of investment, industry and trade for small and medium industries (SMEs) and Invest Selangor chairman, Datuk Teng Chang Khim, has been quoted as saying that things were looking bright for Selangor on the investment front, thanks to positive trends and international investors’ confidence in the state.

As of 2018, Teng and his team from Invest Selangor and Sitec have been making numerous business visits to China to promote the interest of the state’s SMEs. This is due to the fact that the state believes Selangor’s SMEs and digital economy would benefit from the rapid progress of new retail and smart manufacturing in China.

“The Selangor delegation visited Hainan, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong, and have been in talks with the departments of Commerce and e-Commerce Promotion of the provinces of Hangzhou and Guangzhou,”



In 2017, Selangor recorded an investment of RM 5.29 billion, while as of September 2018, the Golden State had managed to weave a 3.2 per cent increase of RM 8 billion. “In less formal meetings, I was informed that until December, the number has increased more than double to make investments more than RM 12 billion,

– Amirudin Shari



Teng had said early this year.

Be that as it may, the State Government is not compelling all parties to maintain the status of this achievement, however, it emphasizes the importance of continued success. Moreover, the state will continue to ensure that various programmes are better implemented in the future.

Amirudin gave as an example the implementation of the establishment of an institute of work, which can not only keep an eye on welfare issues but also new challenges that need to be addressed and resolved. He added that it is the state’s great hope to implement sentiments of not being negligent in carrying out the responsibility and trust given to it by the people.

“Hence, I urge myself and civil servants to be more willing to change or adapt for mutual progress, thereby creating enviable success and setting an example to other states,” he said.

This year, the State Government will continue to invest RM 7 billion in investment through the manufacturing sector. The figure is targeted according to the uncertain world situation at this time.

The state of Selangor is expected to record the highest investment in history, which is over RM 12 billion for the year 2018. Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said the amount recorded is double the increase from 2017, which was RM 5.29 billion.

In 2017, Selangor recorded an investment of RM 5.29 billion, while as of September 2018, the Golden State had managed to weave a 3.2 per cent increase of RM 8 billion. “In less formal meetings, I was informed that until December, the number has increased more than double to make investments more than RM 12 billion,” said Selangor Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari.

Malaysia tops charts for Best Healthcare in the World

By
Muhaimin Merican



How often have you heard nightmare stories or horrifying legends about how our hospitals have blundered in their services? From horror stories about botched surgery to stories of patients receiving the wrong medication and even of being denied services—the horror stories seem endless and make us question the level of healthcare in our country.

Although such cases are likely to happen anywhere in the world, the ranking of Malaysian healthcare recently surprised us and stole everyone's attention when Malaysia was ranked Number 1 in Healthcare in the world.

Malaysia, with a score of 95 out of 100, ranked first in the Best Healthcare in the World category of the 2019 International Living Annual Global Retirement Index.

According to the International Living website, among the top six countries that obtained the best ratings in the category of Best Healthcare in the World for this year, Malaysia ranked first with its world-class healthcare services and sophisticated infrastructure.

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Malaysia, with a score of 95 out of 100, ranked first in the Best Healthcare in the World category of the 2019 International Living Annual Global Retirement Index”

It said that in 13 hospitals in the country that were accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI), almost all doctors – the majority of whom were trained in the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia – were fluent in English, thus communication was flawless.

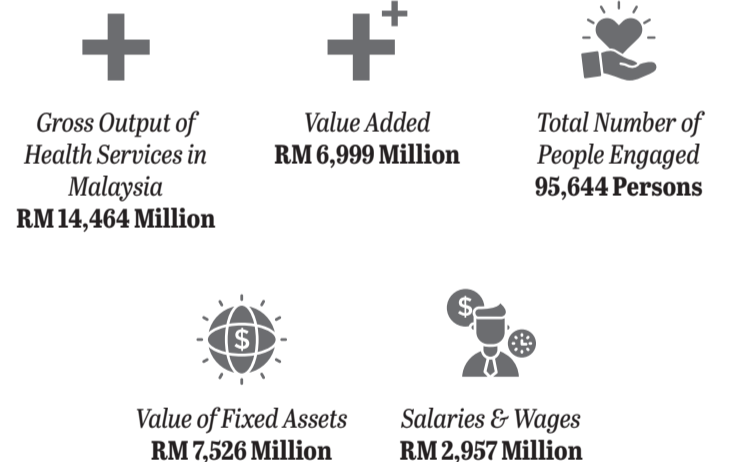
“There are both private and public hospitals for expatriates to choose from to suit one's needs, though the private hospitals tend to be a bit more expensive but are more up to Western standards than the public hospitals,” it said, adding that even at the private hospitals, the treatment was affordable for minor visits.

“The prescriptions in Malaysia cost a fraction of what you pay at home. But it's not just the cost that is attractive – it's the service.

“Pharmacists, similar to rest of medical staff in Malaysia, are well-trained and informed. The Malaysians are friendly people but it's the genuine interest they take which impresses,” it said

It is expected that more than 800,000 foreigners seek treatment in hospitals in Penang and Kuala Lumpur every year. There are specialists in every hospital but unlike overseas, it is not necessary to wait for months to get an appointment. Just turn up to the hospital, register, then take a number and wait your turn. If you are then referred to another doctor, or need to get an X-ray or scan, this will also be done on the same day in the same place.

Facts & Figures:



Treatments most sought after:

IVF	Neurology
Cancer	Organ Transplants
Oncology	Paediatrics
Orthopaedics	
Ophthalmology	
Dental Care	
Cardiology	





Millennials Expected to Take Over the Workforce By 2025

By **Muhaimin Merican**

It is estimated that 75 per cent of the global workforce will consist of millennials by 2025, says Qi Group Executive Chairman, Datuk Seri Vijay Eswaran.

More than half of present-day jobs will be rendered obsolete by then due to the fast evolving nature of technology and automation, he added

He also mentioned that most millennials are no longer willing to work the traditional 9 to 5 work hours. “They are more interested in being responsible for their own lives and they are more interested in finding their own experience, moving and exploring and also willing

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They are more interested in being responsible for their own lives and they are more interested in finding their own experience, moving and exploring and also willing to make a living out of those experiences

– Datuk Seri Vijay Eswaran

”



Qi Group Executive Chairman, **Datuk Seri Vijay Eswaran.**

to make a living out of those experiences” he added when speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Vijay mentioned that millennials are perfect and in line with the current state of the economy, which points to a free market system, creating temporary positions for short-term employment of freelancers.

Speaking to the crowd, he compared how the youth of today no longer shares the same

dreams as their parents and older generations, such as buying houses or buying cars.

He added the vast shift in demography would change the workforce in the future. Most millennials are no longer interested in or agree with the concept of ‘safe’ and ‘permanent’ jobs.

Millennials or ‘Generation Y’ is the classification for youths who reached adulthood around the turn of the century.

Promising Economic Outlook



For many years, the cost of living in our country has remained the topmost concern for a substantial segment of the public. In 2017, research house Ipsos Malaysia said that 55 per cent of its survey respondents, involving Malaysians aged 18 to 74, desired the government to reduce the cost of living within the country. Meanwhile, 42 per cent of them also wanted the government to provide affordable housing while another 37 per cent called for a tax rebate.

With a new government at its helm, these economic issues within the nation are being addressed and tackled, particularly regarding the affordable housing and house ownership sector, as mentioned in the Budget 2019 tabled on November 2, 2018.

Be that as it may, certain economic issues, such as the slowing down of economic activities, the skyrocketing national debt and the rising cost of living are still factors that remain a concern to the people. Moreover, a rise in the unemployment rate of 3.3 per cent, with youth unemployment three times higher than that, is also proving to be a matter of apprehension.

These problems that are arising, and the drag in the nation's growth momentum, are no doubt mainly due to external sources, primarily the United States - China trade war and the uncertainties of Brexit. However, a solution must be presented in order to resolve the slowing down of Malaysia's economy amidst the uncertainty of the global economy.

Main Factors Contributing to High Cost of Living

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Increase in Food Prices

In 2016, a Report on Household Expenditure Survey by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) revealed that food and non-alcoholic beverages made up 18 per cent of the main household consumption expenditure.

According to the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI), food and non-alcoholic beverages accounted for 30.2 per cent in CPI weights. The increase by food sub-group index consisted of oils and fats (+39.6 per cent), fish and seafood (+8 per cent), vegetables (+4.8 per cent), and fruits (+3.9 per cent). What is even more worrisome was that 'Even the Food Away from Home' Index saw a rise, with an increase of 5.1 per cent.



Low Salary

In another one of its surveys titled Salaries & Wages Survey Report, the DOSM stated that the median monthly salaries and wages received by paid employees in 2016 had improved by 6.2 per cent to RM 1,703 compared to RM 1,600 in 2015. The mean monthly salaries and wages had also recorded an annual growth rate of 6.3 per cent to RM 2,463 compared to RM 2,312 in the previous year. However, by 2017, Standard Chartered Global Research reported that real wage growth was slightly negative during the first half of the year.

With the current economic outlook, incomes and wages must rise faster than the cost of living, especially in the long term. Furthermore, true reform of the labour market is also needed and can be started by addressing our dependence on foreign workers, which is seen as a major cause for the suppression of salary levels in Malaysia.



bers of the EAC. These are Public Bank Bhd. managing director Tan Sri Tay Ah Lek, Majlis Amanah Rakyat chairman Dr Hasnita Hashim and Bursa Malaysia chairman Datuk Shireen Ann Zaharah Muhiudeen.

Regarding the formation of the EAC, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir explained that its main role is to act as a channel for the public to stream in their feedback. "It is important that the government listens to the people and this is the role of the EAC. Things will go wrong when the government does not listen to the people," he said.

■ Assisting the Nation

The 16-member council, chaired by the Prime Minister, will examine and make decisions on economic and financial matters, as well as look into problems faced by the public. As such, stakeholders and experts have suggested several measures for the EAC to help combat the rising cost of living.

As the first measure, Yeah Kim Leng, a lecturer at Sunway University Business School, suggests reducing the cost of doing business and helping players in key sectors like telecommunications, education, medical care and housing with initiatives that will reduce their costs and increase their productivity.

On the other hand, the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) urges the government to avoid price controls and blanket subsidies. IDEAS chief executive Ali Salman proposes that the government instead lower the cost of public transport, communications and housing by encouraging more competition in the said sectors.

Besides those, he also advises the government to simplify the recruitment pro-

cess for foreign workers as the existing mechanism is too costly and complex, which contributes to the hiring of illegal immigrants. This will in turn lead to lower wages for legal workers in industries like construction and agriculture.

"Bringing in formalised labour will put pressure on employers to increase wages," said Ali, adding that this would definitely help to ease the cost of living.

■ A Promising Future

With all the uncertainties and rising headwinds, it is a given for the public to feel anxious of the coming times. However, Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) governor Datuk Nor Shamsiah Mohd Yunus believes that Malaysia is able to weather the storm ahead on the back of a current account surplus, adequate total reserves, and the fact that banks are in a strong position in terms of capital and liquidity.

On that account, the Malaysian economy is expected to remain on the growth path driven by the resilience of

private consumption and the continuation of civil engineering projects, as well as the recovery from supply side shocks.

Nor Shamsiah added that the moderation in economic growth would not lead the country into a recession, as many are wont to believe, and notes that global growth is reverting to a long-term trajectory. She also elaborated that Malaysia has diversified its economic structure. For example, the oil and gas sector now account for only about 8 per cent of the total economy.

"I don't think that there will be a global crisis. It's a normalisation of global growth after the weaning impact of the various impetus that have been introduced by countries around the globe, like the US," she said.

On February 14, the governor had announced that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 4.7 per cent in the fourth quarter last year, noting that the annual GDP growth for 2018 was also at 4.7 per cent.

With the establishment of the EAC, made up of capable and experienced members, as well as a good balance of public officials and members from the private sector who are tasked to look into issues relating to the cost of living, employment, poverty and home-ownership, the likelihood of a more stable and prosperous economy does not seem far-fetched.

Hence, with a diversified export sector that will act as a buffer and a council that is overlooking and ensuring that the economic growth, equitable distribution of wealth and the well-being of the people are taken care of, it can be said with confidence that the nation's economy will continue to positively grow in time to come.

■ Combatting the Rise in Cost of Living

On February 11, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) announced the establishment of the Economic Action Council (EAC), to respond to and act to address economic issues faced by the public, based on their feedback. With new problems arising amidst old ones in the economy, the move to form the council is indeed reassuring as they can help combat the rising cost of living.

"The main objectives of the council are to stimulate economic growth, ensure fair distribution of wealth and improve the well-being of the people. The council will also focus on issues related to cost of living, labour, poverty and home ownership," the PMO said in a statement on February 11.

Members of the council include Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as chairman, along with Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Ignatius Darell Leiking and the Prime Minister's economic advisor, Dr Muhammed Abdul Khalid.

Besides these, other members of the council include former International Trade and Industry Minister Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, Permodalan Nasional Bhd. chairman Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz and Council of Eminent Persons member Prof. Dr Jomo Kwame Sundaram.

To ensure that the council consists of the cream of the crop, a list of corporate leaders was also added as mem-

The Public Speaks

The SJ team went down to the streets to uncover the rakyat's view on the nation's current economic outlook. Here is what they have to say:



I do think the cost of living has increased but not necessarily to a stage where it has affected my lifestyle too much. I still can still fairly go about my daily activities so the hike in the cost of living is not a drastic change, yet I can't say that the cost of living has not increased, because it definitely has.

• • •

Azrai Ismail, 24,
College Student at KDU University



The cost of living has indeed increased, especially sectors such as housing and general cost of living in urban areas. This increase is unfortunate in the sense that it hasn't been coupled with exponential increase in the quality of life, so it feels like we are getting less even whilst paying more.

• • •

Mohd Shamil Yusof, 41
Events Director



An increase in the cost of living has hit the lower and middle classes quite hard. Being in the middle class myself, I realize that my Ringgit is not stretching as far as it used to. After paying monthly bills, monthly commitments and such, I find I have little or none left to spend let alone to save, so I'd say that the cost of living has definitely increased.

• • •

Fiza Basir, 42
Recruitment Senior Manager

SELANGOR QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL

Local Councils in Selangor to Host Women's Welfare and Wellness Events

All local councils in Selangor will be hosting the Karnival 3W (Women, Welfare and Wellness) throughout the year starting from February 10. The 3W programme is being organised to inform the public, especially women, about available state-government related benefits, aid and welfare. The Karnival 3W is the brainchild of state Health, Welfare, Women Empowerment and Family Committee chairman Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud who has collaborated with government agencies to focus on her portfolio to help the public. "With a good support system, women can achieve success. They are commonly more involved in their family's well-being."



25 Mosques in Hulu Langat Receive RM 300,000

A total of 25 mosques in the Hulu Langat district received a total of RM 300,000. A total of RM 300,000 was allocated for the 25 mosques in and around the Hulu Langat district in an effort to empower these institutions. The funds were handed out by Dato' Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, during an event at Masjid Al-Hasanah in Bandar Baru Bangi.

Selangor Government Urges Public to Abide by Court's Decision

The Selangor Government advises the public to respect and abide the law with regard to a Shah Alam High Court decision dated 13 February 2019 by judge YA Datuk Wong Kian Kheong on the issue of Sri Maha Mariamman Temple in Seafield, USJ 25, Selangor. The Selangor State Government takes note of the ruling that dismissed the bid to stop the relocation of the said temple. Therefore, the Selangor State Government urges all parties involved to respect and abide by the court's decision to ensure public order and uphold the rule of law.

Tanjung Karang Hit by Worst Storm in 20 Years



A storm that struck Tanjung Karang earlier this month has been classified the worst in the state in the past 20 years. The storm that damaged as many as 165 houses is recorded as one of the worst storms that had struck Selangor in the past 20 years. Buildings affected included houses, schools and religious establishments. The storm affected more than 500 people in the area. The villages that were badly affected by the storm include Kampung Sawah Sempadan and Kampung Tiram Jaya.

No Action Against Selangor for Not Releasing Syahmi Safari for AFF U-22 Championship

The Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) has said that it cannot take action against Malaysia Super League outfit Selangor FA for not releasing midfielder Syahmi Safari for the AFF U-22 Championship 2019. Selangor had stated that they will not be releasing their player for the Malaysia U-22 side's five-day centralised training camp which is to begin on Sunday, as they are also playing domestic league matches during the same period. FAM secretary-general, Stuart Ramalingam, has said that it is the club's prerogative to release the player during non-FIFA dates, as is the case with the AFF U-22 Championship, which is to be held in Cambodia from February 17 to 26.



Selangor Closes Five More Plants

Another five unlicensed recycling factories, whose operations had caused plastic waste to pollute drainage and rivers, have been shut down. The five factories were located in Teluk Gong. They were shuttered by the Klang Municipal Council's (MPK) Licensing Department. State Local Government, Public Transport and New Village Development Committee chairman Ng Sze Han, who went along in one such operation to close down these illegal businesses, said this latest closure meant that a total of 104 such businesses had been shuttered in Selangor over the past six months. Of the 104, he said 33 were found in Kuala Langat while the rest were in Klang.

NATIONAL NEWS QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL



Saudi Prince skips Malaysia and Indonesia on Asian tour

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has postponed his working visit to Malaysia and Indonesia, a day before he was due to arrive on the 17 of February

Malaysia-Born But Stateless, Three Kids Win Citizenship at Doorstep to Hearing

Three stateless children born in Malaysia ended their years-long legal battle for citizenship today when the government finally recognised them as Malaysians, just before their Federal Court hearing this morning. The three boys, who received written confirmation today of their citizenships, are currently aged 17, 16 and eight, according to their birth month.

The Inquest into Death of Fireman Adib Begins



It was an emotional hearing on the first day of the inquest into the death of fireman Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim as his teammates unfolded the story of the day of the incident. Md Elliza Mohd Noor, who was the driver of the fire rescue truck (FRT), tried hard to hold back his tears as he was told to identify Adib in a photo in the witness dock. The 36-year-old Sarawakian described the incident as life-threatening and terrifying, as a mob of more than 50 rowdy people marched towards and attacked the convoy deployed to put out vehicle fires outside the Sri Maha Mariamman temple in Subang. Around 30 witnesses, including six doctors, have been lined up to testify before coroner Rofiah Mohamad.



Sultan of Pahang is the new Yang di-Pertuan Agong

The Sultan of Pahang, Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin, has been sworn in as the 16th Yang di-Pertuan Agong. Sultan Abdullah, 59, was sworn in at the national palace Istana Negara in the capital Kuala Lumpur.



Love in Georgetown City Cancelled Due to Safety Issues

Penangpac and Big Nose Productions have cancelled a play about relationships and social issues on police advice after Muslim groups protested against it. The organisers will have to refund about RM 22,000 worth of tickets already sold.



Ministry to focus on helping B40

PETALING JAYA – The Ministry of Housing and Local Government is focusing on helping the bottom 40 per cent (B40) group, while giving special attention to the middle 40 per cent (M40) group.

Minister Zuraida Kamarudin said in a statement on January 29 that the ministry's focus currently is to address the issues faced by the bottom 40 per cent (B40) group first, as they are the most affected in the

government's efforts to restore the country's economy.

She explained that the B40 group are those with a household income of RM 3,000 and below, and it is very difficult for this group to have the opportunity to own a home if they are not given serious attention and immediate aid by the government.

However, she assured that the ministry has not forgotten the needs of the M40 group, with detailed studies being con-

ducted to gather details and information, before implementing an effective action plan.

"A holistic solution through new principles and policies is being planned by the ministry to enable the M40 group to have the opportunity to own homes," said Zuraida.

On January 28, the ministry unveiled the revamped National Housing Policy 2018-2025, which outlines five focuses, 16 strategies and 57 action plans. It also contains a sub-policy, namely the National Affordable Housing Policy that outlines the standards, specifications and guidelines for the development of affordable homes.

A day later, Bank Negara Ma-

aysia launched its RM 1 billion Fund for Affordable Homes, which aims to help first-time house buyers from the lower income group to finance their purchase.

Meanwhile, Foo Gee Jen, managing director at CBRE-WTW, called on the government not to rely entirely on the private sector to drive the development of affordable homes since this may lead to heavier cross-subsidy for the M40 group.

"The government should not just be looking at winning the vote by making the B40 happy. If there is too much cross-subsidy, the M40 group will suffer," he warned.



RM 20,000 houses for low-income group

SERI ISKANDAR – The government of Perak revealed a new housing policy aimed at helping low-income households within the B40 group to acquire a home for as low as RM 20,000.

Perak Menteri Besar, Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu, said under the new policy the state government, through the Perak Housing and Property Board, would finance the construction of affordable housing from development costs imposed on housing developers following

pre-defined terms.

"We really want to help the B40 group, especially bumiputera, to have their own home although it is a bit of a bold decision made by the state government."

"This policy also needs to be implemented to address the problem of housing developers who are forced to suffer losses due to the unsold bumiputera quota housing units in housing projects," he said.

Ahmad Faizal was speaking to reporters on February 8, after

launching the Iskandar University Square (IUS) at Seri Iskandar Sustainable and Integrated Development Project developed by Team Keris Bhd.

Earlier in his speech, Ahmad Faizal said the widening income gap had contributed to the inability of people in the state to own homes.

"We are not talking about the income gap between one race and another but among the bumiputra themselves," he said.

He adds that the issue of affordable housing has become complex and requires a correction of various policies.

According to him, within seven months of Pakatan Harapan taking over, the state government had identified the locations and approved the construction of 30,000 low-cost houses, affordable as well as owner-friendly homes.

Discounts and Rebates from PKNS for Buyers

SHAH ALAM – The Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) is offering a discount of up to 20 per cent on its ready-built and ready-to-move-in properties that are on sale at its 'PKNS Mega Bonanza Promotion' in a bid to attract homebuyers.

Norita Mohd Sidek, acting Chief Executive Officer at PKNS, revealed that homebuyers can get a discount of up to

20 per cent for selected housing projects such as Daffina 2, Daffina 3 and Elaisha in Kota Puteri, as well as Azhara in Antara Gapi.

Bumiputera and non-bumiputera buyers can look forward to over RM 1 million in rebates at the promotion, which will run until the end of the month.

The campaign also features commercial properties such as Menara U2 and Menara U in Shah Alam.

"Buyers will have the opportunity to enjoy the documentation incentive worth up to RM 15,000 for Hijauan Enklaf, Opal Residensi and 10 Residensi, as well as Taman Bayu Malawati (Kuala Lumpur)," said Norita.

Apart from these, up to RM 30,000 worth of vouchers for electrical goods will also be given to buyers of residential projects Hijauan Enklaf and

Opal Residensi, and for the commercial project, Avenue Rasa.

Meanwhile, buyers of Vega Residensi and Anggun Kirana will also enjoy up to RM 15,000 worth of Smart Home Vouchers.

"With these vouchers, the purchasers will be able to install the smart home system application through which the owner can monitor their home when they are indoors or away," said Norita.

Early-bird discounts will also be offered for buyers of Dillenia, Estera, Violet and Kamelia at Bernam Jaya and up to RM 10,000 worth of interior design vouchers for certain projects in Taman Bayu Malawati.

Other projects include Anggun Kirana and Hijauan Enklaf at Alam Nusantara, Setia Alam and 10 Residensi in Shah Alam.



More Reasons to Buy a Home in 2019

KUALA LUMPUR – Buyers are in for good news as Malaysians who will take part in the Home Ownership Campaign (HOC) will benefit from several new incentives, apart from the 10 per cent minimum discount. According to Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng, home buyers will not need to pay the stamp duty on the housing loan contract for properties costing from RM 300,000 to RM 2.5 million.

For dwellings priced up to RM 2.5 million, buyers will also not need to pay the stamp duty on the transfer of ownership or memorandum of transfer (MOT) for the first RM 1 million, while the stamp duty for the next RM 1.5 million will be reduced to 3.0 per cent. After the campaign ends, the rate will revert to 4.0 per cent.

The perks, however, are only available for those buying new houses in the primary housing market during the nationwide Home Ownership Campaign, which is ongoing until June 2019.

These are in addition to other incentives announced in Budget 2019, such as Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) RM 1 billion Fund for Affordable Homes, as well as stamp duty exemptions for first-timers buying homes costing up to RM 1 million.

Furthermore, home builders have agreed to offer a discount of at least 10 per cent for completed unsold homes that will

be marketed during the campaign.

The Finance Minister called on participating developers to increase discounts. For developers that fail to offer the 10 per cent minimum discount, the authorities will penalise them, such as imposing additional taxes.

He hopes the discounts and stamp duty exemptions will be able to spur Malaysians to buy residential properties, and in turn this is expected to reduce the supply glut of houses. As of Q3 2018, the number of unsold dwellings reached 30,115 units.

Meanwhile, National Housing Department Director-General, N. Jayaseelan, also announced several additional incentives.

For instance, home builders will be permitted to waive legal fees and offer freebies such as furniture to buyers.

On top of that, developers can now provide flexible payment terms such as staggered payments. However, these additional incentives are only valid for one year.

During the Home Ownership Campaign, the Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (REHDA) will hold property exhibitions across Malaysia. The largest event will be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from March 1 to March 3, during which RM 5 billion worth of homes will be showcased.

Malaysia's GDP climbs to 4.7 % in 4Q18 as concerns ease



Bank Negara Malaysia

Malaysia's economy expanded at a faster pace in the final quarter of 2018, ending a year of weakening momentum as resilient exports helped to shore up growth amid a slowdown in global demand from the U.S.-China trade war.

Solid GDP growth provides a welcome reprieve for Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's administration, which has faced simmering discontent over rising living costs less than a year after romping to a shock general election victory in May.

The central bank said it ex-

pects the economy to remain on a steady growth path moving forward, supported by steady domestic demand and improving external appetite for Malaysia's exports.

"Malaysia will continue to experience quality growth in external demand and that will provide support to growth in 2019," Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) Governor Nur Shamsiah Mohd Yunus told a news conference.

Southeast Asia's third-largest economy expanded 4.7 per cent in the fourth quarter from a year earlier, up from 4.4 per cent in the third quarter. The outcome was in line with the median estimate of a Reuter's poll but was better than some economists had expected.

Gains from improved exports, however, are likely not enough to propel a sustained rebound of Malaysia's economy, with investment and private consumption growth slowing in

“**Malaysia will continue to experience quality growth in external demand and that will provide support to growth in 2019**”

Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM)
Governor Nur Shamsiah Mohd
Yunus

the October - December period compared to the past quarter, Capital Economics said.

"Consumption growth is likely to slow further as the boost from last year's scrapping of the Goods and Services Tax fades," the London-based economic research firm said in a client note.

"There will be other drags on growth this year, too. Fiscal policy is set to weigh on domestic demand as the government aims to reduce the deficit."

Private consumption remained a key driver of the economy but grew at a slightly slower pace of 8.5 per cent in the fourth quarter, compared with 9 per cent in July-September.

Full-year 2018 growth came in at 4.7 per cent, just below the government's forecast of 4.8 per cent but far short of the 5.9 per cent pace a year earlier. Earlier, the government said it expected 2019 full-year expansion to come in at 4.9 per cent.



PULAU INDAH TO THRIVE IN 2020

By
Batrisyia Jay

“Once built, IKEA Pulau Indah will be the company’s third-largest furniture distribution hub after IKEA Chicago, USA and IKEA Düsseldorf, Germany, and will serve 12 IKEA stores in ASEAN”

In August 2018, developer Central Spectrum (M) Sdn. Bhd. announced that furniture retailer IKEA will be investing RM 908 million to set up a new regional distribution and supply chain centre in Pulau Indah, Selangor.

Henceforth, construction of the biggest regional Distribution Centre (DC) in the Asia Pacific region commenced, and the centre is expected to be open in September 2020. The aforementioned centre will cater for supplying to South-east Asian and Indian markets, IKEA said in a statement on January 29, 2019.

“The new DC will help to reach out to more customers in Southeast Asia and India. It will help secure a faster and steadier supply of the home furnishings our customers love,” said Ikea Supply Malaysia managing director Lee Bee Chin.

Once built, IKEA Pulau Indah will be the company’s third-largest furniture distribution hub after IKEA Chicago, USA and IKEA Düsseldorf, Germany, and will serve 12 IKEA stores in ASEAN.

The commendable deal was concluded at a signing ceremony during which former Selangor Menteri Besar and current Minister of Economic Affairs, Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, visited the IKEA corporate office in Basel, Switzerland on August 24, 2018. “The investment will benefit Selangor in creating job opportunities and in contributing to the domestic industrial growth,” said the office of the Menteri Besar in a statement last year regarding the deal.

■ What it Means for Selangor

It might boast to be a good deal that gives birth to tonnes of opportunities, but what does it really mean for the golden state of Selangor to have this deal in its grasp? Firstly, IKEA’s new regional distribution and supply chain centre which will be built in the Pulau Indah Industrial Park is expected to have a positive spillover effect, and accelerate the socio-economic development of the area.

Central Spectrum (M) Sdn. Bhd., which is developing the centre, is optimistic that the centre will bring about at least 500 job opportunities. “We believe that with IKEA’s establishment in Pulau Indah, many foreign investors, namely from China, Korea and Japan, will also follow IKEA’s footsteps and set up their business in Pulau Indah,” said General Manager (Development) Noor Azhulil Adnan.

The ability to influence and bring in foreign investors is always a good sign in any business, and Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, agrees with this notion, adding that these vacancies will

involve and be open to those with a specific talent and qualifications.

“Although it is a large logistics hub, some of it involves automation or robotics, while the rest involves skilled manpower, and it is open to graduates to fill in these job vacancies,” he said.

On January 29, the Selangor Menteri Besar had officiated at the ground-breaking ceremony of IKEA’s DC in the industrial area of Pulau Indah. With so much potential and opportunities on hand, the development is sure to further boost the investment industry in Selangor, and in Malaysia in general.

■ A Thriving Location

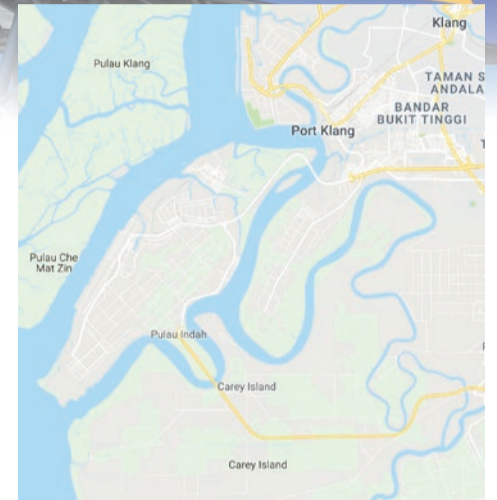
The development of the IKEA centre with Pulau Indah as the chosen location was not merely decided on a whim. According to the World Shipping Council, Port Klang, which consists of two ports - Northport and Westport - was the world’s 12th busiest port in 2015.

With a historical tradition dating back to more than 100 years, Northport is a well-established port located on the mainland, and lies about 15 km from the town centre of Klang. On the other hand, Westport is a relatively younger port located on Pulau Indah, located about 25 km away from the town.

According to CBD Properties Sdn. Bhd. real estate negotiator Robin Wong, the establishment of Westport and the development of Pulau Indah began in 1994, with its master developer Central Spectrum (M) Sdn. Bhd. at the helm.

The development of the much-anticipated Pulau Indah Industrial Park was then divided into three major phases. The first two phases were launched in the 1990s, and have since been fully sold, with Phase 1 mostly occupied by heavy industries, while Phase 2 was designed to be a halal hub.

According to the developer’s website, more than 500 companies have set up operations in the industrial park as of 2016, including Ramly Burger, Oleon and Felda.



Wong explained that Phase 3 has three sub-phases of its own. Phase 3a was launched last year while Phase 3c was launched in 2016 at about RM 60 per square foot (psf), with the current selling price as high as RM 70 psf.

Meanwhile, in its website, Central Spectrum stated that the company plans to roll out the last phase, Phase 3b, sometime this year. Moreover, improvements in the area’s accessibility have resulted in a strong rise in demand for industrial land in the thriving area.

One of these improvements is the opening of the South Klang Valley Expressway (SKVE) in 2013, which has undoubtedly improved connectivity between Pulau Indah and the northern parts of Peninsular Malaysia. Before the development of the SKVE, the major highway connecting the area was the Shah Alam Expressway, which links the island to various other places in the Klang Valley.

The development of the IKEA centre in Pulau Indah will not only ensure a low unemployment rate within the state, if not within the whole nation, it will also provide a better growth spurt and environment for Port Klang as an industrial hub in Selangor.

The 95,000-square metre centre will have an estimated storage capacity of 192,800 cubic metres. IKEA Supply, which was established in May 2017, is the wholesaler responsible for the construction of the DC, and will facilitate the DC’s operations in the future.

With that said, it is without a doubt that Selangor is the best location for the DC. This is not only because of its proximity to all stores in the Southeast-Asian region but also because of its well-developed infrastructure and the availability of labour resources within the state.

Chinese New Year Customs and Traditions

By
Muhaimin Merican

Earlier this month, millions of Malaysian Chinese joined billions across the globe in welcoming a new lunar year. Chinese New Year is celebrated on the first day of the Chinese Lunar Calendar. Each year is named after one of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac.

But do we actually know what the festive dishes and the customs celebrated during this festive season mean?



Mandarin Oranges

Most Malaysians have received mandarin oranges during the Chinese New Year period but how many actually know the reason for giving out mandarin oranges?

The handing out of mandarin oranges actually has a linguistic reason behind it. In the southern Chinese custom, the Cantonese pronunciation of giving mandarin oranges – "song kam" – is the same as "giving gold". Therefore, it signifies wishing prosperity upon the recipient.

Having mandarin oranges around the home during the Chinese New Year is said to bring riches into your life. Even having citrus trees in the home is meant to bring more fortune into one's home or business, and the more fruit on the tree the better it is at ushering in fortune for the home or business.

Lion Dance



The Chinese lion dance dates back all the way to the ancient Chinese kingdom, and it intertwines with the many early cultures in the Southeast-Asian region. The Chinese lion dance is very much rooted in and a cultural symbol of ancient Chinese folklore. It is a traditional dance that mimics the behaviour or movements of the lion in a performance that involves a lion costume to bring good luck, prosperity, and to chase away evil spirits.

In Malaysia, the culture of the Chinese lion dance was largely imported into the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, together with the mass migration of Chinese seeking their fortunes and a better life in the country.

The lion dance can be generalized into two basic forms, the northern lion and the southern lion dance. The southern lion dance predominates in South East Asia, propagated by the Chinese emigrants from southern China, such as those from Guangdong province.



Yee Sang

The raw fish salad has been the speciality of China's Guangdong province for centuries and it is eaten there all year round. It was brought to Southeast Asia by Cantonese immigrants in the 1940s, and later popularised as a Chinese New Year specialty.

But the practice of eating it, complete with the high drama of tossing the ingredients into the air while loudly declaring auspicious wishes during Chinese New Year, is said to be unique to Singapore and Malaysia.

Sometime in the 1940s, a man named Loke Ching Fatt introduced his own version that would eventually become the Lo Hei Yee Sang Malaysians know and love. Loke's complex Yee Sang recipe had about 30 ingredients. His recipe was a multi-coloured combination of various Cantonese, Teochew and Hokkien Yusheng traditions, with a big dash of his own creativity.

Of course, no legendary dish is complete without a secret ingredient. In Loke's Yee Sang, it was his signature sweet and tangy sauce. Loke also decided to serve it banquet-style, hoping that a joyous atmosphere would attract more customers. And it worked. Word about the popular Yee Sang grew, and it soon spread over the nation and became an integral part of the Chinese New Year celebration in Malaysia.



Reunion Dinner

No festive season in Malaysia would be complete without a huge family dinner where relatives from far and wide come to visit for a traditional family dinner, and Chinese New Year is no exception, whereby families get together for the traditional reunion dinner.

Before modern and affordable forms of transport came about, Chinese New Year was the only time when family members would make the journey back to their hometowns for a reunion. The reunion dinner at Chinese New Year thus served as a way for family members living in different parts of China to meet up at least once a year. Nowadays, reunion dinners are held on the eve of Chinese New Year and have since become an occasion to spend time with the family for family bonding.

Ang Pow



Ang pow, or red packets, are traditionally handed out by married couples to their parents, single adults and children during the Chinese New Year celebrations as tokens of good fortune and blessing. There is said to be no rule in terms of the amount that should go into an ang pow, as the act of giving a red packet is meant to be a gesture of blessing and not a transaction.

According to Chinese tradition, good things come in pairs, so an even number is preferred. You cannot go wrong with the number eight, as the number sounds like prosperity in Mandarin. Avoid giving RM 4, as the Chinese word for "four" is the homonym for "death".

Over the years, several practices have been adopted when handing out ang pow. Popular practices include replacing physical money with 4D tickets, and only filling the ang pow envelopes with new notes.

AROUND TOWN

February 2019

RAPTOR WATCH CAMP

8TH - 10TH MARCH 2019
AT TANJUNG TUAN, MELAKA.
AGE: 10 YEARS OLD & ABOVE
MNS MEMBER/GROUP BOOKING:
RM520.00
NON-MNS MEMBER: RM 550.00

WITH NATURE
EDUCATION
CENTRE



Raptor Watch Camp

In conjunction with the 20th Raptor Watch of Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), FRIM-MNS Nature Education Centre (NEC) is organising an interesting Raptor Watch Camp from the 8th to the 10th of March. This camp aims to educate and raise awareness about the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. This 3-day-2-night camp is the next step for budding birders and young nature enthusiasts who want to take their birding skills to the next level and enjoy outdoor adventure, camp activities and nature exploration. For more info, please call 03-62771703 or email at nec@mns.org.my.

FRIM-MNS Nature Education Centre, FRIM Kepong & Tanjung Tuan Camping Ground, Port Dickson

March 8, 2019 - March 10, 2019
RM520.00 per child for MNS members/
KPA members or Group Booking (three
or more). RM 550.00 per child for Non-
MNS member (Fee includes meals,
accommodation, insurance, entrance
fee to FRIM, activity materials, MNS
facilitators and certificate).

nec@mns.org.my



The Gruffalo

Meet a wheeler-dealer Fox, an eccentric old Owl and a maraca-shaking, party-mad Snake in The Gruffalo. Mouse can scare these hungry animals away with tall stories of the terrifying Gruffalo but what happens when he comes face to face with the very creature he imagined? Join Mouse on an adventurous journey through the deep, dark wood in this stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson's award-winning children's book for ages 4 and up.

PJ Live Arts, Jaya One
February 25, 2019 - March 24, 2019
Economy RM75, Premium RM95,
Premium Family Package RM350 (4-pax)
[facebook.com/
events/344419633059334/](https://www.facebook.com/events/344419633059334/)



KL Highland Games

The annual Kuala Lumpur Highland Games are back this year. Watch the competitions as marching bands perform with bagpipes and drums, marvel at the kilted heavy athletes testing their strength in traditional Scottish sporting events such as the caber toss, hammer throw, shot putt, and height for weight, and cheer on the teams in an international junior rugby tournament.

Feel free to bring a group of friends and enter the Tug o' War competition or explore the Kids' Village with its fun rides and activities. Sample the wide selection of delicious food and drinks (some with a very Scottish flavour) offered at the many stalls, while you listen and dance to live music from the afternoon until 8pm. Enjoy it all as part of a great day outdoors in the lush setting of Bukit Kiara Equestrian & Country Resort!

February 23, 2019
Bukit Kiara Equestrian & Country Resort
Free Admission
[facebook.com/events/998256413677354/](https://www.facebook.com/events/998256413677354/)

Harry Potter: Imperium Musicus

Come see what magician Chase Lew has up his sleeve in Harry Potter: Imperium Musicus, a musical that is full of mesmerising melodies and tricks galore, sure to inspire young magicians and wizards alike. Sit back and enjoy as conductor Naohisa Furusawa and the MPO conjure up the sweeping sounds of the Harry Potter films. Wave your wands to the beat and prepare to be amazed.

February 24, 2019
Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Tickets: RM122 RM94 RM75 RM47
Suite Seats: RM219.60/seat RM195.20/seat
[facebook.com/events/1858259427613772/?event_time_id=1858259434280438](https://www.facebook.com/events/1858259427613772/?event_time_id=1858259434280438)



NEC PROGRAMME

JOIN US FOR A

NIGHT WALK IN FRIM FOREST

22/6 SAT 7/9 SAT 14/12 SAT

8 PM - 11 PM
AGE: 13 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

WITH EXPERTS FROM MNS HERPETOFAUNA SIG
TICKETS: RM 85 PER PAX
| NEC@MNS.ORG.MY |
03-62771703

Night Walk in FRIM Forest

Obesity has been an ongoing issue in Malaysia for decades. As such, cardio exercises are one of the solutions that can help reduce the rising obesity rate in the country. Zumba, Masala Bhangra, UJam and Salsation are some of the official certified exercises in Malaysia with professionally trained instructors. Like aerobics, this is a rather enjoyable type of cardio that uses music to create a lively and entertaining atmosphere.

Organised by students of MMU, the event aims for a better and healthier nation by encouraging Malaysians to achieve a balanced and healthy lifestyle through exercise. The event also aims to create awareness on the dangers of obesity and the need to have a healthy lifestyle among Malaysians. Among the activities included are Zumba, Masala Bhangra, UJam and Salsation.

FRIM-MNS Nature Education Centre, FRIM Kepong
February 23, 2019
RM 85.00

(Fee includes insurance, facilitators from MNS, certificate and FRIM entrance fee)
[facebook.com/events/2055348521422479/?event_time_id=205779871784412](https://www.facebook.com/events/2055348521422479/?event_time_id=205779871784412)

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